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Cover designs courtesy of Courtney Timmins.

Featuring:
(Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY)
Solis, Virgil. *Philosophy Enthroned*. Mid-16th century.
Kandinsky, Vasily. *Rain Landscape.* 1911.
Kandinsky, Vasily. *Four Parts*. 1932.

If you have questions regarding the Journal or would like to submit your work for review, or if you'd be interested in joining next year's staff, please contact the Journal at dianoia@bc.edu.

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Spring 2017

Dear Reader,

After a three-year hiatus, we are pleased to release Issue IV of *Dianoia: The Undergraduate Philosophy Journal of Boston College*. The front cover hosts Virgil Solis' *Philosophy Enthroned*, while the back cover features Kandinsky's *Rain Landscape* as well as his *Four Parts*. We thought it fitting to give such a prominent position to Lady Philosophy and to her great servants: Albert the Great, Virgil, Ptolemy, and Plato. Though none of these philosophers are specifically the focus of any of the essays contained herein, each of them has served Philosophy in a distinct and lasting manner. Much like those aforementioned, the philosophers referenced in this collection of essays have made their own unique contribution to the pursuit of wisdom. Similarly, the authors of these essays have inherited this great tradition, adding to it their own perspective and distinct style. The pairing of Solis' woodcutting with Kandinsky's work attempts to illustrate this continuity of Philosophy's reign; the essays touch on a wide range of thinkers — from Thomas Aquinas to Jimi Hendrix — and are indebted to the contributions of the abovementioned philosophical giants. Each serves as a testament to the love of wisdom.

In raising *Dianoia* from its short slumber, the Editorial Board ambitiously decided to expand the scope of the journal beyond the walls of Boston College, soliciting papers from other colleges and universities for the first time in its history. As a result, we received several dozen high quality submissions from elite colleges and universities across the United States and even the United Kingdom. We thank each of these authors for his or her hard work. From this pool, we are pleased to publish seven essays that we believe not only exemplify the pinnacle of undergraduate philosophical research, but also take as their focus topics that would be of interest to a general undergraduate audience. It is our hope that these works will contribute to dialogue in classrooms and on campuses around the world.

We are greatly indebted to those members of the Boston College Philosophy Department and the greater Boston College community who have helped to make the revival of *Dianoia* possible, and we thank you for your continued support.

We hope that you enjoy reading the essays that follow, and, in the hope of creating continued discourse, encourage the submission of essays in response to those here contained for future issues of *Dianoia*.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Lombardo, Editor-in-Chief

Peter G. Klapes, Managing Editor   Jordan A. Pino, Managing Editor

LOOKS, GESTURES, AND WORDS:
Skepticism and the Ethical in Cavell and Levinas

BERNARDO PORTILHO ANDRADE

> We know nothing of the soul
> Other than of our own;
> Those of others are looks,
> Are gestures, are words,
> And what we assume of resemblance
> At the bottom.
>
> *– Fernando Pessoa[1]*

A sense of separation from others often comes to the overly conscious student who has just ended a conversation with his much-esteemed professor: "*What did he think of what I said?*" From there arises an obsessive wish for a third-party witness, as if in the form of a minuscule fly or a hidden camera, allowing him to revisit later the conversation with his interlocutor: "If only I could remember *exactly* what happened, as if replaying a clip, I would be able to distinguish my subjective projections from the objective interaction!" However, even *that* turns out to be a futile wish, as the despairing student realizes that no objective recording could reveal the depths of his listener's inner states. The professor's outward expressions might be wholly distinct from his impressions, and nothing could grant the student such privileged access – for unless each lives for a moment in the other's mind, they will stay forever separate,

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1   I am quoting my own translation of Pessoa's untitled poem. As far as I know, no English version has been published. For the original Portuguese, see:

Pessoa, Fernando. *Poesias Inéditas* (1930-1935). Lisboa: Edições Atica, 1955.

forever isolated.

The problem described above – namely that my knowledge cannot seize hold of the other person and possess him; that I cannot enter into his eyes and grasp the inner workings of his soul – lies at the core of what Stanley Cavell and Emmanuel Levinas would call the "scandal of skepticism." This brings up a surprising coincidence, i.e. that an American philosopher (with intellectual roots in the works of Emerson, Thoreau, Austin and Wittgenstein) and a French-Lithuanian thinker (whose inspiration comes from the Jewish tradition and the phenomenology of Husserl and Heidegger) arrive at an uncannily similar solution to a problem perceived within two separate historical dialogues. This paper attempts to locate and explain this point of agreement. In doing so, it presents the profoundly innovative view of morality that arises from both authors' reflections on skepticism.

This enquiry departs from Cavell's late collection of essays *Philosophy the Day After Tomorrow*. In the book's sixth chapter, entitled "What is the scandal of skepticism," Cavell admits his surprise when reading Levinas, in particular his astonishment at the eerie similarity between their solutions to other-mind skepticism.[2] Encouraged by Cavell's essay, I intend 1), to elucidate his notion of the "scandal of skepticism" and 2), to provide a short comparison between Cavell and Levinas' solutions to that scandal. I will conclude that their respective analyses of skepticism both lead to the radical statement, attributed to Levinas, that "ethics is first philosophy."

1. CAVELL AND THE "SCANDAL OF SKEPTICISM"

Cavell borrows his title, "the scandal of skepticism," from Kant's footnote in his preface to the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. As Kant says:

> "It always remains a scandal of philosophy and universal human reason that the existence of things outside us… should have to be assumed merely on faith, and that if it occurs to anyone to doubt it, we should be unable to answer him with a satisfactory proof."[3]

What Kant finds scandalous is that the philosophy of his time still has not found a proof of the existence of external things. He opposes the claim that one can be conscious only of what is in him, i.e., his representation of external things, and that he thus cannot know whether or not there is something outside him, corresponding to it.[4] Kant is hence concerned with skepticism 1), as a function *of knowledge* (can we know anything?), and specifically 2), of knowledge of *the external world*.

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2 Cavell, *Philosophy the Day After Tomorrow*, p. 150. Cavell's feeling of surprise came after reading Levinas' collection of essays entitled *Difficult Freedom*, which Cavell quotes at length in the sixth chapter of his book.

3 Kant, Immanuel, Preface to the Second Edition, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B xl. For the specific translation referenced here, see Kant, Immanuel, Paul Guyer, and Allen W. Wood, *Critique of Pure Reason*.

4 Berkeley presents this anti-Kantian position in his *Three Dialogues*, when Philonous says, "It is a great contradiction to talk of conceiving a thing which is unconceived… you cannot possibly conceive how any corporeal sensible thing should exist otherwise than in a mind." See Berkeley, *Three Dialogues* between Hylas and Philonous, pp. 35-36.

Kant's quotation also reflects his response to Humean skepticism. The passage works as a critique of Hume, who abandons his philosophical project after affirming that we rely on a *natural belief* in the external world and in its causal laws. The Humean notion that the mind has a habit (not a reason) that leads to beliefs about the external world explains why Kant uses the word *"faith"* when he states that it is a scandal of philosophy "that we should have to accept the existence of things outside us […] merely on *faith*."[5] Kant thus finds it inacceptable that Hume, as well as all thinkers before him, has not philosophically solved the problem of external-world skepticism.

Cavell, however, takes the "scandal of skepticism" in a different way. Following Wittgenstein, he embeds philosophy in ordinary language – a profound methodological shift that, as I will show, finally leads to the priority of the ethical. Unlike Kant, Cavell is not concerned with skepticism as a threat to a systematic science that studies the external world. Rather, he finds that skepticism is inherent in (ordinary) language because of the attunement of the speakers. He worries about the difficulties of communication; about the seeming impossibility of knowing whether the other person means the same as I do by the words we use. Science avoids skepticism by sublimating language in fixed rules of procedure and agreement, but our everyday use of words "is anything but invulnerable to skepticism."[6]

Cavell wonders why philosophers so often have hubristic ambitions to go beyond the ordinary. After all, Descartes' *Meditations* starts with an isolated philosopher fleeing from the ordinary, trapping himself in a tiny room with some candlewax and not much else. Hume similarly takes the problem of skepticism to be divorced from ordinary life. To escape his philosophical melancholy, he dines, plays a game of backgammon, and has merry conversations with friends. This attitude certainly resonates with Hume's maxim: "Be a philosopher, but be still a man."[7] The concerns that trouble the philosopher seem, for Hume, not to reach man in his concrete life. That is why philosophy, throughout its history, "has chronically required of itself a flight from the ordinary."[8] The thinker, in his search for knowledge and certainty, has far too often decided to escape everyday life as a means of finding theoretical grounding. However, to deal with skepticism solely in the abstract realm of ontology leaves unexplored the persistent danger of skepticism in our everyday use of language. For Cavell, *that* is the scandal.

1.1. CAVELLIAN SKEPTICISM AND WITTGENSTEINIAN CRITERIA

Cavell's ordinary-language skepticism rests on what Wittgenstein calls criteria. Unlike other interpreters of Wittgenstein, Cavell does not see the *Philosophical Investigation*

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5   Kant, Preface to the Second Edition, *Critique of Pure Reason*, and B xl.
6   Cavell, *Philosophy the Day After Tomorrow*, p. 134.
7   Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, "Section 1: Of the Different Species of Philosophy."
8   Cavell, *Philosophy the Day After Tomorrow,* p. 134

as an attempt to *refute* skepticism; on the contrary, he takes Wittgenstein to show that skepticism is an inevitable by-product of ordinary language. In the usual view, criteria are presumed to rebut skepticism by establishing the existence of something with certainty.[9] For example, against the skeptic who doubts that he can ever know with certainty whether or not the other is in pain,[10] the philosopher can point to the criteria of pain (say, contorting one's face), the presence of which necessarily entails that the other is in pain. John Austin embodies this approach in his famous example of the goldfinch.[11] If one were to disagree with Austin as to whether the bird they see is a goldfinch, Austin would simply refer him to the rulebook (in this case, to a book on birdwatching), and then tell him that since the bird they see has *that* black stripe in his wing, and *that* yellow throat, it *must* be a goldfinch. In other words, these are the criteria that establish what it *means* to be a goldfinch. To disagree with Austin would entail that one does not know what a goldfinch *is*; what its criteria *are*.

For Cavell, on the other hand, criteria cannot settle the skeptic's worries. Far from dismissing skepticism, a correct understanding of criteria shows skepticism to be *irrefutable*. Criteria belong solely to the way we agree within language, and not to any context-less and independently existing rulebook. No rulebook could ever account for the flexibility and creativity with which I employ my concepts, establish commitments, and make myself responsible. Nothing underlies or "governs" my application of concepts in judgments. Surprisingly, both Cavell and Levinas share this particular and highly innovative view on language. Although I am stepping ahead, this point of agreement becomes clear when Levinas says, in his collection of essays entitled *Humanism of the Other*, that:

> Language refers to the positions of the listener and the speaker, that is, to the contingency of their story. To seize by inventory all the contexts of language and all possible positions of interlocutors is a senseless task. Every verbal signification lies at the confluence of countless semantic rivers.[12]

The skeptic wishes to obtain the certainty that his application of concepts is based on something robust, solid, or fixed – a structure, a manual, an impersonal metaphysics. Some commentators on Cavell and Wittgenstein (such as Stephen Mulhall and Saul Kripke), in line with the skeptical demand for a solid foundation, often emphasize the idea of language as an agreed-upon framework of rules, which relieves the speakers of responsibility for their own words, freezing or sublimating language, emptying it of its on-going flexibility and creativity.[13] To such ordinary-language philosophers,

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9   Hammer, *Stanley Cavell: Skepticism, Subjectivity and the Ordinary*, p. 32.
10 Whether physical or emotional, I take pain to be an unpleasant private experience. The significance of the pain example, which will appear multiple times henceforth, is that most people take pain to be private to its owner in the strong sense that no one else can epistemically access the other's pain in the way that one has access to his own pain.
11 Austin gives the goldfinch example, among other places, in a 1946 essay entitled "Other Minds." See Austin, James Urmson, and Geoffrey Warnock, *Philosophical Papers*, pp. 76-116.
12 Levinas, *Humanism of the Other*, p. 11.
13 Hammer, *Stanley Cavell: Skepticism, Subjectivity and the Ordinary*, p. 39.

once the criteria for pain are satisfied (say, your face is contorted) the question of the non-existence of pain can be discarded. What more, they might ask, could one possibly require? This misses the point, however, that in cases of acting or feigning, it is precisely pain-behavior, and hence the satisfaction of the criteria of pain, that is being simulated. Without the possibility of simulating the satisfaction of criteria, acting or feigning would not exist. This shows that we are never in a position to know with absolute certainty that the other feels pain. The skeptic would like criteria to prove that someone *really* is in pain, but criteria give us certainty about *identity*, not *existence*.[14] This already points to the *fragility* of our everyday use of words, to how language skeptically invites us to demand certainty of the other's pain: I want to act *correctly*, to show concern only when you *really* feel pain. However, all I have are your looks, your gestures and your words, and they do not suffice as criteria for *existence*.

When it comes to my criteria regarding the other person, it seems that I am always acting on the basis of insufficient evidence. After all, I must respond to the other's pain, to his smile or affection, and yet my criteria can never provide me with certainty of the existence of his inner states, only of its semblance: "*he is expressing pain, or expressing care… but does he feel it?*" A fundamental lack of knowledge permeates all of my relationships with others, and from this abyss comes my skeptical wish to fill the darkness with certainty of the other's inner states. Ordinary-language skepticism thus comes from the realization of this inevitable epistemological separation between me and the other person: "how am I supposed to respond to him, to acknowledge his pain, if I cannot know *for sure* that he is suffering?" To refrain from doing good is *not* morally neutral; to flee from the world and avoid the other already has its moral charge. Such is the reason why this Cavellian skepticism stands as primarily *ethical:* the ethical trauma results from the fact that my epistemological possibilities reach up to a certain point, whereas my moral obligations extend beyond that point. For instance, I cannot *know* with certainty that the other is truly sad, but I must respond – here and now – to his crestfallen look.

The skeptic, troubled by Cavell's reading of Wittgenstein's criteria, thus presents a reasonable request – namely, to act out of knowledge and not out of ignorance; to have his moral actions be determined by the extent of his knowledge. Such has, after all, been the standard approach in the history of Western philosophy. Ever since Plato's *Protagoras*, philosophers have always taken good and virtuous actions at least to *involve* knowledge, not simply to be *equated* to knowledge. Socrates, for instance, claims that knowledge alone generates all virtues, whereas ignorance alone causes all vices.[15] As Descartes similarly says in the *Meditations*: "From a great light in the understanding results a great propensity in the will."[16] Our will, the mover of our actions, must follow and obey the understanding. To demand otherwise, to request

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14 Ibid., p. 41.
15 See Plato's *Protagoras*, 357b-e
16 See Descartes, *Meditationes de prima philosophia*, Meditation IV, §69. I am quoting my own English translation.

that our moral actions *precede* understanding, stands as a highly radical position. Far from being easily dismissible, the skeptic in fact embodies the spirit of Western philosophy when he reacts against Cavell's reading of criteria.

In order to justify Cavell's radical position – placing morality before knowledge and certainty, and thus opposing the general historical trend of Western philosophy – I will in the next few paragraphs further expose the ethical trauma of attempting to establish criteria regarding the Other on the basis of insufficient evidence. Such is the trauma of trying to have *certainty* of the Other's inner states as an epistemological basis for the ethical. If I show this (skeptical) approach as inherently frustrated, as an attempt for the impossible, as a recipe for disaster, then I will be able to justify Cavell's ethical response to the skeptic – namely, the primacy of ethics over certainty, or stated differently, the urgency of *acknowledging* the other prior to (and independently of) *knowing* that other. At first sight, the word 'acknowledgment' seems to contain within it the word 'knowledge,' but, interestingly enough, the only way to leave our other-mind skepticism behind is to learn how to acknowledge the other without knowing the other with certainty.

1.2. THE ETHICAL TRAUMA OF CAVELLIAN SKEPTICISM

If criteria grant me certainty only of the *identity* of something and not of its *existence*, as I have already shown, both external-world and other-mind skepticism become possible. For just as Cavell considers how disappointment with criteria pervades philosophy's quest for certainty about the existence of the external world, so does he take the problem of other minds to result from the wish to strip ourselves of the responsibilities and anxieties that mark our usage of criteria. I find it difficult both to know 1), whether the objects which I see as fulfilling the criteria for cars in fact exist and 2), whether the gestures which I see as fulfilling the criteria for sadness a), indeed exist and b), correspond to a real state of inner-sadness. External-world skepticism might lead to other-mind skepticism, but as we can see from the double layer of complexity in the latter case (2), it is other-mind skepticism which presents a greater problem. To be sure, Cavell thinks that both forms of skepticism cannot be easily dismissed, but he clearly devotes more time to solving the difficulties around other-mind skepticism.

If the objects around me fulfill the criteria for cars, I can very well *assume* the existence of those cars without any satisfactory proof, for otherwise I run the mortal risk of a traffic accident. But to assume facts about the other person – that is, to make claims about the other person and to act on those claims – can lead me to moral disaster. I can, of course, simply assume the overall *existence* of the other person without moral consequences (most people do), just as I did in the case of the cars. However, notice that I can also easily *assume* (without any moral consequence) that inside the car, I will find five seats or a big trunk, whereas I *cannot* assume (without moral

consequences) that the other loves me, cares for me, or has any interest in listening to my stories. Suppose that I want to settle the question and not just *assume* that the car has five seats: I could open its doors and look inside. Imagine that what I see inside the car does fulfill the criteria for five seats. Being a skeptic, I can of course doubt whether I am *really* seeing five seats (whether they *really* exist), but I am nonetheless directly witnessing those five seats; that is, they are still present to me as objects to my knowledge. I can certainly doubt the powers of my own witnessing, but that is as far as I can go.

The situation concerning the other person, however, seems very different. In the latter case, I cannot directly witness the Other's inner states: I cannot *feel* your love for me, or your interest in my stories. I can still see your facial expressions, just as I can listen to your words of praise, but *that* alone is what I am directly witnessing. If I were to doubt my senses, as in the case of looking inside the car, I would analogously doubt whether I am correctly perceiving *those* facial expressions and *those* words of praise. If I were to doubt the other just as I did in the case of the car, I would doubt whether what I see indeed fulfills the criteria for, say, a smile. But my skepticism towards the other can always go further: "*Is he faking? Is he merely pretending to like me? And with what intention?*" This worry rests on the impossibility of my knowing whether you are enjoying my company or the food I cooked, and not on the impossibility of my knowing whether you are smiling at me, nodding your head, or holding my hand. Thus, my doubt regarding the other has two layers: a), the perception of his gestures and b), the correspondence of those gestures to his inner states. Whereby I suffer no moral consequences for suspending my worries regarding the inside of the car, I run the risk of deception, of betrayal, and of eventually ending up alone if I suspend my skeptical worries of the other's feelings.

In the previous paragraph, I advanced the notion that skeptical worries about the Other stand as a persistent possibility in ordinary language and everyday life. However, while Cavell recognizes the moral risks in completely suspending these worries (such as the risk of betrayal or deception), he particularly focuses on the danger of *not* suspending skeptical worries; that is, of demanding *certainty* of the other's inner states. The wish to *possess* the Other, so to speak, and to grasp him as an object of knowledge – which reminds us of our introductory paragraph – is both the wish for the impossible and the birth of a tragic fate. I intend to elucidate both of these notions in the two following subsections. The first, dealing with the impossibility of knowing the other's inner states, bases itself on Cavell's essay "Knowing and Acknowledging," from *Must We Mean What We Say*; the second, touching on the tragic fate of the skeptic, finds its roots in Cavell's reading of *King Lear* in "The Avoidance of Love," also in the same book.

1.2.1. SKEPTICISM AS THE WISH FOR THE IMPOSSIBLE

My separation from others lies in the fact that, however intimate I am with some people, I am still myself and not them, and I can never truly be in *their* position; I can never have *their* feelings and thoughts, for otherwise they would be *mine* and not theirs. Such a separation does not describe an inability of mine, or a mistake to be corrected, but rather a general fact of the human condition. Though I can *nominally* have the same pain as you (e.g. accidentally hitting my thumb with a hammer as I build a treehouse), I have no means of accessing *how* it feels to you. I know how the pain feels to *me*, and I know what *I* call it, but that name might correspond to a completely different feeling for you. In other words, it stands as a permanent possibility that the hammer could have caused a wholly distinct pain in your finger, and my inability to *have* your pain stops me from either confirming or denying it. With regards to my pain, "I stand sealed *out* from others, as well as sealed *in* myself."[17]

In discussing the skeptical problem of "having" the other's pain,[18] Cavell defends Wittgenstein's interlocutor in the *Philosophical Investigations*, where the author says that it makes no sense to want to *have* the other's pain. Cavell states that the skeptic of the *Investigations* has discovered that unless he can share or swap feelings with the other person, he cannot know what the other is experiencing (if anything).[19] Though Cavell does not think this is a perfectly unobjectionable idea, he is far from confident that he knows what is objectionable about it. To be sure, it may turn out that the question "*can I have the same feeling that he does?*" is badly conceived, but the point of the matter, for Cavell, lies in the fact that this has not been *shown* in the *Investigations*.[20]

In order to show that the skeptic's question cannot be easily dismissed, Cavell mentions the example of a couple owning two cars of the same model (both are 1952 MG-TD's). To say that the cars are the same is to say that they are not different *makes,* but it cannot be denied that the husband has his car and the wife hers – that there are two.[21] However, when it comes to colors, if the color of *this* notebook fits the same description as the color of *that* notebook (let us say, #250 of the Universal Color Chips) then the color of the notebooks is the same. And if a critic were to ask: "*But are there not two colors, just as in the case of the cars?*", Cavell would respond that unless the critic means that one of them seems closer to #249 or to #251, he does not know what "color" or "same" means, what a color is.[22] We then conclude that with pains, as with cars – but not with colors – we can say that in one sense there are two (in terms of its "numeric identity") and in another sense there is only one (in terms of its "qualitative identity"). The whole issue of concern for the skeptic, however,

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17 Cavell, *Must we Mean What We Say*, p. 240.
18 Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, § 293.
19 Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say*, p. 228.
20 Ibid.
21 Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say*, p. 224.
22 Ibid.

lies precisely in the lack (or impossibility) of numeric identity, because in the case of pain that stands as a complete impediment to knowledge. Suppose the couple can have descriptively the same pain – say, again, hitting their fingers with a hammer while building the family's tree house: Do they have the same particular pain? Can we know here and now that they do? It is as if we needed to feel a replica of their pains – first of the husband, then of the wife – in order to compare and confirm that it is the same. As Cavell states: "If this is the way things are, we do not know whether they have the same pain or not; we never can." [23]

The fact that the last paragraph ends with the words "*We never can [know]*" already shows why Cavell calls this form of skepticism a wish for the impossible. We demand knowledge precisely of what we cannot know; we want certainty with regards to the other's inner states, which requires the abolition of numeric differences. If only we were all one single extended body with one single extended mind, without alterity, we would be able to acquire certainty of *all* inner states. [24]One can already notice the violent nature of such a wish, the thirsting for totality or for the dissolution of the Other. Though I keep telling myself not to jump ahead, a reader of Levinas can see the incredible similarity between the two thinkers unfolding at this point. The skeptic of the *Investigations* – who, after all, is not unreasonable – whose claim is not easily dismissible or objectionable – has a *wish for totality*, a desire to encompass everything into *sameness*, into a *sine fine* self. [25] But that is impossible: the other's pain is not present to me as an object of knowledge. I am inevitably confined to knowing only of the other's expressions and outward manifestations. With regards to his pain, I cannot *know* it, but simply *accept* it (to respond to his contorted face with care) or *deny* it (to turn away my eyes, looking out the window).

1.2.2. SKEPTICISM BEGETS A TRAGIC FATE

Cavell claims that tragedy (at least in its Shakespearean form) displays the structure of other-mind skepticism, a disappointment with the human finitude of criteria and the consequent denial of the "unknowable" other. In the final pages of the *Claim of Reason*, Cavell establishes that skepticism is intrinsically marked by its drive towards the tragic. Incapable of coming to terms with the limits of criteria, the skeptic tragically finds himself, the world, and others to be withdrawn from each other and devoid of significance. [26] Such is the reason, as we shall see, why King Lear demands

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23 Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say*, p. 229.

24 What I have described in this sentence is an even more radical example than the one given by Cavell on p. 232 of *Must We Mean What We Say*. Cavell talks about two Corsican Brothers, one of whom (call him Second), suffers everything which happens to his brother (call him First). When you whip First, Second writhes with him – not in sympathy, seeing what is happening, but even miles away, not knowing what is happening to his brother. This is a way for Cavell to conceive of a situation in which both individuals have numerically the same pain. But as Cavell points out, it is not clear whether Second will express his pain by saying "I am in pain" or "He (First) is in pain." In this case, problems still arise concerning our knowledge of the other because alterity, separation and individuation are still in place. The skeptic wishes, in a way, for the abolition of individuation, which he cannot achieve.

25 The skeptical wish for the abolition of numeric differences and of otherness is the wish for a self "without end," echoing the Latin expression "Imperium sine fine," "The Empire without end," which refers to Rome.

26 Hammer, *Stanley Cavell: Skepticism, Subjectivity, and the Ordinary*, p. 77.

of his daughters, so to speak, a *certificate of love*. Lear wants a statement of love that fixates, grounds and establishes that which can only exist in in the fragile and too-human realm of ordinary language.

A disappointment with the limits of criteria and the consequent denial of the other mark Cavell's reading of *King Lear* in his essay entitled "The Avoidance of Love." As the title suggests, *avoidance* permeates the whole play: Gloucester refuses to recognize Edmund as his illegitimate son; Cornwall blinds Gloucester so as not to be seen by him; Lear does not reveal himself to Gloucester after the latter's blinding; and most importantly, Lear denies his love for Cordelia in the abdication scene in Act I. What Cavell finds interesting in this fateful scene from Act I is that, while desperately wanting Cordelia's love, Lear sees the demand that her love makes upon him as threatening. The realization that love involves *dependence* strikes Lear as incompatible with his position of power and authority as king. Threatened by the fear of exposing these feelings (and thus by the fear of the dependence that these feelings entail), Lear arranges for his daughters to publicly declare their love for him, and in return he agrees to distribute his lands to each of them. Lear thus asks his daughters to make him look like a loved father, but without having to return in kind.

Cordelia, however, who loves her father, cannot accept this. Rather than giving a lofty and elevated speech of praise, offering false love in return for Lear's rewards, she chooses to remain silent. Only by refusing the dissimulated expression of love that Lear expects of her – that is, by keeping her love secret – can Cordelia continue to be responsive to her own true feelings.[27] Lear's subsequent fury and ruthlessness comes not from his doubts as to whether Cordelia *really* loves him, but rather from his having to *accept* their mutual love and dependence on one another, which requires that he reveals himself to Cordelia. By failing to expose his dependence, Lear rejects both the one he loves *and* her love for him.[28] In other words, by wanting to possess Cordelia's love as one possesses a material object (owning it while not being owned by it) Lear ends up *losing* what he already had: a loving relationship.

This interpretation touches on a fundamental aspect of acknowledgment according to Cavell – namely, that acknowledging entails *revealing* oneself to the other, making oneself known, handing oneself over to the other to be either accepted or rejected. To acknowledge Cordelia's love Lear must reveal himself as desiring that love, as loving her back, as being *weakened by love* and thus vulnerable to his beloved. Cavell's ethical response to skepticism thus arises as one of revealing oneself to the other, of being *determined* by that other, which is the very opposite of self-determination.

