CHIASMA
A Site For Thought

#2
WHAT NOW, PROFESSOR?

CHIASMA

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❦ EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

I am happy and proud to see the second issue of *Chiasma: A Site for Thought* published this year. We were established in September 2013 as an annual, double-blind, peer-reviewed journal to further the disruption, generation, and dispersion of that much decried, yet inescapable beast of the academy: theory. We continue to feature invited essays, peer-reviewed articles, and solicited reviews of books and of academic fields, and have this year also included a translation of academic work previously unavailable in English. Though housed in Western University's Centre for the Study of Theory and Criticism, *Chiasma*'s editorial and advisory personnel, and our contributors, are drawn from a variety of disciplines in the arts, humanities, and social sciences. We are united in our commitment not to a methodology, a politics, a body of texts, or even an approach, but rather to a problem: what, how, and why do we think theory, and what does this *do*?

Our inaugural issue questioned "What the Doing of Thinking Does and Doesn't Do Today." When we sent out this year's Call for Papers inviting submissions on the 'problem' of the teaching of being, we were motivated by our interest in the possible consequences—philosophical, social, political, financial, ethical, and otherwise—of the prevailing academic interest in ontology. More specifically, we were interested in the possible consequences of the teaching of ontology, ontologies. Whatever else might have changed in and around the academy, this problem remains: with one eye on 2015 and the other on that abstract realm we call history (at other times, the future), we teach and we learn and we publish on how to understand what it is, what it means, to be. With this in mind, this year we ask, "What Now, Professor?" This particular problem is too formidable for any particular article to address, so we have collected articles and reviews that engage some of its aspects.

Eileen Joy returns to this issue with her article "Let Us Now Stand Up For Bastards," which is at once a response to Johanna Drucker's work on the digital humanities, a critical inquiry into the changing relationship between the public commons and the University, and something between a manifesto and a call to arms to all "bastards" against the tyranny of cultural Authority. In discussing the crisis of the digital humanities, Joy's piece thus engages our "problem" on at least two fronts: that of the form in which new ideas and works exist and are made more or less accessible (and the social and financial consequences thereof), and that of the ontology of public-ation, which she defines as "the formation of publics and counter-publics," in our digital age. In other words, Joy takes a meta-level survey of the industry of public(-)ation, of the production and teaching of knowledge and ideation, and urges us to side with the "bastards" and, in view of the possible consequences of recent trends in this industry, to "take care."

Will Samson's article, "On the *Neuro-* Turn in the Humanities," was originally delivered as a Theory Session. The Sessions are the Centre for the Study of Theory and Criticism's interdisciplinary forum for the lively exchange of ideas and research between resident and visiting students and faculty. In the spirit of these Sessions, following Samson's piece we have also included a condensed version of Tom Wormald's response. Samson's article moves us out of Joy's meta-industrial perspective, into Conflict of the Faculties territory. He examines the ongoing engagement of continental philosophy with neuroscience, and of phenomenology with naturalism, paying attention not least to the conflicting ontological claims of each. After returning to Dilthey's distinction between explanation and understanding, Samson concludes by deftly negotiating a rapprochement between neuroscientific research and humanistic scholarship. Given that the dialogue between continental philosophy and neuroscience seems likely to continue—at the levels both of independent humanistic scholarship and neuroscientific research, and of university coursework and its teaching of being—Samson's suggestions merit close consideration.

Levi R. Bryant's "For an Apocalyptic Pedagogy" raises the stakes of the "problem" we posit in this issue, arguing that we need an "apocalyptic pedagogy" to effectively combat the perfidious "ontology of everyday life" (OEL)—that we need to practice apocalypse at a pedagogical level if we are to mitigate an apocalypse of the globe. Bryant advocates an ecological

approach to an ontology of flows, machines, and production, wherein the machine of pedagogy holds a powerful potential to unveil, apocalyptically, the world in which we dwell. Using the Bloemhof primary school in Rotterdam, Holland, as an example, Bryant argues that the implementation of apocalyptic pedagogy has the potential to demystify the actualism of OEL, to foster an ecological subjectivity, and to "directly intervene in the social and cultural ecologies of [...] students."

Harvey L. Hix, in "Why *This* Poetry Matters," begins by returning to the perennial question, "can poetry matter?" In order to make his case for the direct (and political) contemporary relevance of Fray Luis de León's poetry, Hix hypothesizes and develops a theory that divides thinking into four "boxes," based on the two axes of final versus provisional authority, and the ultimate immanence versus ultimate transcendence. He concludes that de León's work "matters" because it belongs to box four, where authority is provisional and transcendence ultimate, the box which is "the most to be admired and the hardest to achieve and sustain," not least because it is "the only box that legitimates civil disobedience". Though Hix's article is explicitly oriented to explaining the continuing relevance of de León's poetry, working as it does through the history of ideas from Aristotle to the Patriot Act, Hix's theory points to the direct, tangible social and political consequences of how we, and the authors we teach, think—and of what they teach us.

Noel Glover examines what the work of D. W. Winnicott has to offer pedagogy in his article, "Between Comfort and Disillusionment," arguing that pedagogy has much to learn from Winnicott's theories of play. Drawing on Winnicott's therapeutic practices, Glover also advocates for pedagogical practices that give students the opportunity to experience their own formlessness and ignorance—where the goal would not be the formation of good neoliberal, self-sufficient subjectivities, but the experience of oneself "at play" with others, the opening up of the "self" we discover in the other, and the 'self' we creatively imagine ourselves to be. Glover thus uses Winnicott's insights to imagine pedagogy as means of teaching another way to conceive of both an experience one's self (one's own ontology) and one's relationship to others (both teachers and fellow students).

In their co-authored article, "Heidegger's *Contributions* To Education (From Thinking)," Carolyn Thomas and Iain Thomson re-examine Martin

Heidegger's thoughts on ontotheology and his understanding of education as a practice oriented to readying human beings to think being. They interpret Heidegger's work as issuing a call for "a thinking catalyzed by a pedagogy practiced as relentless hermeneutic engagement with the ontotheological tradition," a thinking which repeatedly forces itself to encounter the shock of *aporia*, and moves us to "leap" away from ontotheology. Thomas and Thomson conclude with a suggestive description of post-metaphysical thinking as the "real education" of post-modern thinkers. In doing so, the authors, in a sense, respond to our "problem" in reverse—positing post-modern thinkers as a consequence of Heidegger's pedagogy, both continuing and breaking from the Western tradition.

Bernard Stiegler's article, "Annotation, Navigation, Electronic Editions," appears here in English translation for the first time, translated by John Oliver Beal. Read alongside Joy's article (and probably on the reader's computer), Stiegler's work provides valuable and engaging insight into the technological research, set of concerns, and theoretical background through which the digital humanities came into existence. We follow this with Jan Plug's review of Rodolphe Gasché's *Georges Bataille: Phenomenology and Phantasmology* and Kent L. Brintnall's review and evaluation of Calvin Thomas's *Ten Lessons in Theory*. Finally, in keeping with the theme of this issue, we have included participant reviews of two of the leading summer programs in critical theory. Asad Haider reviews his experience at the Duke-Bologna School on Global Studies and Critical Theory, and Aggeliki Sifaki her experience of Rosi Braidotti's course, Critical Theory Beyond Negativity.

Thanks are due as always to the students and faculty of the Centre for the Study of Theory and Criticism for their ongoing support of this project. Jon Doering in particular provided invaluable assistance. We also thank our outstanding Advisory Board, for their advice and encouragement; our contributors, for their generosity and enthusiasm; and the editors of this issue, for their commitment and creative industry. *Chiasma* is still a young publication, and as such it faces and overcomes many challenges each year; this issue would not have been possible without Ilya Merlin, Dru Farro, and Jeremy Colangelo, all of whom stepped up when it was most needed.

ESSAYS

LET US NOW STAND UP FOR BASTARDS

The Importance of Illegitmate Publics*

EILEEN A. JOY

> [What might be] the possibility of liberating oneself from a cycle of disen-
> gaged production motivated by a craving for legitimising praise? Paradoxi-
> cally, I looked toward a mutual admiration society—to that ecstatic reciprocal
> attention-paying of lovers—as an alternative model for understanding how
> and why intellectuals might freely collaborate.
> ~ Frances Stark, *Structures that fit my opening and other parts considered in the whole* (2006)

In her essay "Pixel Dust: Illusions of Innovation in Scholarly Publishing," published in the *Los Angeles Review of Books* last January, Johanna Drucker cautioned against what she calls "the hyped myths of digital publishing."[1] Drucker, who has described herself as both an

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"aesthetician" and "token humanist" within the digital humanities and information sciences[2] (where she has played important roles, both at the University of Virginia and, more recently, at UCLA), believes there are many "prevailing misconceptions" relative to digital scholarship, such as—

> • that it is "cheap, permanent yet somehow immaterial, and that it is done by machines";
> • that "everything" is digitized and that everything digital is available;
> • that it participates in all sorts of "fantasies about crowdsourced, participatory knowledge generation that would essentially de-professionalize knowledge production";
> • that it operates with a "business model in which publishing thrives without a revenue stream";
> • and that it provides multi-modal platforms for dissemination and reading that go far beyond the supposed flat "linearity" of the print book.

Drucker is concerned about these "hyped myths" (her phrase), in part because they arise, along with the digital humanities itself (writ large as a field that cuts across multiple institutions), at a time of crisis in academic publishing, described by Drucker as a situation in which university presses are shrinking, not expanding, their lists; libraries are being crippled by rising and exorbitant journal subscription rates; sales of monographs have dropped dramatically; and the production of PhDs has not abated, while at the same time the outlets for the dissemination of their work has dramatically narrowed. And what Drucker is most at pains in her essay to demonstrate is that, in the face of this publishing crisis "we can't rely on a purely technological salvation, building houses on the shifting sands of innovative digital platforms."

I actually think Drucker, whom I deeply admire and who is herself a significant innovator within and theorist of the digital humanities, raises some important concerns in her essay, with which I am mainly in

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2 See Johanna Drucker, "SpecLab's Experiment: The Humanist, the Library, and the Digital Future of Cultural Materials and Their Interpretation," lecture delivered for the Scholarly Communication Lecture Series, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio, 9 April 2010: http://youtu.be/RgsyWKgmaSA.

agreement—for example, that digital scholarship is not cheaper, easier to produce, nor even necessarily more accessible than traditional print scholarship. Indeed, born-digital scholarship can be extremely expensive, especially in terms of the technical expertise and software+hardware required, and it also often necessitates long-term funding strategies that are overly reliant on private foundational support. Further, open-access publishing initiatives, such as those initiated in the UK after the Finch Report, and also by the University of California's Office of Scholarly Communication,[3] do indeed bring with them serious funding perils: if all academic work is to be made fully available with no fees imposed upon readers and users, then the financial burden falls more squarely upon institutions of higher learning and governments at the exact moment that funding for higher education, and especially for more speculative forms of research, is shrinking and under siege.[4] A troubling recent development in this regard is revealed in the (revised) "White Paper" released by University of California Press on 30 April 2014, "The Future of the Humanities in the Digital Age at UC Press." This "White Paper" was developed as an outcome

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3 See the Research Council UK's 2012 "Policy on Open Access and Guidance," as well as a link to the "National Working Group on Expanding Access to Published Research Find- ings" (a.k.a. the 'Finch Group Report'), here: http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/openac- cess/policy/. See the Open Access Policy adopted by the University of California and ratified by the UC Academic Senate in 2013 here: http://osc.universityofcalifornia.edu/ open-access-policy/. For the ways in which the "open source" movement does not always spell "public good," and even poses a danger to a truly public commons, see Christopher Newfield, "Corporate Open Source: Intellectual Property and the Struggle Over Value," *Radical Philosophy* 181 (Sep/Oct 2013): http://www.radicalphilosophy.com/commentary/ corporate-open-source.