Lear's failure to acknowledge leads to tragedy, for after banishing Cordelia from his kingdom, Lear must now reveal not only his feelings towards her, but he must also recognize that he has distorted their relationship. As Cavell puts it, Lear must reveal

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27 Hammer, *Stanley Cavell: Skepticism, Subjectivity and the Ordinary*, p. 79.
28 Ibid.

"that he is her unjust banishing father."[29] It is out of his failure to reveal himself as her unjust father that Cordelia dies, which Cavell takes to mean that "*every* falsehood, every refusal of acknowledgment, will be tracked down. In the realm of spirit… there is absolute justice."[30] Lear knows that his frustration does not in fact come from uncertainty as to whether Cordelia loves him or not. Instead, he is incapable of coming to terms with his human condition – with the fact that he loves her, and is thus dependent on a finite and fragile being, so finite and so fragile as to die in his hands by the end of the play. But in the fashion of a good skeptic, Lear converts this human condition into a riddle, into an intellectual lack: "*Can I know that she loves me?*" And yet, as I have said in the previous sections, the inner states of the other human being are not up to proof; they exist beyond the scope of scientific evidence, of ocular testimony, of certificates and contracts. Behind the skeptic's demanding rationality, therefore, stands an unbearable fear of disappointment with the other's too-human finitude, which gets converted into an impossible intellectual demand. In our narcissism, we wish to be grand, which means hiding from the finite other, for to acknowledge him entails joining his kind. Shakespearean theatre thus shows us that theatricality must be defeated.

2. LEVINAS, CAVELL AND THE PRIMACY OF THE ETHICAL

I have so far exposed Cavell's views on the ethical danger of ordinary-language skepticism, that is, the danger of reducing the other person to a philosophical puzzle or an intellectual lack. This attitude becomes one of domination or possession, for the skeptic wishes to contain the other within the limits of his knowledge. Lear wants, as was said, a certificate of love from Cordelia, so that *all* of Cordelia's being is in there, and *nothing* is outside; Cordelia would then become completely known, thoroughly revealed, like an aircraft to a Boeing engineer. The skeptic's tragic fate comes from placing epistemology first and ethics second, that is, from wanting to *know* before *acknowledging*.

It is at this point that we find the unexpected similarity between Cavell and Levinas. Both philosophers converge on the Levinasian maxim that "ethics is first philosophy." Cavell criticizes ordinary-language philosophers for wanting criteria to cover the full depths of the other person's being. Levinas, in his turn, similarly attacks phenomenology – the philosophical tradition he has inherited from Husserl and Heidegger – for reducing the other to a term within language, to a phenomenon within the world of consciousness. In the following part of my essay, I will first introduce Levinas' critique of phenomenology, and then compare the two thinkers. Such a comparison is as tempting as it is unexplored. Despite having mentioned his surprise with Levinas late in his career, Cavell has not himself devoted the time to

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29 Cavell, *The Claim of Reason*, p. 429.
30 Cavell, *Must we Mean What We Say*, p. 309.

studying Levinas extensively. What follows is, I believe, much needed – and just as with anything done for the first time, it might require successive attempts.

2.1. A SKETCH OF LEVINASIAN PHENOMENOLOGY

Phenomenology is the descriptive study of what *appears*, of what is being (re-)presented to consciousness. However, to appear as phenomena, beings must be identified as *this* or *that* (I see this *as* a chair). In the absence of any identification, there would only be a rustling of a totally anonymous and shapeless "there is" (*il y a*) in which everything gets confused with everything else. The identity of a phenomenon as this or that is its *thematization*: "Being manifests itself by becoming a theme,"[31] that is, by being gathered, centered and posited as this or that. Levinas emphasizes the lack of a pure receptivity in the way that consciousness "takes" or posits something *as* something else. The commentator Adriaan Peperzak says that "there is a sort of sovereignty in this way of getting in touch with the given. Consciousness leads the game and determines the positions of the pawns."[32] The *logos* overcomes the pre-phenomenal chaos and establishes an order in the anonymous rustling of Being. Every phenomenon thus becomes a Said (*un Dit*); that is, the thematic presentation of a being, the gathering of an identification that consciousness imposes on the "there is" *(il y a)*.

According to Levinas, the whole history of Western philosophy has been dominated by the idea that beings and Being show themselves when expressed in speech or writing, when put in the Said. Levinas, however, criticizes the entire tradition by pointing to a simple fact: a *discourse is always said by someone to one or more others (or to oneself as listener or reader)*.[33] The saying of a said (*le Dire d'un Dit*) stands as one of the most ordinary and basic events of everyday life, as well as the root of the whole enterprise of civilization, unfolding itself in communication and social institutions. Why has philosophy failed to ignore the Saying (*le Dire*), concentrating exclusively on the Said (*le Dit*)? Language is not only and not primarily enunciation or expression, but rather *communication* – in talking or writing I always address my words (and myself) to someone. I expect someone to hear me. In speaking or writing to him, I initiate a relation between myself and him. One way of hiding this relation (the Saying) in the history of Western philosophy has been by treating it as a phenomenon comparable to other phenomena. However, the other person to whom I speak is not there before me as a phenomenon that I can observe, study, and analyze, but as someone *to whom* I offer something that I have felt, heard, studied, written, or said. To be sure, I can look at the color of somebody's eyes or contemplate someone's beauty, which I can describe in a generic phenomenology, but my relation to the other does not have a phenomenological structure. By treating or observing another in the way that would be appropriate to a phenomenon, I prevent myself from having an *encounter* with this person. In order to face someone who looks back

31 Peperzak, *Beyond: The Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas*, p. 56.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid., p. 61.

at me, I must separate myself from the identifying and thematizing attitude described earlier, for if I were to see the Other as an interesting phenomenon (as someone with green eyes or a sweet voice), I would reduce the Other's otherness to an element of my thematic universe: the Other consequently would become *absent*. As Peperzak phrases it, in contrast to the phenomena that I can observe, the Other whom I meet as Other is *invisible*.[34] Or in the words of Levinas, the Other is not a phenomenon, but rather an *enigma*.[35]

The theoretical intention is thus essentially incapable of taking one of the most ordinary experiences of everyday life seriously: it cannot do justice to the fact that my words are *addressed to someone*. The problem with philosophy – and the temptation which Levinas constantly tries to evade – is that, as soon as I want to concentrate on this experience, I betray it by making it into a theme. By becoming a theme, an address loses its very moment of Saying, that by which its signification is communicative, and thus it loses its orientation towards an actual or possible hearer. The "to" has changed into an "in front of" or "before" of an object that is present before consciousness. Levinas wants to convey, through his innovative writing (as if through an epiphany), the *vocative* in our language, the irreducible relation to the addressee, which is present in every sentence and every message (saying "Here I am!", "*Me voici*!"). Levinas' writing also attempts to reveal the inherent *transcendence* of communication, the fact that to speak is not comparable to noetico-noematic correlations,[36] but rather to my offering the whole of my identifying acts – that is, the whole of my world – to someone who is not a part or moment or event within that whole. You, as the Other, are not to be found *in* my world – for you come from afar – and my response to your facing me precedes, and is more fundamental than, the domain of phenomenal beings. All of my themes and identifications are meant first and foremost *to be given* to you for your acknowledgement or denial. In my contact or proximity to you there is the mark of "the one-for-the-other," as Levinas says.[37] I give you my words – and myself – saying "See me, here and now," and, in doing so, I am in the *accusative case*: for it is up to you to accept or deny my words, to accept or deny myself.[38] I thus find myself in a position of a "passivity beyond passivity." My obligations and responsibilities to you do not stem from any decision or contract originating in my will, for before I could even think, thematize, and freely choose, I have become responsible to you. Every thematization and every thought of mine is given and addressed *to you*; on the hither side of every Said of mine lies a Saying filled with responsibility for you.

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34 Peperzak, *Beyond: The Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas*, p. 63.
35 Ibid.
36 In Husserl's terminology, the noetic content is the mental act (say, an act of liking, of judging, or of remembering), which is directed towards an intentionally held object, "noema" (say, a book, a landscape, or one's childhood home).
37 Peperzak, *Beyond: The Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas*, p. 67.
38 The expressions "See me, here and now," "Here I am," "I am in the accusative case," and then later "a passivity beyond passivity" all comprise the Levinasian terminology present throughout *Otherwise than Being*.

2.2. SOME POINTS OF AGREEMENT

The position of ultimate passivity that I find myself in my ethical relation points to Levinas' maxim that "I am a *hostage* to the Other." As we have seen, Lear's wish to have a certificate of love from Cordelia (a Said) in exchange for land stands as a desperate attempt to avoid the ethical reality of ordinary language, to reduce the Other to a theme or a term in a contract, to mask one's existence as *hostage* to the finite Other. By setting up rulebooks and contracts that take you and I as signatories, I avoid an ethical engagement. Such was Lear's wish, but such was also Saul Kripke and John Austin's attempt to ground language on a rulebook (be it a manual on birdwatching), on something more "robust" and "independent" than the too-human Other. Kripke speaks of an "eerie feeling" when he realizes that "nothing ensures" that the other person will make the same mathematical projections as he has done in the past, for "there is no reason" we act and agree in language (or in mathematical functions) as we do.[39] It as if, Kripke says, "the entire idea of meaning vanishes into thin air."[40] Cavell correctly responds by saying that *something* has vanished, but that in other ways it seems that language is "solider than ever."[41] Suppose someone invites me to tea and lays out the toy tea set that belongs to his child's doll, and then proceeds to pour. I might not be able to reason with him, but I have choices beyond breaking with him or going away: I might try to humor him, or show him my trustworthiness by sipping from the toy cup, or I might serve the tea to my doll.[42] Any Said that we might agree upon (a theme in the rulebook) has vanished, but the "signifyingness" (to use Levinas' expression), the Saying, the "one-for-the-other," the communicative and vocative element of language remains. It is in this sense that, prior to and more fundamental than my certainty or knowledge that we employ the same terms in the same way, I have an ethical responsibility for you, as my Other. Such an idea unites Cavell and Levinas, turning both into outcasts in the drama of Western philosophy.

We can also find this sense of passivity, and of the purely vocative aspect of language, in Cavell's mention of Rousseau in the final pages of *The Claim of Reason*. Cavell takes as paradigmatic of the discovery and acknowledgment of the Other the following "mythic" or "pre-historical" moment in Rousseau's *Essay on the Origin of Language*:

> Upon meeting others, a savage man will initially be frightened. Because of his fear he sees the other as bigger and stronger than himself. He calls them giants… That is how the figurative word is born before the literal word, when our gaze is held in passionate fascination. [43]

The first naming of the Other is characterized by Rousseau in the form of an *exclamation*: upon meeting the Other, the savage man has an experience on the basis

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39 Cavell, *Philosophy the Day After Tomorrow*, p. 135.
40 Kripke, *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language*, p. 22.
41 Cavell, *Philosophy the Day After Tomorrow*, p. 136.
42 Ibid.
43 See Rousseau, *Essay on the Origin of Language*, in the section entitled "That the first language had to be figurative."

of which "he calls something out, something is called forth from him."[44] From the Other's sheer otherness comes the fright and fascination which Rousseau defines in his mythic or pre-historic account as our exclamation and fascination with the other human being. Levinas, in a most similar fashion, says that "the face is the fact that a being affects me not in the indicative, but in the imperative,"[45] that the Other is a thick moral presence to me, a *giant*, commanding me from a position of height. The one moment in which Cavell distances himself from Levinas – and this might be the biggest distinction between the two thinkers – is when he emphasizes that the Other is ultimately not stronger or "higher" than the self. Rousseau says that:

> After many experiences, the savage recognizes that these so-called giants are neither bigger nor stronger than he. Their stature does not approach the idea he had initially attached to the word giant. So he invents another name common to them and to him, such as the name man, for example, and leaves giant to the fictitious object that had impressed him during his illusion.[46]

Cavell follows Rousseau's reasoning by claiming that after the first frightful meeting with the Other, the savage decides, on the basis of noticing the empirical analogies between himself and others, to displace the first name called forth from him ("giant") in favor of another ("man").[47] It is crucial for Cavell to recognize this no-more-than-human status of the other person, because the realization of the beloved's finitude lies at the center of his interpretation of *King Lear*. If the Other is weak and finite, I am just as weak and finite for being dependent, through love, on that Other. For Levinas, however, the Other always remains a *giant*, so to speak, for "the face, still a thing among things, breaks through the form that nevertheless delimits it."[48] The face is a physical entity, a thing among others, and yet it expresses the infinite, breaking through its finite form. The Other presents me with an ungraspable infinity, for I cannot encompass him in my thoughts and theories, in my themes and categories. The Other forever stays "infinitely transcendent, infinitely foreign."[49]

If the Other is my equal – and Lear's drama for Cavell is the admission that he is just as equal, just as finite as the Other – then my task is to accept my human condition and not hide in theatricality or deny acknowledgement. But if the Other is my superior – and the philosopher's drama for Levinas is the admission that the Other is not a theme in the phenomenal world – then my task is to renounce my autonomy and recognize my passivity towards the Other. In both cases, there is a *lowering*: Lear thinks of himself too highly and must now accept the lower condition of being just as human as Cordelia; the philosopher wants to place the Other among his themes and

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44 Cavell, *The Claim of Reason*, p. 466.
45 Levinas, *Collected Philosophical Papers*, p. 21.
46 See Rousseau, *Essay on the Origin of Language*, in the section entitled "That the first language had to be figurative."
47 Cavell, *The Claim of Reason*, p. 466.
48 Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p. 197.
49 Ibid.

ideas, all of which are his creations, but the Other stands outside as the receiving end and final destination of the philosopher's thematization. The distinction between 1), the Other being my finite equal and 2), the Other being entirely outside my world, being "what I myself am not,"[50] however, renders an important difference between Cavell and Levinas. Since the Cavellian Other is as finite as I am, I might burden him by "placing infinite demands on finite sources,"[51] and the Other might similarly place monstrous burdens on me, in which case I can say "*No*," I can choose not to engage (for in this scenario, either myself or the Other has not acknowledged our common human finitude). For Levinas, however, since the Other is an infinity beyond grasp – not a part of my world of themes and ideas – my obligations and responsibilities to him stem from a most passive position, before any thought and thematization, and thus before any decision of my will. I have no choice but to say "*Yes*" to the Other if he approaches me with his nude face, without theatricality.[52]

Although in no way do I expect to exhaust all possible comparisons between these highly complex thinkers, in general, we might state that each of them reacts to the dominance of scientific positivism, of the social sciences, of categorization, that is, of taking the human as a term in a language, instead of recognizing that individuals *address* and *are addressed* by one another. In admitting this fact of (ordinary) language, both thinkers equally envision the supremacy of ethics, and its indispensable primacy over all other intellectual pursuits. Skepticism tries to sublimate language by reducing its very communicative element, its "signifyingness" to a term within the language. Ethics would then be governed according to social contracts, legal books, societal norms, moral codes – anything that can be fixed and established. But as I have shown, that is both impossible and tragic. Levinas and Cavell both try to return us to the ethical, to its inescapable presence in ordinary life. If the title of "first philosophy" once belonged to metaphysics (with Aristotle), then being transferred to epistemology (with Descartes), we can now safely say that, for Levinas and Cavell, ethics is *prima philosophia*.

As a concluding thought, I will end this investigation on Levinas and Cavell – the first of many others – with an aesthetic comparison. Kant's notion of the mathematical sublime might serve to describe the encounter with the Levinasian Other, which is an encounter with an infinite otherness that I cannot grasp (*greifen*).[53] This mathematical

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50 Levinas, *Time and the Other*, p. 83.

51 Cavell, *The Claim of Reason*, p. 470.

52 I include the conditional as a way to respond to the problem of hostages, which permeates Levinasian scholarship. The British philosopher Simon Critchley, for instance, has touched on this issue. As he explains, the Holocaust survivors who had invited him to speak in their London synagogue could not accept Levinas' command that we should be held responsible for their persecutor. Their reaction, which strongly invokes the remembrance of National Socialism, made Critchley think that Levinas had gone too far, or become too "masochistic." One way to avoid this problem is to say that the Nazi guard does not present his face, in its destitution, nudity and vulnerability, but rather hides himself in the theatricality of cruelty. If there is a genuine human interaction, the ethical forcefulness of the Other's face commands me to say "Yes."

53 I have previously discussed this comparison between Levinas' ethics and Kant's aesthetics in an essay entitled "The Epiphany of the Face: Levinas and the Ethical-Religious Attitude," which I presented at the 5th Annual Graduate and Undergraduate Student Conference in Philosophy, at San Diego State University, on October

sublime arises when we are confronted with something so large that it overwhelms our sensory capacity, when we cannot apprehend the magnitude of a given object. Looking at the starry night sky, for instance, with its multitude of galaxies and constellations, our senses reach up to a certain point, but reason can go further and conceive the idea of infinity, which exceeds any possible faculty of the imagination. Analogously, the face of the Other communicates an otherness which cannot possibly be grasped by sameness: "It cannot be comprehended, that is, encompassed. The Other remains infinitely transcendent, infinitely foreign."[54] Just as what lies beyond the stars, the Other cannot receive a place in my phenomenal world, cannot be categorized in my sameness or apprehended and understood by my intelligence. A vision of the Other is at most an epiphany, or *ekstasis* ("stepping outside"). For Kant, the mathematical sublime contrasts, in its turn, with the dynamic sublime, and just as the first belongs to Levinas, so would the second correspond to Cavell. In Kant's words, the dynamic sublime is when nature creates a fearfulness "without us being afraid *of* it."[55] Looking at immensely powerful waves hitting the rocks in the coast, we know they can annihilate us, wipe us out with one hit, and yet their awesome power does not give us a sense of threat from afar. Analogously to Cavell, you might not follow the same rules as I do, we might not mean the same by what we say, but rather than assuming the skeptical position of demanding conformity, I turn my spade expressing patience. My rulebooks might vanish into thin air, my Kripkean wishes can be destroyed with a single hit, and yet I accommodate myself to the Other; communication might threaten to break down in a second, but that opens for us the ethical realm of language without rules. ✦

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54 Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p. 194.

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THE FRUCTIFYING RAY:

Considering Kandinskian Artistic Creation Through the Hegelian Alienated Consciousness

MARTIN FITZGERALD

"The world sounds. It is a cosmos of spiritually affective beings." [1]

INTRODUCTION

At a particular time necessities come to fruition. i.e., the creating spirit (which one can call the abstract spirit) finds access to the [individual] soul, subsequently to [many] souls, and calls forth a longing, an inner compulsion.

If those conditions are fulfilled which are necessary for a precise form to come to maturity, then this longing, this inner compulsion is empowered to create a new value in the human mind, which, consciously or unconsciously, begins to live within man.

Consciously or unconsciously, from this moment man seeks a material form for this new spiritual value that lives in spiritual form within him.

Thus the spiritual value seeks its materialization. Matter is here a reserve of supplies from which the spirit, like a cook, selects what is n e c e s s a r y in this case.

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1   Wassily Kandinsky, "On the Question of Form," in *Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art*, Kenneth C. Lindsay and Peter Vergo, eds. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), p. 250.

This is the positive, the creative [element]. This is the good, T h e w h i t e , f r u c t i f y i n g r a y.

This white ray leads to evolution, to sublimation. Thus, behind matter, within matter, the creative spirit lies concealed.[2]

This short passage both encapsulates many of Kandinsky's major philosophical themes including the internal-external division, the principle of inner necessity, the creating spirit, and artistic evolution and also highlights the difficulty in grounding Kandinsky on a systematic theory of artistic creation. It is difficult to understand the transition from the first inner longing to a concrete contribution to spiritual progress. In particular, it is not clear what this spiritual value is, how it actually becomes materialized, or how the artist selects the necessary matter to materialize it. To address this, I want to call attention to three processes which I will call *discernment*, wherein the artist realizes what his or her spiritual value is; *translation*, wherein the artist transforms the spiritual value into a form appropriate to be embodied in an artistic composition; and *crafting*, wherein the artist physically creates his or her composition. Guiding each of these processes is what Kandinsky calls the 'creating spirit.' I will also look at the work of G.W.F. Hegel in order to help supplement Kandinsky's notion of spirit and to articulate how discernment, translation, and crafting bring a 'spiritually-purposive goal' into being. As we will see, this triadic structure demonstrates the path by which the artist alienates his consciousness from himself in the work of art in order that it may again confront him as an externalized force so as to drive spiritual progress.

In order to make sense of this structure, I will begin by discussing the Hegelian *Geist*, the way in which *Geist* alienates from itself, and the way in which alienation contributes to *Geist's* development. This portion of the Hegelian dialectic will provide a lens through which to interpret Kandinsky's theory. Using this lens, I will discuss Kandinsky's vision of human spiritual progress because every spiritually-purposive goal derives from the artist's position in the collective spiritual atmosphere. Against this backdrop, I will isolate the Kandinskian creating spirit and locate its position alongside what Kandinsky calls the inner need. From here, I will explain the triadic structure of discernment, translation, and crafting in order to demonstrate how the artist produces spiritually-purposive artwork. Finally, I will explain how the process of alienation ends with recuperation whereby the artistic composition returns feedback into the mind of the spectator to produce concrete spiritual progress.

CONSTRUCTING A HEGELIAN LENS

Hegel's system of philosophy follows the historically-conditioned path of consciousness toward Absolute knowing and Absolute Spirit (the mind that knows and has itself fully as its own subject). For Hegel, consciousness, particularly human

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2   Ibid., p. 235. The unusual spacing is transcribed from Kandinsky's own writing.

consciousness, is the embodiment of reason in the world. The collective embodiment of reason in historically-conditioned consciousness is termed *Geist*. Hegel believes that *Geist* by its very nature follows a path through which Truth unfolds. Such a path inevitably takes consciousness out of union with the natural world and into a state of alienation, a fissure that consciousness eventually reunites. Hegel draws upon the Judeo-Christian concept of the Fall to explain this point:

> Upon a closer inspection of the story of the Fall we find, as was already said, that it exemplifies the universal bearings of knowledge upon the spiritual life. In its instinctive and natural stage, spiritual life wears the garb of innocence and confiding simplicity; but the very essence of spirit implies the absorption of this immediate condition in something higher. The spiritual is distinguished from the natural, and more especially from the animal, life, in the circumstance that it does not continue a mere stream of tendency, but sunders itself to self–realisation. But this position of severed life has in its turn to be suppressed, and the spirit has by its own act to win its way to concord again. The final concord then is spiritual; that is, the principle of restoration is found in thought, and thought only. The hand that inflicts the wound is also the hand which heals it.[3]

Consciousness not only brings itself out of natural harmony, but also brings itself back into harmony with nature. The reunion with nature is done through a *transformation* of nature. To "win its way to concord again," spirit:

> impregnates the external world with his will. Thereby he humanises his environment, by showing how it is capable of satisfying him and how it cannot preserve any power of independence against him. Only by means of this effectual activity is he no longer merely in general, but also in particular and in detail, actually aware of himself and at home in his environment.[4]

In order to shape the world in its own image, the human consciousness performs *work*. With work, consciousness shapes an external object in such a way that it can recognize itself in the object:

> Man brings himself before himself by *practical* activity, since he has the impulse, in whatever is given to him, in what is present to him externally, to produce himself and therein equally to recognise himself. This aim he achieves by altering external things whereon he impresses the seal of his inner being and in which he now finds again his own characteristics. Man does this in order, as a free subject, to strip the external world of its inflexible foreignness and to enjoy in the shape of things only an external realisation of himself.[5]

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3 G.W.F. Hegel, *Hegel's Logic*, trans. William Wallace (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 24.
4 G.W.F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. T.M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 256.
5 Ibid.

This process by which "he impresses the seal of his inner being and in which he now finds again his own characteristics," Hegel calls *alienation*[6]. In this process of alienation it is not merely the external world which is changed. As Rae notes, alienation provides the consciousness an ability to view itself in a way that it would otherwise not have access to, thereby changing it in the process.[7] The alienated consciousness is like a mirror which reflects back to the subject what his or her consciousness must really be like in the first place. Pippin points out that "we don't know, in any determinate or 'living' detail, who we actually take ourselves to be except in such externalization, either in action or in such material productions as artworks."[8] In this 'mirror reflection,' consciousness sees not only itself, but also a collective consciousness of *Geist* in the larger sense.

Individual consciousness, as Hegel claims, is essentially constituted by historical processes, which play out on a societal level. History begins with the break from immediate nature, and, from this point, consciousness itself begins its historical development. This is to say that the very nature of consciousness is constituted by historical, societal forces. As such, even when consciousness is afforded the opportunity to gaze upon itself, it necessarily always sees, knowingly or unknowingly, the society which has formed it into its current state.

Within Hegel's work, alienation is understood in two senses. Alienation is the English word chosen for what are in reality two German words: *Entfremdung* and *Entäusserung*. Rae associates the two words as follows:

> Entfremdung describes a process or state where consciousness is separated from, at least, one of the aspects that are required for consciousness to fully understand itself. In contract, 'Entäusserung' describes the process whereby consciousness externalizes itself in object form and, through this objectification, develops a better understanding of itself.[9]

These two uses of the word are interrelated. *Entfremdung*, the state of the consciousness before it properly knows its own nature as the universal self, is the state of consciousness after the Fall. Sayers notes, as is consistent with this reading, that this sense of "alienation can and will be overcome when spirit has completed its development and come to be at home in the world."[10] To progress to where consciousness is at home again in the world, consciousness needs to use *Entäusserung*. *Entäusserung* is the way in which the conscious subject puts his consciousness before himself in an object in order to be able to observe what his own consciousness is like to gain a better understanding of it. The two senses of alienation are interrelated insofar

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6   Ibid.
7   Gavin Rae, "Hegel, Alienation, and the Phenomenological Development of Consciousness," *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 20.1 (February 10, 2012), p. 24.
8   Robert B. Pippin, *After the Beautiful: Hegel and the Philosophy of Pictorial Modernism*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014), p. 41.
9   Ibid.
10 Sean Sayers, "Creative Activity and Alienation in Hegel and Marx," *Historical Materialism* 11.1 (2003), p. 120.

as the understanding afforded by *Entaüsserung* helps reunite the split of consciousness in *Entfremdung*. Although aspects of Kandinsky's thought resonate with both of these senses of alienation, the focus of this paper is on *Entaüsserung*, hereafter referred to simply as alienation. Alienation takes place in all categories of work, one of which, artistic work, will be the focus of this paper.

Even though Kandinsky is concerned with artistic work, there is no particular need to invoke pieces of art as distinct from other kinds of objects from a Hegelian perspective for this analysis. In other words, although Hegel has an entire separate theory of aesthetics, we can use Hegelian alienation as a framework for art as a general type of work. If we do as such, then a piece of art is no longer particularly distinct from another object arising from work. Art itself can be understood as a type of work, for work itself finds "its highest expression … in the free creative activity of art."[11] Artistic *creation* is still itself an act of work. Although Hegel does clearly draw a distinction between art and other types of objects, the point here is to look at how art is a kind of work and trace alienation within that work. Pippin writes that artistic creation involves alienation as it has been defined above:

> Very roughly, Hegel's view was that the production or "externalization" of our ideas in artworks represents a distinct and, until very recently, indispensable form of self- knowledge. His unusual phrase is that the human being, understood as *Geist*, must "double itself " (*sich verdoppeln*) (A, 1:31) … And with that one characterization, we are already in uncharted waters; art does not double or imitate reality as in so many mimetic theories, but rather in art, *Geist*, some sort of achieved collective like- mindedness, doubles itself.[12]

Thus, it seems fitting to consider the art object in this context. On a basic level, artistic creation is similar to other acts of work insofar as it is the act by which consciousness externalizes itself in order to see and better understand itself as well as to craft the world in its own image. Although it is not necessary to invoke Hegel's aesthetics, it *is* necessary to give special attention to the art object within Kandinsky's work. Hegel's philosophy provides the opportunity to see the artist as one kind of worker and to see artistic creation as a kind of work alongside other kinds of work. While, again, art is a special kind of work, it still belongs to the general category of work. Kandinsky's writings, however, do not provide this opportunity: in them, artistic creation is necessarily artistic in quality. There is no larger reference to work as a category in Kandinsky's theory. However, Hegel's notion of work can provide this more general category. Alienation provides a Hegelian lens through which to observe how artistic creation works in Kandinsky's theory. In particular, I want to consider the way in which the doubling of consciousness serves as a framework to understand Kandinsky's creative process.

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11 Sayers, "Creative Activity and Alienation in Hegel and Marx," p. 113.
12 Pippin, *After the Beautiful*, p. 32.

THE ARTIST

As noted above, the artist is one particular type of determination of consciousness capable of performing work. Although in Hegel's theory any consciousness can perform work which doubles itself, Kandinsky gives an account of the creative process as it relates specifically to an artist. The general mechanisms of Hegelian consciousness, such as self-discovery through alienation, are very much still present within the Kandinskian artist, but with Kandinsky's view the artist does a more specific kind of work. This work is artistic work, what Kandinsky calls the *creative act*. In the world of spirit,[13] Kandinsky regards the creative act as essential because art is an irreplaceable instrument in humanity's shared spiritual progress.[14] The artist, being the one who creates art, is thus a necessary part of spiritual progress himself both through creating individual compositions, as well as using a lifetime's effort to achieve a larger goal. The artist's very existence is meant not to serve his own aims, but rather he exists "exclusively for the sake of the spectator, because the artist is the slave of humanity."[15] Indeed, the artist:

> has a threefold responsibility: (1) he must render up again that talent which has been bestowed upon him; (2) his actions and thoughts and feelings, like those of every human being, constitute the spiritual atmosphere, in such a way that they purify or infect the spiritual air; and (3) these actions and thoughts and feelings are the material for his creations, which likewise play a part in constituting the spiritual atmosphere. He is a 'king', as Sar Peladan calls him, not only in the sense that he has a great power, but also in that he has great responsibilities.[16]

The kind of art which the artist creates in order to effect spiritual progress, Kandinsky calls spiritually-purposive art. Indeed, Kandinsky believes that an artist has a committal responsibility to the non-artist to create spiritually-purposive art. Why is it that the artist occupies such a privileged position for Kandinsky? There are two compelling reasons: one, that the artist is sensitive enough to hear the call of what Kandinsky calls the creating spirit, and two, that the artist is effectively able to alienate his consciousness into an art object through the creative act in such a way that it makes the call of the creating spirit perceptible to a spectator.

The artist's sensitivity to the creating spirit is, in a word, the ability of the artist to determine what spiritual value is necessary to drive spiritual progress. As a gloss, Paul Klee's simile of the tree is a useful comparison. The Kandinskian creating spirit is like the root system of Klee's tree:

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13 Not to be confused with the Hegelian Spirit. As written with a lowercase "s," this refers to Kandinsky's understanding of spirit.

14 Wassily Kandinsky, "On the Spiritual in Art," in *Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art*, Kenneth C. Lindsay and Peter Vergo, eds. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), p. 212.

15 Wassily Kandinsky, "On the Artist," in *Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art*, Kenneth C. Lindsay and Peter Vergo, eds. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), p. 418.

16 Kandinsky, *On the Spiritual in Art*, pp. 213-214.

The artist has studied this world of variety and has, we may suppose, unobtrusively found his way in it. His sense of direction has brought order into the passing stream of image and experience. This sense of direction in nature and life, this branching and spreading array, I shall compare with the root of the tree. From the root the sap flows to the artist, flows through him, flows to his eye. Thus he stands as the trunk of the tree. Battered and stirred by the strength of the flow, he moulds his vision into his work … Nobody would affirm that the tree grows its crown in the image of its root. Between above and below can be no mirrored reflection. It is obvious that different functions expanding in different elements must produce vital divergences … standing at his [the artist's] appointed place, the trunk of the tree, he does nothing other than gather and pass on what comes to him from the depths. He neither serves nor rules – he transmits. His position is humble. And the beauty at the crown is not his own. He is merely a channel.[17]

With this line of thought, the artist is said to draw from his or her surrounding life and transmit it into the crown of the tree, which is the artistic composition. In a similar way, the creating spirit is "one's inner impulse … [that] will inexorably create at the right moment the form it finds necessary,"[18] to give expression to some content. Just as with the roots of Klee's tree, the Kandinskian creating spirit draws from the "passing stream," which is in this case the collective spiritual atmosphere that Kandinsky describes as the "spiritual triangle."[19] From the spiritual triangle, the creating spirit "calls forth a … spiritual value [which] seeks its materialization."[20] Kandinsky does not explicitly state what the content of such a value is or could be, but nevertheless insists that "art in general is not a mere purposeless creating of things that dissipate themselves in a void, but a power that has a purpose and must serve the development and refinement of the human soul – the movement of the triangle."[21] If spiritually-purposive art is created both to materialize a spiritual value (and no other thing[22]), as well as to raise the spiritual triangle, then the spiritual value is one which, when materialized, directs itself towards raising the spiritual triangle.

The process of materialization – the creative act – takes place through a Hegelian alienation of the artist's consciousness into the artistic composition. In this process, the artist, through contact with the creating spirit, must first determine what spiritual value is necessary and suitable to express. Then, the artist must comprehend the way in which this value is capable of being materialized in an artistic composition. Finally, the artist must then proceed to make this composition. When performed correctly,

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17 Paul Klee, *On Modern Art*, trans. Paul Findlay (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), pp. 13-15.
18 Wassily Kandinsky, "Cologne Lecture," in *Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art*, Kenneth C. Lindsay and Peter Vergo, eds. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), p. 396.
19 See section **The Spiritual Triangle**
20 Kandinsky, "On the Question of Form," p. 235.
21 Kandinsky, *On the Spiritual in Art,* p. 212.
22 Kandinsky acknowledges that many different forces affect the production of a piece of art but nevertheless states that only the inner spiritual value is the true goal of the piece of art. Epoch, personality, and so forth give rise to artistic expression, but are not the goal of a piece of art.

the artist produces a spiritually-purposive composition which embodies his or her externalized consciousness.

THE SPIRITUAL TRIANGLE

Spiritually-purposive art is only spiritually-purposive if it contributes to the advancement of the collective spiritual atmosphere. Kandinsky elaborates this viewpoint in the first four chapters of *On the Spiritual in Art* with the simile of the "spiritual triangle."[23] All of humanity's collective spiritual life:

> can be accurately represented by a diagram of a large acute triangle divided into unequal parts, with the most acute and smallest division at the top. The farther down one goes, the larger, broader, more extensive and deeper become the divisions of the triangle. The whole triangle moves slowly, barely perceptibly, forward and upward so that where the highest point is 'today'; the next division is 'tomorrow,' i.e. what is today comprehensible only to the topmost segment of the triangle and to the rest of the triangle is gibberish, becomes tomorrow the sensible and emotional content of the life of the second segment.[24]

Due to the geometry of the triangle, there are fewer and fewer people in each level as the apex is approached; the majority of people fall within one of the lower levels. At the very top level "stands sometimes only a single man"[25] who, through his efforts alone, brings the triangle towards tomorrow. This person is analogous to Hegel's notion of the world-historical individual. World-historical individuals are "agents of the World-Spirit," meaning that they have "an insight into the requirements of the time."[26]

> This was the very Truth for their age, for their world; the species next in order, so to speak, and which was already formed in the womb of time. It was theirs to know this nascent principle; the necessary, directly sequent step in progress, which their world was to take; to make this their aim, and to expend their energy in promoting it. World-historical men – the Heroes of an epoch – must, therefore, be recognized as its clear-sighted ones; their deeds, their words are the best of that time.[27]

Kandinsky locates the apex of the triangle similarly. The visionary at the apex hears the voice of spirit and opens the way to "the spiritual bread for the spiritual awakening now beginning."[28] His progress is a progress for all in that the work of the visionary advances the triangle absolutely. Even if the fruits of his innovations are

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23 Kandinsky, *On the Spiritual in Art*, p. 133.
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid.
26 Hegel, G.W.F., *The Philosophy of History*. Ontario: Batoche Books, 1900. https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/hegel/works/hi/introduction-lectures.htm#s1.
27 Ibid.
28 Kandinsky, *On the Spiritual in Art*, p. 138.

not immediately felt by all, the progress still stands as a universal progress. However, not everyone has direct access to this progress. Instead, it is the unique role of the artist to make spiritual values available to non-artists. Just like non-artists, Kandinsky notes that artists have different degrees of spiritual development and as such reside in different segments of the triangle. Thus:

> In every division of the triangle, one can find artists. Every one of them who is able to see beyond the frontiers of his own segment is the prophet of his environment, and helps the forward movement of the obstinate cartload of humanity. … It is obvious that every such segment hungers – consciously or (much more often) completely unconsciously – after its corresponding spiritual bread. This bread is given it by its artists, and tomorrow the next segment will reach for that same bread.[29]

And, in this way, the progress of the apex is ostensibly the progress of all. Once the apex has broken into new ground, the new ground is separated from others only by a train of "tomorrows."

Kandinsky believes that all pure art is spiritually-purposive art, which is to say that all pure art furthers the advance of the spiritual triangle. According to Kandinsky, art is uniquely and exclusively positioned to perform this function. Thus, "art is for this reason indispensable and purposeful,"[30] because "there is no other power that can replace art."[31]

Just, then, as work is crucial to the development of *Geist*, so too is the creative act crucial to the development of Kandinskian spirit. If spiritual progress requires the production of art, then a form of work, the work which produces art, is necessary to raise the spiritual triangle. This work must take the creating spirit and inner need as its guidance, proceeding from contact with the spiritual triangle.

COMPOSITION

An artistic composition is the material result of the creative act. In it resides the artist's externalized consciousness in the form of a concrete pictorial goal. A composition is distinct from the more general term 'art object.' Kandinsky offers several different definitions for the word, each of which slightly different from, but not excluding, the others. First, a composition is "the internally purposive subordination of individual elements [and] of the structure to a concrete pictorial goal."[32] The elements themselves are defined as "the concrete result produced by force operating upon the material," where "tensions, for their part, give expression to the inner sound of the element."[33]

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29 Ibid., p. 134.
30 Wassily Kandinsky, "On Stage Composition," in *Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art*, Kenneth C. Lindsay and Peter Vergo, eds. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), p. 258.
31 Kandinsky, *On the Spiritual in Art*, p. 212.
32 Wassily Kandinsky, *Point and Line to Plane,* in *Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art,* Kenneth C. Lindsay and Peter Vergo, eds. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), p. 552.
33 Ibid, p. 611.

Thus it is also appropriate to call a composition "the logically precise organization of … living forces encapsulated within elements in the guise of tensions."[34] An element's inner sound is a "spiritual being possessing qualities which are identical to that form."[35]

These inner sounds are what communicate with the spectator spiritually. In addition to internal effect produced by inner sound, every color, form, and object in a composition also has an external effect. Kandinsky's writing is concerned with measuring internal effect through external forms, and not with measuring external effect itself. Inner sounds awaken movements in the spirit through the sense which experiences the art. For example, Kandinsky describes "color [as] a means of exerting a direct influence upon the soul. Color is the keyboard. The eye is the hammer. The soul is the piano, with its many strings."[36] Similarly, "form itself, even if completely abstract, resembling geometrical form, has its own inner sound."[37] Outside of painting, "musical sound has direct access to the soul. It finds there an echo, for man 'hath music in himself'."[38] In other words, inner effect is a property of artistic compositions in general, not merely of paintings. It is necessary to note, however, that each discipline of art has its own peculiarities. Although one can represent the same inner effect in both painting and music, the two effects can never be the same; "each art has its own forces, which cannot be replaced by those of another art."[39]

Because an artistic composition is a physical thing, the inner sound is necessarily revealed through some sort of contact with the material of the composition. However, curiously, Kandinsky notes that there are kinds of music which "lead us into a new realm, where musical experiences are no longer acoustic, but purely spiritual."[40] Kandinsky seems to be saying that, despite the material nature of a composition (in the case of music, acoustic vibrations produced from physical instruments), the spiritual effect can offer itself up directly, as though the material did not exist at all. "The *manner* of listening to a 'pure' musical work is identical to that of seeing a work of 'concrete' painting."[41]

A work of art is pure when all of its elements are chosen and arranged by necessity. In analyzing Kandinsky's tableau *Thirty*, Florman finds a striking similarity between the arrangement of forms in the painting and the composition and function of Hegel's ideal state. She cites Frederick Beiser's analysis:

> First, the whole exists for each of the parts as much as each of the parts exists for the whole; in other words, the individual is as much a means as

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34 Ibid.
35 Kandinsky, *On the Spiritual in Art*, p. 163.
36 Ibid., p. 160.
37 Ibid., p. 163.
38 Ibid., p. 161.
39 Ibid., p. 155.
40 Ibid., p. 155.
41 Wassily Kandinsky, "Abstract and Concrete Art," in *Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art*, ed, Kenneth C. Lindsay, and Peter Vergo. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), p. 841.

an end for the state. Second … there must be life in each part of the state, so that each has some degree of autonomy and independence. Third, each part, in maintaining itself and seeking its own self-interest, also promotes the interest of the whole.[42]

Florman uses this analysis of the state to make sense of *Thirty's* highly variegated structure, noting that "it's these independent units, mediating between the *Kraft* or power of the whole and the variety of the particular, often opposed forces pulling the smaller parts in one direction or the other, that give the comparison whatever plausibility it has."[43] The comparison, however, stretches further. Kandinsky understands compositions as a general form as "the internally purposive subordination … of the individual elements and … of the structure (construction) to a concrete pictorial goal."[44] Thus, while *Thirty* might be the painting through which Kandinsky most explicitly states this relationship, Kandinsky's elements-based approach means that the "organic model"[45] of Hegel's state applies equally well to all of his proper compositions. This also helps make sense of Florman's other observation: that "in his ideal state, Hegel had assigned a crucial role to independent bodies – civic corporations of one kind or another – which were charged with reconciling the conflicting claims of community and freedom."[46] Kandinsky believes that within a composition, "independent … complexes can be subordinated to other, still larger, ones which themselves form only part of the overall composition."[47] While the end result of the creative act is a unified composition, the composition nevertheless contains smaller organs within it, which are compositions in their own right.

For the comparison to hold, then the elements' existence must be as dependent on the composition as the composition is on the elements, just as the individual is just as much a means as an end for the state. If an element is to be understood as simply a physical form on the canvas then the comparison falls apart, for the physical form exists outside of its organization into a composition. Crucially, however, Kandinsky has defined an element as an "encapsulated tension." The tension is dependent on the hand of the artist, who alienates his consciousness to create *that particular element*. Kojève reaches a similar conclusion in his essay "The Concrete Paintings of Kandinsky," raising the example of a drawing "in which Kandinsky incarnates a Beautiful [sic] involving a combination of a triangle with a circle:"[48]

> Just as the tableau "represents" nothing external to it, its Beautiful is also purely immanent, it is the Beautiful of the tableau that exists only in the tableau. This Beautiful was *created* by the artist, just as was the circle-

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42 Florman, *Concerning the Spiritual and the Concrete in Kandinsky's Art* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), p. 64.
43 Ibid.
44 Kandinsky, *Point and Line to Plane*, p. 552.
45 Florman, *Concerning the Spiritual and the Concrete in Kandinsky's Art*, p. 64.
46 Ibid.
47 Kandinsky, *Point and Line to Plane*, p. 616.
48 Florman, *Concerning the Spiritual and the Concrete in Kandinsky's Art*, p. 163.

triangle that embodies it. The circle-triangle does not exist in the real, nonartistic world; it does not exist before, outside of, or apart from the tableau; it was created in and by – or as – the tableau. [49]

Florman's comparison to Hegel's ideal state is apt in more ways than she states. The artist's concrete goal both determines and is determined by the artistic elements which embody it. Yet, there is still a gap between the between the work of the creating spirit and the finished composition. The artist has to pass through a triadic stage of creation whereby the artist realizes his or her spiritual value (*discernment*), morphs it into a form appropriate to an artistic composition (*translation*), and then create the actual material composition (*crafting*).[50]

DISCERNMENT

To begin the process of alienation, the artist must determine what spiritual value is necessary to drive spiritual progress. Although the artist has contact with the creating spirit for this purpose, the spiritual value to be materialized does not arrive in a finished form, nor in a way which can be directly cognized. Kandinsky suggests that the creative spirit implants the value only as a latent potentiality; it arrives as a longing. It is only later that "if those conditions are fulfilled which are necessary for a precise form to come to maturity, then this longing, this inner compulsion, is empowered to create a new value in the human mind."[51] In other words, the artist does not originally possess the value in its final form. The artist only comes to possess the value through realizing a "precise form," which empowers the longing.[52] As such, to realize what value the artist must embody in his artwork is dependent on contact with the physical world. I call the process by which the artist comes to realize his value *discernment*.

Kandinsky himself suggests two conditions through which the precise form can be recognized: the external condition and the internal condition. The internal condition is the power of the human spirit to hear the call of the creating spirit which "impels the human spirit forward and upward."[53] The external condition is the condition whereby "no barriers stand in the way," of "evolution, progress forward and upward."[54] Kandinsky mentions these conditions are necessary to bring a longing to fruition. Thus, the implantation of the longing takes place prior to these two conditions.

Discernment is thus guided by the creative spirit, which is the artist's own inner impulse, through the two conditions, internal and external, in order to find the

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49 Ibid.
50 None of these terms exist in Kandinsky's actual texts, nor does he allude to such a triadic process. However, I believe the triadic movement to be the correct reading of his account of the creative act, not a Hegelian imposition.
51 Kandinsky, "On the Question of Form," p. 235.
52 I understand 'form' to refer to the material art object which can embody the value. This use of 'form' is consistent with both the term as it is generally used in Kandinsky's work as well as within this particular essay.
53 Ibid., p. 236.
54 Ibid.

precise form which converts the inner longing into a new value which lives "in a spiritual form within him."[55] What is the event, or events, which causes, or cause, the conversion of a longing into a value? One thing is certain, that the artist must to some degree look outside him or herself to do this. The inner longing is temporally conditioned (hence why it only arises at a particular time), which is to say that the longing is a historical event. The conversion of a longing into a value is done through the discovery of a form. This, too, is historically conditioned, for "form is always temporal, i.e. relative, since it is nothing more than the means necessary today, the means which the revelation of today sounds forth, manifests itself."[56] Form itself is subject to both "time (period) and space (nationality)."[57] Because form is temporally conditioned, the artist does not freely imagine a precise form. The artist can only discover this necessarily temporal form through contact with the temporal world. Even the value itself is one which participates in the "continual triumph of new values,"[58] which, insofar as they drive the evolution of humanity as a whole, rely on a temporal spectator. In the same way that the Hegelian world-historical individual is not simply just a great person, but one who is intensely aware of Spirit as it is in the world at the moment, so too is the great artist one who is intensely aware of the spiritual needs of the age.

The question still remains, however, the extent to which the artist's contact with the outside world can be done spiritually, materially, or otherwise. Does the artist discover his or her precise form through pure thought, through observing other forms, or through some other means? Whatever the case, once the artist has discerned his or her spiritual value, the artist must produce a piece of art to embody that value. To do so, the artist translated that value into a concrete pictorial goal.

TRANSLATION

The artist advances the spiritual triangle by disseminating his new value through his artwork. To do so, the artist must *translate* the spiritual value into a mode which can actually guide the creation of an art object. "From [the] moment," when the artist realizes the precise form of his value, he "seeks a material form for this new value that lives in a spiritual form within him."[59] Translation is the process whereby the artist comes to discover which artistic spiritual effect is capable of materially embodying the spiritual value found through discernment. An artwork embodies the value through possessing a combined spiritual effect which resonates with the spectator in such a way as to inspire that value in the spectator as well. Thus, Kandinsky says that "every phenomenon in both external and internal worlds can be given linear expression – a kind of translation"[60] and also notes the existence of such translations in other art

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55 Ibid., p. 235.
56 Ibid., p. 237. Kandinsky's emphasis.
57 Ibid. Kandinsky's emphasis.
58 Ibid., p. 236.
59 Ibid., p. 235.
60 Kandinsky, *Point and Line to Plane*, pp. 583-584.

forms such as music as well. The result of the translation, the spiritual effect, we may rightly call the goal of the composition as the artist relates to it. The artist's aim is to create a composition with the guidance of the translated spiritual value. This agrees with Kandinsky's essay "On Stage Composition" where he identifies "the goal of a work of art" as "a certain complex of vibrations."[61]

The spiritual effect of the composition is not the same thing as the value which it embodies, nor can one proceed directly from a spiritual value to a spiritual effect, which is why translation is a necessary step in the creative process. This is due to the inherent metaphysical properties of artistic compositions in Kandinsky's thought and not merely due to the way the creating spirit acts in the artist. First, the nature of art makes it impossible to translate the goal purely rationally. Kandinsky bites the bullet and "abandon[s] the realm of objective reasoning" by stating that "the artist can never either grasp or recognize fully his own goal."[62] This points to the fact that each category of art adds its own peculiarities to the same internal effect and that the internal effect of an element is dependent on the context it is put in. The key to translation is that the artist does not proceed directly from the imagined spiritual value to a fully translated pictorial goal. Rather, the artist has to understand the value from the side of the composition. Translation imagines what spiritual effect within a composition will inspire the spiritual value in the spectator through internal effect. Where each category of art has its own peculiarities in internal effect, the artist can only understand the combined effect through understanding how each kind of art modifies the entire spiritual effect of the composition. Thus, a proper examination of the properties of artistic forms is the only way to determine how the artist can perform a translation.

In his "Cologne Lecture," Kandinsky notes his discovery of what Florman calls "color's fundamental mutability."[63] The actual inner sound of a color can be "redefined *ad infinitum* by its different uses,"[64] as opposed to being constant across all paintings. What appears to be a warm color can be made cool in a particular use. This means that the artist cannot reliably use the same color or form to achieve the same spiritual effect repeatedly, as the spiritual effect will change, even drastically so, depending on the other elements of the composition. For translation, this means that the artist has to imagine and/or create a substantial portion of the composition before being able to imagine how each individual form is affected by the others. The inner sound is constantly changing as more elements are added, which is problematic because there is an infinite number of inner sounds, so an element can frequently come to possess an inner sound previously unknown.

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61 Kandinsky, "On Stage Composition," p. 257.
62 Kandinsky, "Cologne Lecture," p. 399.
63 Florman, *Concerning the Spiritual and the Concrete in Kandinsky's Art*, p. 85.
64 Kandinsky, "Cologne Lecture," p. 398.

Further, "each art has its own forces, which cannot be replaced by those of another art."[65]

Where do the differences lie? Kandinsky notes that "in the last essentials, these means," the material forms, "are wholly alike: their final goal extinguishes their external dissimilarities and reveals their inner identity."[66] This is not to say that the inner effect of two kinds of art can be identical, for "an exact 'translation' of one art to another is impossible."[67] Rather the implication is that their identity as spiritually affective art is preserved across category. If the dissimilarity is not due to identity, for they are both spiritually affective art forms at base, and is not due to limitations in inner sound, then the dissimilarity is to be found in the difference in material between categories of art. The affectivity of a certain kind of art owes to the material proper to that kind of art. This means that matter itself has a kind of affectivity peculiar to it. In the process of translation, the artist imagines the concrete pictorial goal in terms of the material they intend to use. But, because the matter is affective in a special way, one which the artist can never fully grasp, the artist cannot immediately determine how the goal is to be translated. Thus, "nothing is more damaging and more sinful than to seek one's forms by force."[68]

The artist cannot directly impose himself on the matter because he cannot grasp the translated goal without mediation, hence the sinfulness of forcing forms. However, the artist is capable of *perceiving* the translated goal in the finished composition even if he is not capable of dictating exactly what it is he perceived. This means the artist can place himself in the presence of the translated goal by the mediation of spiritually affective matter. This is not to say that the artist necessarily approaches the canvas in a state of paralysis, but rather is to say that translation is never complete as a purely mental phenomenon alone.

Indeed, the impossibility of translation as a purely mental phenomenon points towards the very root of the process of alienation. The goal of a composition, as we have seen, springs forth from the creating spirit, which itself springs forth from the artists' consciousness. In other words, the goal of the composition is created by, and is held in, the artist's consciousness. However, as Hegel says, the consciousness cannot simply observe itself as it truly is. Instead, consciousness must observe itself through alienation by recognizing itself in an external object. In this case, the creative act is the work which invests consciousness in an external object, the composition, and allows the artist to recognize himself. Hence, the artist cannot simply immediately realize his translated goal, as to do so would be to observe consciousness directly. Rather, the artist must first begin crafting his composition.

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65 Kandinsky, *On the Spiritual in Art*, p. 155.
66 Kandinsky, "On Stage Composition," p. 257.
67 Kandinsky, "Abstract and Concrete Art," p. 841.
68 Kandinsky, "Cologne Lecture," p. 396.

CRAFTING

Creation is the actual physical process by which the artist creates the art object which will materialize the spiritual value by embodying the value's translation into artistic spiritual effect. In crafting, the goal serves to guide which forms must be placed by inner necessity. Crafting includes things such as painting, sculpting, writing, or any such physical activity. As with translation and discernment, crafting is a necessary step in the creative process, especially insofar as the result of crafting, the composition, is what mediates the spiritual value back into the spiritual triangle. An artist creates a composition by combining the elements proper to the type of art they are working in as guided by the goal they wish to create. For example, graphic art features the point and the line.

Kandinsky does not speak much about the actual physical process of crafting. Indeed, to speak too much of it would risk a descension into "virtuoso painting,"[69] or painting that focuses on external effect rather than internal effect. However, he does mention that form must "enter into the work of art of its own accord, and, moreover, at that level of completeness which corresponds to the development of the creative spirit."[70] The physical "matter is here a reserve of supplies from which the spirit, like a cook, selects what is necessary in this case."[71] There are many different ways to produce forms just as there are many different categories of art. *Point and Line to Plane* makes a particular study of etching, woodcutting, and lithography to demonstrate how different technical methods can impact the inner sound of certain elements. Each of these three crafting techniques gives a point "various faces and hence various expressions."[72] As a grouping, "technical resources arise no less intentionally and purposively than all other phenomena, both in the "material" world (spruce, lion, star, louse) and in the "spiritual" (work of art, moral principle, scientific method, religious idea)."[73]

As the artist gazes at the forms he has created, he becomes a spectator to his own work. The artist's own composition as it is being crafted inspires a spiritual effect in the artist himself. This can help the artist further realize his own spiritual value or realize exactly how it is that value translates into a concrete pictorial goal.

COLLAPSE OF THE TRIAD

The separation of the creative act into each of these three stages contains within it a problem. Each of the three stages requires something outside of itself to reach completeness, indeed even to begin in the first place. Discernment requires recognition of a precise form for the spiritual value to make itself apparent. If the

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69 Kandinsky, "On the Artist," p. 412.
70 Kandinsky, "Cologne Lecture," p. 396.
71 Kandinsky, "On the Question of Form," p. 235.
72 Kandinsky, *Point and Line to Plane*, p. 566.
73 Ibid., p. 563.

precise form is to be appropriate for the spiritual value, then the value must already be conceived of as a translated value. However, translation requires contact with the material of the composition because the inner sound of the elements is unknowable in isolation. Because the artist cannot fully imagine the inner sound of each element without viewing the element's inner sound in juxtaposition with other sounds, the artist cannot perfectly picture a complete canvas in his head before the piece has been created. Translation is thus only approximate at best until the artist sees how the inner sounds of familiar elements are modified by their juxtapositions. Likewise, crafting requires a concrete pictorial goal to choose and order the elements. The artist must choose elements in accordance with the translated goal, which is itself dependent on the artist's discernment of the spiritual value, which is itself dependent on realizing the precise form of the composition. The artistic process seems to be at a standstill. Each stage requires something from the other stage in order to proceed.