4 There are too many examples to count of the University, and especially the humanities, under siege, but for a recent example from the state of Wisconsin, see Richard Grusin, "Meet the Regents, Wisconsin, or Welcome to Our New University System Overlords," *Ragman's Circles* [weblog], 5 February 2015: https://ragmanscircles.wordpress.com/2015/02/05/ meet-the-regents-wisconsin-or-welcome-to-our-new-university-system-overlords/.   For important reports on what is happening within the University of California system (the canary in the coalmine, if ever there were one, for higher education in the US), Michael Meranze and Christopher Newfield's weblog *Remaking the University* is always indispensable: http://utotherescue.blogspot.com/. Finally, see also Christopher Newfield, *Unmaking the Public University: The Forty-Year Assault on the Middle Class* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011) and Andrew McGettigan, *The Great University Gamble: Money, Markets and the Future of Higher Education* (London: Pluto Press, 2013).

of a two-day workshop that involved "an interdisciplinary group of fifteen faculty across the UC system, four senior staff from the UC Press, and three representatives from the library community." The "White Paper" proposes that the "perennial problem of monograph publishing" (meaning, that it is both required for tenure and promotion at most institutions while it is also not economically sustainable) be addressed by creating "a new Open Access model which would make [monographs] … freely available in digital form, with the costs of publication shared between the different stakeholders (the Press, the author/department, and libraries)."[5] In other words, a severe (and, importantly, new) financial burden would be imposed upon authors and their departments—and where do their monies come from, anyway? Is it not the same stream of revenue (legislative appropriations, for example) that ostensibly funds the UC Press? This feels economically tautological in the extreme, not to mention that it places faculty authors under the strain of having to compete with other faculty authors for already-limited resources, and perhaps will even unwittingly cause a situation where authors situated in departments and colleges with higher enrollments (and thus more tuition income) and more generous endowments will have an unfair advantage over authors working in more esoteric (yet still highly valuable) fields that do not attract as many students, and/or who reside in more economically-disadvantaged institutions. Not to mention that if you are a scholar who is not attached to an institution at all, you are in a somewhat precarious position if you had any notion of UC Press (or other presses adopting this model) publishing your book. Ultimately, what this really signals, in my mind, is that state legislatures and the public universities funded by them are somewhat turning their back on their responsibility to disseminate research findings, which should be a matter of great public concern (and outrage). Surely there is a better "business model" for academic publishing that neither lapses into "author-department" pay schemes nor merely hands over all of its existing funds for research development to commercial presses that have no concern for the university other than the profits to be derived therefrom?

It is thus also worrisome, in this vein, that large sums of money are already being set aside (such as by the UK Research Councils, in the wake of the recommendations of the Finch Report, as noted above) to pay

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5 The UC Press "White Paper" can be accessed here: https://www.dropbox.com/s/8fjaxhzvte3ltkk/HumWorkshop REV_draft_whitepaper_043014.pdf.

commercial and university presses to publish open-access monographs, edited volumes, and journals at exorbitant rates that are based on exceedingly bloated "business-as-usual" pricing structures.[6]   And what this means is that, even though publishers such as Palgrave Macmillan are willing to work with universities and research councils in order to make the scholarly archive more fully open and accessible, they are only willing to do so at very high prices—prices that, understandably, represent what they need to make in order to survive, and yet that also reflect the increasingly untenable overheads they carry into the bargain, and this at a time when the editorial quality of their publications is actually on a downturn, and has been for quite some time. For example, publishers such as Palgrave, Oxford University Press, Springer, Nature Publishing Group, Fordham University Press, Duke University Press, Taylor & Francis, and a host of other supposedly "gold-standard" academic presses have been outsourcing most of their editorial work (proofreading, copy-editing, typesetting, illustration and design, HTML and XML coding, etc.) to companies such as Newgen KnowledgeWorks (http://www.newgen.co/), which has offices in India, the US, and the UK, and is growing at a rapid rate, with lots of proliferating spin-off and copycat companies.[7]   Although Newgen describes itself as

6 And as a result of these bloated pricing arrangements, universities are increasingly finding that they can no longer afford journal subscriptions. See, for example, Harvard University's 2012 "Faculty Advisory Council Memorandum on Journal Pricing," where it is stated that, "[m]any large journal publishers have made the scholarly communication environment fiscally unsustainable and academically restrictive" (http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k77982&tabgroupid=icb.tabgroup143448). Further, reflecting in 2004 on a battle between Reed Elsevier and the University of California library system over the pricing of science journal subscription packages, Daniel Greenstein, Associate Vice-Provost and University Librarian for the University of California system, writes that "the business model of commercial publishing, which once served the academy's information needs, now threatens fundamentally to undermine and pervert the course of research and teaching. Put bluntly, the model is economically unsustainable for us. If business as usual continues, it will deny scholars both access to the information they need and the ability to distribute their work to the worldwide audience it deserves": "Not so Quiet on a Western Front," *Nature.com*, Web Focus: Access to the Literature [web supplement feature], 28 May 2004: http://www.nature.com/nature/focus/accessdebate/23.html.

7 For more on Palgrave's open access programs, see Palgrave Open here: http://www.palgrave.com//page/about-us-palgrave-open-faqs/. For more of my own thoughts on this state of affairs relative to government funding of for-profit open-access initiatives, see Eileen A. Joy, "A Time for Radical Hope: Freedom, Responsibility, Publishing, and Building

having been established to "cater to the pre-press publishing needs of books and journals publishers in the UK, US, and Europe," it is clear that their current ambition is essentially to take over all aspects of the pre- (and maybe even post-) press publishing processes, with services now also including "digital archiving, data conversion, electronic publishing, and large-scale ePUB conversion services." I wouldn't care if they did all of these things well, but as the editor of a Palgrave journal, *postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies*, whose proofing and copy-editing is handled by Newgen with some oversight by Palgrave, I can categorically assert that their care for the editorial quality of our journal does not even come close to the care it would receive from dedicated copy-editors whose experience and expertise would not only hew closely to the journal's subject matter, but whose efforts would not be compromised by also having to edit hundred of other journals, all with different style guidelines, in sweatshop-like conditions.

Finally, with Drucker, I believe that print technologies actually are more impervious to the ravages of time than digital technologies. Yes, I also know about LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe),[8] an open-source, library-led digital preservation system: I believe that this is the same strategy, along with piracy, employed by the Ptolemaic dynasty in ancient Egypt, and it's the reason why today we are thankfully and miraculously able to read Homer and Aeschylus and Sophocles and so on,[9] and using a platform called a "manuscript" or a "book" that doesn't require electricity, software, or hardware to be legible. The book is its own best all-in-one platform, and

New Publics," *Chiasma: A Site for Thought* 1 (April 2014): 10–23; http://chiasmaasitefor-thought.com/issue-1/.

8 See LOCKSS: Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe, based at Stanford University Libraries, here: http://www.lockss.org/.

9 On the subject of the ancient Ptolemy empire's grandiose ambitions (and even crimes) as librarians, see Luciano Canfora, *The Vanished Library: A Wonder of the Ancient World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), and on the history of the library, and the books and other readerly artifacts contained therein, relative to their continual entropy and destruction, as well as their endless re-bootings, see Nicholson Baker, *Double Fold: Libraries and the Assault on Paper* (New York: Random House, 2001) and Matthew Battles, *Library: An Unquiet History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003). For an intriguing online collaborative digital humanities project, based at Harvard University, that seeks to trace the "evolution and the resulting multiformity of the textual tradition, reflected in the many surviving texts of Homer," see The Homer Multitext: http://www.homermultitext.org/

that is one of the reasons why we still buy and read them,[10] whereas, at the same time, you will have to search far and wide to find someone to develop your 35mm celluloid film or the machine that will still read and play your cassette tapes, your zip-discs, your CDs, your DVDs, and so on (and yes, *some* "old" media, such as LP vinyl records, are witnessing a comeback, and there are good reasons for that).[11] For the most part, so-called "hard" media and the devices for "playing" and storing those are disappearing. Welcome to the Cloud: you live in it now, you don't own any piece of its ephemeral Unreal-estate, your "stuff" no longer really belongs to you (you're just leasing it). And if Benjamin Bratton is right, cloud computing promises a future of delaminated and partially private, partially inhuman accelerationist, semi-privatized polities operating in de-sovereigned territories that will take over the core functions of state powers in order to provide dividends to an elite technologized minority: welcome to Cloud Feudalism.[12] For better or worse (probably worse), it is the future-to-come, and you have probably already uploaded a prototype of yourself there.

But that feudalism is not really my concern here. Nor are Drucker's cautions about the supposed hype surrounding the digital humanities and their ability, or supposed lack thereof, to save publishing. Her cautions are worth considering even while at the same time we move forward with new (and truly helpful) digital platforms for scholarly publishing. At punctum books, we are concerned to continue lavishing attention on the printed book as a cultural arts artifact with certain sensually phenomenological presencing and time-traveling powers, while we also want to make as many of our publications as possible available in open-access, digital form and also in special web-based environments with navigational structures that are not merely analogues nor surrogates for the print-based medium. And this is because we are pluralists who believe that a "biodiversity" of

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10 Sales of print books are currently outpacing sales of e-books. See Claire Fallon, "Print Books Outsold EBooks in First Half of 2014," *The Huffington Post*, 6 October 2014: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/10/06/ebooks-print-books-outsold_n_5940654. html.

11 Punctum Records (http://punctumrecords.com), an "imprint" of punctum books, similar to the books' division continuing to invest in the printed book while also exploring and cultivating digital platforms for dissemination, is similarly investing in media such as vinyl and cassette tape, while also releasing materials in digital form.

12 See Benjamin Bratton, "The Black Stack," e-flux 53 (March 2014): http://www.e-flux.com/journal/the-black-stack/.

intellectual matter and media are critical to the cultivation and fostering of the most lively and vibrant public commons possible. We believe further, that such 'biodiversity' is critical to liberty and democracy, or to what Ivan Illich once memorably advocated for as "the protection, the maximum use, and the enjoyment of the one resource that is almost equally distributed among all people: personal energy under personal control."[13] Drucker herself, after all, wants to call our attention to the "mirages" of the digital humanities in order to help us better steer ourselves towards the more "usefully innovative" digital publishing initiatives, such as (in her view) the Digital Public Library of America, launched at Harvard, "a fully public, completely integrated online library with access," in Drucker's words "to the highest quality of ongoing knowledge production."

And this brings me to what really gave me pause and serious unease in Drucker's essay—her emphasis throughout on the ideas:

> 1. that "crowdsourced, participatory knowledge generation […]would essentially de-professionalize knowledge production";
> 2. that the Academy-proper "provides a gold standard of scholarship" that is valuable precisely because that scholarship "filters" downward and "stimulate[s] thought in virtually every field of human endeavor";
> 3. that "[h]ard, serious, life-long dedication to scholarship, the actual professional work of experts in a field," should "remain at the center of knowledge production";
> 4. and, finally, that the humanities should be careful not to risk its "cultural authority in the process of becoming digital."

It is to this idea of "cultural authority" that I now want to turn, and I want to say something like: cultural Authority is the last thing the humanities needs right now if it truly wants to innovate in the brightest

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13 Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), qtd. in Mark Seem, "Introduction," in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Schizophrenia and Capitalism*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), xxiv.

sense of the word—from the Latin *innovare*, to renew, to restore, to change—in a fashion that does not mean trashing the past nor smashing all of the tools seen as supposedly hopelessly outdated and outmoded, but instead means harnessing all of the energies of the tools and platforms (old, new, and futural) at our disposal in order to create the most richly tapestried and noisy public commons. Because, contra Drucker, I do not want a trickle-down knowledge economy that comes from the University mountaintops down to the streets—at least, not in the humanities. In order for the public commons to be more open, more diverse, and hopefully more rowdily democratic, the University itself has to be more open to the ideas and voices of its supposed non-, para-, and anti-institutional Others. It is precisely at the moment that we believe that the humanities has, or should have, cultural Authority, that we should revolt. We should also attend better to one of the questions implicit in the term and practice of "open" in "open-access" that is rarely attended to: who has access to the modes of being published, and who doesn't? Open-Access (OA) should not just mean publications that are open to users and readers, with no impediments such as pay- and firewalls; it should also mean that the services necessary for the production of public-ation (understood as the formation of publics and counter-publics "seeded" by new works, however they may be "delivered"—more on which below) should be accessible to all. Fully open to authors and open to readers. This point is rarely discussed as if it matters when publishers and academics gather to discuss the future of publishing in a digital world, occasions on which they often appear intent on figuring out ways to continue, in changing times, to maintain the "legitimacy" and "prestige" of their exclusive (and exclusionary) Establishments.

We might remind ourselves that English studies were partly founded in the living rooms and salons of rogue amateurs such as Frederick Furnivall and his compatriot para-academics, who founded, among many other ventures, the Early English Text Society in 1864.[14] When James A.H. Murray was working on what would become the Oxford English Dictionary, he had to do so in a tin shed in his backyard in Oxford, which tin shed was sunk into the ground several feet so that it would not obscure the view of the Oxford don who lived next door, about which situation Murray

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14 On this point, see David Matthews, *The Making of Middle English, 1765–1910* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

himself wrote that "no trace of such a place of real work shall be seen by fastidious and otiose Oxford."[15] Because his Edinburgh degree was not recognized by Oxford and he was also a Dissenting Congregationalist, he was not initially allowed access to the Common Rooms or even to Bodleian Library, until Benjamin Jowett, Master of Balliol College, prevailed upon Oxford to grant Murray an Honorary M.A.[16] It is worth mentioning as well that Murray was grossly under-compensated and always in debt, and that the University hounded him fairly mercilessly for always falling behind schedule on the Dictionary, so much so that he was often on the verge of a nervous breakdown and in ill health.[17] Murray was eventually knighted in 1908, multiple honorary doctorates were ultimately conferred upon him, and he was also feted in a parade in London where he walked alongside Thomas Hardy, so … take that, you Oxford bastards. And indeed, cadging from Edmund in *King Lear*, might now be the time (again) to stand up for bastards, and for bastard thought—i.e., the thoughts, and the work (such as Murray's and Furnivall's), that the Academy does not (initially) want to claim as its supposedly "rightful" progeny? I definitively answer: yes. There is no way to move knowledge forward without this "standing up." The more difficult question is how to refashion the academic press such that it actually provides safe harbor and nourishment for such refugees.

And let me be clear here that when I reference the term "innovation" (as I do above) as a practice of restorative change and renewal that would be opposed to the stances and further entrenchment of academic Authority, I am careful to distinguish innovation as a practice that does not sign on to the ways in which that term is used within corporations, such as Microsoft, whose new CEO, Satya Nadella, wrote a letter to Microsoft employees this past July, after laying off 18,000 of those employees, in which he precisely opposed innovation to tradition ("our industry does not respect tradition— it only respects innovation") as a survival strategy for staying ahead of the pack in our supposed "mobile-first and cloud-first world."[18] Whereas for me, innovation within publishing implies change, yes, but this is a change

15 Katherine Maud Elisabeth Murray, *Caught in the Web of Words: James A.H. Murray and the Oxford English Dictionary* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 248.

16 Ibid., 248.

17 Ibid., 256.

18 Satya Nadella, "Bold Ambition & Our Core," *Microsoft.com*, 10 July 2014: http://news.microsoft.com/ceo/bold-ambition/index.html.

that clears the way for the new while also reclaiming the ground of certain valuable historical structures (such as the Library, the Scriptorium, the Studio, the Salon, the Seminar, the Lab, the Hermitage, the School, and so on) that have been covered over and deformed by an increasingly powerful techno-managerial class of administrators that wants to run the University as if it were a business.[19] So, yes, Johanna Drucker, we should be wary about the ways in which some persons and groups, even within the University, tout their "innovations," but I also say, "down with [your] cultural authority" and "up with the people." Academic publishing is definitely facing a crisis, but please let us recall, too, that wherever intellectuals gather to discuss and disseminate ideas, they are always under threat and always have been; which is to say, do you want your hemlock hot or cold? So what we need right now, in my view, are more distributive collectives of someones, nomadic para-institutions, or "outstitutions,"[20] who would take responsibility for securing the freedom for the greatest number of persons possible who want to participate in intellectual-cultural life. And a publisher would be a person, or a group, or a multiplicity, who desires to be held hostage for securing this freedom.

Let's distinguish, then, as Paul Boshears has urged, between "publishing"—"making stuff knowable"—and "publication" as "public-making," which is a "process . . . the process of saturating,"[21] of instantiating and also drenching with writings many publics. Publication would thus be focused on creating tools and platforms and holding areas (some call these books, journals, zines, serials, weblogs, podcasts, databases, editions, etc.), around which certain communities might coalesce and be sustained. More than just "publics," these spaces would be "counter-

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19 On this state of affairs, Bill Readings, *The University in Ruins* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), never ceases to be instructive.
20 I borrow the term "outstitution" from Jamie Allen, who deploys (invents?) that term in order to describe "grassroots and DIY teaching and learning movements that really don't care about, or for, the way that universities decide (or don't decide) to share and impart knowledge," such as The Public School New York (http://thepublicschool.org/nyc): Editors of *continent. & Speculations*, "Discussion Before an Encounter," continent. 2.2 (2012): 145 [136–147].
21 Paul Boshears, in Editors of *continent. & Speculations*, "Discussion Before an Encounter," 147. See also Paul Boshears, "Open Access Publishing as a Para-Academic Proposition: Besides OA as Labor Relation," tripleC 11.2 (2013): 614–619, and Paul Boshears, "Para-Academic Publishing as Public-Making," in *The Para-Academic Handbook: A Toolkit for Making-Learning-Creating Acting*, eds. Alex Waldrop and Deborah Withers (Bristol, UK: HammerOn Press, 2014), 175–188.

publics," in the sense given to them by Michael Warner as "spaces of circulation in which it is hoped that the poesis of scene making will be transformative, not merely replicative."[22]   And a "press" would be that which, following the word's Old French etymology, serves as the imprinting device, but also as the pressing "crush" of the crowd into the commons. The university—and the presses associated with it—will hopefully continue to serve as one important site for the cultivation of thought and cultural studies more broadly, but increasingly their spaces are so striated by so many checkpoints, watchtowers, and administrative procedures, that truly radical modes of publishing are difficult to pursue and develop. One has to do only a brief survey of all of the new academic publishing initiatives cropping up everywhere—partly due to, on the one hand, a genuine enthusiasm for digital and open-access and post-monograph publishing modes, and on the other hand, the fears and anxieties that coalesce around such new directions, and on yet another (third) hand, the almost anxious hyper-reaction to governmental and university mandates that would dictate open-access publishing as compulsory—and one will see that a concern for certain forms of what I will call elite and bureaucratic-managerial academic oversight still exist (with few exceptions).[23] And this sort of concern, in my mind, is not conducive to opening up the important question of what 'counts' as 'scholarship,' such that we might begin to build new avenues of access for novel (and counter-institutional) modes of thought and writing.

Whether traditional old-school or forward-leaning progressive in its publishing methods, the Academy always seeks its own imprimatur as a sign of so-called legitimacy. And it always talks in the language of austerity and false choices (like, "monographs only for tenure!" or more recently,

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22 Michael Warner, "Publics, and Counterpublics," *Public Culture* 14.1 (2002): 88 [49–90].
23 See, for example, the final conference report of Jisc Collections and OAPEN on "Open Access Monographs in the Humanities and Social Sciences," a conference that was held at The British Library in July 2013 to explore the ways in which the publication of mono-graphs would intersect with new digital publishing platforms, and where one of the overall conclusions was that the humanities and social sciences will still rely to a certain extent on monographs as a significant 'output' of their research dissemination while those mono-graphs will also need to be delivered in a variety of open-access platforms if they are to have any sort of wide impact and also be sustainable over the long term. That all makes sense, but there was also a lot of hand-wringing during the conference over how to con-tinue to ensure that these open-access monographs would continue to build and confer "prestige" and "authority": https://www.jisc-collections.ac.uk/Reports/oabooksreport/.

"screw monographs; it's all just one huge digital mega-journal from now on and everyone can aggregate their own books and cataloguing systems using Mendeley!"). What we need now are illegitimate publishers willing to build shelters for illegitimate publics, which is to say, public-ations, ones that would be hell-bent on pressing a rowdy and unruly crowd of ideas into the ventilating system of this place we call the University-at-large— an Academy of Thought (and also, thought-practices) that would not be bound by the specific geographic co-ordinates of specific schools and colleges, but which insists, nevertheless, on playing the shadow-demon-parasite-prod-supplement to the University-proper (its para-mour/more). What we need now is an excess of counter-thought, an excess of modes and forms of counter-public-ation. There is no epistemic rigour worth guarding here; there is no good reason to put a limit to thought within the setting of the Academy of Thought: one must admit the mad, the chimeric, the deviant, the teratological, the wayward, the crooked, the lost, the invalid, and so on. Here be monsters in the Academy of Thought.

In my view, the time is propitious for reinventing (innovating) the Academy as a site that would oppose the current situation of overly professionalized performance, with "performance" here cadged from business management discourses, where it is often invoked as the "key to increasing corporate productivity by eliciting individual commitment and competitiveness between employees"—a situation in which, in the university at least, we may believe "we are the avant-garde but we are also the job-slaves."[24] With Jan Verwoert, I would rather dream and enact a University and an Academy of Thought where we would practice (and protect) "another logic of agency, an ethos, which could help us defy the social pressure to perform and eschew the promise of the regimented options of consumption." And this would also mean "claiming the imagination and the aesthetic experience as a field of collective agency where workable forms of resistance can be devised," and also "interrupt[ing] the brute assertiveness of the I Can through the performance of an I Can't in the key of I Can."[25] Most importantly, we have to begin with the caveat that we are existentially

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24 Jan Verwoert, *Exhaustion and Exuberance: Ways to Defy the Pressure to Perform*, pamphlet for the exhibition "Art Sheffield 08: Yes, No and Other Options" (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Contemporary Art Forum, 2008), 90.
25 Ibid., 91–92, 94.

obligated to others, and that publishing—as a vital mode of disseminating research findings, and thus also of "seeding" publics and counter-publics—is a form of care whose economic limits could never be set in advance, and which requires, instead, what Verwoert calls a "community committed to the politics of dedication," a sort of "mutual admiration society."[26] The idea would not be to accumulate capital as a publisher, but instead to focus on the expenditure of everything we have already accumulated and will accumulate (talents as well as money) in order to lovingly build and foster the reparative hospice wards of the convalescent and increasingly inoperative communities of the para-academic precariat—those who are the most vulnerable, both within and without the University proper, and who are literally "convalescent," meaning those who are recovering, who are recuperating, who are always getting better while also always being unwell, and who choose to "recuperate" together, which itself means "to take back"—to take back ourselves to ourselves, to take back our humanities, our university, and our commons, and to have some room, finally, to *conspire*, which is to say, to "breathe together." Or, as Verwoert puts it,

> if, living under the pressure to perform, we begin to see that a state of exhaustion is a horizon of collective experience, could we then understand this experience as the point of departure for the formation of a particular sort of solidarity? A solidarity that would not lay the foundations for the assertion of a potent operative community, but which would, on the contrary, lead us to acknowledge that the one thing we share — exhaustion — makes us an inoperative community [. . .] . A community, however, that can still act, not because it is entitled to do so by the institutions of power, but by virtue of an unconditional, exuberant politics of dedication.[27]

punctum books was founded, partly following the lead of Michel Foucault in his Preface to Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*,[28] as an exercise and experiment in convivial and not-sad militancy of open thought, in refusing allegiance to the old categories of the Negative, and to publication itself as an art of living, an ascesis of freedom. Like the

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26 Ibid., 102.
27 Ibid., 110.
28 Michel Foucault, "Preface," in Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, xv–xvi.

practitioners of Hakim Bey's *amour fou*, we strive to be "illegal," "saturating" ourselves with our own aesthetic, engaging in publishing ventures that would fill themselves "to the borders" with "the trajectories of [their] own gestures," and never tilting at fates fit for "commissars & shopkeepers."[29] One of the things we have lost sight of in the University, and especially in our publishing practices, is the importance of play—now is the time, again cadging from Hakim Bey, to "share the mischievous destiny" of runaways, "to meet only as wild children might, locking gazes across a dinner table while adults gibber from behind their masks."[30] Without non-utilitarian play, and without the right to flail, flounder, and fail while playing, we risk the frigid stasis of the status quo, of always being trapped in what has already been said (the literal definition of "fate," from the Latin *fatum*, "that which has already been spoken"), what has already been played out. How did we get here? How did the creative arts get so thoroughly de-cathected from the liberal arts? How will we give birth to heretic-misfit love-child thoughts without unbridled play (which is to say, experimentation—how does one maintain one's cultural "authority" while also playing the fool-who-experiments?).[31] Publishing, then, and public-ation, as the site where fools do indeed rush in, taking more seriously the phrase, "field of play."

punctum has grown, and continues to grow, through a vast network of talented persons dedicated to radically independent publishing ventures that would not be beholden to any specific university nor to any commercial academic interests. It is dedicated to fostering the broadest possible range of open-access print- and e-based platforms for the sustenance of what we are calling a "whimsical para-humanities assemblage"—an assemblage, moreover, that refuses to relinquish any possible form of public-ation: the

29 Hakim Bey, "Amour Fou," in Hakim Bey, *T.A.Z.: The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism* (Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia, 1991); http://hermetic.com/bey/taz_cont.html.