Hegel himself recognizes a similar problem in the Phenomenology of Spirit in chapter 5, C "Individuality which Takes Itself to be Real in and for Itself":

> Consciousness must act merely in order that what it is *in itself* may become explicit *for it;* in other words, action is simply the coming-to-be of Spirit as *consciousness*. What the latter is *in itself,* it knows therefore from what it *actually* is. Accordingly, an individual cannot know what he [really] is until he has made himself a reality through action. However, this seems to imply that he cannot determine the *End* of his action until he has carried it out; but at the same time, since he is a *conscious* individual, he must have the action in front of him beforehand as *entirely his own*, i.e. as an *End*. The individual who is going to act seems, therefore, to find himself in a circle in which each moment already presupposes the other, and thus he seems unable to find a beginning, because he only gets to know his original nature, which must be his End, *from the deed*, while, in order to act, he must have that End beforehand. But for that very reason he has to start immediately, and, whatever the circumstances, without further scruples about beginning, means, or End, proceed to action; for his essence and *intrinsic* nature is beginning, means, and End, all in one. [74]

The "End" here is analogous to the artist's concrete pictorial goal and the deadlock is much the same. How can the artist proceed, oriented towards the concrete pictorial goal, that is, his End, when that End is only found through the action? If the End must be had beforehand, it seems impossible to proceed. However, where the End springs forth from consciousness itself, the deadlock can be broken. Because the artist alienates his own consciousness as the concrete pictorial goal, the intrinsic nature of that very consciousness contains the beginning, means, and End within it already. It is immediate action which leads to the end of the creative act.

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74 Hegel, G.W.F., *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller, (Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 240.

Florman, while having a different account for the creative act, nonetheless arrives at a similar conclusion. Through her analysis, Florman has also identified a triadic creative process. In the first moment the artist lays in the main body of the composition, in the second moment he balances the individual elements against one another, and in the third the artist makes tiny alterations in color to profoundly alter the combined effect.[75] Florman notes that "the implication here is that the painting's completion turned on a process not wholly, not even primarily, within the artist's conscious control. Especially at this third stage, Kandinsky would have us know, progress was driven by painting's own logic or 'inner necessity.'"[76] Florman's description picks up after implantation of the inner longing,[77] but nevertheless demonstrates something profound about Kandinsky's account of the creative process in agreement with Hegel: that true distinctions between moments of the creative process are ultimately untenable. Even if the artist lays out the main forms first, the forms are not the same in essence as the final forms. As was said above,[78] the elements and goal are mutually constitutive. If the goal changes after the main forms are laid in, then those forms change as well. It is in this same way that discernment, translation, and crafting collapse into one another.

CONCLUSION

At the end of the creative act, the artist's externalized consciousness lies ready to re-confront itself in the completed composition. The triadic movement described above ultimately sunders into the more general process of alienation. Now latent in the composition is consciousness as implanted through a concrete pictorial goal in the creative act. In order to drive spiritual progress, the composition now offers itself up to the spectator; for, after all, the artist exists "exclusively for the sake of the spectator, because the artist is the slave of humanity."[79] The spiritual bread offered in the composition is a spiritual value created by the artist's own inner impulse under the guise of the creating spirit. Truly, then, the artist offers his own consciousness up as the people's spiritual bread. In doing so, "in rendering itself objective and making this [–] its being [–] an object of thought, [spirit,] on the one hand, destroys the determinate form of its being, and, on the other hand, gains a comprehension of the universal element which it involves and, thereby, gives a new form to its inherent principle … [which] has risen into another, and, in fact, a higher principle." The higher principle is still shrouded in mystery for Kandinsky, but he nevertheless maintains conviction that the spiritual triangle moves ever upward. It is only through Hegel's theory of alienation, however, that the movement of the triangle is given its fullest expression, for in it we see that the creative act is itself the movement of consciousness from the triangle into the composition through the artist's hand. ✦

75 Florman, *Concerning the Spiritual and the Concrete in Kandinsky's Art*, p. 85.
76 Ibid.
77 See **Discernment**
78 See **Composition**
79 Kandinsky, "On the Artist," p. 418.

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G.K. CHESTERTON AND THE QUEST FOR HEIDEGGERIAN AUTHENTICITY

CLARE CHIODINI

The public careers of G. K. Chesterton, novelist and Catholic convert, and Martin Heidegger, philosopher and lapsed Catholic, overlapped for roughly twenty-five years from the beginning of the second decade of the 20th century.[1] In this paper, I will seek to foster a dialogue between these two authors by analyzing one of each's most famous works: Heidegger's *Being and Time*[2] and Chesterton's *The Ball and the Cross.* After describing Heidegger's thought, we will show that Chesterton, like his German counterpart, understood the difference between an authentic and a fallen existence (what Heidegger calls 'Dasein'[3]), by demonstrating how this understanding is exhibited in his novel. However, despite their many similarities, the two works differ in a crucial way. Highlighting this divergence, I will conclude by arguing that Heidegger's explanation of guilt and resoluteness is incomplete without

1 Chesterton was born in 1874, fifteen years before Heidegger, and died in 1936, forty years before Heidegger's death.

2 In *Being and Time*, Heidegger contends that philosophy has ceased to explore the question of Being's meaning, considering it to be a universal or self-evident concept that resists definition. Heidegger therefore sets out to formulate a conception of Being itself. However, the Being he seeks to define is the Being of particular entities, which may be designated as beings with a lower case 'b'. In order to understand Being in itself, Heidegger decides it is first necessary to gain access to a particular entity, or being, as it is in its Being. The entity he prioritizes towards this end is Dasein.
Heidegger, Martin, *Being and Time* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), pp. 6-8.

3 In Heideggerian language, Dasein denotes the particular being whose Being matters to it. Dasein must be distinguished from other objects in the world because it "relates to its existence always as its own… it exists in the first-person as a 'who' not a 'what'." Although 'Dasein,' as a German term, is held as untranslatable, it may be roughly understood as a combination of the verb 'to be' and the adverb for 'place'. Therefore, Dasein indicates 'a being which is here'. For Heidegger, "being-here is not reducible to merely occupying a space. To be-here is to experience a world opening up."
Dahlstrom, Daniel O., *The Heidegger Dictionary* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2013), p. 35.

something exemplified by the characters in Chesterton's novel, i.e., without a reason for choosing to choose.

PART I

In section 60 of *Being and Time*, Heidegger writes that 'resoluteness' is "the reticent self-projection upon one's ownmost Being-guilty, in which one is ready for anxiety."[4] This statement culminates many chapters worth of explanation, which I shall attempt to summarize and explore below.

Resoluteness is essentially the projection of one's possibilities in light of one's existential[5] state of guilt. By 'guilt,' Heidegger does not mean to suggest a moralistic, dooming sensation of having done wrong. While the philosopher does not deny a relationship between morality and guilt, he understands the latter as being a condition for the former: one can be morally good or evil because one is primordially Being-guilty.[6] This existential sense of Being-guilty Heidegger defines as "Being-the-basis of a nullity."[7] This meaning is two-pronged: in the first place, there is nothing Dasein can point to as the basis of its existence – of its factical projection of potentiality-for-being. In the second place, however, Dasein finds itself responsible, despite this lack of basis, for choosing one possibility over another. It is responsible for its freedom to project some possibilities while rejecting others. This freedom is not a cold fact, but rather is a burden to Dasein. The authentic seizure of certain possibilities is a responsibility it must undertake for itself. The implications of this freedom bear heavily on Dasein's relation to its own being. As I shall explain below, Dasein's conscience identifies its guilt by recalling itself from its state of being lost in the 'they'" (the crowd)[8].

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4   Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 297.
5   Existentials are ontological facts which describe the mode of Dasein's Being; they are the, "characters that make it up existentially. Since Dasein is its disclosedness, existentials at once constitute-and-disclose existence as Dasein's Being." Being-in, Being-Alongside, and "they" are examples of existentials. Conscience, death and guilt are examples of existential phenomena.

The term "existential" must be differentiated from another, similar term – "existentiel". An existentiel understanding of Dasein refers to that being as it is encountered and described in our more immediate, daily experience. Heidegger seeks to ground his study of existential Dasein in its existentiel understanding. Dahlstrom, *The Heidegger Dictionary*, p. 70.
6   Being-guilty simply implies that, "Dasein as such is guilty," given that guilt is an existential which indicates Dasein's necessary ability to choose between potentialities. Being-guilty means that Dasein has assumed the responsibility of that choice.

Ibid., p. 284.
7   Ibid.
8   'They' indicates the general crowd, the public opinion which dominates society. Heidegger makes clear that the 'they' is not anything definite and cannot be viewed as the conglomeration of many individuals. Rather the 'they' is constituted by the indefinite others into which every Dasein sinks by participating in a public culture: transportation, information, etc. Its concern is to make everything average. The 'they' is an existential, because it is the mode in which Dasein exists for the most part; it is Dasein's everyday "Being-one's-Self". However, it is an inauthentic-self, because as 'they' Dasein does not act resolutely, but rather ignores its responsibility to guilt and allows others to make its decisions for it.

Ibid., pp. 127, 271.

Heidegger describes conscience as a call that summons Dasein from its fallenness[9] to its ownmost potentiality-for-Being[10] . It is a call that works as a countermeasure to Dasein's "listening away."[11] In its everyday Being, Dasein is absorbed in the world of the 'they' (the worlds of anonymous social groupings or crowds) and Heidegger calls this mindless absorption a state of "falling." In this state, Dasein finds itself tempted to surrender its authentic potentiality-for-being[12] and submit itself to the interpretation and nearly subliminal control of the 'they' as expressed in Idle Talk,[13] Curiosity, and Ambiguity. Concretely then, in its everyday being Dasein listens to gossip and reads magazines without ever verifying whether what is said-in-the-talk has any meaningful relationship to the true being of the entity discussed. It abandons itself to a constant interest in the superficial, restlessly seeking "continual novelty and changing encounters,"[14] all the while refusing to bring the encountered thing close and understand it. It is always talking and "surmising" [15] about future events and possible courses of action, yet never acts itself. Living under the proscription of the 'they', Dasein is tranquillized into complacency. It loses the desire to make life more challenging and thus avoids facing its ownmost possibility, effectively alienating itself. It looks away from the significance and potentiality of its Being, and focuses entirely on things theoretically present-at-hand or practically ready-to-

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9   Fallenness is an existential: a particular mode of Dasein's Being which describes Dasein's existential state of "Being-in" in its everydayness. Being-in has three basic existential constituents: attunement(or mood), understanding, and discourse.

Moods evidence the emotional life of Dasein. In moods, Dasein discloses to itself that it has been thrown into the world. Although "thrown" is a complex concept in Heidegger, we can understand it as the fact that the individual Dasein exists within a particular place at a particular time with particular people; what Heidegger describes as Dasein's facticity. Dasein's mood indicates to Dasein that it has been thrown into the world in a certain way. By revealing itself as thrown, Dasein's mood allows for what is encountered within-the-world to matter to Dasein.

Understanding as an existential has to do with understanding the "for-the-sake-of-which" (143) of Dasein. Heidegger emphasizes that Dasein does not exist as a thing before its possibilities, but rather projects possibilities and understands itself through them. In this sense Dasein is its possibility existentially. Possibility as an existential is not a logical or present-at-hand possibility, but "the most primordial and ultimately positive ontological determinacy of Dasein" (143). In understanding, Dasein becomes apparent to itself in terms of the referential totality of its potentialities for being. It is essentially "thrown possibility" (143). This potentiality-for-being is inextricably tied to guilt: it does not indicate a conglomeration of hypothetical possibilities, but, instead, indicates the fact that Dasein is in every case this potentiality-for-being rather than that one.

Discourse refers to the fact that Dasein's projection of its possibilities brings it into relation with others as Being-with. Through discourse Dasein expresses itself in terms of its state-of-mind. In this expression, the understanding of the world (of Dasein as Being-with Others and as Being-in-the-world) is disclosed to Others.

Fallenness is Being-in-the-World as it "maintains itself in the everyday Being of the They" (167). Fallenness indicates Dasein's basic tendency to conform. Dasein is thrown into the public sphere and thus, for the most part, pays attention not to the Being of itself, but of the 'they'. Additionally, the 'they' hampers Dasein's capacity to understand itself as potentiality-for-Being because it appropriates Dasein's possibilities, depriving Dasein of its responsibility to decide for itself.

Ibid., pp. 131-167.

10 Ibid., p. 271

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid., p. 167.

13 Idle Talk can be understood as the existential of discourse as a character of fallen Dasein; it is discourse submitted to the control of the 'they'. Having lost its relationship of Being to the entity discussed, discourse becomes mere gossiping.

Ibid., p. 168.

14 Ibid., p. 172

15 Ibid., p. 174.

hand.[16] Indeed, it often reduces itself to such entities, never bothering to look past a theoretical dissection of its inner workings to the uncomfortable facticity of its potentiality-for-being. Nevertheless, it is this very discomfort which calls Dasein back from such groundlessness.

The call of conscience breaks through public, worldly interpretations to the Dasein that has abandoned itself to them. With an 'alien' voice, this call recalls Dasein to its ownmost potentiality for being, a being accompanied by a feeling of the greatest uncanniness.[17] To understand what we mean by this latter term we must first offer a brief description of anxiety. Fallen Dasein is Dasein which, existentially, has not understood itself in terms of its own possibilities. It turns away from a disclosure of itself as, "authentic potentiality-for-Being-its-Self"[18] and allows for absorption in the concerns of the 'they'. Dasein's falling, therefore, can be understood as a fleeing away from something threatening. Heidegger clarifies that he is not speaking of fleeing as grounded in the mood of fear and evoked in the face of a definite threat (something ready-to-hand or present-at-hand). Instead, in falling, Dasein flees in the face of itself; in the face of Being-in-the-world. This fleeing is grounded in the basic state-of-mind, or mood, which Heidegger calls anxiety, and which reveals to Dasein the threat imposed by Being-in-the-world. As he writes, "that in the face of which one has anxiety is completely indefinite…[i]t tells us that entities within-the-world are not relevant… it is characterized by the fact that what threatens is nowhere."[19] In anxiety, the "nothing and nowhere" of the world become manifest; the entities, or beings, become utterly insignificant. However, this insignificance does not mean the world holds no meaning for Dasein. Rather, "what oppresses us…is not the summation of everything present-at-hand; it is rather the possibility of the ready-to-hand in general; that is to say, it is the world itself."[20] Being is anxious in the face of no thing – no specific entity within-the-world. Instead, anxiety arises when we face the full horizon of our possibility.

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16 An object that is present-at-hand is an object that Dasein relates to within the world as a mere fact. Whether it is the fact of a physical thing or a theoretical concept, it is something that is present within the world and may be theorized about, but is not used. It differs from an object that is ready to hand and that is related to as something useful and to be implemented or handled. An object ready-to-hand is bound up in a network of references which determine its purpose (traceable finally to the service of Dasein).

Ibid., p. 73-75.

It is important, moreover, to distinguish (as Heidegger does) between presence and being. He maintains that the history of philosophy has largely equated the two, such that presence has taken on a metaphysical meaning. It intimates "present-ness" and "accessibility to someone here and now." Heidegger argues that the Greeks failed to see that they were interpreting being in terms of time and restricting it to the present. Thus, they had failed to arrive at a more primordial form of being in which absence is not to be considered. Heidegger considers "presence" as the event that, "grounds and affords the coming to presence…[it] encompasses the… having been and the future, since all… are in a way present to us – even… because of the ways they are absent."

Dahlstrom, The Heidegger Dictionary, p. 173.

17 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 277.
18 Ibid., p. 184.
19 Ibid., p. 186
20 Ibid., p. 187.

Yet Dasein is not only anxious in the face of something, but also about something. This "about", as with "in the face of", is no definite being, but rather is Being-in-the-world itself.[21] In anxiety, the world and all its entities lose their power to define Dasein, and that being is thrown back upon its own authentic potentiality-for-being; it is individualized as "being-possible."[22] As Heidegger writes, "anxiety makes manifest in Dasein its Being towards its ownmost potentiality-for-Being – that is, its Being-free for the freedom of choosing itself and taking hold of itself."[23] In other words, anxiety emerges when, in the face of its horizon of possibilities, Dasein recognizes its guilt – its responsibility of choice. This position of being is a vulnerable and uncomfortable one: "in anxiety one feels uncanny… 'uncanniness' also means 'not-being-at-home'."[24] Guilt, then, is a burden in this sense: though it may become one, it is not necessarily a grievous weight, but rather the discomfort of one's individual responsibility to choose among possibilities in light of the urgency endowed by one's ownmost possibility. This position of uncanny discomfort is entirely at odds with the obvious tranquility of the 'they', and its comforting assurances of being-at-home. Returning to our initial theme of conscience, it is clear now that Dasein, uncanny in its anxiety, serves as a countermeasure to the falling of Dasein. As Dasein attempts to flee mindlessly into the "they", anxiety grips it and, in this grip, Dasein calls itself back to its responsibility of choice before its ownmost possibility.

It has been said that anxiety brings Dasein before its ownmost potentiality-for-Being, but we have yet to explain what this potential is. Simply, it is death. According to Heidegger, death is not a truncating end or conclusion to Dasein, but rather a fundamentally individual possibility of impossibility. It is the possibility of a point at which Dasein will no longer be free to choose from its grand horizon of possibilities.[25] Being-towards-death[26], which Heidegger calls anticipation, is essentially allowing oneself to be open to the threat arising from the throwness of one's being: the threat that one has been thrown into the world to die and that one must choose one's possibilities in the face of this ultimate fact. However, this threat is not negative, for because of it, Dasein is called back to an authentic state-of-being in which its possibilities are freed for their truth. Anxiety, as the state-of-mind which holds open (or stands before) the threat of Dasein's ownmost possibility, drags Dasein back from

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21 Ibid.
22 Ibid., p. 188.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid., p. 189
25 Death is an existential possibility which is present to Dasein in every moment. Death makes itself present (in the sense of presence explained above) in the present as a possibility of Being impending on Dasein. Furthermore, it is Dasein's ownmost possibility. Ownmost as it is used by Heidegger means that which belongs most closely to oneself. Of every possibility Dasein possesses, death is the most personal. No one can die for you, and thus it is the one thing Dasein must inevitably do for itself. The fundamental characteristics of death are: ownmost, not-shared, not-to-be-overtaken, certain, and indeterminate. Due to lack of space to address these aspects individually, they are simply assumed and occasionally referenced in this paper.
26 Being-towards-death indicates that Dasein, in its Being, concerns itself over death as a possibility. It is not brooding over or theorizing about death; rather, it indicates a way of relating to death as each Dasein's ownmost possibility; it is the anticipation of this possibility.
   Ibid., p. 260.

fallenness in the call of conscience. In other words, anxiety brings Dasein into an authentic state of being.[27] Moreover, death grants Dasein liberty, for by making Dasein's possibilities stand out in the horizon of existence, it frees it. For example, world travel is always a possibility, yet one usually absent from the thoughts of the everyday man. Tell this man that he will soon die, and suddenly the possibility which was always present – but never understood – stands out as a copper relief from its setting. At this point, death's purpose in our grand scheme should be apparent: in Being-towards-death, Dasein becomes capable of living authentically, free to choose from the full range of its possibilities.

We are now ready to rejoin our discussion on the topic of resoluteness. Conscience is the call which summons Dasein away from its fallenness to stand before its potentiality-for-Being. Its voice belongs to the being most alien to fallen Dasein, namely, Dasein "individualized down to itself in uncanniness and […] thrown into 'nothing'."[28] Hearing this voice – or summons – correctly means, "having an understanding of oneself in one's ownmost potentiality-for-being – that is… projecting oneself upon one's ownmost authentic potentiality for becoming guilty." [29]In other words, conscience calls one to recognize the fact of one's responsibility of choice in light of one's ownmost potentiality for death. Understanding the call is choosing to have a conscience, i.e. wanting to be called to an undertaking of this anxious, burdensome responsibility of choice. In this wanting to have a conscience, Dasein is disclosed, and it is this disclosedness of our possibilities that we call resoluteness. Resoluteness essentially entails the projection of possibilities in relation to guilt. Called in anxiety to an openness before our responsibility of choosing possibilities (in view of death), we project actual possibilities: we choose; we live authentically.

PART II

I will now argue that G.K Chesterton understood the phenomenon of conscience and fallenness that we have outlined above. In his novel *The Ball and the Cross*, Chesterton presents characters whose persistence in conflict, and eventual friendship, set them apart from the crowd. Indeed, their entire story centers around the imminent possibility of death, and the way in which their authentic choices and interactions

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27 Dasein's existence may be lived authentically or inauthentically because it understands itself as the possibility of being itself or not. Existentially, Dasein is its possibility. Anxiety brings Dasein face to face with its Being-free for its possibilities, the ownmost of which is death. Because Dasein relates to its Being in terms of "its ownmost possibility", "it can lose and find itself" (38, 42). This is because Dasein's potential to be authentic or inauthentic corresponds to certain existentiel possibilities. What those particular existentiel possibilities may be differs from person to person and, therefore, it is impossible to state exactly what form an authentic existentiel possibility takes. Nevertheless this much is certain: Dasein's authentic Being necessitates it face its potentiality-for-Being in view of the urgency bestowed by its ownmost possibility (death). The existentiel possibilities which it then chooses will be ones in which Dasein finds itself and acts according to the truth of its Being.

Ibid., pp. 38-42.

28 Ibid., p. 277

29 Ibid., p. 287.

constitute a marked difference from the 'they'.[30] To begin this discussion I will offer a summary of the novel.

Evan MacIan, a stolid Catholic hailing from Scotland, arrives in London one afternoon, and after wandering around the large city, eventually finds himself outside the editorial office of The Atheist. Absentmindedly, the young Catholic begins to read a paper pasted to the window, and, therein discovering blasphemy against the Virgin Mary, shatters the glass and challenges the surprised editor within to a duel. The editor's name is James Turnbull, and as fervently as MacIan follows the tenets of his Catholic faith, Turnbull declares the triumph of atheism and the death of God. However, in this initial encounter between the two, one element of their respective creeds becomes starkly apparent: their beliefs are not ideologies which, having been subscribed to, have closed the men off, but, rather, are the reason for an authentic relationship with one another. Indeed, far from being enraged by his damaged property, Turnbull turns, "deadly pale with pleasure" and is happy that "someone was angry with the paper"[31] ; he is happy that at last he has an opportunity for authentic dialogue. Joyously accepting MacIan's proposal for a duel, the two make preparations for a fight to the death in defense of their respective creeds.

Yet, the passionate Scotsmen (for that nationality encompasses both) find themselves continually baffled in the attempt to engage. Any two men willing to engage so authentically over the 'trivial' motive of religion must be mad. Hence, their story unfolds as a grand chase across Britain with the police and public on their tails. Each time the men begin to fence, something or someone prevents them, leading to an encounter with a series of unusual, or rather, uncomfortably usual, characters. In the end, Turnbull and MacIan are tricked into an asylum from which there is no escape. After a period of solitary isolation, they emerge to discover that every individual encountered along their way has been made an inmate alongside them. This discovery leads to a concluding confrontation with the master of the asylum, and the end of the novel.

One of the main themes of this book is the way in which the general obviousness of public interpretation obscures the meaning of the Scots' duel. It amounts to a description of what Heidegger would label the "fallenness" of Dasein. The reduction of the believers' meaningful feud is made especially clear after the gentlemen's first attempt at a fight to the death is checked by police interference. Having satisfied readers as to the safe escape of the protagonists, Chesterton launches into an account of journalism and the manner in which newspapers responded to the cataclysmic event of a religious duel:

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30 Two aspects are worthy of note regarding our following discussion. The first is that, in examining the resoluteness of the Scotsmen, we are essentially displaying an example of existentiel authenticity. The second is that, because these characters are Chesterton's productions, they reveal primarily the thought of that author, and are thus removed from an observation of people actually existing in the world.

31 Chesterton, G.K, *The Ball and the Cross* (Sioux Falls: NuVision Publications, LLC, 2008), p. 22.

> "Whatever secret and elvish thing it is that broods over editors and suddenly turns their brains, that thing had seized on the story of the broken glass and the duel in the garden…. Mr. MacIan, one of the combatants, became for some mysterious reason, singly and hugely popular as a comic figure… he was always represented…with red whiskers… Letters under the heading "Where are They" poured into every paper… running them to earth in the Monument, Twopenny Tube, Epping Forest, Westminster Abbey…."[32]

This description bears fascinating similarities to Heidegger's account of "Idle Talk", a characteristic of Fallenness. In the scribbling of various journals it becomes impossible to verify whether what has been said is, or is not, factually true. MacIan is neither comic nor red-haired, and as the Scotsmen read the newspapers they are seated not in any of the locations announced, but on a hill to the north of London. There is no way, however, for the common newspaper reader to know that. What has been said-in-the-talk, or in this case, written in the articles, has become its own subject, severed from the being of the entities discussed and passed around to a public which accepts the script without question. This fake form of dialogue has closed off and covered up the facticity of MacIan's challenge. Truth has not been challenged as a lie, but dismissed as a joke. The words have garbled the facts, and readers not bothering to confirm have stopped at the garbling.

Chesterton beautifully demonstrates the difference between fallen Dasein attempting to play the part of public conscience and an authentic being's understanding of that call. The first character whom MacIan and Turnbull meet on their journey is described in his chapter title as a "philosopher of love". Coming across the duelists as they join swords, the man recognizes them from what he has read in the papers, and in the manner of multiple thinkers whom he names, attempts to "appeal to [their] higher natures". At one point in his empty overture, the man remarks, "well, we won't quarrel about a word," immediately sparking a vehement reaction from MacIan. "What is the good of words if they aren't important enough to quarrel over? Why do we choose one word more than another if there isn't any difference between them?"[33] MacIan's reply is a direct refutation of Idle Talk and its interpretation. While the philosopher of love would simply forward vague conceptions of right or wrong, MacIan demands a relationship between discourse and the true being of entities. In light of this, his response to the philosopher's drawn out monologue regarding moral planes and the power of love to breed love is understandable:

> "Talk about the principle of love as much as you like. You seem to me colder than a lump of stone; but I am willing to believe that you may at some time have loved a cat…But don't you talk about Christianity… It is a thing that has made men slay and torture each other; and you will never

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32 Ibid., p. 78.
33 Ibid., p. 51.

know why… Hate it, in God's name, as Turnbull does, who is a man. It is a monstrous thing, for which men die."[34]

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger asserts that conscience, wrongly interpreted as power, passes itself off as, "recognizing the call in the sense of a voice which is 'universally' binding." It is upon just such a 'universal,' ideological concept of love and nature that Chesterton's philosopher has grounded his appeal: and it is on this ground that MacIan objects. As Heidegger writes later, "A 'world-conscience' is a dubious fabrication, and Dasein can come to this only because conscience, in its basis and its essence, is in each case mine."[35] This is precisely the flaw which MacIan points out in the man's argument. Conscience, by being mine, is something that rises from within and recalls me to myself; it has nothing to do with abstract concepts I have never experienced. Unlike MacIan and Turnbull, whose beliefs are authentically theirs, the philosopher of love preaches something about which he has theorized, but has never made his own. As such, his appeal is empty, removed from any truth authenticated by his being.