30 Bey, "Wild Children," in *T.A.Z.*

31 On the importance of artful play to the humanities as well as to well-being, see L.O. Aranye Fradenburg, "Living Chaucer," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 33 (2011): 41–64, where she writes that, "Playing and pretending are crucial to the becomings of living creatures, to adaptation and behavioral flexibility; [...] it is transformative and transforming. We can neither thrive nor survive without it" (57). See also Aranye Fradenburg, "Frontline: The Liberal Arts of Psychoanalysis," *Journal of the American Academy of Psychoanalysis and Dynamic Psychiatry* 39.4 (Winter 2011): 589–609, and L.O. Aranye Fradenburg, *Staying Alive: A Survival Manual for the Liberal Arts*, ed. Eileen A. Joy (Brooklyn: punctum books, 2013).

making of cultural-intellectual stealth publics that would seep in and out of institutional and non-institutional spaces, hopefully blurring the boundaries between Inside and Outside, an ultimate fog machine. And we are also intent on resuscitating what we are calling postmedieval and pastmodern forms of publication (from breviary and commentary and *florilegium* to telegram and liner notes and inter-office memo, from the *Book of Hours* to the cassette mixtape).[32] Public-ation, then, also as salvage operation, the re-purposing of discarded objects, discarded forms, and discarded genres as a means for maximizing the possibilities for thinking. Forms matter. The forms of thinking (in the plural) matter. Again, it is a commitment to excess, and a refusal of all austerity measures. Neither is punctum books interested in the maintenance of specific genres or disciplines (is it literary theory? poetry? philosophy? art history? memoir? sociology? cybernetics? speculative fiction? code? who can tell?), and thus we take seriously Derrida's belief in a university "without condition," where we maintain that it is the humanities' singular purpose to protect the right of anyone to publish anything, or as Derrida himself put it, the "principal right to say everything, whether it be under the heading of fiction and the experimentation of knowledge, and the right to say it publicly, to publish it."[33] And thus, again, I cannot disagree vigorously enough with Drucker that the humanities, in its publishing practices, should protect itself against losing its so-called "cultural authority." If anything, it should welcome the storming of its aery ramparts by whole hosts of its supposedly extramural paramours.

As the authors of the "Manifesto for an Accelerationist Politics" aver, there may be no possible stemming of the tide of neoliberal capital's narrow-minded "imaginary" and hyper-accelerated technologized infrastructure; therefore, might the task now be how to hijack and "re-purpose" this infrastructure to different ends and unleash new, more capacious imaginaries?[34] In this scenario, there is room for an aesthetic

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32 See, for example, punctum books + records' joint project, *Minóy*, which comprises printed book, open-access e-book, cassette, and CD: http://punctumbooks.com/titles/minoy/.

33 Jacques Derrida, "The Future of the Profession or the University without Condition (thanks to the 'Humanities,' what *could take place tomorrow*)," in *Jacques Derrida and the Humanities: A Critical Reader*, ed. Tom Cohen (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 26 [24–57].

34 See Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams, "#ACCELERATE: Manifesto for an Accel-

avant-garde that, in McKenzie Wark's words, will "have to reimagine possible spaces for alter-modernities […] . Just as the Situationists imagined a space of play in the interstitial spaces of the policing of the city via the dérive, so too we now have to imagine and experiment with emerging gaps and cracks in the gamespace that the commodity economy has become."[35] This is not just a leftist-activist situation with regard to capitalism, it is also an academic situation, with regard to the techno-managerial culture of the University, and thus I ask that we replace the idea of the humanities as some sort of guarded (and self-regarding) reservoir of cultural Authority, whose ideas trickle down into society, with the idea that the humanities—especially in its role as a disseminator of knowledge and builder of knowledge forms and platforms—be reconceptualized as a site for the care and curatorship of knowledge and of all persons wishing to contribute to a public commons that must be shared by and accessible to all. The Humanities, and the University more largely, and also the Library, as sites of care: to care for ourselves, to care for each other, and to take care of the public commons, not in order to maintain its borders and authority, filtering what is allowed in and what is allowed out and to whom, but rather, in order to fashion this shared (and always precarious, always vulnerable, always convalescent) commons as a house of hospitality, an invitation to all, to the friends and the strangers, those with papers and those without papers.[36]

    As Derrida reminds us, in Plato's philosophy it "is often the Foreigner (*xenos*) who questions. He carries and puts the [intolerable] question," and

erationist Politics," May 2013: http://accelerationism.files.wordpress.com/2013/05/williams-and-srnicek.pdf. See also McKenzie Wark's response, "#Celerity: A Critique of the Manifesto for an Accelerationist Politics," May 2013: http://speculativeheresy.files.wordpress.com/ 2013/05/wark-mckenzie-celerity.pdf.

35 Wark, "#Celerity," 2.4. See also, on the possibilities of tactical-poetic interventions into the networks, McKenzie Wark, *Telesthesia: Communication, Culture and Class* (Cambridge, U.K.: Polity, 2012).

36 My interest in care is partly inspired by Michel Foucault who, in his later writings, was concerned with "care of the self," and how certain practices of ascesis (including "thought on thought") might open the self to certain individual freedoms and the invention of "a manner of being that is still improbable." See Michel Foucault, "Friendship as a Way of Life" and "The Ethics of the Concern for Self as a Practice of Freedom," in *Foucault Live: Collected Interviews, 1961-1984*, ed. Sylvère Lotringer (New York: Semiotext(e), 1989), 308–312, 432–449. See also Michel Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1981-1982*, ed. Frédéric Gros, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2005).

thus he is the very "someone who basically has to account for [the very] possibility of sophistry."[37] The "paternal authority of the logos" is always ready to "disarm" the Foreigner, who nevertheless prevails as an important figure of Thought's (difficult) natality. To welcome this *xenos*, this Foreigner, invites danger (the guest as enemy, the host as hostage) as well as a way forward, a way out of Authority, out of our settled (overly-professonalized) selves, toward the wilder shores of vagabond (and free) thought.

The publisher as host and hostage, and also as the persons, or collective of persons, who are willing to devote their lives and service to converting as many illegitimate ideas as possible into objects of beauty, erudition, and legibility. It it hoped that these new (teratological) works would provoke us to rethink everything we thought we knew and to let go, finally, of our Authority, while still insisting on Care (which is a gentle form of co-management). So let us take care.

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37 Jacques Derrida, *On Hospitality*, trans. Anne Dufourmantelle (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 5.

ON THE *NEURO-* TURN IN THE HUMANITIES

Naturalism, Hyper-Empiricism, and Understanding*

WILL SAMSON

Since the 1970s or so, and right up to the present day, a lot of work has been done to bridge humanistic meaning-making systems with those of the sciences, and of neuroscience in particular. From the late Francisco Varela's seminal work on phenomenology and neuroscience in the 1990s, to the work of Antonio Damasio and Catherine Malabou more recently, and including literary variations on the same theme, such as Ian McEwan's 2005 novel, *Saturday*,[1] we see that scholars and writers in the humanities are attempting to incorporate neuroscientific insights into their literary, political, philosophical, and theoretical work. It is no longer only analytic philosophers interesting themselves in neuroscience, but also continental philosophers and artists. Interestingly, where one might expect neuroscientists to have recourse to analytic philosophy of science in trying to explain their field, in the cases of Damasio and Varela, we find neuroscientists going to continental philosophy in order to contextualize and expand on their scientific work.

I became acutely aware of the strength of the neuroscientific trend in humanities research not very long ago when I was reading Varela and noticed that a number of people around me were looking into various similar areas: an acquaintance was reading a book on neuro-aesthetics and their applications to literature; a friend was reading a book on cognitive science and performance theory; another friend recommended a book on neuroscience and political theory to me; a number of friends, acquaintances, and strangers were writing theses or dissertations on philosophy, using thinkers who had one foot in the humanities and one in neuroscience. It seemed to me that there was something driving humanities scholars towards the neuro-humanities.

1 Ian McEwan, *Saturday* (New York: Anchor, 2006).

I asked myself, why neuroscience in particular? I'm aware of other lines of scientific thought that have been appropriated by the humanities over the years—I recall a collection of Darwinian literary criticism titled *Madame Bovary's Ovaries* which seems to be a particularly odious example of the trend—but none of these has had the seductive power of what can increasingly be characterised as the neuroscientific *turn* in the humanities. While Darwinian literary criticism has had some popularity, it seems to be on the decline, as indicated by the collapse of its dedicated publishing platform, *The Evolutionary Review*, a journal launched in 2010 which ceased publishing in 2013. Moreover, Darwinian literary studies has met with significantly stronger resistance than the *neuro-* turn, with much of the attendant literature on the topic being quite critical of it.[2] I do not, however, intend to argue about why humanities scholars seem to be gravitating towards neuroscientific ideas in particular; it is possible that the uptake in this kind of research and production has as much to do with financial concerns as it does with more properly methodological or intellectual concerns. Rather, what I wish to interrogate is how to have a valid and productive collaboration between the humanities and neuroscience. In order to effect this project, I am going to evaluate specific aspects of the thought of Catherine Malabou, Francisco Varela, and Antonio Damasio—the scope of this enquiry is thus limited, but I see these thinkers as being indicative of larger trends. Then I will propose some means of fruitful interaction between continental philosophy and neuroscience that do not fall into the same traps as Malabou, Varela and Damasio. My basic thesis is that the ways in which neuro-humanists currently proceed are often methodologically objectionable, and that there are better ways for humanists to collaborate with the sciences in general and neuroscience in particular.

Naturalism and the Humanities

One aspect of why the *neuro-* turn might be appealing to a lay reader is that it invokes naturalism in contexts that are sometimes seen as incred-

2 See, e.g., Stephen Pinker, review of *The Literary Animal: Evolution and the Nature of Narrative*, eds. Jonathan Gottschall and David Sloan Wilson, *Philosophy and Literature* 31 no. 1 (April 2007): 162-78; Eugene Goodheart, Darwinian Misadventures in the Humanities (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishing, 2007); Jonathan Kramnick, "Against Literary Darwinism," *Critical Inquiry* 37 no. 2 (Winter 2011): 312-47.

ibly subjective. Naturalism proceeds by exposing causal relations in such a way as to disallow any explanation that falls outside of the laws of nature narrowly construed. To make the claim that a naturalist approach can be turned towards the analysis of phenomena that are traditionally seen as being outside of such relations is a seductive claim, regardless of how difficult it might be to substantiate. Put differently, naturalism did not firmly take root in the humanities for various reasons,[3] and the *neuro-* turn seeks to ground humanistic research in a naturalistic paradigm, one based on neuroscientific insights. In such an account, neuroscience, as that realm in which it is now becoming possible to treat objectively questions which philosophers have hitherto only been able to speculate about, becomes first philosophy.

The relationship between the neuro-humanities and naturalism is, perhaps surprisingly, fraught. One problem is that scholars in the humanities are generally not trained to think in the methodological terms of the sciences, even though it would behoove thinkers engaging in the neuro-humanities to have a deep enough appreciation of neuroscience to incorporate elements of its disciplinary framework. A parallel problem is that scientists who take on the task of relating their work to the humanities should have a better idea of how their naturalistic research would interact with the kinds of value-objects to which they endeavour to relate it. In the work of Catherine Malabou, we find some form of the first problem: there is something else at stake in Malabou's project making her take on only superficial elements of neuroscience and read them metaphorically rather than substantively.

In what is perhaps Malabou's best work on the topic, *What Should We Do With Our Brain?*, she argues that the notion of *neuroplasticity* operative in the discourse of neuroscience is cognate with the notion of *flexibility* operative in neo-liberal capitalism. As she sketches in her conclusion to the book, the answer to the titular question, "what should we do with our brain?" is that we should resist:

> to ask "What should we do with our brain?" is above all to visualize the possibility of saying no to an afflicting economic,

3 While a closer look at the origins of the disciplinary distinctions between the humanities and the sciences would be out of place here, suffice it to say that the objects of study of the humanities seemed, for a very long time, to be safely locked away in intra-cranial darkness and thus insulated from the tools of the sciences, but open to humanistic methods such as introspection and textual hermeneutics.

political, and mediatic culture that celebrates only the triumph of flexibility, blessing obedient individuals who have no greater merit than that of knowing how to bow their heads with a smile.[4]

This answer, regardless of whether we agree with it, approaches neuro-scientific data from an idiosyncratic point of view. Indeed, it seems that the conclusion here is completely distinct from the discussion of the notion of plasticity at play in the neurosciences, and that a similar prescription—refuse to be flexible, *resist*!—could be made without reference to neuroscience at all. What she is actually engaged in is not a synthesis of neuroscience and the humanities, but an attempt to ideologically correct the discourse of the sciences. In *What Should We Do With Our Brain?* she points to multiple pernicious norms hidden in neuroscience's descriptive statements—reading plasticity as flexibility in line with the *modus operandi* of neo-liberal capitalism is just one of them. This is the deconstructive game—her commitments, be they to materialism, naturalism, Hegelianism, or to deconstruction itself, matter little. What is important for her project in this instance is to construct a philosophical non-space from which to point out, criticize, and correct the normative claims of other discourses.