Although the dialogue and action of Chesterton's characters largely confirm Heidegger's take on the difference between authentic and fallen Dasein, they likewise emphasize a missing element in his conception of resoluteness and death. In analyzing the motives of the novel's characters, Chesterton's stance becomes clear: it is not enough for one to resolutely project possibilities in relation to guilt; one must also stand for something before death – otherwise, Dasein's freedom is simply the freedom to be miserable.

One of the characters encountered along the gentlemen's path is a young, beautiful woman, nameless until the novel's conclusion. After saving the men from the police, the young woman speaks in the following way, evidencing by her words both the power of resoluteness and the necessity for a reason to be so:

> "God knows I have had no pleasure in my life, though I am pretty and young and father has plenty of money. And then people come and tell me that I ought to do things and I do them and it's all drivel…I am to save children from death, and I am not even certain that I should not be better off dead… It seems to me …that there is no way of being happy… but I may be wrong… I felt that, after all, you had got the way out and that was why the world hated you. You see, if there were a way out, it would be sure to be something that looked very queer."[36]

The girl's words elicit three facts. Firstly, the uncanniness of anxiety is at work, betraying itself in her unhappiness. Secondly, this anxiety has not induced her to project her own possibilities or to be resolute. This last fact is a curious one, for it

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34 Ibid., p. 52.
35 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 278.
36 Chesterton, *The Ball and the Cross*, p. 94.

illustrates a deficiency in Heidegger's description of resoluteness. The girl is plainly aware of the call of conscience. Her manner of speaking about death, moreover, shows that she views it neither with tranquility nor horror, but as the factical impossibility of her possibility. Furthermore, she is acutely aware that the public proposal of the 'they' is not a course of action which appeals to her authentic being and she longs for some possibility in the projection of which she might be resolute. Yet, for all this, she cannot form a resolution: her pessimistic understanding of death fails to free her possibilities, and her guilt as ground for resolution is barren, since she has no reason to choose one course over another. Faced with this anxious responsibility of choice, yet lacking anything to stand for, the burden of her guilt becomes what it is not for the authentically resolute; it becomes a grievous weight. She has nothing to be resolute for in the face of death: would it not be better then, to be dead?

Considering this burden, the woman's encounter with resolution is fascinating. In his section on resoluteness, Heidegger declares that resolute Dasein, in light of its chosen potentiality for being, "frees itself for its world," making it possible both to let Others "be," and to become the "conscience" of Others.[37] At this point, it should be clear that the Scotsmen are authentically resolute. Their fatal challenge demonstrates that the projection of each man is grounded upon his embrace of his own, personal responsibility for choice among possibilities made free by the facticity of death. The men act in whatever way appears fitting to their authentic being: they evade the law; they dialogue hotly with interlocutors; they challenge each other in a fight to the death. Every possibility is open to them – and in fact, they choose these possibilities – not because they disdain civilization, but because living authentically (with regard to guilt and in light of death) means recognizing that each possibility matters, and that we must act upon those that correspond to our authentic being. For these men, guilt is not grievous, but a personal challenge concerning the urgency of their choice. As Turnbull declares toward the beginning of the book: "We must fight this thing out somewhere; because, as you truly say, we have found each other's reality. We must kill each other – or convert each other."[38] In the encounter with these men, the woman has met resoluteness, and moreover been called by it. This, then, is the third fact: the resolution[39] of the Scotsmen has acted as a more effective conscience than her own, for unlike her uncanniness, their duel expresses a proposal: a reason, a thing worth fighting for.

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37 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 344.

38 At one point in his book, Heidegger writes, "along with the sober anxiety which brings us face to face with our individualized potentiality-for-being, there goes an armed joy in this possibility" (310). Although Chesterton never explicitly displays his protagonists dealing with the burden of anxiety, he does make one aspect of their characters manifest: they are not at home. *The Ball and the Cross* is primarily an account of two men's rebellion against the public and all its tranquil homeliness. Readers see clearly, moreover, that within this very rebellion the men engage themselves, others, and the world around them with a fierce positivity. It is apparent then, that Chesterton understands existentiel authenticity to take a similar form to that which Heidegger ascribes to it.

39 The term 'resolution' is here employed in place of 'resoluteness', because resoluteness is not a rigid position. Before every possibility, Dasein has the capacity of choosing resolutely – of reaffirming its authenticity. Thus two resolutions, though both authentic, may not resemble each other. Our argument, as put forward above, nevertheless remains the same: in order to make an authentic resolution – to choose in awareness of our full responsibility – we must have a reason to do so.

This theme is referenced again towards the end of the novel. The master of the asylum gathers everyone together and declares that, in the interest of handling such a trivial truth as that of a religious duel (which, nonetheless, had so discomfited the populace), the story of MacIan's challenge had been researched and declared a fable. Accordingly, every person who had testified that they had come across the duo had therefore been diagnosed as pathological and placed in the asylum's care. The master's statement is interpretable as a literary confirmation of the 'they's' control. Though perhaps unrealistic in its abrupt development, the storyline emphasizes the challenge which authentic lives present to public tranquility, and a firm intent to cover them up. However, in the interest of such denial, any authentic mode of Being-with one another must be denied.

Among the individuals locked in the asylum is a man, Durand, whose life has been a demonstration of authenticity. "Simply a man," he has lived with his potentiality-for-Being in mind, and made every existentiel decision in view of his ownmost possibility. He genuinely understands himself as the man of Rousseau's social contract, and therefore projects his possibilities authentically, finding himself in them. Immediately before the master's speech, recognizing that his situation in life has fallen "below the comfort of barbarism," Durand demands that a psychologist admit that the social contract has been annulled. The doctor, considering the matter irrelevant, acknowledges that it has. Durand exits, returning only after he has set the building aflame "in accordance with the strict principles of the social contract."[40] Before fleeing the scene, the doctors betray a moment's irresolution, crying out, "how do you know we shall go?", but MacIan's response silences them: "You believe nothing…and you are insupportably afraid of death."[41] His simple statement speaks volumes. While the doctors, failing to understand the nature of death, reduce it to something merely to be feared, Durand, MacIan, Turnbull, and every other individual locked in the asylum see it as that in light of which their own possibilities are given meaning. They can make the decision to stand true to their beliefs because they believe in something worth acting for in view of death: be it Catholicism, its opposite, the social contract, or the simple fact of their challenged truth. The "lunatics" are authentic for a reason.

Over the course of this discussion, I hope that it has become evident not only what Heidegger's particular thoughts are regarding fallenness, anxiety, conscience, guilt and resolution, but also that Chesterton largely affirms his position regarding these matters(and the forms they adopt in an existentiel sense). However, it should likewise be obvious that, by emphasizing a connection between one's reason for choosing a possibility, and the fact of one's authentically doing so, Chesterton has revealed a gap in Heidegger's philosophy. According to the latter, one must merely be called by uncanniness to an openness before death, for one to project possibilities authentically and responsibly. Yet, Chesterton maintains that this is not enough. For, even if

40 Ibid., p. 197
41 Ibid., p. 197

Dasein allows its listening to be directed away from the "they" by anxiety, it will fail to embrace its guilt: it will not choose without a reason to do so – without a belief worth dying for. ✦

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PRESERVING HUMAN FREEDOM:

Aquinas on Divine Transcendence and Creaturely Contingency

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I. INTRODUCTION

Thomas Aquinas, in his thoroughly Catholic philosophical and theological system, was committed to each of the following principles: that God foreknows all events, even future contingents; that God causes the being of all things, even contingent effects; and that the creatures He creates act contingently in accordance with their free will. On this formulation, the problem almost jumps off the page. How could it possibly be true that creatures may act contingently—that is, act in a way that is not predetermined and not necessary—if God knows what they will do before they do it and, in fact, causes them to actually do it? What kind of free will would that be? And yet, Aquinas insists that divine foreknowledge and divine causation are compatible with creaturely contingency.

Unlike many suggestions offered in support of the so-called "compatibilist" view, Aquinas does not attempt to weaken any of the above principles. He holds that God's omniscience truly requires Him to know all past, present, and future events, both necessary and contingent; that God's role as First Cause does in fact involve giving being to all things, even effects contingent upon free-choice acts; and that the free will of creatures actually involves the ability of the will to freely choose one apparent good over another equally possible alternative. So what satisfactory solution could possibly be offered for the reconciliation of these seemingly contradictory principles? Although many philosophers try to deal with this issue as just one problem, here

I will follow Harm Goris in suggesting that Aquinas parses the problem into two separate, albeit related, questions, providing one solution for the problem of God's foreknowledge, and another for the problem of God's causality. Goris calls these the solutions to temporal fatalism and causal determinism, respectively.[1] Ultimately, the answer to both lies in the utterly transcendent nature of God, who knows and causes in a way fundamentally different from His creatures.

II. CONTEXT: CLARIFYING THE PROBLEM

Aquinas identifies the two relevant problems arising from God's relationship to contingency early on in his career, as evidenced in his commentary on Lombard's *Sentences*:

> "For contingencies seem to elude divine knowledge for two reasons. First, because of the order of cause to what is caused. For the effect of a necessary and immutable cause seems to be necessary; therefore, as God's knowledge is the cause of things and as it is immutable, it does not seem that it can be of contingencies. Second, because of the order of knowledge to what is known; for, as knowledge is certain cognition, it requires from the notion of certainty, even if causality is excluded, certainty and determination in what is known and contingency excludes that."[2]

In other words, God's knowledge seems to be incompatible with the existence of contingents for two reasons. First, the irresistible efficacy of God's unchanging will means that effects must necessarily be as He causes them to be, and this kind of necessity seems to preclude contingency. Since God gives being to all things, including every secondary cause and its effect, we might conclude that no cause or effect can be contingent. And second, God's perfect knowledge requires that the object of His knowledge be certain, and this certainty seems to preclude contingency. Given that God knows all events, including those in the future, we might conclude again that no event is contingent. Thus it would seem that the nature of God is in fact incompatible with contingency. But Aquinas certainly thinks otherwise; on the subject of free choice, he concludes that "particular actions are contingent matters, and so with respect to them the judgment of reason is related to different alternatives and is not determined to just one. Accordingly, by the very fact that he is rational, man must have free choice."[3] And thus arises the problem of reconciling God's acts of foreknowledge and causation to contingency.

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1 Harm Goris, "Divine Foreknowledge, Providence, Predestination, and Human Freedom," in *The Theology of Thomas Aquinas*, Rik Van Nieuwenhove et al., eds. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010), p. 99-122.

2 Aquinas, *Sentences*, I ds 38 1.5, quoted in Harm Goris, *Free Creatures of An Eternal God* (Nijmegan: Thomas Instituut te Utrecht, 1997), p. 55.

3 Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, trans. Alfred Freddoso, I 83.1. All subsequent quotations from the *Summa Theologiae* are taken from the Freddoso translation.

Before diving into Aquinas' solutions, however, it will be helpful to consider the framework he sets up for discussing theological questions of this kind. Aquinas generally takes the approach of negative theology, claiming that "in the case of God we cannot know His real definition, but can only know what He is not…by excluding from God certain things that do not befit Him, e.g. composition, change and other things of this sort, it is possible to show what His mode of being is not."[4] For the purposes of this discussion, two very important points emerge. First, from the fact that there is no composition in God of any kind, Aquinas finds Him to be absolutely simple.[5] Although in the following discussion I will deal separately at times with God's knowledge and His will, divine simplicity demands that we recognize these to be one and the same as they exist in God. Second, from the fact that God is unchanging and immutable, Aquinas finds that God "is His own eternity," such that he exists timelessly in "the simultaneously whole and complete possession of interminable life."[6] God's timelessness, as we will see, has important implications for the question of God's foreknowledge – for if God exists outside of time, His "fore"-knowledge will necessarily look rather different than the way in which foreknowledge is normally conceived.

The previous considerations were conclusions arising from Aquinas' pursuit of negative theology, or what can be said not to be true about God. But if we want to say positive things about God, by ascribing appropriate names or perfections to Him, different rules are at work. Most importantly, we must keep in mind God's transcendence. Accordingly, Aquinas writes that the names of God "signify the divine substance, but in an imperfect manner" and argues that "these names must be said of God and creatures in an analogous sense."[7] In other words, there is a fundamental divide between the nature of God and the nature of His creatures, one that our language may approximate but can never fully accommodate. For our purposes, it is important to keep in mind the inevitable problems that will arise in our discussion of divine foreknowledge and divine causation, always remembering that we are trying to use human language to talk about a mode of being "that elude[s] our grasp."[8]

III. SOLUTION TO TEMPORAL FATALISM

With these considerations in mind, I will now turn to Aquinas' solution for the problem which arises from the necessity seemingly imposed by God's foreknowledge. In answering the question "Does God have knowledge of future contingents?" Aquinas points out that a contingent thing may be thought of in two different ways: in itself, or in its cause. With regard to the latter, a contingent effect as it exists in its cause is indeterminate, such that it is open to both opposites; for example, before

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4   ST I 3 prologue
5   ST I 3.7
6   ST I 10.1, 2
7   ST I 13.2, 5
8   Harm Goris, "Divine Foreknowledge," p. 115.

he makes up his mind, Socrates is free either to sit or not to sit. But with regard to the former, a contingent effect may be thought of in itself as already actual, and present to one's sight; thus Socrates was free to choose whether to sit or not to sit, but once he actually is sitting, his act of sitting is certain. That is to say, when a contingent effect actually occurs, it can at that point be a certain object of knowledge. Now God knows all things through their causes, by which He knows them as either contingent or necessary (more on this in the next section). But He also knows them in themselves, "for His cognition, like His esse, is measured by eternity…His gaze extends from eternity to all things as they exist in their presentness."[9] As such, we might say that God knows a future contingent to be contingent, insofar as He knows its cause; to be future, insofar as He knows its temporal aspect; and to be certain, insofar as it is timelessly present to Him.

From this, it is clear that God, as He exists timelessly, knows things in a fundamentally different way from human beings. Given that Aquinas relies heavily on Boethius' understanding of God's eternity, we might borrow here a helpful passage from Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*:

> "Since God abides for ever in an eternal present, His knowledge, also transcending all movement of time, dwells in the simplicity of its own changeless present, and, embracing the whole infinite sweep of the past and of the future, contemplates all that falls within its simple cognition as if it were now taking place. And therefore…thou wilt more rightly deem it not foreknowledge as of something future, but knowledge of a moment that never passes."[10]

Just as a man on a watchtower could be said to exist on a different spatial plane from the procession he observes, God exists on a "plane" (that is, eternity) which is separate from the procession of time. All events are present to God's gaze, just as all the people walking below are visible to the man on the watchtower. This fact in no way eliminates the temporal aspect of things: events are truly past, present, or future in themselves and in their relationships to us, just as the people in a procession really are walking in a particular order. Thus we could say that God knows all events, past, present, and future, not as past, present, or future, but rather by knowing their respective temporal aspects. It is simply the case that the transcendence of God's "knowledge of vision" allows all events to be present to His sight at once, in a way that our knowledge does not. Therefore, to repeat Aquinas' answer to the question at hand, insofar as future contingents are present to God, there is no necessity imposed by God's certain knowledge: this is the solution to temporal fatalism.

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9   ST I 14.13

10 Ancius Boethius, The *Consolation of Philosophy*, Book V, Prose VI, as translated by Harm Goris in *The Theology of Thomas Aquinas*.

IV. SOLUTION TO CAUSAL DETERMINISM

The argument in the previous section focused on showing that God does not impose necessity on future contingents by having prior knowledge of them. But even if God's eternal "knowledge of vision" leaves room for contingency, the problem remains that His knowledge, considered as the cause of everything which exists, does still seem to impose necessity. Thus we still encounter the problem Goris calls "causal determinism." For Aquinas' response to this problem, we can look to his discussion of free choice, as the relevant kind of contingency for this discussion (contingency in natural, as opposed to voluntary causes, has a more straightforward explanation having to do with impeding causes and the like).[11] On free choice, however, Aquinas writes:

> "Free choice is a cause of its own movement in the sense that through free choice a man moves himself to act. However, freedom does not require that what is free should be the first cause of itself – just as, in order for something to be a cause of another, it is not required that it be the first cause of that thing. Therefore, God is the first cause and moves both natural and voluntary causes. And just as, in the case of natural causes, He does not, by moving them, deprive their actions of being voluntary, but instead He brings this very thing about in them. For within each thing He operates in accord with what is proper to that thing."[12]

Like the solution to temporal fatalism, the appeal made here is once again to God's transcendent nature, such that the mode of His causation far surpasses the mode of causation of the things He creates which act as secondary causes. God's causal activity involves giving being of a particular nature to the things He creates, and it is precisely a thing's nature which determines whether that thing's causal acts are the result of necessity, or of its own free will. God does not merely cause an effect, but also shapes the way in which that effect acts as a secondary cause.

In support of this argument, consider the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*. Goris summarizes Aquinas' relevant teaching on this point: "Only God, who is subsistent being itself, causes being as such, and to him belongs exclusively that causal act that does not presuppose anything, namely, creation out of nothing. Within the existent created order, creatures do have their proper causal role: they cause something to be this, or to be such."[13] God's primary act of creation is the "complete emanation of the totality of an entity," the effect of which is the existence of a thing where nothing was before. This is utterly unlike the effects of secondary causes, which can merely cause changes in existing things as proper to their own nature.[14] In communicating *esse* to His creatures, God's act of creation not only brings about a thing's existence, but also

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11 Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, trans. John P. Rowan, Joseph Kenny, ed., VI 3.1210.
12 ST I 83.1 ad 3
13 Harm Goris, "Divine Foreknowledge," p. 114.
14 ST I 45.1, 5

its mode of existence – including its ability to act freely or necessarily as appropriate to its nature.

On this system, the two kinds of causes, primary and secondary, do not exclude each other, but rather operate on different planes. We can truly say that God is the first cause of every effect, in that He gives being to every effect, but His transcendent act of causation allows Him to give being to contingent effects *as* contingent in accordance with the free acts of their secondary causes; this is the solution to the problem of causal determinism. On a related note, it is worth pointing out that on Aquinas' view, God Himself acts freely; Aquinas maintains that "God acts, in the realm of created things, not by necessity of His nature, but by the free choice of His will."[15] Although God's free choice to create this particular world does not solve the problem of causal determinism arising from God's causal activity in the world He created, it does address the related problem that would arise from God's necessarily creating this particular world, or from His necessarily creating at all. Aquinas' conception of God avoids this particular criticism.

V. OBJECTIONS TO AQUINAS

Finally, in this section, I will deal with objections to and alternative explanations of Aquinas' solutions to temporal fatalism and causal determinism. I will focus on the sort of objections which arise from a lack of consideration given to the aspect of God that I have stressed the most: His complete transcendence. One such objection is voiced by William Craig, who claims that, although God's knowledge of vision does not impose logical necessity, His causal knowledge (or *scientia approbationis*) does impose *causal* necessity:

> "To say that [an event] is contingent means that it is not causally determined by its *proximate* causes in the temporal series. But this seems entirely irrelevant; for the event, whatever its relation to its proximate causes, is still causally determined to occur by the divine *scientia approbationis*. Worse still, Thomas seems to have forgotten that those secondary causes are themselves also similarly determined, so that even on this level contingency seems to be squeezed out."[16]

This objection can be rather straightforwardly refuted in the framework established above. Recall that Aquinas thinks, in the case of secondary causes that are free beings, that God "does not, by moving them, deprive their actions of being voluntary, but instead He brings this very thing about in them."[17] Now, whether Craig should accept this claim from Aquinas is of course a point that could be debated; it might be that Craig finds it simply untenable that there is a first cause which is even *able* to give

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15 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, trans. James F. Anderson, II 23.1.
16 William Lane Craig, "Aquinas on God's Knowledge of Future Contingents," *Thomist: A Speculative Quarterly Review* 54, no. 1 (1990), p. 78.
17 ST 83.1 ad 3

being to something as contingent upon a secondary cause's free choice. Either way, Craig is certainly wrong to claim that Aquinas has *forgotten* about the contingency or necessity of secondary causes. For the sake of discussion, if we grant Aquinas' conception of a transcendent God who creates *ex nihilo*, it seems that we do have good reason to believe that He is perfectly capable of giving being to causes precisely as necessary or free, voluntary or natural. Thus we might claim that, at the very least, Aquinas would think Craig's objection could be answered on the basis of the transcendent nature of divine causation.

Likewise, Aquinas could respond in a similar way to the objection put forth by Prior regarding the argument for God's timeless act of knowledge. It seems to Prior that in the statement "God knows *p*," those wishing to support the timelessness of God must think of the verb "knows" as tenseless; this means that, strictly speaking, at any given *time* God knows nothing. But, Prior claims, "it seems an extraordinary way of affirming God's omniscience if a person, when asked what God knows now, must say "nothing," and when asked what he knew yesterday, must again say "nothing," and must yet again say "nothing," asked what God will know tomorrow."[18] In response, we might say that Prior has hit the nail on the head. Aquinas' solution is necessarily "extraordinary" – it seeks to describe the extraordinary nature of God. Of course God doesn't know anything *now. Now* is an accident belonging to things in the created world, not to the Creator. Immutable, timeless knowledge belongs to God, who exists and knows in a way fundamentally different from ours. In a sense, Prior gets it exactly right; he just doesn't quite recognize the truth of his own argument in support of the transcendence of divine knowledge.

Finally, I would like to address two alternative solutions to this problem which are particularly interesting, namely the Bañezian and Molinist theories. These two rival camps emerged to debate the *De Auxiliis* controversy at the end of the 16th century, with both sides operating under the assumption that Aquinas had not fully explained his view, and thus working provide the necessary support for the true Thomistic doctrine.[19] On one side, Bañez and the Dominicans held that "God had predetermined the eternal decrees of his will to concur in an irresistibly efficacious way with the activities of creatures in time, even when they act freely."[20] That is, all it takes for a choice to be free is for God to determine it to be a free choice; it is perfectly acceptable to think of a free choice as being predetermined but not necessary. Following this view, God foreknows future contingents precisely because He knows how He would predetermine any given situation.[21] But to the Molinist (or Jesuit) camp this conception seems to be a denial of genuine human freedom. They insist on the doctrine of divine concurrence, whereby God acts *with* or *through* secondary

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18 A. N. Prior, "The Formalities of Omniscience," in *Philosophy* vol. 37 no. 140 (1962), p. 116.
19 Harm Goris, "Divine Foreknowledge," p. 99.
20 Ibid, p. 99
21 Alfred Freddoso, "Introduction to the Problem of Free Will and Divine Causality," last edited 19 April 2013, p. 6.

agents rather than *on* them, in order that He not predetermine free choice acts. Then, in order to preserve God's foreknowledge of future contingents, the Molinists introduce a third kind of divine knowledge: middle knowledge. As knowledge of exactly which choice will be made in any given circumstance, whether or not that circumstance actually obtains, middle knowledge could be called "prevolitional;" God has this knowledge before He wills to actualize a particular reality. In this way, although God does not predetermine any free choice act, He considers His middle knowledge and factors that into His providential plan.[22]

There remains considerable debate over these two rival interpretations of the correct relationship between God's knowledge, His causality, and the freedom of His creatures. Without attempting to decide the question of which explanation is correct, here I will simply put forward two opposing arguments which appeal equally to the importance of God's transcendence, as we have been discussing throughout the paper. On one side, Alfred Freddoso argues in support of Bañez, claiming "I have little doubt that [Aquinas] would side with the man whom I think of as his most illuminating commentator, viz., Domingo Bañez,"[23] even if Freddoso admits elsewhere that "[his] own sympathies lie with Molina."[24] Freddoso's appeal, on behalf of Bañez and Aquinas, is to the transcendence of God's causality:

> "God's transcendence makes it perfectly appropriate to hold that His concurrence is not one of the circumstances of the free actions of creatures. As St. Thomas makes clear, God stands *wholly outside* the order of created causes…Thus God can *causally predetermine* that a good effect should be. So God's transcendent causation means there is no worry that the predetermination of a free choice act somehow causes it not to be free."[25]

On the other hand, Goris uses God's transcendent mode of being to argue against both the Bañezian and Molinist interpretations. Goris is concerned primarily with their imposition of an order of priority onto God's knowledge, whereby God's simple knowledge is "logically prior" to God's causal knowledge, which is again prior to God's knowledge of vision. Although their approaches are different, Goris claims that both explanations are equally inappropriate, because they forget the fundamental teaching of divine simplicity, which precludes any real order in God Himself. Therefore, "it may be the case with *human* knowledge and *human* will that it is necessary that something is known if it is to be an object of the will, but this does not apply to *divine* knowledge and will…What lies, finally, at the root of both Bañez's and Molina's view is one and the same original sin. In both views creatures and Creator are put ontologically on par."[26] Thus it is clear that both Freddoso and Goris

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22 Ibid, p. 5.
23 Ibid, p. 3.
24 Alfred J. Freddoso, *Introduction to On Divine Foreknowledge* (Part IV of the Concordia), trans. Alfred J. Freddoso (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 41.
25 Ibid, pp. 41-42.
26 Harm Goris, *Free Creatures*, pp. 80-82.

recognize the need to properly emphasize God's transcendence, although it is not so obvious what conclusion ultimately follows.

VI. CONCLUSION

With respect to the question of the relationship between divine knowledge, divine causation, and creaturely contingency, Goris nicely sums up the heart of Aquinas' position:

> "God's incomprehensible, eternal mode of being allows us to say that events which are future and contingent, and hence indeterminate in themselves and in relation to us, are present and determinate in relation to God. Likewise, God's incomprehensible act of giving being as such, including its modal qualifications, allows us to say that the Creator sustains the causal action of creatures and gives being to their effects in accordance with the necessity or contingency of the secondary causes. "Presence" and "causation" are said analogously of the Eternal One and of the Creator, and signify modes of presence and causation that elude our grasp."[27]

There are two genuine problems arising from the combination of the principles above: the imposition of necessity by prior certain knowledge, and the imposition of necessity by a perfectly efficacious will acting as a cause. Nevertheless, given divine simplicity, God's "knowledge of vision" and His causal knowledge are part of one and the same eternal act. Accordingly, we are not surprised to find that Aquinas' solution to both problems ultimately lies in the transcendence of God, reflected in His way of knowing and His way of causing that are of an entirely different kind from that of His creatures. God's timeless act of knowing, as His certain knowledge of all events which are eternally present to His gaze, preserves the contingency in future events. Similarly, God's causal activity, rather than precluding contingency in His creation, actually *enables* contingency, as God alone gives being to contingent effects precisely as such. In conclusion, therefore, through his appeal to the transcendence of the nature of God, Aquinas defends the compatibility of divine knowledge, divine causation, and creaturely contingency. ✦

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27 Harm Goris, "Divine Foreknowledge," p. 115.

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IS GEOMETRY ANALYTIC?

MGHANGA DAVID MWAKIMA

1. INTRODUCTION

In the fourth chapter of *Language, Truth and Logic*, Ayer undertakes the task of showing how *a priori* knowledge of mathematics and logic is possible. In doing so, he argues that only if we understand mathematics and logic as analytic,[1] by which he memorably meant "devoid of factual content"[2], do we have a justified account of *a priori* knowledge of these disciplines.[3] In this chapter, it is not clear whether Ayer gives an argument *per se* for the analyticity of mathematics and logic. For when one reads that chapter, one sees that Ayer is mainly criticizing the views held by Kant and Mill with respect to arithmetic.[4] Nevertheless, I believe that the positive argument is present. Ayer's discussion of geometry[5] in this chapter shows that it is this discussion which constitutes his positive argument for the thesis that analytic sentences are true

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1   Now, I am aware that 'analytic' was understood differently by Kant, Carnap, Ayer, Quine, and Putnam. It is not even clear whether there is even an agreed definition of 'analytic' today. For the purposes of my paper, the meaning of 'analytic' is Carnap's sense as described in: Michael, Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), in terms of the relativized *a priori*.