However, her stated goal at the beginning of the book was to "awaken a consciousness of [the constitutive historicity of the brain]."[5] Given that the conclusion she arrives at is in no discernible way connected to this goal, she almost certainly fails. Yet what is the value of awakening such a consciousness? A thorough, sober, and informed discussion of how knowledge of the brain might change the way we think and act would be beneficial. Certainly, Malabou places emphasis on the historicity of the brain, but in such a way that the import of the brain in particular as a specific organ remains unclear. Malabou is open to the same criticism Alan Sokal levelled at continental philosophers a generation ago. He accused a number of continental philosophers of invoking scientific discourse in order to lend their claims an air of credibility that they do not deserve on their own. Malabou's naturalism, then, seems to be opportunistic if not false—a fashionable position to take, which allows her to position herself better rhetorically, but which is

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4 Catherine Malabou, *What Should We Do With Our Brain?* (New York: Fordham UP, 2008), 79.
5 Ibid., 2.

neither necessary nor relevant to the political conclusions she wishes to draw.

Malabou's text, then, can serve as something of a warning. *What Should We Do With Our Brain?* gives us a salient example of what happens when we conflate categories. The title and introduction of the book imply a naturalistic focus—reawakening a consciousness of the constitutive historicity of the brain is a project that should take up the naturalist or materialist insights of the sciences in order to increase the humanistic understanding of the formation of the self, of self-fashioning. On the other hand, much of the rest of the book, for all its lip-service to neuroscience and its invocations of terminology and relevant texts, has little to do with this initially announced project, and instead has recourse to textual hermeneutics that seek to unveil the hidden normative standards of the discourse. Theory, like most interdisciplinary work, allows us to approach a discipline from outside of its own self-understanding—but this can have a Frankensteinian effect. There seems to be a tear, haphazardly stitched over, between Malabou's naturalistic posture and her humanistic destination; one, moreover, that she does not adequately bridge. If one is correct in imputing a certain form of naturalism to Malabou, it is confined to the notion that there is no permissible ontological dualism, thus that nature and culture are logically continuous spaces. If, as I think, this insight is fundamentally correct, the question then becomes one of approach: how do we talk about phenomena in the humanities if they are essentially of the same stuff as the objects of the natural sciences? While their shared grounding in the same material stratum allows us to put these discourses into communication, Malabou leaves us fundamentally ill-equipped to actually stage such a conversation.

Hyper-Empiricism: the reduction to material as epistemology

In making her way from a bastard naturalism to a critique of the ideological underpinnings of scientific claims, Malabou brings into relief a tension between norm and nature that discomfits some aspects of the naturalistic discourse. In fact, what can come out of it, if we read her charitably, is a good reproach of what I will call hyper-empiricism—by no means a new concept, but something that requires some attention in this context. From at least Hume, we see a hypostatization of the "copy thesis" of empiricism, namely, that all ideas originate in sense impressions.

Today, the extension of this thesis culminates in statements from scientists and popularisers of science, such as those most recently made about the value of philosophy by Lawrence Krauss, Neil deGrasse Tyson, and Stephen Hawking—all of whom claim that philosophy is no longer the queen of the sciences, nor the handmaid to the sciences, nor even the humble under-gardener clearing away the brush, but a dead discipline that adds nothing of value. This hyper-empiricism comes out of an extension of the copy thesis when that thesis is read as grounding the objectivity of scientific discourse in such a way that insulates it from both the critiques of the tribunal of reason and from ideological contamination. Essentially, the statements of Krauss *et al.* emerge from the mindset that claims that because the objects of philosophy and the objects of natural science are of the same world, the most fundamental approach—the natural scientific approach—will be adequate to the task of describing the essential components of them both. In this account, the scientific worldview is sufficiently advanced to have done with philosophy's mystery-mongering. But this is precisely what Malabou's text shows not to be the case: scientific discourses are no more insulated from ideological contamination than any other—they are simply better positioned, rhetorically, to hide their normative claims and biases.

I term hyper-empiricism any form of empiricism that lays claim to a monopoly on explanation. Opposed to hyper-empiricism might be any number of forms of epistemic pluralism. Hyper-empiricism is seductive (and prevalent in the neuroscientific turn in the humanities) because it levels down the epistemic commitments of the enquiry at hand by displacing the question of how best to understand a given phenomenon onto what physical processes give rise to said phenomenon. The movement is subtle, seductive, and wrong, insofar as it elides the differences between ontology and epistemology, in short, turning a question about understanding into one of composition. Generally, we can see this in particularly facile attempts to reduce phenomenal consciousness or even self-consciousness to its cortical substrates—at the end of the day, says the reductionist, what we are dealing with is made of neurons, or of atoms, or of quarks or of strings. Ultimately, we are dealing only with these substrates. But there is a lot built into this "ultimately" and a lot of places this "ultimately" can lead us, depending on how far the reductionist rabbit has dug its hole. If we want an understanding about how the brain works, it is important to look to neuroscience.

Likewise, if we are looking for a full picture, it is important to see when neuroscientific insights might have some impact on higher-level processes. But to reduce these higher-level processes to their neural correlates is to commit a fallacy. There are a number of things that get left out when the jump is made from the phenomenal manifestation of a thing to the cortical substrates that underlie that manifestation—at the very least, those who would like to claim that the two are in some sense identical would have to concede that the latter misses out on the "what-it's-like-ness" of the former.[6]

At this stage, there does not seem to be a good theoretical rationale guiding us with regards to the proper level to which to reduce things, and when doing so might be appropriate, which leaves only the practical justification: it works. "It works" can mean a lot of different things. To a practicing neuroscientist, it makes sense to focus on the neural level of analysis, since theorizing about quarks or strings is unlikely to result in localizing a brain function or allowing for the physical intervention on and manipulation of a function that the brain controls. The level of analysis makes sense given the practical ends to which a research project is oriented—it is not necessarily that the neuronal level is somehow ontologically or epistemically privileged, only that it becomes effective to think at that level *given some goal*. But does it make sense for humanistic research to yoke itself to that same level of analysis? Further, when we engage in neurohumanities, are we explaining the given phenomenon or explaining it *away*? It seems unlikely that the level of analysis appropriate to the study of literature, metaphysics, or politics would be limited to the neural or even fundamentally ground itself at that level of analysis. Certainly, an investigation of neural structures might be *pertinent*, but under the aspect of explanatory monism one might find it incomplete.

With this in mind, we turn to a book edited by an interdisciplinary team of scholars including Francisco Varela, a neurobiologist; Jean Petitot, a mathematician; Jean-Michel Roy, a philosopher; and Bernard Pachoud, a psychoanalyst. *Naturalizing Phenomenology* came out in 1999 to much fanfare, bringing together a diverse group of scholars in continental philosophy

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6 See Thomas Nagel, "What Is It Like to Be a Bat?", *The Philosophical Review* 83 no. 4 (October 1974): 435-50. The notion of "what-it's-like-ness" (though not the phrase itself) stems from Nagel's essay, but has generally been taken up as a means of highlighting the first-person aspect of consciousness. In short, if there is a mental state, there is something that it is like to be in that mental state.

and cognitive science in order to reconcile naturalism with phenomenology, which has seen the dangers of a naturalistic approach to consciousness since its Husserlian origins. The way in which the project attempts this reconciliation is obvious from the title—the point is to naturalize phenomenology, not to phenomenologize naturalism. Taking neuroscience as a kind of first philosophy, the editors of the book nonetheless claim that the dismissal of the first-person point of view, and of the phenomenological and subjective dimensions of cognition, constitutes a significant lacuna in the project of cognitive science, despite its claims to be the first truly scientific approach to consciousness. In the editors' view, the refined accounts of consciousness provided by Husserlian phenomenology cannot be ignored by cognitive science, and might enable thinkers to bridge or close the explanatory gap between scientific (third-person) accounts of the neurophysiological register of experience and the phenomenal (first-person) experience of consciousness. A renewed focus must be placed, not on what is going on inside the black box of consciousness, but on what is going on *for* the black box.

The problem with this work, which is the capstone and continuation of Varela's project of neurophenomenology, is that naturalizing Husserlian phenomenology is difficult: the way of going about it is not obvious. Even among the editors, the definitions at play and the solutions undertaken are so alien to each other that, despite their mutual affinities, it is difficult to say to what extent they agree. The impetus for naturalizing a theory of consciousness and subjectivity that has been so successful at describing and analyzing the phenomenal level of consciousness is clear—one would like to have all effective explanations exist in the same logical space, or at least not contradict one another. The dangers of such a project are equally clear: often, putting things in logically continuous space is much easier when we simply reduce one level of analysis to another, which, in this case, would bring us back to the problems of explanatory monism and the explanatory gap.

The editors of *Naturalizing Phenomenology* are mistaken about the nature of Husserl's rejection of naturalism, and their misunderstanding is enlightening with respect to the question of hyper-empiricism and explanatory monism in the *neuro-* turn. In their 80-page introduction to the volume, they defend their project by claiming that Husserl's rejection of naturalism regarding consciousness was based on the contingent limitations of scientific (mathematical) formalization at the time Husserl was writing. In their

view, Husserl's antinaturalism "is the result of the scientific limitations of his day, limitations Husserl thought impossible to overcome, making it thereby also impossible for the physico-mathematical sciences to offer a scientific reconstruction of the phenomenality of the surrounding world."[7] This defence, and the elaboration of a minimal theory of interaction between the sciences and phenomenology that follows from it, misses a crucial aspect of Husserl's methodological antinaturalism. Husserl's strong negative reaction to naturalism was not based on the impossibility of mathematizing phenomenal descriptions, and therefore of integrating them into the general framework of the natural sciences,[8] though he did hold this to be impossible. Rather, Husserl's antinaturalism was motivated by a transcendental objective, namely the constitution of meaning in consciousness and its directedness towards a world. It is quite beside the point to claim that one can mathematize and formalise a phenomenological description and thereby view consciousness as another (psycho-physical) object in the world—what is important is that doing so brings one no closer to determining how the constitution of sense works, how meaning is bestowed, what value-orientation is enacted at the level of experience, and so on. Certainly, in any intentional act, there are neurophysiological correlates that are produced, but what is manifested in the act is quite different from these correlates or substrates.

While Husserl was invested in a methodological antinaturalism, it was also his opinion that it is sufficient to effect an attitudinal shift in order to make phenomenological descriptions relevant to psychology (that is, empirical or functional psychology), or to the sciences that concern themselves with consciousness in general. Such an attitudinal shift is fraught with the danger of transforming phenomenology into descriptive psychology should one forget that phenomenology is first and foremost a science of essences and not of the empirical facts of an individual conscious experience.[9] Making such a shift, however, involves a certain kind of methodological or epistemological pluralism, one more in line with Husserl's project than the project of *Naturalizing Phenomenology*. Varela *et al.*, despite their best efforts, ignore the properly philosophical reasons that Husserl avoided a naturalistic

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7 Francisco Varela *et al.*, *Naturalizing Phenomenology* (Stanford CA: Stanford UP, 1999), 40.
8 Ibid, 42.
9 Edmund Husserl, *Introduction to Logic and Theory of Knowledge: Lectures 1906/7*, trans. Claire Oritz Hill (Dordrecht: Springer, 2008), 381.

standpoint, and, to their discredit, elide the differences between epistemology and a positive scientific investigation, differences that were important to Husserl's project.[10] The claim of *Naturalizing Phenomenology*, that phenomenology can be subsumed into a naturalist discourse (specifically that of cognitive neuroscience), goes against the very nature of the Husserlian project, for reasons that should be of interest to any scholar in the humanities trying to bridge the gap between third- and first-person descriptions: one need not reduce the phenomenal to the neural in order to understand it. In fact, and here is where I think the fruitful moment of interaction between phenomenology and neuroscience can take place, it seems more likely that a proper understanding of the internal constitution of the phenomena and how they appear—the internal organization of that which is given phenomenally, highlighted by phenomenology—would be the necessary basis for a neuroscientific analysis of the cerebral and somatic underpinnings of such a phenomenon, or at least would provide valuable material for the interpretation of data. To claim otherwise is to risk falling into the same trap that Varela *et al.* do in eliding the difference between the empirical genesis of a subjective phenomenon and the validity and internal structure of a mental act.