2   Alfred Jules, Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic* (New York: Dover Publications, 1952), p. 79, 87. In these sections of the book, I think the reason Ayer chose to characterize analytic statements as "devoid of factual" content is in order to give an account of why analytic statements could not be shown to be false on the basis of observation. In other words, the reason why the analytic statements were necessary truths, according to Ayer, is that they did not assert that which required *further facts or observation in order to establish their truth*. One just needed to know the "meanings" or definitions of the terms in those statements in order to "see" that they are true independent of further observation or empirical data. For example, it is a fact that 'Euclidean triangle' refers to a planar three-sided figure. And it is a fact that every Euclidean triangle has angles adding up to 180 degrees. But given these facts, it follows that every planar three-sided figure has angles adding up to 180 degrees *without need of any further observation*. So, 'every planar three-sided figure has angles adding up to 180 degrees,' is an analytic statement in Ayer's sense of 'analytic'.

3   Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, p. 73.

4   Kant believed arithmetic is synthetic *a priori* while Mill believed that we arrive at mathematical beliefs on the basis of scientific induction. See Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, p. 74 – 75; 77 – 78.

5   Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, p. 82.

in virtue of the definitions of the terms in them and are thus "devoid of factual content".

What follows is a summary of the argument that Ayer makes in his discussion of geometry. Suppose, as Kant believed in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, that Euclidean geometry is synthetic *a priori*. On the one hand, Euclidean geometry is synthetic because one could not, by conceptual analysis alone, arrive at the truths of Euclidean geometry. Moreover, since geometry is synthetic, unlike analytic judgments (which, according to Kant, do not amplify [or increase] our knowledge), geometry does indeed increase our knowledge. On the other hand, Euclidean geometry is *a priori*, for it is grounded in our *a priori* idea of space, which, for Kant, was the pure form of sensible intuition. The idea of space itself is *a priori* (in the transcendental sense) insofar as it is only if we have that idea, due to the unfathomable constitution of our mind, is any experience possible. But, since Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, other consistent (and practically useful) non-Euclidean geometries[6] have been developed. Thus, it cannot be the case that Euclidean geometry is synthetic *a priori* in Kant's sense or that its *a priori* status is due to the constitution of our mind. "We see now," Ayer says, "that the axioms of a geometry are simply definitions, and that the theorems of a geometry are simply the logical consequences of these definitions. A geometry is not in itself about physical space; in itself it cannot be said to be "about" anything. But we can use a geometry to reason about physical space."[7]

Fast-forward about 30 years later to Hilary Putnam. In a chapter entitled "Analytic and Synthetic," in his book *Mind, Language and Reality*, Putnam, (somewhat) following Quine,[8] argues that principles of geometry are not analytic if the paradigmatic analytic sentence is 'all bachelors are unmarried'. Apart from the separate reasons, of which I shall not speak here, that Putnam gives for the analyticity of 'all bachelors are unmarried,' there are other reasons that he uses to argue that principles of geometry are not analytic. First of all, he rejects the "linguistic convention" account of analyticity that some philosophers were using to argue that the principles of geometry, like physical definitions (e.g., $e = 1/2 \ mv^2$), are true by (linguistic) convention or stipulation, and hence analytic.[9] Putnam argues that these definitions introduced by stipulation lose their conventional character and acquire systematic import within our conceptual system in such a way that it would be a mistake to construe them as analytic if analyticity is understood to mean 'true by linguistic convention or stipulation.'[10] Secondly (and this is where Putnam's acceptance Duhemian and Quinean holism[11] is very evident), mathematics and principles of

6   For example, Einstein used a non-Euclidean geometry to describe space-time in his formulation of the general theory of relativity.
7   Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, p. 82.
8   Cf. Hilary, Putnam, "Analytic and Synthetic" printed in *Mind, Language, and Reality* (Hilary, Putnam Philosophical papers Vol. 2) (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1975) p. 40.
9   Putnam, "Analytic and Synthetic", pp. 36, 38ff.
10   Ibid.
11   See Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism* p. 70 for further discussion of Duhemian and Quinean holism.

geometry are characterized by their centrality, as *framework principles*, within our web of beliefs – revisable but only after holistic considerations. Thus, principles of Euclidean geometry, once thought to be analytic (in the sense of 'immune from revision'), were abandoned because a rival theory was available.[12]

What is intriguing, especially in light of Ayer's argument, is Putnam's conclusion that Euclidean geometry is *false* (my emphasis):

> If the paradigm for an analytic sentence is "all bachelors are unmarried" - and it is - then it is of course absurd to say that the principles of geometry are analytic. Indeed we cannot any longer say that the principles of geometry are analytic; because analytic sentences are true; and *we no longer say that principles of Euclidean geometry are true*.[13]

In this paper, I will attempt to answer the question: *is geometry analytic and in what sense*? In doing so, I will begin by critically evaluating Ayer and Putnam's arguments on the analyticity (or lack thereof) of geometry on the basis of historico-philosophical work on the foundations of geometry by Roberto Torretti in *Philosophy of Geometry from Riemann to Poincaré* and Michael Friedman in *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*. My critical evaluations of Ayer and Putnam will show that in their arguments against Kant and Linguistic Conventionalism respectively, they fail to distinguish clearly between what Einstein called "pure axiomatic geometry" and "practical geometry."[14] On the one hand, I will show that Ayer fails to notice that Kant could have been talking about 'pure geometry,' and not 'applied geometry,' when Kant argued that geometry is synthetic *a priori*. On the other hand, I will show that Putnam fails to distinguish between *applied* Euclidean geometry and *pure* Euclidean geometry in the quoted passage. After my critical evaluations of Ayer and Putnam's arguments, I will conclude by suggesting how someone could plausibly think that *applied* Euclidean geometry is analytic in Carnap's sense. I will be drawing from Friedman's *Reconsidering Logical Positivism* in my presentation of Carnap's sense of 'analytic.' Friedman argues in that book that Carnap can accept Duhemian holism while still rejecting Quinean holism. "To obtain Quinean holism," Friedman says, "we must exhibit the incoherence of Carnap's *Logical Syntax* program, and only this, I suggest, demonstrates the ultimate failure of the logical positivists' version of the *relativized a priori* [my emphasis]."[15]

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12 Putnam, "Analytic and Synthetic", pp. 47ff.
13 Ibid.
14 See Albert, Einstein, *Sidelights on Relativity* (New York: Dover, 1983), p. 32. I thank Peter Koellner for suggesting this approach to my paper. I think 'pure geometry' is a better term than 'pure axiomatic geometry.' Pure axiomatic geometry implies that all the pure geometries are approached axiomatically which is not necessarily the case. Also, 'applied geometry' sounds more accurate than 'practical geometry'; for it suggests that what we are talking about is pure geometry as it is applied to the study of physical space or in physics, e.g., in optics. In this paper, I may sometimes use the terms 'physical geometry' and 'applied geometry' interchangeably.
15 Cf. Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, p. 70

2. PURE GEOMETRY AND APPLIED GEOMETRY

On the one hand, what I choose to call 'pure geometry' is geometry studied as a branch of pure mathematics. Specifically, I take pure geometry to include classical Euclidean geometry as say: that which was pursued in Classical Antiquity and through the Middle Ages in *Euclid's Elements*; the analytical coordinate geometry invented by René Descartes in the 17th century, the non-Euclidean geometries [16]developed independently by Bolyai and Lobachevsky in the 1820s; Gauss's intrinsic geometry of surfaces in his *Disquisitions* of 1827, which, together with the earlier non-Euclidean geometries of Bolyai and Lobachevsky influenced Riemann in his 1854 lecture: *On the Hypotheses that Lie at the Foundations of Geometry* to come up with a generalized conception of space as a n-fold extended quantity i.e. an n-dimensional differentiable manifold – a conception which could accommodate *both* the Euclidean and non-Euclidean geometries. I would also include under pure geometry, the work of Felix Klein and Sophus Lie on transformation groups; projective geometry, which was axiomatized by Moritz Pasch in 1882; and the axiomatic conception of Euclidean geometry and both Euclidean and non-Euclidean geometry found in David Hilbert's 1899 *Foundations of Geometry* and 1902 article "On The Foundations of Geometry" respectively.[17] Topology can also be classed within the study of pure geometry. Pure geometry is *a priori* in both senses of the term: "known independent of experience" and "[demonstrated] from the grounds."[18] But as we shall subsequently see in this paper, saying why pure geometry is *a priori* generates a lot of controversy.

On the other hand, what I call 'applied geometry' is geometry in the literal sense of the term, i.e., "earth measuring."[19] Applied geometry arises whenever the formal terms in pure geometry receive a physical interpretation i.e. when their designata are specified for use in the exact sciences like physics. In classical mechanics, for example, Euclidean geometry was used in kinematics by "building bridge equations"[20] from pure Euclidean geometry to physics. These 'bridge equations' are such as those that grew out of Descartes's analytic geometry, where he introduced coordinate systems and algebra to geometry (e.g., the equation of a straight line [$ax + by + c = 0$]), which found fruitful application in analysis and subsequently in kinematics. I think that

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16 Cf. Roberto, Torretti, *Philosophy of Geometry from Riemann to Poincaré* (Dordrecht-Holland; Boston: D. Reidel Pub., 1978) Chapter 1 and 2 and 3. See Torretti, *Philosophy of Geometry from Riemann to Poincaré*, p. 185 for Hilbert's works.

17 Torretti also points out the work of Levi-Città in the geometric meaning of curvature and that of Weyl with the idea of an affine structure. So, we may include their contributions as contributions to pure geometry.

18 The "from the grounds" sense of the *a priori* comes from the theory of demonstration. In Peter Koellner's seminar class: *Topics in the Philosophy of Mathematics: The Concept of Apriority* (Philosophy 243, Fall 2015), for which I wrote this paper, Koellner had shown that '*a priori*' did not always mean what it means today, i.e., "known independent of experience". '*A priori* [demonstration]' was used earlier by William of Ockham (ca. 13 Century) when he distinguishes: (1) Demonstration from what is prior, i.e., why it is so from explanatory grounds; from (2) Demonstration from what is posterior, i.e., that it is so. He cited Ockham's *Summa Logicae* Part III Tractate II Chapter 17. This sense of '*a priori*', Peter argued in seminar, can serve to illuminate certain accounts of justifications in mathematics.

19 See Einstein, *Sidelights on Relativity*, p. 31

20 This is a term that Peter Koellner explicitly in his presentation during this seminar class. Since I was submitting this paper for that class, I wanted to acknowledge that it is not my own.

physical geometry in classical mechanics was still *a priori*, for I do not think that 'straight line' had received a physical interpretation in optics. However, in General Relativity, the apriority of physical geometry gets lost as physical geometry becomes entangled with the physical structure of the universe, especially with the distribution of mass and energy in the universe. For in General Relativity, the metric of the underlying topology of space-time depends on the distribution of mass-energy across the universe.[21] Specifically, if a geodesic (which is the non-Euclidean equivalent of the straight line in Euclidean geometry) in a 4-dimensional semi-Riemannian manifold of non-constant curvature is interpreted as the path of an unimpeded beam of light, then the physical structure of the universe is such that two unimpeded parallel beams of light can converge globally (if not locally or infinitesimally) as they go past a star.[22]

3. CRITICAL EVALUATION OF AYER

Armed with this distinction between pure geometry and applied geometry, I would now like to engage in critical evaluation of Ayer's argument in the fourth chapter of *Language Truth and Logic*. One way of critically evaluating Ayer's argument is to ask whether the argument works in refuting Kant's epistemology of geometry as Ayer intended. With respect to this aspect of critical evaluation, the first point I want to make is that Ayer is correct in saying that "a geometry is not in itself about physical space:[23] in itself it cannot be said to be "about" anything." He is correct insofar as he is talking about pure geometry as I have distinguished it above; however, I do not believe that this particular argument succeeds in refuting Kant's thesis that geometry is synthetic *a priori*.

First, for Kant, the 'synthetic' had a primary sense and a secondary sense. The primary sense of 'synthetic' is well known. It is roughly the idea that a judgment is synthetic whenever the predicate 'B' of a judgment is not contained (covertly) in the subject 'A' of the judgment. So, one can think of 'A' without necessarily thinking of 'B.' Or, put another way, mere conceptual analysis does not reveal that the predicate 'B' was contained in subject 'A' all along. The secondary sense of the synthetic is that while analytic judgments are explicative, which means that they reveal the concepts already contained in the subject albeit confusedly or less clearly; synthetic judgments are ampliative, which means that synthetic judgments extend our knowledge.[24]

Secondly, the '*a priori*' also had two distinct senses for Kant. Firstly, whatever was *a priori* was both necessary and had universal validity. Secondly, whatever was *a priori* was so in a transcendental sense, meaning that it arose out of the unfathomable constitution of our mind insofar as it made experience possible. The implication

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21 Cf. Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, pp. 62.
22 I thank Peter Koellner for fruitful discussion of these points as I was writing this paper in Fall 2015.
23 Cf. Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, pp. 46f for the distinctions that Carnap drew between formal, intuitive and physical space.
24 Cf. Immanuel, Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (Smith Norman K., Trans.) (China: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) (2nd edition: Original work published in German 1787) Introduction Part IV p. 48f.

here being that whatever makes experience possible cannot itself be known through experience.[25]

On the basis of these clarifications, I want to argue that Ayer's argument that seeks to refute Kant's epistemology of geometry in terms of geometry not being "about" anything, does not succeed. To see why, recall that for Ayer a proposition has factual content if and only if it "provides information about matters of fact."[26] Elsewhere, he says that propositions that have factual content are empirical hypotheses.[27] So, when Ayer says (emphasis mine), "[It] is natural for us to think, as Kant thought, that geometry is the study of the properties of physical space, and *consequently that its propositions have factual content*," I am at a loss as to why. There is *no evidence* in Kant's *Critique* to suggest that Kant's view of geometry was such that the propositions of geometry expressed empirical hypotheses. In fact, Kant is very clear:

> Geometrical propositions are one and all apodeitic…such propositions cannot be empirical or, in other words, judgments of experience, nor can they be derived from any such judgments.[28]

It may be objected that in the context of the quoted passage Kant says that, "geometry is a science which determines the properties of space synthetically, and yet *a priori*." This objection may be put forward to suggest that the term 'science' and the clause 'determines the properties of space synthetically' together imply that, for Kant, geometry is empirical and that it is *about something* (that it has factual content and that this content is physical space). Couldn't this, after all, be what Ayer is objecting to? My response is yes: Ayer is objecting to this view. However, Ayer's objection does not work for the following reasons. First, the quotation from Kant does not establish that the propositions of geometry are empirical hypotheses. That geometry is a 'science' could just mean that it is a systematically organized body of knowledge, which is just what a science means. Pure mathematics is also sometimes viewed as a science in the sense of being a systematically organized body of knowledge. Secondly, the quoted passage does not imply that the space in question is actual *physical* space. In fact, that the passage does not imply physical space is strongly suggested by the fact that part of what Kant has in mind throughout the Transcendental Aesthetic is arriving at our idea of space. This idea of space – as a form of our sensible intuition – is *a priori* in the transcendental sense. So, if geometry is about this *a priori* idea, then it cannot be the case that in the quoted passage the space in question is physical space. Lastly, 'synthetically,' for Kant, does not mean that synthetic judgments are known by experience; for, after all, there are synthetic *a priori* judgments. The right

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25 Cf. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (Smith Norman K., Trans.) Introduction Part II p. 43f and p. 70f and Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, p. 7.
26 Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, p. 79
27 Ibid., p. 15 - 17.
28 Cf. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (Smith Norman K., Trans.) p. 70

way of interpreting 'synthetically' is in the primary and secondary senses of synthetic judgments that I have described above.[29]

What the foregoing aspect of critical evaluation shows is that one cannot explain away Ayer's overthrow of Kant's epistemology of geometry by saying that Ayer is talking about pure geometry while Kant is talking about applied geometry. The passages from Kant I have quoted above strongly suggest that Kant possibly had pure geometry in mind. The way that Ayer's argument *does* succeed is in challenging the *grounds* of the apriority of geometry. While Kant grounds the apriority of geometrical propositions on the *a priori* idea of space that arises as a result of the constitution of our mind, Ayer believes that a geometry is *a priori* because it is analytic (though not in Kant's sense of the term). Moreover, since Kant's time, there have been other consistent theories of pure geometry other than the classical Euclidean one that was the only one known to him. For within these geometrical theories, the theorems are logical consequences of the axioms and so these theories are all *a priori* because they are analytic. It is on this basis that Ayer is able to endorse the conventionalism of Poincaré in the quoted passage: roughly, that the idea that the choice of a pure geometry to be applied in physical theory is a matter of convention based on expediency and the overall fruitfulness and simplicity of working with the said geometry.[30]

The conventionalism of Poincaré will be better appreciated in the context of critical evaluation of Putnam's essay. In that essay, Putnam targets the linguistic conventionalism. Although some logical positivists (especially Moritz Schlick) were inspired by Poincaré's conventionalism, the linguistic conventionalism advocated by Carnap is unique and has important differences from the conventionalism of Poincaré.

4. CRITICAL EVALUATION OF PUTNAM

4.1 WHY WAS EUCLIDEAN GEOMETRY ABANDONED?

I begin my critical evaluation of Putnam's essay by looking at where Putnam says that the laws of geometry were abandoned because there was a rival theory.[31] Here we make use of our distinction between pure geometry and applied geometry. While it is true to say that when Euclidean geometry is *applied* to our physical space, it turns out to be incorrect; it does not follow that pure Euclidean geometry itself is false and that it was abandoned. Viewed historico-philosophically, what actually happened is that geometers doubted that Postulate 5 was self-evident, and hence they doubted that it ought to be included with the rest of Euclid's axioms. Torretti points out that mathematicians like Proclus, John Wallis, Girolamo Saccheri, John Heinrich Lambert and Adrien Legendre made attempts to prove Postulate 5 from the

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29 Cf. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (Smith Norman K., Trans.) p. 53.
30 Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, p. 83.
31 Putnam, "Analytic and Synthetic", pp. 46, 48.

other axioms.[32] Although Gauss thought that there were no mathematical reasons for preferring Euclidean geometry to the non-Euclidean one,[33] it was in the 1820s that Bolyai and Lobachevsky, working independently of each other, developed non-Euclidean geometry, which was constructed by denying postulate 5 and using the rest of Euclid's axioms that do not depend on Postulate 5. [34]Lobachevsky indeed did not view his system as contrary to Euclidean geometry. He viewed both systems as equally consistent.[35] Then Riemann, by building on Gauss's work on the intrinsic geometry of surfaces, produced a generalized geometry capable of accommodating *both* the Euclidean and non-Euclidean geometries – Euclidean space is a special case of the genus of the manifold.[36]

Moreover, where Putnam says, "before the development of non-Euclidean geometry by Riemann and Lobachevski, the best philosophic minds regarded the principles of geometry as virtually analytic. The human mind could not conceive their falsity." Putnam's remarks need to be corrected in light of what actually happened historico-philosophically. If, by the best philosophic minds he counts Kant, then Kant did not regard the principles of geometry as analytic. For Kant, principles of geometry were synthetic *a priori*. It is important to distinguish analyticity from apriority. Analyticity is one way of explaining the apriority of mathematics and geometry. In fact, given my discussion in section 3 above, Kant's epistemology of geometry is compatible with the existence of non-Euclidean geometries. Friedman points out that the only difference between Poincaré and Kant is that the former was familiar with non-Euclidean geometry, while the latter was not.[37]

4.2 THE RATIONALE OF THE ANALYTIC-SYNTHETIC DISTINCTION

A second way we may critically evaluate Putnam's argument is with the preliminary remarks leading up to his discussion of the analyticity (or lack thereof) of principles of geometry. One such remark he makes is intended to defend the Quinean insight that he thinks is underappreciated by the philosophers who undertake to challenge Quine's views. Putnam thinks that citing garden-variety examples of analyticity will not do as a reply to Quine. Instead, he insists that what is needed is a definition of the nature and rationale of the analytic-synthetic distinction: "what point is there to having a separate class of statements called analytic statements?"[38] So thus, we may begin our critical evaluation of Putnam's view here, by responding to this question historico-philosophically.

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32 Torretti, *Philosophy of Geometry from Riemann to Poincaré*, pp. 43, 44, 50.
33 Ibid., p. 53.
34 Ibid., p. 40.
35 Ibid,, p. 66.
36 Torretti, *Philosophy of Geometry from Riemann to Poincaré*, p. 101.
37 Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, p. 83.
38 Putnam, "Analytic and Synthetic", p. 35

On the one hand, I believe that the nature and rationale of the analytic-synthetic distinction lie in the fact that the logical positivists in general, and Carnap in particular, wanted to respond to the Kantian problem: *how is pure mathematics possible*?[39] In doing so, they also wanted to avoid the Kantian synthetic *a priori* doctrine of the transcendental aesthetic.[40] Since Putnam directs some of his criticisms of the analyticity of geometry towards Reichenbach,[41] whose conventionalism, he says, grew out of the Viennese circle, seeing what Reichenbach *actually* thought at one time in his career will serve us well as we seek to understand the nature and rationale of the analytic-synthetic distinction.

4.3 THE RELATIVIZED A PRIORI

As Friedman points out, Reichenbach had a unique conception of the relationship between the *a priori* and empirical science that was neither strictly Kantian nor radically empiricist.[42] Friedman argues in his 1920 book, *General Relativity and A Priori Knowledge*, that Reichenbach distinguished between *axioms of coordination* and *axioms of connection*.[43] On the one hand, the axioms of coordination preserved *part* of the Kantian sense of the *a priori*, namely that they make science, through the physical theory, possible. He held that whatever the axioms of coordination were, they were *a priori* relative to the scientific theory that was employing them. Friedman notes that, for Reichenbach, "these nonempirical axioms of coordination – which include, paradigmatically, the principles of physical geometry – are 'constitutive of the object of knowledge.'"[44] Axioms of connection, on the other hand, are scientific inductive generalizations. What is important to note, according to Friedman, is that for Reichenbach, the axioms of coordination, *relative to a given scientific theory* (Newtonian Mechanics, Special Relativity, or General Relativity), are *a priori* and, as such, are not subject to any empirical confirmation or disconfirmation. But whichever axioms of coordination are in fact used depends on the scientific theory. So, the axioms of coordination could, in principle, be revised as a result of scientific advances, e.g., physical Euclidean geometry is *a priori* in classical mechanics but is not *a priori* in General Relativity, where "topology (sufficient to admit a Riemannian structure)" is instead *a priori*.[45] This is the *relativized a priori* – the idea that relative to a scientific theory, a geometry, for example, is *a priori*.

Friedman notes that Schlick, in an exchange of letters, rebuked Reichenbach for holding on to elements of the Kantian doctrine. Instead, Schlick wanted Reichenbach to adopt the conventionalism of Poincaré. By acquiescing to Schlick, the notion of

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39 Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, p. 165.
40 Cf. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, p. Chapter 4 and Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, pp. 165 and Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (Smith Norman K., Trans.) p. 56.
41 Putnam, "Analytic and Synthetic", pp. 33, 47.
42 Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, p. 7.
43 Ibid.
44 Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, p. 7.
45 Ibid., p. 7 and especially pp. 66 – 68.

relativized a priori was lost.[46] Later, as Friedman points out, Reichenbach devoted his writing to reconciling post-general relativity science to the conventionalism of Schlick and Poincaré.[47]

Schlick's conventionalism grew out of that of Poincaré and the work of David Hilbert. From the former, Schlick was persuaded that the question of which of the geometries is to be applied to space is a matter to be settled by experience and requirements of overall simplicity of our scientific conceptual system. Applying the Helmholtz-Lie theorem, which states that based on the experience (or idealization in the case of Poincaré) that rigid motion is possible in our space, our space must be either Euclidean or characterized by one of the manifolds of constant curvature,[48] Poincaré thought that the choice between the non-Euclidean and Euclidean geometries was conventional based on which was the most expedient to work with.[49] From Hilbert, Schlick got the idea of 'implicit definitions', namely that the axioms of a geometry implicitly define the geometry's primitive terms. Different geometries differ in so far as they employ different implicit definitions of 'point,' 'line,' 'between,' and so on.

As Friedman points out, the conventionalism of Poincaré and Schlick is in no way different from Duhemian holism, which is the idea that the theoretical components of our conceptual system face the tribunal of experience not in isolation, but as a whole.[50] So, Schlick's conventionalism does not do justice to the principles of geometry and differs from the linguistic conventionalism of Carnap that I shall now proceed to explain.

4.4 LINGUISTIC CONVENTIONALISM

According to Friedman, where Reichenbach had failed to give a clear explication of the difference between the axioms of coordination and the axioms of connection, Carnap, in the *Logical Syntax of Language*, had the machinery to do so: L-rules[51] (the analytic) and P-rules (the synthetic) of the physical language of science. The choice of L-rules and the interpretation that made them true is a matter of convention, for these rules are purely formal and one has a lot of leeway in selecting the L-rules in the formulation of a language. In Classical Mechanics, for example, the L-rules include the principles of Euclidean geometry, while the P-rules are the general principles and laws of physics. In General Relativity, the L-rules include a topology sufficient

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46 Ibid., pp. 64 This is important because Putnam, in "Analytic and Synthetic," in a footnote on p. 47, cites Reichenbach's 1928 *Philosophy of Space and Time* (Reichenbach, 1956) which suggests publication dates much later than the ones which Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, p. 7 is drawing from to explain Reichenbach's conception of the relativized *a priori*.

47 Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, p. 63.

48 Cf. Ibid., p. 77.

49 Since he died in 1912, Poincaré was not aware that Einstein would, in fact, use a non-Euclidean geometry of variable curvature. See Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, p. 79.

50 Cf. The foregoing discussion with Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, pp. 64 – 65 and pp. 78 - 79.

51 Cf. Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, p. 13. "The L-rules or logical rules represent the purely formal, non-empirical part of our scientific theory, whereas P-rules or physical rules represent its material or empirical content."

to admit the 4-dimensional semi-Riemannian manifold of non-constant curvature, while the P-rules now include applied geometry through optics and the other general laws of physics. What is important to note for Carnap, says Friedman, is that the L-rules (or analytic sentences) are distinguished from the P-rules *at a given stage* in the development of the scientific enterprise.[52] That they are revisable in light of the development of the scientific enterprise is exemplified by applied or physical geometry in the move from classical mechanics to general relativity. However, Carnap can still say this and can also hold on to the idea that in a physical language there is a distinction between analytic sentences and synthetic sentences. For it is the analytic sentences, axioms of coordination (in the case of Reichenbach) and conventions (in the case of Poincaré and Schlick), that are constitutive of any endeavor to gain any objective scientific knowledge.[53] In other words, only if we are armed with the axioms of coordination or L-rules can we begin to generate hypotheses and test them.[54] Thus, it is useful to have the distinction between the analytic and the synthetic even in science.

On the other hand, I would argue that holists, like Putnam, who oppose the distinction in science, have a hard time responding to the Kantian question of "*how is pure mathematics possible*?" That is, they have a hard time explaining why mathematics and logic seem to be necessarily true, and therefore *a priori*. While they would say that mathematics and logic are *framework principles* which are to be identified with centrality and priority within our conceptual scheme, such that if revisions become necessary due to advances in science they are the last to be considered for revision,[55] I would still argue that the holists would be hard pressed to explain away our belief that there is a marked difference between mathematics, on the one hand, and physical laws, on the other. The former cannot be otherwise, while the latter can.

4.5 APPLIED GEOMETRY AND THE PHYSICAL INTERPRETATION OF A STRAIGHT LINE

Lastly, we may critically evaluate Putnam's essay with respect to the physical interpretation of a straight line. Hume, Putnam says, would rather deny that light rays travel in straight lines than conclude that Euclid's postulate 5 is false.[56] In other words, optical theory was synthetic for Hume and (pure) Euclidean geometry was analytic. In a footnote to a remark on Reichenbach, Putnam points out that Reichenbach actually claimed that there were other possible alternative coordinative definitions of 'straight line'.[57] I take this to imply that for Reichenbach, the optical

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52 Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, p. 13.
53 Ibid.
54 Cf. Rudolf, Carnap, *Foundations of Mathematics and Logic* (International Encyclopedia of Unified Science ; Vol. 1, no. 3) (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939) p. 1 where he says, "In these theoretical activities, deduction plays an important part; this includes calculation, which is a special form of deduction applied to numerical expressions."
55 Putnam, "Analytic and Synthetic", p. 40.
56 Ibid., pp. 46 - 47.
57 Putnam, "Analytic and Synthetic", p. 47.

theory was analytic (in the sense of stipulated true by convention) while the principles of geometry in General Relativity were synthetic.[58] Putnam says that both Hume and Reichenbach are wrong:

> The principle that light travels in straight lines is a law of optics, nothing more or less serious than that. We test the conjunction of geometry and optics indeed, and if we get into trouble, then we can alter either the geometry or the optics, depending on the nature of the trouble.[59]

It is possible that Reichenbach was correct in Putnam's footnoted discussion.[60] For in a very enlightening discussion on the empiricism with respect to geometry of Ernst Mach, Torretti points out that *there are* alternative physical interpretations of the straight line. In fact, interpreting straight line as the path of a light ray may not be the best approximation of a straight line. In this discussion from Mach on how planes are constructed in practice:

> Physically a plane is constructed by rubbing three bodies together until three surfaces A, B, C, are obtained, each of which exactly fits the others – a result which can be accomplished […] with neither convex nor concave surfaces, but with plane surfaces only.[61]

Torretti observes, "If you construct two adjacent planes by this method, their common edge will provide a better approximation of the straight line than any taut string or light ray."[62]

5. CONCLUSION

What this observation by Torretti on the passage from Mach suggests to me is that we have a choice of what physical interpretation to give our pure geometrical concepts. Therefore, Reichenbach could have been right in saying that the optical theory is analytic, hence *a priori* relative to pre-general relativity physics. Recall that, in presenting Carnap's view, I said that Friedman argues that, for Carnap, the choice of L-rules *and the interpretation* that made them true is a matter of convention.[63] Now when we stipulate the interpretation of a straight line as the path of a ray of light, the stipulation is a matter of convention, since there are alternatives that are equally good physical interpretations. Now, given that in the discussion of kinetic energy, Putnam seems to grant that *conventions are valid only if there are alternatives*;[64] and, given that there are alternative interpretations of a straight line, it follows that statements in the optical theory that interpret geometrical concepts are *valid* conventions, and are

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58 Ibid., p. 49.
59 Ibid., p. 49f
60 Ibid., p. 47.
61 Torretti, *Philosophy of Geometry from Riemann to Poincaré* , p. 283
62 Ibid.
63 Friedman, *Reconsidering Logical Positivism*, p. 13.
64 Putnam, "Analytic and Synthetic", pp. 45 He says, "['e=1/2 mv^2'] would be true by stipulation, yes, but only in a context which is defined by the fact that the only alternative principle is 'e = mv'"

hence analytic. So, using the idea of the *relativized a priori* from Friedman, I want to suggest that Reichenbach could have been right in saying that the optical theory, which is a kind of *applied* geometry, was analytic (in the sense of stipulated as true by convention), and hence *a priori*, *relative* to pre-general relativity science. But optical theory (applied geometry) is now synthetic, and hence not *a priori*, *relative* to general relativity physics, and we can say this, however, without having to deny the view that pure Euclidean geometry is analytic in Carnap's sense. ✦

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MAURICE MERLEAU-PONTY AND ALEX GARLAND:

Human Consciousness in *Ex Machina*

FISHER PRESSMAN

Alex Garland's science-fiction film *Ex Machina* is the story of Ava, an artificially intelligent robot, as she undergoes a Turing test, an examination aimed at determining whether an artificially intelligent entity is conscious. Garland forces the audience to ask what it means to be conscious, and whether a machine can have consciousness.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty stands as one of the most recognized existentialist philosophers of the twentieth century, who used phenomenological analysis to "demonstrate how the world is an *experience which we live* before it becomes an *object which we know*."[1] He emphasizes the uniqueness of the body, as "more than an instrument or a means; it is our expression in the world, the visible form of our intentions."[2] In this way, Merleau-Ponty's philosophy provides a powerful tool for reading the film *Ex Machina*, particularly with respect to Garland's choice to use an incarnate robot, and the robot Ava's use of art as pre-linguistic expression.

PHENOMENOLOGY AND EXISTENTIALISM

Philosopher Richard Kearney suggests that "phenomenology and existentialism attempt to relocate the origins of meaning in our lived experience prior to the

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1   Richard Kearney, *Modern Movements in European Philosophy* (Manchester, NY: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 1.
2   Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Prospectus" in Robert Solomon, *Existentialism* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 275.

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impersonal 'objectivism' on a narrow scientific attitude."[3] The renewed focus on lived experience, with an emphasis on *being* over objective truth, was a response to the increased focus on empirical and scientific methods being incorporated into philosophy and other disciplines in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[4] This shift towards positivism confined truth as one-dimensional, and, as a result, was met with a new approach towards understanding relation to the world[5].

Phenomenology, according to Robert Solomon, "is the explicit conceptual manifestation of an existential attitude – a spirit of the 'present age.'"[6] He suggests that existentialism is an expression between harsh reason and the celebration of the individual. He concludes: "Existentialism is this self-discovery. Its presupposition is always the Cartesian 'I am' (not 'I think')."[7] It is not something to be defined, he argues, but an expression, a mood, a discovery of the self, with an essential understanding that personal, lived experience is our entry point into the absurdity of life, which begins with 'I am.'[8]

MERLEAU-PONTY AND EXISTENTIALISM

Maurice Merleau-Ponty is widely considered a leading figure in phenomenological philosophy. Merleau-Ponty writes in *Phenomenology of Perception* that phenomenology is "the study of essences […] such as the essence of perception or the essence of consciousness."[9] His project in this text is to examine what constitutes human experience and being in the world. He asserts that a study of human existence can be examined only through a study of phenomena as it relates to the essence of human facticity.[10]

For Merleau-Ponty, lived experience is necessary for being; the experience of being is not some abstraction of 'I think,' but 'I am.' He suggests that the world is a place in which we live and with which we communicate, but not something that any person can possess. The facticity of the world established the "*Weltlichkeit der Welt* [worldliness of the world]," which allows for the embodied experience of being.[11] It is the facticity of living – of being in the world – that enables the "recognition that the body is not an object amongst objects, to be measured in purely scientific or geometric terms, but a mysterious and expressive mode of belonging to the world of our perceptions, gestures, sexuality and speech."[12] The necessary component for experiencing the world, for Merleau-Ponty, is the body, which allows for a means of

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3   Kearney, *Modern Movements in European Philosophy*, p. 1.
4   Ibid., p. 2.
5   Ibid., p. 2.
6   Robert Solomon, *Existentialism* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. xi.
7   Ibid., p. xii.
8   Ibid., p. xx.
9   Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2012), p. xxi.
10 Ibid., p. xxi.
11 Ibid., p. xxxi.
12 Kearney, "Maurice Merleau-Ponty" in *Modern Movements of European Philosophy,* p. 73.

opening the cogito to the world around it. This body is what senses, experiences, and lives, and from which our consciousness derives its relation to the world. Merleau-Ponty discusses the importance of the body for lived experience as our point of intentionality in the world in his work *Prospectus (A Report to the Collège de France)*. He writes:[13]

> The perceiving mind is an incarnated mind. I have tried, first of all, to re-establish the roots of the mind in its body, and in its world, going against doctrines which treat perception as a simple result of the action of external things on our body as well as against those which insist on the autonomy of consciousness. These philosophies commonly forget – in favor of a pure exteriority or of a pure interiority – the intersection of the mind in corporeality, the ambiguous relation which we entertain with our body and, correlatively, with perceived things.[14]

Human existence is not some abstraction, coming from the mind alone as other philosophers suggest, but is the lived, embodied experience and our relation to the world. Solomon comments that "our bodies are not simply objects in the world (to which each of us has privileged but yet contingent access). The body is our Being-in-the-world, the perspective from which we perceive, judge, value."[15]

It is clear from this analysis that it is the body that gives us access to the world and provides us with a platform through which we can experience. Kearney writes: "the 'phenomenon' of our embodied consciousness is precisely that 'in-between' realm – l'entredeux – which pre-exists the division into subject and object."[16] To be in the world is to have an experiencing body-subject, which is the platform for thought, for feeling, and for outward expression towards others. Kearney concludes his analysis on the philosopher with a discussion of what being-in-the-world means for Merleau-Ponty: "We might sum up the adventures of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological dialectic in terms of this multiple, reversible equation: *I think* (consciousness) – *I perceive* (nature) – *I express* (language) – *I create* (art) – *I relate with others* (history) – *I exist in the flesh of the world* (Being)."[17]

CRITIQUE OF LANGUAGE, THE BODY, AND THE ROLE OF ART

A second major contribution of Merleau-Ponty is his critique of language, and his analysis of our signification in, and to, the world. Kearney writes, "To perceive the world is already to make sense of it, to transform it into signs by expressing an intentional project of meaning. Our carnal interrelationship with others is

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13 Ibid., p. 73.
14 Merleau-Ponty, "Prospectus," p. 274.
15 Solomon, "Maurice Merleau-Ponty" in *Existentialism*, pp. 271-272.
16 Kearney, "Maurice Merleau-Ponty" in *Modern Movements of European Philosophy*, p. 75.
17 Ibid., p. 90.

therefore indicative of an intentional 'signification.'"[18] Merleau-Ponty argues that to make meaning of the world is to use language as a "sort of being," as language's "opaqueness, its obstinate reference to itself, and its turning and folding back on itself are precisely what make it a mental power; for it in turn becomes something like a universe, and it is capable of lodging things themselves in this universe."[19] In this way, it is language that gives rise to being through the interpretation of the body-subject. It is through the body-subject in the world that one can signify and interpret the signs from others.[20] Further, it is the use of language that creates the facticity of being necessary for human consciousness. As Merleau-Ponty notes in the above passage, through language one can situate oneself in the universe, and signal to others through linguistic mediation.

An important aspect of language is the speech-act. Speech enables one to connect with another individual, or as Merleau-Ponty writes, "to express is to become aware of another and himself."[21] He concludes, "Speech … is that moment when the significative intention … proves itself capable … of shaping me and others."[22] Speech plays a crucial role in shaping culture and relating to others, and allows for an interrelationship with people in the world.[23] It is essential in establishing the human's position in the universe, and it is what gives rise to the facticity of being. However, these signs are not limited to just language through speech. Movement, too, is the expression of the thoughts of the body-subject. Merleau-Ponty writes: "Language bears the meaning of thought as a footprint signifies the movement and effort of a body."[24] Each individual has a unique style, conveyed through the movement, art, and speech of the body. He states that "style is the system of equivalencies that he makes for himself for the work which manifests the world he sees. It is the universal index of the 'coherent deformation' by which he concentrates the still scattered meaning of his perception and makes it exist expressly."[25] The pre-linguistic signifying to others is this individual style, which is achieved through external expression. Merleau-Ponty gives the reader an important example of the style of the body-subject in the world in his book *Signs*. He writes:

> A woman passing is not first and foremost a corporeal contour for me, a colored mannequin, or a spectacle; she is 'an individual, sentimental, sexual expression.' She is a certain manner of being flesh which is given entirely in her walk or even in the simple shock of her heel on the ground – as the tension of the bow is present in each fiber of wood – a very noticeable

18 Ibid., p. 79.
19 Merleau-Ponty, *Signs* (Northwestern University Press, 1964), p. 43.
20 Kearney, "Maurice Merleau-Ponty" in *Modern Movements of European Philosophy,* p. 79.
21 Merleau-Ponty, *Signs,* p. 90.
22 Ibid., p. 92
23 Ibid., p. 92.
24 Ibid., p. 44.
25 Ibid., p. 55.

variation of the norm of walking, looking, touching, and speaking that I possess in my self-awareness because I am incarnate.[26]

This passage clearly details what Merleau-Ponty means by style. The "woman passing" is not some robotic façade; rather, she is made a being-in-the-world by her style, her "walking, looking, touching, and speaking," which constitute her unique set of expressions – set of gestures as pre-linguistic language – which give rise to her understood consciousness.[27]

Finally, Merleau-Ponty highlights the use of art (whether painting or poetry) as a means of expression in the world: a mix of the style of movement, and a reflection of the pre-linguistic expression that body-subjects necessarily employ. As Kearney notes: "Merleau-Ponty argues that artistic forms such as painting, music, and poetry provide a privileged access to the hidden workings of language. Behind the transparency of secondary expression, art reveals the *indirect* voices of primary expression."[28] It is through art that the artist can interpret "the world out of everything he lived" by constituting "his corporeal or vital situation in language."[29] Merleau-Ponty suggests that art can reveal our experience in the world, and can, as Kearney writes, open a "'universal realm of primary expressions … a language common to all body subjects."[30] Primary expression through pre-reflective art allows for translation across linguistic systems or cultural barriers, and allows for communication between people of varied backgrounds.[31]

PHENOMENOLOGY IN *EX MACHINA*

The film *Ex Machina* directly addresses the question of human existence, and the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty offers an exceptional means of discussing the film and its presentation of artificial intelligence. The film is the story of Caleb, a young programmer, who is selected to perform a Turing Test on the AI Ava, created by Nathan.[32] The film is loosely structured around a series of seven interviews (or tests) performed by Caleb over the course of a week, during which he tries to determine if Ava is self-conscious. Caleb becomes increasingly enamored by Nathan's creation, and ultimately helps Ava to escape from the facility. Director and writer Alex Garland uses the film as a medium to discuss what it means to be conscious; what it means for something to have sentience. He responds in an interview:

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26 Ibid., p. 54.
27 Ibid., p. 54.
28 Kearney, "Maurice Merleau-Ponty" in *Modern Movements of European Philosophy*, p. 80.
29 Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, p. 64.
30 Kearney, "Maurice Merleau-Ponty" in *Modern Movements of European Philosophy*, p. 81.
31 Ibid., p. 81.
32 A Turing Test is a test devised to determine if a computer has the ability to think. The test involves a human interacting with a computer, with the computer attempting to convince the human that it (the machine) is a human. A successful computer would be able to imitate a human so well as to convince the human examiner that it was sentient. If a computer can act and react like a human, then it should be considered able to think. In the context of *Ex Machina*, Nathan admits that Ava is clearly a machine, yet asks Caleb to continue with a Turing Test to assess weather the machine (Ava) can still pass, or be viewed as conscious, by a human.

> If you talk about the problems of strong artificial intelligence and let's
> say self-awareness – a self-aware machine – then you are immediately
> talking about human consciousness. That immediately brings you into
> the territory of how humans interact with each other, let alone how they
> interact with the machine. Really just how sentience encounters and
> understands sentience. How does one consciousness know or feel sure
> what is happening inside another consciousness?[33]

It is clear that Garland has an interest similar to Merleau-Ponty regarding what
consciousness is and how we know if someone, let alone some machine, is sentient.
Two features of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology facilitate an interesting discussion
of the problem of consciousness. Garland uses the choice of a physically bodied
subject for the robot, Ava, and allows her to create drawn art as a means of presenting
her existence in the world – both key concepts for Merleau-Ponty's existentialism.[34]

The first approach that Garland uses to discuss the consciousness of Ava is through
her representation as a carnal body, which moves, talks, and feels. The body is a central
part of Merleau-Ponty's understanding of consciousness because it is the mechanism
through which one experiences the world. As noted above, consciousness is achieved
only through "the intersection of the mind in corporeality, the ambiguous relation
which we entertain with our body and, correlatively, with perceived things."[35] Ava's
body has a special significance in the film because of the structure of the Turing Test
used by Nathan and Caleb. Garland intentionally creates Ava with a machine-body
that forces anyone interacting with her to know that she is a robot, yet still to believe
that the robot is conscious. Nathan, Ava's creator, says in scene 22 that "the real test
is to show you she is a robot. Then see if you still feel she has consciousness."[36] In
an interview, Garland comments on the decision to give Ava a body, saying "the first
time she appears, there's no doubt about her machine status. Large parts of her body
are transparent and you can see through them."[37] He continues, "Hopefully that
starts to sort of introduce the more humanlike aspects of her in a sort of physical
representation … a sense of life, but a sense of life which is *other* in some way."[38] It
is essential that Ava have a body because it is what gives her the sense of life, as well
as a platform to interact with Caleb and Nathan; the body is also a prerequisite for
consciousness according to Merleau-Ponty.

Later in the film, Caleb asks why it is necessary that Ava have a physical body.[39] He
asks Nathan, "Why did you give her sexuality? An AI doesn't need a gender. She

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33 O'Hehir, Andrew, "Dark Secrets of the Sex Robot: Alex Garland Talks A.I., Consciousness and Why 'the Gender
   Stuff' of *Ex Machina* is Only One Part of the Movie's Big Idea" (Salon Magazine, 2015).
34 I will be using the pronouns she, her, and hers, herself when describing the robot Ava. I will also use pronouns
   like it and its to describe the robot. The pronouns used mirror the gendered pronouns used in the film, as well as
   non-gendered pronouns used in the discussion of specific traits for a robot or non-living being.
35 Merleau-Ponty, "Prospectus" in *Existentialism*, p. 274.
36 Garland, *Ex Machina* (2015), p. 26.
37 All Things Considered, "More Fear of Human Intelligence Than Artificial Intelligence in *Ex Machina*". (2014)
38 Ibid. [My italics]
39 Garland, *Ex Machina*, Scene 55.

could have been a grey box."[40] Nathan responds to Caleb, "Actually, I'm not sure that's true. Can you think of an example of consciousness, at any level, human or animal, that exists without a sexual dimension? What imperative does a grey box have to interact with another grey box? Does consciousness exist without interaction?"[41] The distinction is clearly made between Ava – a robot with senses – and a grey box – the normal subject of a Turing Test. A physical body is necessary, as Merleau-Ponty suggests, to walk, look, touch, and speak.[42] Another important aspect here is the sexuality of the robot; it is important for Garland to represent Ava as "an individual, sentimental, sexual expression," and not just as a box that interacts with speech alone.[43] It is the mix of a "system of systems devoted to the inspection of the world and capable of leaping over distances, piercing the perceptual future, and outlining hollows and reliefs, distances and deviations" that gives life to Ava, and which enables her to be a body-subject in the world.[44]

The importance of her physical body is most powerfully displayed in the final scenes of the film, when the newly escaped Ava adopts a style by literally creating her final human body and, at the end of the film, when she moves through a crowd of people. These two scenes clearly show that human movement of gesture "embodied in the form of a 'style' which mediates between symbolizer and spectator."[45]

The first of these instances takes place in the final ten minutes of the film, after Ava has killed her creator, Nathan. She walks into Nathan's room where other previous versions of AI robots are kept, and she begins to layer synthetic skin onto her robotic frame. It is also in this scene where she picks her final cut of hair (from a selection of wigs), and selects a dress to wear out in the world. The second notable instance is her entry into the world, as she leaves the house and enters the human world. In this scene, Ava is mixed in a crowd of other people and, as someone moves past Ava, she too disappears into the mass of other individuals. These two events can be read as the final attempts for Garland to present Ava as having created her own style, that "system of equivalencies that he makes for himself for the work which manifests the world he sees."[46] Ava has made that her style, and her distinct expressions are her manifestation in the world. These final instances are, as Kearney writes, both prime examples of the creation of meaning as "both within and without, both subjective and objective, spiritual and material; it reveals that Being is not some mindless in-itself which threatens our free expression, but an intercorporeal life-world which gives us meanings and summons each body-subject to recreate these meanings for

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40 Ibid., p. 55.
41 Ibid., pp. 55-56.
42 Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, p. 54.
43 Ibid., p. 54.
44 Ibid., p. 67.
45 Richard Kearney, "The Dialectical Imagination (Merleau-Ponty)" in *Poetics of Imagining* (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 1998), p. 134.
46 Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, p. 55.

itself."[47] For the viewer, it appears that Ava has become sentient during the film. Through her carnal embodiment and sexual gesturing, Ava has achieved the "walking, looking, touching, and speaking" which is present for incarnate self-awareness.[48] Further, she has become the body-subject, embodying the "perceptions, gestures, sexuality and speech" which exists for beings-in-the-world, and has created her own distinct manifestations in the world by the end of the film through speech, style, and dress.[49] These pre- and post-linguistic signifyings through speech and motion are the necessary components of being for Merleau-Ponty, and it is clear that Ava has achieved being through her speech and motion. The principles of phenomenology described by Merleau-Ponty offer an interesting and poignant analysis of *Ex Machina* through the prerequisite to be incarnate before conscious.

The second important reference point between Garland's film and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology is the reliance on art as a means of communication, especially for Ava. There are several importance scenes in which Ava draws/creates art while she is confined in her quarters. The first example of her drawing takes place during the 'Session 2' interview between Caleb and Ava.[50] She says to him, "I brought you a drawing."[51] The notes in the script describe this first drawing presented to Caleb as "totally abstract … a mesh of tiny black marks, that swirl around the page like iron filings in magnetic field patterns."[52] As their conversation continues, it is evident that Ava is unsure what the drawing is, or why she made it, though she draws every day that she can. There are several other examples of Ava's art throughout the film. She presents to Caleb a drawing of her room (or containment area), and then later in the film, Ava draws a likeness of Caleb, presumably to show her affection for him. She is also shown several times (over security cameras) during the film to be drawing while nobody is interacting with her.

This recurring depiction of Ava creating art is important because it relates to Merleau-Ponty's notion of art as a means of pre-linguistic expression, and is used by Garland to again highlight the sentience Ava possesses. Merleau-Ponty suggests that accomplished artwork is that which has the ability to connect with the viewer in a meaningful way, and to invite the viewer into the world of the artist, leaving the previously "silent world of the painter" now "uttered and accessible."[53] Ava's drawings represent this type of art, which reaches out to Caleb and allows him to access her consciousness through pre-linguistic expressions. The role of art in the film is important to give another means of humanizing the machine, to prove that while she does have the exterior of a robot, she also has thought, and the means of expressing this thought with gesture, ultimately giving rise to her being-in-the-world.

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47 Kearney, "Maurice Merleau-Ponty" in *Modern Movements of European Philosophy*, p. 89.
48 Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, p. 90.
49 Kearney, "Maurice Merleau-Ponty" in *Modern Movements of European Philosophy*, p. 73.
50 Garland, *Ex Machina*, Scene 32.
51 Ibid., p. 35.
52 Ibid., p. 35.
53 Merleau-Ponty, *Signs* p. 51.

Finally, another important scene focuses on art, but does not directly involve Ava. The two men are in the midst of a conversation regarding Ava's supposed affections for Caleb when Nathan asks Caleb about a painting in the room.[54] Nathan answers his own question to Caleb: "Jackson Pollock. The drip painter. He let his mind go blank, and his hand go where it wanted. Not deliberate, not random. Someplace in between. They called it automatic art."[55] He continues, "The challenge is not to act automatically. It's to find an action that is not automatic. From talking, to breathing, to painting." This is remarkably similar to Merleau-Ponty's discussion of the influential impressionist painter Henri Matisse, and is directly applicable to the discussion of human consciousness. He says of Matisse's painting style:

> A camera once recoded the work of Matisse in slow motion… everything happened in the human world of perception and gesture; and the camera gives us a fascinating version of the events only by making us believe that the painter's hand operated in the physical world where an infinity of options is possible. And yet, Matisse's hand did hesitate. Consequently, there was a choice and the chosen line was chosen in such a way as to observe, scattered out over the painting, twenty conditions which were unformulated and even informulable for any one by Matisse.[56]

The Pollack painting in the film has the same meaning for Garland as does the Matisse painting for Merleau-Ponty. Matisse "did hesitate," before creating his masterful works of art, in order to create his works of art in a manner that only Matisse was able to perfect.[57] In an almost identical manner, Nathan discusses the Pollack painting, saying that it is "not deliberate, not random," but someplace in between.[58] The painting in the film stands as a representation for Ava, the robot, and her feelings towards Caleb as a being-in-the-world. She does not act precisely as some machine might, nor does she act with complete randomness; rather, Ava, like Matisse, acts with a calculated precision, sometimes hesitating, which gives rise to her consciousness and sexuality. Her body, like Matisse or Pollack's hands, is her "expression in the world, the visible form of [her] intentions."[59] Merleau-Ponty's philosophy provides a powerful explanation for the role of art in *Ex Machina*, both through the robot's creation of art and through discussions concerning art creation as a phenomenon of existence.

CONCLUSION

Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological analysis offers several powerful tools that the viewer can use to decipher and analyze Alex Garland's film *Ex Machina*. These philosophical tools help the viewer to understand Garland's use of an embodied,

54 Garland, *Ex Machina*, Scene 50A.
55 Ibid., p. 58.
56 Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, pp. 45-6.
57 Ibid., p. 46.
58 Garland, *Ex Machina*, p. 59.
59 Merleau-Ponty, "Prospectus," p. 275.

even sexual, robot who creates art in the context of human consciousness and being-in-the-world. And, on the flip side, Garland unintentionally employs some of Merleau-Ponty's most important philosophical contributions regarding both being and consciousness in his film to discuss whether artificial intelligence has reached sentience. His choices to create Ava as carnal and his focus on art are both clearly intended to create an AI that the audience believes is sentient. It is fascinating that while Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology explains AI through embodied experience, other notable philosophers have used his phenomenology to criticize the notion of non-human human consciousness. The writing of Hubert Dreyfus stands as perhaps the best example of this criticism. He comments: "Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Michael Polanyi have devoted a deal of thought to" the question regarding the "essential difference between meat machine and metal machine, between being embodied and controlling movable manipulators."[60] His conclusion, though, is the opposite of Alex Garland's. Dreyfus firmly believes that the concept of artificial intelligence "seems magical from the point of view of science"; he remarks, "there is no reason to suppose that a world organized in terms of the body should be accessed through any other means." But perhaps that is the power of film, of the aesthetic art form Garland uses. It seems that the failure of AI in the scientific fashion articulated by Dreyfus is a failure Merleau-Ponty might not recognize, for both Merleau-Ponty and Garland operate in the "domain of the phenomenal," in questions of existence, and not in objective truth or positivist logic. Merleau-Ponty insists that we must go beyond science to question the world for ourselves through lived experience, and *Ex Machina* presents to the viewer a fascinating experience of consciousness, of the interconnectivity of individuals, and of the deceit of human will. ✦

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60 Hubert Dreyfus, Artificial Intelligence (Sage Publications, 1974), p. 31.