A reductive point of view, *à la* hyper-empiricism or explanatory monism, leads us to an untenable position that sees the empirical processes through which the subject is engendered as the same processes to which the subject can be reduced. Rather than liquidating the subject entirely, making it into a mere objective being in the world, the neuronal correlates of experience provide functional information about the processes underlying consciousness. Phenomenology provides a way of understanding these physical explanations with reference to the lifeworld, contextualizing them along non-reductive lines, and producing satisfying *clarifications* of the neuroscientific data. Neuroscience and phenomenological analysis are not at odds—in fact, while they study what is nominally the same object, they do so in radically different but not competing modes—neuroscience grounding itself inside the spectrum of known-unknown, phenomenology grounding itself inside that of clear-obscure. Neuroscience expands the domain of what is given to intelligibility, the number of pos-

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10 See Husserl, *Introduction*, 401: "The phenomenological reduction amounts to being constantly conscious of this fact and not passing between with naturalistic trains of thought where theory of knowledge is under investigation."

sible of objects of knowledge, while phenomenology clarifies the concepts at our disposal in understanding or interpreting said domain. This provides a decent model for the interaction between neuroscience and the humanities, on which I will expand in the following section of this paper.

Understanding: concluding unscientific postscript

In place of a formal conclusion, I would like to draw the reader's attention to an old distinction that comes out of the hermeneutical tradition via Wilhelm Dilthey: the distinction between explanation and understanding. Dilthey saw explanation as the mode of inquiry proper to natural science, and understanding as the mode of inquiry proper to the human sciences, or what we would today call the humanities. Explanation proceeds by the clarification of causal links in order to come up with law-based or rule-governed accounts of how phenomena arise. Understanding, on the other hand, takes human historical life into account, and attempts to integrate both the historicity and possible meanings of phenomena into an account. Explanation is "vertical," insofar as causal relations determine from the ground up. Understanding is "horizontal," insofar as it takes in our meaning-making horizons as indicative. We can see how this distinction might be helpful in glossing what the *neuro-* turn in the humanities is doing when it applies neuroscientific insights to objects of the humanities. If we take a set of insights that are at home in the natural sciences (and thus engage in the mode of explanation) and apply them to cultural objects (a novel, a mind, etc.) without first parsing our engagement with the methodological problem of moving from explanation to understanding, then we are simply treating cultural objects as objects of natural-scientific inquiry.

The interaction between explanation and understanding is complex, and often a particular analysis will involve both, whether it be a nominally scientific or nominally humanistic analysis. For an example of how these modes of analysis can and should interact, I would like to investigate one particular instance where the insights of phenomenology can be made available in the interpretation of neuroscientific research in a way that is beneficial to both.

Both cognitive neuroscience and phenomenology take up empathy as an object of study; as such, it seems like a good candidate for showing how the two might or might not be able to collaborate. Ralph Adolphs, a

researcher in neuropsychology, argues in "Emotion, Social Cognition, and the Human Brain" that understanding the actions and emotions of others means, in some sense, simulating them. The brain constructs social cognition, at least in part, by simulating the emotional state of the person being observed: we know what others experience because our brains reflect their sentiments.[11] This "insight" is based on the functioning of mirror neurons and the fact that certain brain areas are involved both when we experience certain stimuli and when we witness others undergoing the same stimuli. The automatic and covert operations of these brain areas in many instances, however, should give us pause in immediately adopting this explanation in the case of something like empathy in particular, or of social cognition in general. Contrary to the position both Adolphs and Antonio Damasio take, what is going on when mirror-neurons activate might not be that we are undergoing the experience of the other, albeit in a more superficial manner.[12] If we adopt a phenomenological standpoint from which to clarify and interpret the data at hand, we will come to a slightly different, yet immeasurably more fruitful interpretation. Adolphs and Damasio imply that, because the same neural networks are involved in both the first-personal experience of an emotion or of pain and in the empathetic understanding of that pain, at some level the experiences are the same, though less "intense."

Phenomenologists have insisted since the beginning of the 20th century that empathy involves an analogization of one's experience, and they have provided experiential and transcendental rationales for distinguishing between empathy, sympathy, and first-hand experience. These might seem like basic, unscientific, even uninteresting insights at first glance, yet they outstrip neuroscientific accounts insofar as they provide an internal, non-reductive account of that which is to be explained. In its transcendental modality, phenomenology gives an account of the conditions under which we speak of empathy (or freedom, or pain, or love, or fear, or religious *ekstasis*), as well as the conditions under which we might be given to speak of "imitation" or of the "experience of another." In the kind of neuroscientific research mentioned above, a form of tautol-

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11 Ralph Adolphs, "Emotion, Social Cognition, and the Human Brain," in *Essays in Social Neuroscience*, eds. John T. Cacioppo and Gary G Berntson (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004), 125.
12 Antonio Damasio, *Looking For Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain* (London: William Heinemann Press: 2003), 115.

ogy or question-begging arises from the experimental assumptions and explanatory framework—namely, this kind of research takes for granted that these things are constitutively and entirely in the brain, and so, even when dealing with social phenomena such as empathy, these explanations will always find a way to reduce the phenomenon to a brain structure, a procedure which may well be valid in some sense, but seems incomplete.

There is no reason to deny that the imitative brain structures at play in empathy constitute an innate human structure, but there is also no reason to elaborate from there that this structure is empathy, nor that "imitation" is *the* key to it, nor that because the structure is innate, there is no socio-cultural element to it. Not only has some recent neuroscientific research reified, individualized, and biologized what phenomenology would show to be a social fact,[13] but the research on empathy as a whole has elided a few key phenomenological distinctions that seem to hold true. Firstly, the experience of empathizing *is different from* the experience of imitating another's experience, regardless of the activation of mirror neurons. The qualitative experience of empathizing is distinguishable from a first-person experience of the same phenomenon, as it is distinguishable from imitating said experience imaginatively and from remembering said experience happening to oneself or another (as long as the memory does not reignite an emotion, which it might). Neuroscience is refined enough to distinguish between these instances, but Adolphs and Damasio make mirror neurons a sufficient condition for all of them. According to them, these things are more or less neurologically identical, despite how different they *feel*. That may be the case, but this just shows that there is more to these phenomena than their neurophysiological substrates. The final, most probative instance where phenomenology becomes instructive, if not indispensible, is the following question: If mirror neurons are active in empathetic experiences, if the same brain areas light up when I witness another in pain as when I myself am in pain, why does this mean that I experience it "in the second person," as it were? It is absurd to reduce social, interpersonal, intersubjective structures, involv-

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13 See the following study on implicit racial bias, which explains its results partly in terms of evolutionary biology, and without any reference to acculturation, which seems to be a rather important lacuna: Forgiarini *et al*. "Racism and the Empathy for Pain on Our Skin," *Frontiers in Psychology* vol. 2 (2011), accessed on November 2, 2014. http://dx.doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2011.00108

ing multiple people and a social sitation and a history and cultural ideas, to structures of individual neurophysiology. According to at least one study, the analysis of mirror neurons should shed light on intersubjectivity;[14] instead, the experimental assumptions involved erode the very possibility of investigating intersubjectivity. This is why phenomenology, and the humanities in general, are of import to neuroscientific explanations of phenomena.

Neuroscience says too much and reduces it to too little. Although I have mostly concentrated on phenomenology, my statements can with little effort be generalised to the rest of the humanities, insofar as their insights do not attempt to contradict the facts while providing understanding. Interpreting the results of neuroscientific research as it pertains to higher-order phenomena requires a humanistic understanding of that which is to be explained, a refined conceptual toolkit for speaking about experience, culture, and interpersonal interaction that takes a different approach from that of neuroscience. I do not advocate such a requirement in order to discredit neuroscientific research, but in order to supplement it, steer the research in a productive manner, and perhaps refine the experiments that neuroscientists engage in. In the final analysis, neuroscience does not supplant humanistic scholarship, but enlarges the field of givenness that the humanities can engage with.

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"AN EXPRESSLY NON-REDUCTIVE ACCOUNT OF THE SUBJECT INFORMED BY NEUROSCIENTIFIC INSIGHTS"

A brief response by Thomas Wormald

Mr. Samson and I fundamentally agree that a confrontation between the neurosciences and the humanities is a necessary and productive endeavour. Moreover, perhaps even an inevitable one and thus of equal importance—as I take the essential point of Samson's argument to be—

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14 Matthew Ratcliffe, "Phenomenology, Neuroscience, and Intersubjectivity," in *A Companion to Phenomenology and Existentialism*, eds. Hubert Dreyfus and Mark A. Wrathall (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 329-45.

is the particular form this engagement takes. Of equal importance is the particular manner and care through which this endeavour is conducted, in regards to our mindfulness of the epistemological and ontological commitments, assumptions and limitations which must be recognized and negotiated when crossing and engaging different disciplinary registers. In this manner, the set of problems and concerns Samson foregrounds in his paper are of immense importance in their exhortation to think and reflect carefully on how we conduct and produce knowledge in an interdisciplinary field and the responsibilities inherent in negotiating these different disciplines.

Where Samson and I principally diverge is our interpretative differences concerning Catherine Malabou's work in *What Should We Do With Our Brain?*, and our respective evaluations of the success of her work as an exemplar of engagement between the humanities and the neurosciences. As evinced by one of the dominant leitmotifs operative in Samson's paper—that can be seen in notions such as first philosophy, hyper-empiricism and explanatory monism—what I take to be at stake in Samson's estimation, in regards to neuroscience and the naturalist epistemologies that subtend other neighboring disciplines, is the seductive reductionism of scientific explanation. That is, the allure that accompanies the notion that one can identify one substance or one cause or one set of predictable, naturalized laws, which all phenomena can be reduced to or explained by (or, as Samson writes, explained *away*). Essentially, the problem Samson identifies is the category error that occurs when such explanatory paradigms are applied to human beings. That is, when one exports the framework of natural science to explain human beings, one distorts ones object of inquiry in this case as much as one actually understands. Such is the fear of humanities writ large: science cannot account for the irreducibility of human experience.

Adducing Malabou here is, for me, quite strange. What Malabou is attempting to do is to articulate an expressly non-reductive account of the subject informed by neuroscientific insights. Specifically, Malabou's novel claim is that the sciences provide us with the means to do so: that science is no longer an enemy, but an ally in defending a robust account of human subjectivity. That is, while Malabou may say things like "you are your synapses," what she is essentially doing is trying to make us see that our conventional understanding of "synapses," "brain," "program," any of these traditionally understood scientistic or fixed, causally mechanistic notions,

and the fear of determinism they evoke, needs to be substantially revised as borne out by the insights of contemporary science. While Malabou says '*yes*' we are reducible to something like neuronal functioning, our brain is no longer a *reducible* or *reductive* entity in itself—as fundamentally plastic, it is an autopoetic economy of passivity and activity; we are not determined by program or design, but are both passively shaped by, and actively self-shaping through, our own singular histories and our interaction with our environs and one another. We are thus, in a paradox that undermines any determinism, reducible to an irreducibility. Malabou refuses to cede to either side of absolute naturalization or anti-naturalism, recognizing that the truth dialectically inheres in both. What Malabou wants to break down is essentially the "cold war" of science and philosophy that she sees as prohibitive to a full understanding of the material self. Malabou is interested in and affirms the complex, dialectical genesis of a processual subject, one in *becoming*, that is born of the struggle—and not the reductive continuity—between the biological and cultural, the neuronal and mental. This is the explanatory gap that Samson mentions, which Malabou takes to be the space of negation that opens up actual *material* freedom in the sense of plasticity. The critique of reductive, hyper-empirical, explanatory monism outlined here is germane and important, but it is misplaced in the instance of Malabou.

Samson is also critical of whether Malabou realizes her project in *What Should We Do With Our Brain?*, one which he defines as an "awakening of the consciousness of the brain"—a characterization with which I agree, but an assessment with which I do not. Samson writes:

> for all its lip-service to neuroscience and its invocations of the terminology and relevant texts, [the actual text] has little to do with the initially announced project [being an awakening of the historicity of the brain] and instead has recourse to (deconstructive) textual hermeneutics.