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JIMI HENDRIX:
Creolization and the
Re-Imagined Black Authentic

ROBERT ENGELMAN

While Jimi Hendrix understood himself as a person of both Native American and African-American heritage, he was well aware of his being perceived as a black person and a black artist, both in England and in the United States. This tension seems to have been formative in his understanding of race, his relationship to blackness, and, consequently, the formation of his own identity. In accordance with his refusal to treat race as consisting of fixed singularities with respective essences, Hendrix, I argue, styled himself not as a crossover artist, but rather as a hybrid, creolized artist.[1] Towards this end, I analyze two opposed models of cultural and ethnic "Relation"[2] proposed by Édouard Glissant, the baroque and the *métissage*, and argue that Hendrix thought and acted in a manner closer to the latter.[3] Then, I will analyze Hendrix's relationship with race (blackness in particular), which shifted dramatically towards the end of his life, and I will explore how this relationship should be evaluated. Finally, I will examine his song, "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)," as a demonstration of his reflexive stylization as a creolized musician.[4]

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1   That is to say, Hendrix did not style himself to be a successful black artist in a white musical scene, but rather to be an artist who rejects such a divide altogether.
2   Relation, to clarify, is Glissant's term for the interaction and change that occurs in cultural contact.
3   Édouard Glissant, *The Poetics of Relation*, trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997). pp. 26-27.
4   The terms 'creole' and 'creolized' appear throughout the paper and should be understood as analogous to 'hybrid' and 'hybridized,' where two or more ethnicities or cultures come into contact and yield something distinctive, rather than as a reference to Creole culture specifically.

THE BAROQUE AND THE *MÉTISSAGE*

Glissant introduces the baroque as an ideological model that regards ethnicity and culture as existing in a network of coming together and scattering, which entails that cultural contact can be untangled and that the respective cultures can thus be 'restored' to whatever state they were in prior to the contact. Beneath this treatment is an assumption that cultures have essences that can remain pure or become tainted and diluted through cultural contact, and that because cultural contact compromises a culture's essence, "no culture [is] rightfully impeded in the baroque; none [rightfully] imposes its tradition, even if there are some that export their generalizing products everywhere."[5] Glissant claims that this ideology is a "derangement," or a violent delusion, though a key confounding issue with eradicating such a derangement is that it has become concealed through its naturalization.[6] Thus, the baroque should be regarded as both a conceptually and ethically problematic ideological framework.

Conceptually, the baroque presumes cultural stability and continuity through an essence, which disregards the vast histories of cultural exchange and contact that have formed what we recognize as definite and unique cultures. Moreover, this essentialist claim of fixedness depends on regarding culture ontologically, as some metaphysical entity that individuals participate in—perhaps in a Platonic fashion wherein the 'Form' of the culture never changes, but its instantiations may become 'corrupted'— or as something natural within individuals that becomes corrupted through 'mixing.' The metaphysical, Platonist model is ahistorical and lacks the explanatory power for the ways in which culture operates at both individual and group levels, while the natural model does not account for cultural learning and serves as a slippery slope towards racial tropes that justify oppression and violence. Whichever model we may find more appropriately describes the presuppositions of the baroque (which, if we follow Glissant, appears to be the second), it is clear that a model of cultural and ethnic Relation, centered on essentializing and abstracting cultural identities from the lives of people who frequently exist at cultural crossroads, leads to either "intolerant exclusions" or "the manifest and integrating violence of contaminations," both of which involve the relegation of individuals, groups, and cultures.[7]

This is to say that the baroque is not merely an abstracted, ideological model of ethnic and cultural interaction, but an ideology of said interaction that *interpellates* subjects into living in a manner that is consistent with much of the ideology's principles and presuppositions. As a concept, interpellation refers to the phenomenon that, in receiving labels and legitimating them through response, we find ourselves implicated in, and governed by, the ideological frameworks that accompany these labels; to use a quotidian example, if a restaurant employee is treated by a patron as a waitress, and responds in a manner that demonstrates such a treatment to be appropriate (such

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5 Ibid., p. 92.
6 Ibid., p. 91.
7 Ibid.

as asking what the patron would like to drink), the employee is interpellated into a framework that governs how she ought to behave and how she will be treated by both the patron and those around her—namely, in accordance with her identification as a waitress. If we follow Fanon, who discusses interpellation with particular attention towards blackness (which is, of course, pertinent towards the analysis of Hendrix), we see that being designated as black is especially troubling insofar as it "connotes… a certain manner of not-being, [and] of being defective," rather than being a proper subject who simply happens to be black.[8] Thus, through interpellation, the baroque enters into daily life by subjugating the labeled through the labeler, such that the black subject in particular becomes sub-subject in the interaction. Because the baroque has exercised, and continues to exercise, much oppression in a manner through which its very 'being an ideology' or framework gets hidden, we should understand how crucial Glissant's project is in exposing the baroque as *ideology,* while offering a new ideology—more firmly grounded in historical realities—that combats the ethical and theoretical pitfalls of the baroque.

Glissant offers the *métissage* as a more truthful and more ethical ideology of cultural and ethnic interaction. Rather than treating cultures as essential singularities, entailing that cultural contact is either inconsequential or 'tainting' to all cultures involved, the *métissage* treats cultures as fluid and worldly phenomena. Accordingly, Glissant regards the structure of Relation as a "turbulent confluence" that is "neither fusion nor confusion… neither the uniform blend—a ravenous integration—nor muddled nothingness."[9] That is, cultures are fluid and worldly phenomena, which continually interact with one another in a number of ways, including, but not limited to, the exchange of goods and encounters between people. The hybridization that results from these forms of Relation is not indiscriminate muddiness—as the baroque may characterize it—but is actually the *formative process by which distinctive cultures come to be*. By placing hybridity, diversification, and fluidity at the center of this process, the *métissage* inverts the baroque idea that cultural interaction taints and homogenizes cultures. Rather than treating cultural contact as a phenomenon by which distinctive cultures become uniform, the *métissage* treats hybridization or *creolization* as a generative process by which cultures develop and emerge; this process of Relation "senses, assumes, opens, gathers, scatters, continues, and transforms the thought of these elements, these forms, and this motion."[10] What is important to note in Glissant's view is that he *humanizes* Relation between cultures by placing these *imaginative and creative* processes as central to it. Thus, if we follow Glissant, it is the case that, as cultures collide and take from one another, they become more complex and diversified, prompting and resulting from imaginative development.

The ethical dimension of the *métissage* is, of course, made possible by its consistency with history and with living culture, but for our purposes, it is crucial to note how

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8   Pierre Macherey, "Figures of Interpellation in Althusser and Fanon," *Radical Philosophy*, 173.9 (2012): p. 16.
9   Glissant, *The Poetics of Relation*, p. 94.
10 Ibid., pp. 94-95.

it challenges the tenability and the ethics of using the notion of authenticity *qua* legitimacy, which signifies something's really having a particular identity, to describe cultures and individuals.[11] By revising the understanding of cultures and individuals, the *métissage* model makes this sort of authenticity a given for all cultures and individuals, rendering it as a superfluous notion in this universe of discourse. As Glissant describes this revision:

> The aesthetics of the *chaos-monde*… embraces all the elements and forms of expression of this totality within us; it is totality's act and its fluidity, totality's reflection and agent in motion… Destructure these facts, declare them void, replace them, reinvent their music: totality's imagination is inexhaustible and always, in every form, wholly legitimate—that is, free of all legitimacy.[12]

At least two points emerge from this passage. First, by treating the totality of a person's identity as creative and imaginative *in-itself*, Glissant's model makes wholly compatible—if not necessarily entangled—imaginative stylization and authenticity, in both senses of the latter term. Thus, for Glissant, to be authentic does not entail that one need search for some deep-rooted essence that has become obscured or limit oneself to a supposedly fixed 'essence,' but instead allows for the freedom to explore and imagine what she could be. The imaginative totality of the self, for Glissant, is constantly developing, and this development is always legitimate or 'real'; this is to say that the legitimate components of one's identity are not limited to one's inherited identity, but include our decisions to involve ourselves in projects or to take on roles. To use a simple example, one is not born a doctor, but if one decides to become a doctor and goes through the process, then she becomes a legitimate doctor, as well as a legitimate member of whatever ethnicity and culture that she is born into. Second, because Glissant understands the individual as a creative agent and cultures as creolized and interacting, he readily accepts that there are innumerable permutations and idiosyncrasies of cultural possibilities. These manifold developing forms are inadequately, and all-too-often oppressively, generalized into categories that serve as the standards for authenticity in the baroque ideology. Such categories cannot, however, be realistic guides for applying authenticity, as they deny the hybridity and imagination of cultures and agents while mischaracterizing the cultures they purport to encapsulate. That is, if we maintain authenticity as signifying legitimacy or 'realness,' then the notion becomes superfluous, and perhaps senseless, for judging cultures and cultural agents, because both are essentially condemned to this form of authenticity. If, however, authenticity signifies a way of relating to oneself and the

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11 I acknowledge that content of the term 'authenticity *qua* legitimacy' is often expressed simply with the term, 'authenticity'; however, the distinction that I am developing here is between using authenticity to denote membership in a certain type or identity (i.e., being a 'real American' as opposed being to an immigrant living in America), and to denote an honest or responsible relation to a certain type or identity (i.e., being an engaged American as opposed to being an apathetic American).

12 Ibid.

components of one's identity, it can be used to examine and evaluate cultures and individuals in a more pluralistic manner.

Pragmatist philosopher Paul Taylor has recently written an insightful book on the notion of black aesthetics, which I have found to complement Glissant's discussion of cultural hybridity and his rejection of authenticity *qua* legitimacy as a relevant notion for describing people as members of given races, ethnicities, or cultures. Of course, authenticity *qua* legitimacy has appropriate and valid uses (i.e., is this an authentic bank note, or a fake?), but to use this notion to describe individuals' identities is superfluous under the *métissage* framework, and, under the baroque framework, it designates individuals who are at cultural or ethnic crossroads as 'fake' or illegitimate members of a given race, ethnicity, or culture of which they are in fact a part. So, after discarding four permutations of this notion of authenticity, which are all quite similar to the notion that Glissant seeks to discard, Taylor offers a somewhat new notion that he calls, following the existential and phenomenological traditions, "experiential authenticity."[13] This form of authenticity complements Glissant's account in a manner similar to that of Fanon's, namely by emphasizing the contingency and context under which individual agents, such as Jimi Hendrix, undertake commitments and creative projects. For Taylor, experiential authenticity is primarily "a heuristic device for action-guidance… to seek the right balance between facticity and transcendence."[14] He thus emphasizes the importance of responsibly engaging with one's factical commitments in light of the possibility of moving beyond them through "creativity and choice," which is to say that we are bound to both our chosen and non-chosen commitments.[15] Experiential authenticity ultimately deals with the ethical issues that become prevalent in light of cultural and ethnic hybridity. Because we live "in a world of ceaseless cultural exchange," where our roots often appear more nonexistent than rhizomatic, we need, for ethics, a notion of authenticity that allows us to take the facticity of our non-chosen roots seriously as we relate to and enmesh ourselves with others.[16] While Glissant demonstrates that cultural hybridity undermines many applications of authenticity *qua* legitimacy, Taylor's experiential authenticity helps us to ethically evaluate chosen entanglements in light of those non-chosen, while maintaining the hybridity of cultures.

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13 Paul C. Taylor, *Black is Beautiful: A Philosophy of Black Aesthetics.* (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley Blackwell, 2016), p. 147.

14 Ibid., p. 148.

15 Ibid., p. 147.

16 Ibid., p. 152. In describing our roots as rhizomatic, I mean that Glissant, borrowing from the work of Deleuze and Guattari, understands that our 'roots' are multifarious, constantly developing, intertwined, and resistant to teleological readings, rather than as singular, mono-rooted or, otherwise, arborescent in nature. The main point here is that the force of cultural exchange today certainly exposes our constant development and our entanglement with others, but it often obscures the fact that we are rooted to anything at all (Not sure what that means). Rhizomatic roots thus accord with Glissant's insistence that one's identity is hybridized, that is, not stemming from or being predicated by, a single root, which is inevitably entangled among the cultures and commitments with which one becomes involved. Cf. Darbinski, John E., *Levinas and the Postcolonial: Race, Nation, Other* (Edinburgh University Press: Edinburg, U.K., 2011), pp. 170-178.

What Glissant and Taylor make clear is that we should not judge whether Jimi Hendrix, who had clearly made commitments far beyond those into which he was thrown, was legitimately or illegitimately black, but whether or not he responsibly engaged with his commitments, which include his own blackness. Together with Glissant's notion of the *métissage*, this Taylorian notion of authenticity allows us to embrace and judge creativity, not as a spirited-away, Romantic ideal, but rather as a very real activity that entangles one in real, consequential commitments.

JIMI HENDRIX'S PHILOSOPHY OF RACE

I argue that interpreting Hendrix's shifting negotiations between 1), a coldness towards his blackness, and 2), an embrace of it as simply a shift between not wanting and wanting to be black, does not go far enough in considering Hendrix's own view of what race *is*, among other factors. By *coldness*, I refer to Hendrix's 'turning away' from his blackness and his commitment to it, which I will demonstrate in the examples that follow. In light of Taylor's experiential authenticity, moreover, this coldness should be considered inauthentic, because Hendrix did not responsibly engage with his own blackness, precisely by treating it as something to which he was not bound. Hendrix's philosophy of race, what Paul Gilroy somewhat misleadingly terms "the nomadic ideology of the gypsy," could be understood as a way for him to rationalize his cold turning away from blackness, especially in the way that Gilroy represents Hendrix's view[17] As will be demonstrated, however, Hendrix's view of race should also be understood as allowing him to authentically embrace his blackness without reducing himself to it or ignoring his other commitments. Thus, before proposing what Hendrix's view was and how it should be considered, it is necessary to substantiate the biographical claim that Hendrix did in fact shift between avoidant rejection and authentic embrace of his blackness.

To begin, Hendrix has been quoted on multiple occasions making remarks that indicate his avoidance of blackness and his dismissal of the plights of African Americans in the United States. Hendrix once supposedly told a producer: "Negros think they really have it bad, but Indians [(Native Americans)] have it just as bad if not worse."[18] This remark touches on both indications noted above; Hendrix identified with both his Native American heritage and his African-American heritage, which set the grounds for him to distance himself from blackness and the ethical causes undertaken by African-Americans. Hendrix's understanding of himself as multi-ethnic seems to have made him confused over his ethnic identity, a proposition supported by the testimony of Linda Keith, a girlfriend of Keith Richards and a close friend of

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17 Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness.* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 94. What is misleading about Gilroy's terminology is that it suggests rootlessness rather than rhizomatic roots. Such a misunderstanding, however, may have been precisely what led Hendrix to turn away from his blackness (though I make no claim that this is necessarily what happened).

18 Charles Gower Price, "Got My Own World to Look Through: Jimi Hendrix and the Blues Aesthetic," *Journal of American & Comparative Cultures*, 25.3-4 (2002): p. 442.

Hendrix.[19] That is to say, Hendrix's self-understanding was incompatible with "[the law of] the excluded middle of the American racial imagination," not to mention that Hendrix's identity drew from outside the black-white binary altogether.[20] Thus, it is plausible that his distancing himself from blackness early in his career had more to do with do with the contrariety between the dominant structure of racial and ethnic interpellation (the baroque framework), which was 'naturalized' within the public sphere, and Hendrix's own understanding of race and ethnicity, which was informed by his *experience* of the contrariety of his double-consciousness.

What I argue for here is that Hendrix's multi-ethnic self-conception and, consequently, the contrariety of his double-consciousness (seeing-himself-being-seen-as-black involving blackness as an over-simplified mislabel *and* an oppressive label) made it rather difficult, but not impossible, for him to develop a philosophy of race through which he could embrace his blackness without reducing himself to it. Contrary to, and perhaps in explicit opposition to, the interpellating baroque essentialism that was diffuse in both white society and the Black Aesthetic movement, Hendrix refused to "describe his music in race-specific terms."[21] That is, Hendrix did not essentialize musical style to race, did not assert race-based ownership of style, nor did he see as valid the application of racial standards to music. Case in point: as opposed to critics like Amiri Baraka who located the blues specifically in blackness, Hendrix said that "everybody has some kind of blues to offer," and heard 'funkiness' in both Irish and African-American folk music alike.[22] Terms such as 'funk' and 'blues' have historically been associated so closely with African-American music-making that these remarks cannot but reveal Hendrix's refusal to valorize an ideology of race that seemed to limit his artistic endeavors, oppress his subjecthood, and misrepresent his identity.

Later in his career, there is evidence that Hendrix came to more closely identify with his blackness and embrace the related responsibility that he had been avoiding, though the topic of race still appears to have been uncomfortable for him to talk about. Three biographical facts elucidate this point. First, during a trip to Morocco, Hendrix was comforted by the fact that his race was not causing him to be interpellated as sub-subject, and that his fame did not subsume how others perceived him: he immersed himself in the music and mysticism of the Moroccan culture around him without the active presence of double-consciousness that had been infringing on his identity.[23]

Second, shortly after the Woodstock Festival, Hendrix had agreed to perform a benefit concert in Harlem for the United Block Association (UBA). He was nervous

19 Ibid., p. 443; Charles R. Cross, *Room Full of Mirrors: A Biography of Jimi Hendrix.* (New York: Hyperion, 2005).
20 Christopher Waterman, "Race Music: Bo Chatmon, "Corrine Corrina," and the Excluded Middle," *Music and the Racial Imagination*, Ronald Radano and Philip V. Bohlman, eds. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 198.
21 Steve Waksman, "Black Sound, Black Body: Jimi Hendrix, the Electric Guitar, and the Meanings of Blackness," *Popular Music and Society,* 23.1 (1999): p. 86.
22 Ibid., 87.
23 Charles R. Cross, *Room Full of Mirrors: A Biography of Jimi Hendrix,* pp. 264-265.

about recognizing that his fan-base was largely white and that he had minimal, if any, presence on black radio stations, but, nevertheless, was rather optimistic about the event: he was moved by "the nonviolent nature of Woodstock and hoped the UBA show would bring that same sense of unity to Harlem."[24] Even though Hendrix was shying away from talking about race in a follow-up interview, there is a clear sense that he wanted to responsibly engage with the African-American community, typified by his emphasis on: non-violence, providing opportunities for the underprivileged, and his avoidance of reducing musical forms to essentialized race-music; here his remarks on musical style are basically consistent with his earlier remarks on both the blues and funk.[25]

Lastly, although Hendrix's strong advocacy for non-violence had led him to distance himself from the Black Panthers throughout his career, by 1970 he had gone so far as to call "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)" "our anthem," which he then dedicated to "the People's Park and *especially* the Black Panthers [second emphasis added]."[26] Thus, despite his refusal to speak of music in racial terms, it appears that he felt obligated to reach out to the African-American community; although he had knowingly alienated himself from this community, his commitment to the ideals of the Rainbow movement—such as peace, open-mindedness, and diversity—would be a sham—a mere act of posturing—had he not seriously engaged with the African-American community, at the very least because the Rainbow movement was heavily implicated in the Civil Rights movement. Accordingly, Hendrix's view of himself as 'black-but-not-only-black' along with his Rainbow ethics should be understood as critical for his turn towards positively engaging with the African-American community. Further, by 1970, racial politics had reached a point at which one could not be flippant about one's identity; accordingly, Hendrix was berated by many members of the African-American community for his history of turning-away from his blackness and his responsibility to it. However, it is clear that Hendrix had, by this time and for a manifold of reasons, come to recognize that he had an ethical responsibly engage with his blackness. In light of experiential authenticity, one might say that Hendrix came to realize that he had a commitment to the African-American community that no amount of branching out could eliminate. Although he was far from an exemplary representative of the African-American community and an activist for their causes, he came to face and take seriously his responsibility to the African-American community, in addition to his other, chosen responsibilities, both related and unrelated.

My argument thus builds upon Steve Waksman's argument that "musical and racial boundaries (which intersect in the division, say, between "real" blues and "white" blues, or between blues and rock) appeared to Hendrix to be similarly artificial constructs" by emphasizing the *boundaries* as illegitimate, and the standard modes of judging

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24 Ibid., p. 274.

25 Ibid., p. 274-75. In an interview with the *New York Times* before the event, Hendrix said that he "want[ed] to show them that music is universal—that there is no white rock or black rock."

26 Ibid., p. 296.

authenticity—and of using authenticity *qua* legitimacy as an evaluative tool—as antagonistic towards his artistic proclivities.[27] Through his ethnic identification and imaginative stylization, Jimi Hendrix reveals himself as something of a Glissantian, whose identity and authenticity-grounds are ill-suited for, and misrepresented by, the essentialist presuppositions of the baroque ideology. Accordingly, Hendrix—the person and the artist—should be studied through the *métissage* framework.

JIMI'S CREOLE IMAGINATION AND EXPERIENTIAL AUTHENTICITY

By adopting the *métissage* framework of cultural Relation to analyze Jimi Hendrix as a reflexively hybrid artist rather than a 'crossover' artist, we can better understand his creative development and evaluate his cultural agency. The *métissage* holds that cultures and cultural agents have rhizomatic roots, such that they are hybrid and multi-rooted rather than rootless; further, cultures and cultural agents can expand their roots be relating to others. This process of Relation is generative and imaginative whilst also being contingent to prior roots, both chosen and non-chosen. Thus, when Glissant treats imagination as "inexhaustible," he is referring to the fact that relation is something of an extropy, wherein cultures and cultural agents become more diverse and more complex, along with their imaginative potentials.[28] I hold that this cultural extropy increases the contingencies of a given imagination as well as its possibilities. In light of the cultural extropy and rhizomatic contingencies that are revealed through the *métissage*, the phenomenon of Jimi Hendrix—as both man and artist—becomes much more coherent. Here we have a black musician with a multi-ethnic heritage who took an active role in his subject formation. Although he was interpellated as black in manners that were at times advantageous (in London) and at times disadvantageous (in the U.S.), his active subject formation was fueled and conditioned by the interaction between the multifarious experimentation of the Rainbow movement and his self-understanding as culturally and ethnically hybrid.

Hendrix's 'creole imagination', as I have termed it, should thus not be understood as "free play of the imagination," as Waksman puts it, à la Kant, which implies that the imagination is an autonomous, non-contingent form of freedom.[29] Here I strongly disagree with Waksman, and instead suggest an understanding of creole imagination as a contingent form of imagination that increases its contingencies and expands its possibilities as it entangles itself with the manifold set of possibilities that it discovers and engages with. To apply Waksman's notion to Hendrix, we see that Hendrix began his musical development with the blues tradition, which is entangled with African-

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27 Waksman, "Black Sound, Black Body: Jimi Hendrix, the Electric Guitar, and the Meanings of Blackness," p. 88. I have omitted Waksman's appeal to the "free play of the imagination," which I reject as an antiquated appeal to the arts and imagination as autonomous and non-contingent. I briefly argue against it and offer my alternative understanding of imagination in the following section.

28 Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, p. 95.

29 Waksman, "Black Sound, Black Body: Jimi Hendrix, the Electric Guitar, and the Meanings of Blackness," p. 88.

American culture, but throughout his career, he engaged with a number of other musical styles and cultural movements, which, in turn, expanded his imaginative horizon while entangling him in further commitments and contingencies. For example, once Hendrix aligned himself with the Rainbow movement and the hippie counterculture, his subsequent actions became entangled with these commitments, and could then be evaluated on this basis. Nevertheless, both his ethnic hybridity and his blackness were contingencies for him both prior to and after these commitments, and should thus be understood as conditions in which he engaged in his reflexive stylization. From the aforementioned biographical points, it is clear that Hendrix did not responsibly consider his blackness as a contingent commitment until the near-end of his life, though the responsibility was there to be considered and acted upon all along. When he did responsibly engage with his blackness, however, he did so in a way that was simultaneously both responsible for and considerate of his Rainbow commitments; when he was in Harlem to help the UBA, he championed nonviolence and also refused to essentialize music as race-music, all while working to positively influence the local youth, who were systematically impoverished and racially-targeted. At this point, by coherently and responsibly negotiating with his commitments, Hendrix had come to exhibit an experiential authenticity that he had not demonstrated beforehand. Perhaps a sort of crowning-jewel with which we can conclude this analysis of Jimi Hendrix's relationship to blackness is a separate analysis of his song, "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)," in light of his dedication of a performance of the song to the Black Panthers, which marks a consummation of his hybrid, reflexive stylization with his turn towards experiential authenticity.

"Voodoo Child (Slight Return)" demonstrates how Hendrix's style has its basis in the blues, but stretches far beyond this basis. Even before Hendrix began to relate authentically to his blackness, he used the term 'Voodoo' as homage to a spiritual tradition found in a number of African and Afro-Diasporic cultures. Additionally, the lyrics of the song follow the traditional blues, AAB form. Following the song's lyrics, Hendrix proclaims himself a 'voodoo child' with masculine, spiritual power that extends from this world to 'the next'; the voodoo child chops down mountains with his hand, reassembles these mountains to create an island, and erects sand from beneath the ocean (though this last line could also be read as expressing a sort of 'shaking things up'). After lyrically expressing his power, Hendrix "plays a searing solo on the upper registers of his instrument" that wails with pitch bends and disorientingly swells with 'wah' sounds and automated panning[30] In the following verse, Hendrix's lyrics come quite closer to those of a traditional blues, where he apologizes for taking up somebody's time (perhaps a woman's), and promises to make it up to this person; his manner of reparation, however, returns to the spiritual and the mystical by evoking an otherworldly meeting. In professing his intention to return the time in the 'next' world, Hendrix makes it an imperative to not be late,

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30 Ibid., p. 91.

which may be to signify his persuasive power as a voodoo child, though the reason for the imperative admittedly remains unclear. On a number of grounds, however, the song captures the multiplicity of Hendrix's hybrid style. It is bluesy, but not only so. It exploits both the material and the ephemeral possibilities afforded by the electric guitar. It incorporates both chaotic noise and articulate musical phrasing. Ultimately, by non-reductively fusing these elements without attention to false contradictions, misattributed incoherencies, and the law of the excluded racial-middle that had linked race and music by essentializing black and white cultural production, Hendrix demonstrates his commitment to exposing boundaries as altogether illegitimate and as oppressive to those at the crossroads. Only after re-aligning himself with the African-American cause, however, does he demonstrate an understanding that the essentialism and boundary-forging of the baroque are oppressive to those on the 'wrong side' of the boundary as well. Ultimately, it is at this point, and not beforehand, that Hendrix could be considered experientially authentic.

CONCLUSION

By dedicating a hybrid, experimental blues song to the Black Panthers, Hendrix shows us that his commitment to and identification with creolization could be compatible with a commitment to the African-American community, and that hybridity and blackness need not be mutually exclusive. The cultural and political climate of the early-1960's allowed Hendrix to experiment while downplaying his identity, but there were clear changes on a number of fronts as the decade came to a close. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X were both assassinated, Nixon had set his sights on the Black Panthers in his 'law and order' campaign, and there were riots, by both blacks and whites, over race relations across the country. Racial identification had become a much more serious matter that could no longer be 'escaped'. Hendrix clearly had to face this reality and, consequently, had come to the side of black America. Following Taylor, I hold that Hendrix had come to relate authentically to his blackness at this point, which he did not seem to do in the early 1960's. The rapid cultural change during the Rainbow movement had covered up the contingency of one's roots, however rhizomatic they may be. Knowing that Hendrix was, for most of his life, far from a moral exemplar in his engagement with blackness, it is critical that we consider his philosophy of race not to justify his irresponsibility, but to understand it as deeply woven *between* his worldview and the historical situation in which he was thrown. I do not believe there can be a moral justification for Hendrix's cold neglect of his responsibilities as an African-American, but by probing into his views on race, his involvement in the Rainbow movement, and his turn towards authentically engaging with his commitment to blackness, we can begin to see why his relation to blackness was as enigmatic, complex, and shifting as it was. ✦

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