Samson takes issue with a mixing of critical registers: an implied naturalistic focus that is effected or conducted through vaguely deconstructive strategies. This is coded negatively and I want to question why. This accusation is not entirely fair and can be allayed by keeping in mind how Malabou frames the text: through a gesture to Marx's famous *Eigh-*

teenth Brumaire sentiment that humans make their own history, but they do not know that they do it and they do not do it exactly as they please. Translated into Malabou's terms, humans make their own brains, but they do not know that they do it and do not do it exactly as they please.

A productive way of situating Malabou's intervention in or engagement with neuroscience is by keeping in mind its self-avowed parallels with Marx. That is, just as modes of production are ideologically naturalized in Marx's analysis—they are necessary, determined, inevitable, unable to be changed—Malabou argues that a similar naturalization occurs with popular understandings of the brain that engender equally pernicious effects, creating a naïve consciousness or attitude that construes oneself, and possibly one's world, as ultimately determined and unchangeable; without a genuine future or possibility. I think that this is a perfect example of how the humanities can use its own conceptual tool-kit and resources to complicate, check, or bear upon discourses of science: it can bring a sense of critical reflexivity and sensitivity to how the ostensibly 'neutral' discoveries and discourses of "objective" science play out and can be mobilized in the world to status quo serving political, social and cultural ends. In this way, I take Malabou's project to be precisely what Samson characterizes as a productive way for a philosopher to approach the findings of neuroscientific research: as a field of givenness that expands, troubles, and pushes us to re-conceptualize what it means to be human— particularly as it affords robust resources to defend and bolster the *material* reality of human possibility, a future and transformative political action.

⁘ FOR AN APOCALYPTIC PEDAGOGY
LEVI R. BRYANT

Today, perhaps more than ever, the possibility of apocalypse is the most urgent horizon of thought. While the destruction of the planet and the end of humanity as a result of divine intervention have always been thinkable, these scenarios always seemed to belong to the realm of fantasy. What distinguishes our age is that apocalypse, or the utter destruction of the planet now belongs to the realm of real possibility. The possibility of apocalypse has entered the realm of immanence, of the earth, rather than existing as a transcendent possibility issuing from the divine. The rise of global capitalism, with its ruthless exploitation of the environment and its imperative to actualise all possible sources of profit, coupled with its unquenchable demand for energy in the form of fossil fuels to drive its engines of production and trade, has ushered in the age of the anthropocene—perhaps better called the "nomismacene,"[1] to capture the sense in which it is capital that has wrought this transformation—which is quickly transforming the entire climate and environment of the planet. With the ever-growing intensification of capitalism, the population expands as a result of the fecundity of agriculture and unparalleled technologies of distribution and transport, creating an even greater demand for energy, food, and materials for building that, in turn, exacerbate the assault on the environment. Moreover, the dwindling of energy resources, and famine produced by changing climate conditions and an increasing frequency of natural disasters, leads to growing political instability and more frequent instances of war. Meanwhile, a society of the spectacle wrought by new communications technologies functions—despite bringing the entire world into our living rooms and computers—to veil these circumstances through a variety of strategies ranging from the construction of an age of distraction, whether through the ever-changing news *du jour,* the endless interruption of text messages and emails, or celebrity spectacles, to the outright obfuscation

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1 From the Greek νομισμα or *nomisma*, meaning "money" or "currency."

of the reality of climate change and its link to global capitalism. As a consequence, the two things that are most determinative of our material circumstances today—climate change and capitalism—are rendered invisible even, paradoxically, as we chatter about them endlessly. With these intertwined phenomena we face nothing less than the possibility of a global apocalypse, whether as a result of the collapse of civilization as we know it, due to the destruction of the environment and the exhaustion of the energy required to motor our social assemblages, or in the form of an extinction of humanity and a ruin of the planet.

Where apocalypse is the contemporary horizon of thought, the task becomes one of thinking—to risk a Heideggerian turn of phrase—the material reality of dwelling, for what is needed is a subjectivity attentive to how we are situated in the ecology of the world. The thought of dwelling, in its turn, is an ontological thinking. And with this ontological thinking we must conceive of a pedagogy, a practice that would cultivate forms of subjectivity attentive to the veiled being of dwelling. This thesis might initially seem absurd, for ontology, which investigates being *qua* being, is generally thought as the most abstract of investigations, whereas all of these problems are deeply concrete. However, how we relate to and discern being is a component in all of these problems, and also our ability to respond to these problems. What we do, how we live, and how we respond to problems—and whether or not we even discern them—is wrapped up in how we understand being. In short, ontology matters.

Here, then, we must distinguish between ontology and being. Being is what *is* regardless of whether or not anyone bothers to think about it. *An* ontology is a theory *of* being that may or may not grasp what is. In this respect, one component of our problem today lies in how we think being in our everyday relatings to the world around us. An apocalyptic pedagogy—and here it should be noted that αποκαλυψις signifies both the utter destruction of the world and an unveiling—contests the spontaneous ontology of everyday life (OEL) that veils what it is to dwell, instead unveiling a networked conception of being populated by precarious and fragile relations. Such a subjectivity requires overcoming the OEL based on a sort of fetishism—which Marx gave us the basic schema to decipher—where the beings that compose being are thought of as discrete and divorced from the dynamic relational networks or ecologies that sustain them.

How might a pedagogy directed at ontology contribute to mitigating global apocalypse? Perhaps, paradoxically, by practicing apocalypse. This practice of apocalypse would be a practice not of utter destruction—though perhaps the destruction of the reigning OEL—but of unveiling. I will have more to say about this later, but for the moment we should investigate just what a pedagogy is. Elsewhere I have proposed that we conceive of all being as composed of machines, nothing but machines.[2] Whether it is the smallest particles (or strings) of which matter is composed, or trees, automobiles, theories, persons, institutions, novels, or galactic clusters—and all other things besides—to be is to be a machine. This, of course, is a metaphor; but, then, metaphors are machines as well. If the reader finds the term "machine" distasteful, "thing," "object," "system," "being," "entity," "actant," "process," "substance," or "event" are synonyms. While I cannot discuss all of the details of what constitutes a machine here, what is important is not the signifier we use to denote entities, but that we think beings not in terms of their properties, qualities, or features, but rather in terms of what they *do*. Machines operate. They are activities that draw on flows—and flows are themselves machines—transforming them through their operations. Machinic ontology is therefore a process ontology.

If the signifier "machine" is preferable to signifiers such as "object,"[3] "thing," or "substance," then this is for two reasons: First, the term "object" seems to ineluctably lead us to think of a subject. Objects are thought as what subjects posit. We are thus led to think that there are two domains of being—that of subjects and that of objects—and we are drawn into questions of epistemology or of how a subject is able to know objects. Where we began with questions pertaining to the being of beings, we end up with questions of how we know beings. While these questions are deeply important, questions of what beings are are also important. My hope is that the term "machine" is removed enough from the grammar structuring terms like "object" and "subject" to allow us to temporarily bracket questions of

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2 Levi R. Bryant, *Onto-Cartography: An Ontology of Machines and Media* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), chap. 2.

3 In *The Democracy of Objects* I proposed that we conceive all of being as composed of objects. However, there I argued that "object," when properly analyzed, denotes "machine," "system," or "process." Cf. Levi R. Bryant, *The Democracy of Objects* (Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press, 2011), chap. 5.

epistemology so as to tarry with the things themselves. And, of course, it goes without saying that subjects and knowledge-producing practices and theories are themselves types of machines.

Second, while there are clear disadvantages to the term machine,[4] it at least has the merit of drawing our attention to what things do. In particular, the idea of a machine draws our attention to questions of how things operate, what they operate upon, what they produce in operating, and what energy they draw upon to operate. There is no machine, not even thought, that is not thermodynamic. Even thought requires calories. Compare how the question "what is it?" is answered in traditional substance-ontology and machinic-ontology in the case of trees. In the substance-ontology presupposed by 18th-century botany, the emphasis was on the identification and determination of those features that allow us to categorize and distinguish different plants. The botanist might discuss the shape of leaves, different types of leaves, features of bark, their colours, and so on. This ontology sought to capture trees in a series of distinctive features revolving around qualities. This method, of course, is important and should not be dismissed outright. Machinic-ontology, however, approaches trees not in terms of their properties, but in terms of their operations, what those operations draw on to operate, and what those operations produce. Trees are factories that draw on flows of sunlight, carbon dioxide, water, and soil nutrients, producing various types of cells organized in specific ways that generate leaves, bark, trunks, roots, and oxygen as outputs. It is not that properties like the shape of leaves are unreal, but rather that they are the result of these operations. Moreover, as Thomas Rickert would argue, drawing on the French concept of *terroir*, what the tree will "become" is not a predestined outcome of a genetic blueprint, but is in part a function of the *terre*, the land, in which the tree grows and from which it draws the flows upon which it operates.[5] Genetically identical seeds grown in different geographical soils will produce trees with different qualities. As Deleuze puts it, "we are made of

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4   In particular, the term "machine" has the disadvantage of carrying connotations of technologies created by human beings for the sake of purposes. Clearly the philosophical usage of the term "machine" proposed here requires us to suspend these connotations, for not all machines are created by human beings and not all machines have a purpose.

5 Thomas Rickert, *Ambient Rhetoric: The Attunements of Rhetorical Being* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013), ix.

contracted water, earth, light and air."[6] This is why *where* grapes are grown makes such a profound difference in the qualities of a wine. Insofar as there is a singularity to these circumstances in each instance, each machine will also possess a singularity citing, as it were, the field from which it grew. The individual will precede the general, such that the general, resemblance, is a statistical effect of similar conditions of genesis rather than something already encoded in the machine that becomes.

From the foregoing, then, it follows that a pedagogy is a machine as well. If pedagogy must be referred to with the indefinite article, then this is because there is not one pedagogical technology, but a variety of different pedagogical technologies that produce very different things. Nonetheless, there are some commonalities among these different pedagogies. If we resolve to entertain the hypothesis of treating pedagogy as a machine, we should ask not what a pedagogy *is*, but rather what a pedagogy *does*. The first dimension of pedagogy consists of the question of what a teaching operates upon. To this, the obvious answer is students and apprentices. However, above all, it operates on bodies, affects, and forms of cognition. Students and apprentices are the flows that pass through a pedagogical machine, operating on body-minds. The second dimension of pedagogical machines revolves around how these machines operate. This is the question of pedagogical techniques, which, despite being a crucial site of critical investigation for radical pedagogy, I will not discuss in detail here.[7]

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6 Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 73.

7 In his famous essay, "Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatus," Althusser argues that education is one of the central components of the state apparatus through which the conditions of production are reproduced, cf. Louis Althusser, "Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatus (Notes Towards an Investigation)," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays,* trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001). Elsewhere, Paulo Freire and Jacques Rancière develop similar claims, cf. Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2000), chap. 2 and Jacques Rancière, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation*, trans. Kristin Ross (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991). Both Freire and Rancière contend that there is a certain form of pedagogy that constructs a subjectivity obedient to authority and structured along certain class lines, while simultaneously divesting these subjects of their ability to pose their own problems and develop their own knowledge. A radical pedagogy, would, in part, contest and undermine the mechanisms of this form of pedagogy, opening the way to the formation of genuine agents.

Here I will focus on the third dimension of pedagogical machines: what such machines produce. Initially the answer seems obvious. Pedagogical machines operate by transmitting knowledge, thereby producing knowing subjects. This, of course, raises all sorts of questions as to just what knowledge is. The Greeks distinguished at least five forms of knowledge—δοξα (*doxa*, opinion), επιστημη (*episteme*, propositional knowledge with justification), φρονησις (*phronesis*, practical knowledge), τεχνη (*techne*, craftsmanship), and σοφια (*sophia*, wisdom)—one of which, *doxa*, does not even deserve to be called education. When we look at primary school education, with its focus on standarised testing, it is not clear that any of the remaining four forms of knowledge are transmitted by pedagogical machines. While we might think that primary schools transmit *episteme* because this form of knowledge is transmissible by speech—*phronesis* and *techne*, while clearly having components of speech and writing, are primarily learned by doing—much of the primary school curriculum lacks any component of justification or supporting reasons for the propositions transmitted, rendering such propositions better classified as *doxa*.[8] When reflecting on primary school education in the United States, as well as the premises behind educational reforms such as No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top, and Common Core, it will be noted that there seems to be an obsession with propositional knowledge as evinced in a discourse focused on "facts"; yet it seems that learning is something far more profound than a transmission and internalisation of propositions.

While knowledge, in one or more of its four forms, is certainly a core component of learning, it is not clear that it constitutes what is most characteristic of pedagogy and learning. Might not conceiving of pedagogy as a machine of subjectivization be both more accurate and get us further? The concept of subjectivization often carries negative connotations, evoking images of indoctrination. While there are indeed machines of subjectivization that function in this way, the function of indoctrination should not be understood as intrinsic to these technologies. Rather, peda-

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8 Here it should be borne in mind that *doxa* is not synonymous with falsehood, but rather a belief that one holds without knowing why it is true or without being able to provide a demonstration for its proof. I am of the opinion (*doxa*) that there are stars that are 100,000 light years from Earth, and might even be able to name some of these stars, but because I lack detailed knowledge of astronomy, I am unable to provide a demonstration that this is indeed the case.

gogies as machines of subjectivization should be thought of as technologies that produce agents with certain cognitive, affective, and normative capacities that can be either emancipatory or oppressive. When pedagogy is at its best, it engenders, at the cognitive level, not merely the internalization of propositions passively received from a master, but rather the capacity to form propositions or sequences of thought, as in the case of the agent that has undergone subjectivization as a scientist developing the capacity to formulate experiments and theories explaining phenomena. At the affective level, subjectivisation produces capacities to act and sense the world.[9] The subjectivization a doctor undergoes in becoming a doctor engenders a capacity to sense certain signs of the body as significant or signifying with respect to various medical conditions and diseases, while the training of an athlete produces bodily capacities to act in particular ways in response to aleatory local situations, such as those powers of the surfer in response to waves. At the normative level, subjectivization produces values and goals proper to a form of activity, social existence, and life. A pedagogy is not merely the transmission and internalization of propositions, but rather the formation of a body at the spiritual and affective level. At the cognitive and affective level, it is clear that pedagogy as a machine of subjectivization consists of the production of the capacity to sense signs relevant to a domain of being and to act appropriately in response to those signs.

Earlier I suggested that an apocalyptic pedagogy operates with the possibility of collapse and utter destruction as the horizon of its operations, but also with unveiling as its mode of operation. In particular, such an unveiling is an unveiling of being as dwelling. An apocalyptic pedagogy would be one that aims at subjectivizations cognitively and affectively attuned to the unveiling of beings or machines, including ourselves, as they dwell. This raises three interrelated questions: first, what is the veiled world in its

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9   Here I follow Deleuze's reading of affect in Spinoza. In this context, affect refers not primarily to emotion, but rather to a body's capacity to affect and be affected. Being affected refers to passions and more broadly the body's capacity to both sense the world and be acted upon by other bodies in the world. For example, sharks are able to sense other organisms through the electro-magnetic fields that they emit. By contrast, the capacity to affect refers to actions or what a body is capable of doing as in the case of a bird's capacity to fly. Cf. Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: A Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1988), 27. All machines, I contend, can be understood in terms of their affects.

veiledness? Put less cryptically, in what way does the world present itself to us in veiled form? Second, what is the activity of unveiling, and the mode of cognition and affectivity proper to unveiling? Third, what does it mean for a being to dwell? As we will see, unveiling is the practice of bringing the background or what Rickert calls the "ambient" into the foreground. As Rickert describes it, ambience "encompasses various shades of meaning, but largely […] refers to what is lying around, surrounding, encompassing, or environing."[10] The ambient is a field of interrelated machines, all operating with respect to one another, affecting how the others operate, depending on others for their operations, drawing on flows from other machines, and issuing flows to other machines. The ambient is not the machine—or perhaps it is a hypercomplex machine?—but is rather that field into which a machine plugs in exercising its operations.

The ambient is thus the ecological; it is an ecology of machines. Here we must exercise caution, for the term "ecology" evokes connotations of "nature." We think of the ecological as something we investigate elsewhere, outside of society, culture, or the city. Ecology is what we investigate when we investigate Amazonian rainforests and coral reefs. This is a connotation that should be abandoned by apocalyptic ontology. "Ecology" does not signify nature but relation, relations between machines. There is an ecology of urban neighbourhoods in New York, no less than Canadian forests. This ecology, this ambience, does not consist of weeds growing in sidewalks, rats, cockroaches, mould and pollen—though in includes these too—but rather of roads, businesses, relations between different groups, institutions such as schools, different sets of customs belonging to those various groups, sources of energy and food, technologies that afford and constrain action, affiliations such as friendships, conflicts among different groups, police and the local customs of police forces, laws, governmental agencies, and many other things besides. There is an ecology of everything, including a household, not because everything draws on the natural world as the background upon which it is dependent—though everything does—but because everything exists in fields of relations that condition how machines behave. It is for this reason that ecological thinking is ontological thinking. Thinking ecologically means thinking the mediation of machines, how machines are related to other machines, and how these mediations condition how machines behave.

10 Rickert, *Ambient Rhetoric*, 5.

There are two dimensions to the OEL through which its mechanisms of veiling function: the erasure or veiling of ambience and the freezing of beings in the actuality they display under certain ecological conditions. With respect to the first, Marx, I believe, provides the basic schema for comprehending the veiled world and how the veiled world presents itself. When developing his account of commodity fetishism, Marx famously remarks that the commodity "is nothing but the definite social relation between men themselves which assumes […] for them, the fantastic form of a relation between things."[11] Here Marx is somewhat misleading, for it is not so much that when in a state of commodity fetishism one treats relations between people as relations between things, but rather that relations to other people are treated merely as relations between things. In our dealings with commodities that we purchase and consume, we experience ourselves as merely dealing with things, with objects, overlooking the ambience of social relations, the background, the ecology of societal relations that renders these commodities possible. As Deleuze and Guattari put it, paraphrasing Marx, "we cannot tell from the mere taste of wheat who grew it; the product gives us no hint as to the system and the relations of production."[12] When I purchase a cheap pair of shoes from Wal-Mart, I take myself to *just* be buying shoes and to be dealing with no other people at all, save the superstore and the cashier. However, these shoes are cheap, they have the exchange-value they have, as a result of being produced in Third World sweatshops that minimize the cost of production. In purchasing these shoes I take myself to *merely* be participating in the mundane activity of purchasing shoes. In fact, I am participating in an entire system or ecology of social relations with other people, which functions to reproduce these relations. Yet all of this is ambient in the shoes. In his analysis of what is ambient in the commodity (i.e., of social relations), Marx reveals himself as a profoundly ecological thinker.

The unveiling practiced in apocalyptic ontology moves beyond the self-enclosed boundaries of the discrete or individual machine, unfold-

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11 Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy, Vol. I*, trans. Ben Fowkes, (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), 165.

12 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 24.

ing how it is plugged into an entire field of other machines. Where OEL sees joblessness, for example, as the result of a moral failing of an *individual*—"the jobless person is lazy and lacks a good work ethic and therefore deserves her joblessness"—apocalyptic ontology reveals how states of machines are conditioned by the ecology of relations in which they *occur*. The unveiling practiced by apocalyptic ontology in the case of joblessness would look at the availability of jobs in a geographical region, how racism might function with respect to jobs, how foreign trade agreements might affect the availability of jobs, the impact of new technologies on jobs, etc. In this regard, apocalyptic ontology treats *states* of machines in a manner akin to how psychoanalysis treats symptoms. In psychoanalysis, symptoms have a meaning, a signification, relating to their life history. The woman's phobia of weasels might not simply be an irrational fear of weasels, but rather might refer to an internalized *discourse* that arose as a young girl when her parents were going through a particularly nasty divorce. Perhaps her mother constantly referred to her father as a "deceitful weasel." Her phobia would be a trace of this discourse and trauma, a way of managing that trauma and the anxiety that accompanies it in the phobia of a particular animal. Where Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, based on the OEL, might seek to overcome this phobia through gradual exposure to weasels rendering them tolerable—thereby leaving the ambience of the symptom, the family history, intact—the unveiling practiced in psychoanalysis would seek to decipher the ambience, the meaning, of this signifier so that the patient might directly confront that trauma. The case is similar with all states of machines. There is a background field that conditions or contributes to the states of the machine.

     None of this is to suggest that machines have no agency of their own. Every machine has its "Eigenvalues" or powers that reside within the being itself and that are activities on the part of the machine itself, and not simply outputs in response to how the machine has been affected by other machines. Some machines are unable to initiate actualisations or actions on their own, such that their states are actualised only in response to flows from other machines. For example, the states of malleability and brittleness characteristic of iron are a function of the temperature of the field the iron occupies at a particular point in time. Other entities have agency—and this agency exists in degrees ranging from that of very simple organisms

like bacteria up to more complex machines such as dogs, dolphins, and humans—and therefore have a degree of freedom in their action consisting of the capacity to actualise states out of themselves. Yet because they exist in a field composed of other machines, many of the actions open to them constitute either poor or foreclosed possibilities. By analogy, a knight in a game of chess might have the power to move in a particular way but be unable to do so because another piece is occupying that space or the player might choose not to do so because it would be immediately taken in the next move.

There are degrees of freedom for genuine agents, yet that freedom can be constrained by how the field, the ecology, in which the agent dwells is arranged. In the case of joblessness it is not unusual to hear people blame the jobless themselves, saying that they should just move somewhere else where there are jobs. This misses the point that either, first, the agent might exist in a way that does not afford him the possibility of moving, e.g., he lacks the financial resources; or, second, moving would not be a "good move" because it would sever him from relations that make his life worth living, such as relationships with friends and family, or because he has ob-ligations that prevent him from moving, as in the case of care for elderly parents. OEL has a perpetual tendency to erase ambient fields that charac-terize the terrain in which agents dwell. As a consequence, we get two very different ways of responding to symptoms. In the case of OEL, we get a *moral* discourse that calls for the spiritual transformation of agents, such as teaching them a "good work ethic" in the case of joblessness. In the case of ecological ontology, it is the ambient field, the background of action, that is largely the source of the problem. It is consequently this field that needs to be engaged with.

The foregoing allows us to give the OEL that apocalyptic pedagogy targets—i.e., to give the veiled world greater clarity. The veiled world of the OEL is one that erases the ambience of entities or how they dwell in fields of relations to other entities. Entities, machines—including persons themselves—are encountered as unrelated to one another, without ambi-ence, without dwelling, such that they are not implicated or sheathed within one another. They are treated as discrete and autonomous, as separable units. As a consequence, we experience ourselves as beings who do not dwell, who are not sheathed in other beings, and encounter other beings as discrete and independent such that they don't affect one another. Thus, as

Jane Bennett suggests, we experience things as capable of just being thrown away.[13] For the OEL, when things are thrown away they are gone, they are without effect, for things are without ambience or relationality. The car burns the gasoline without remainder. It does not emit gases that, in turn, affect the ambient field in their own way. And perhaps this is another way of thinking the subjectivization aimed at by apocalyptic pedagogy: such a pedagogy aims, in part, at producing a form of affectivity and cognition that is attentive to waste as waste. It is thermodynamic. "Waste as waste" does not refer to that which goes unused—yet another trope of OEL insofar as it seeks to maximally exploit everything—but rather to that which remains after the operation, an output of a machine on the flows upon which it acts. In a manner befitting of Pynchon, apocalyptic subjectivity, in part, is attuned to the agency of waste.

However here we must exercise caution, for the great temptation that haunts the unveiling of apocalyptic practice lies in the thesis that things *are* their relations, that they are only in and through their relations. Apocalyptic ontology has a tendency to overcompensate in the face of the discrete ontology of OEL, treating relations as intrinsic to machines. Yet if relations were intrinsic to machines, there would be no danger of apocalypse. While non-relation might indeed spell the death or destruction of a thing, machines nonetheless enjoy a minimal autonomy or independence from their relations. As William Connolly has argued, there is a fragility of things, a vulnerability.[14] This vulnerability lies not only in the capacity of things to be affected by other things such that they are destroyed—as in the case of coral reefs dying as a result of rising ocean temperatures—but also as a result of relations being severed. Things suffer both as a result of relations and as a result of non-relation. The entire project of apocalyptic ontology and ecology is for naught if we do not begin from the premise that both relations and non-relations can be destructive, and if we fail to understand that the relations constitutive of dwelling are fragile such that they are capable of being severed.

The second great veiling constitutive of OEL lies in "actualism." Actualism consists of the reduction of machines to their occurrent prop-

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13 Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press), 6.
14 William Connolly, *The Fragility of Things: Self-Organizing Processes, Neoliberal Fantasies, and Democratic Activism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013).

erties under specific conditions. This veiling is more difficult to grasp, as actualism is so pervasive in our thought. We have a tendency to treat qualities of entities as intrinsic features that belong to the machine in all possible contexts, rather than events that occur under specific circumstances. Take a beautiful piece of blown glass artwork such as a vase. We say that the vase *is* blue. Yet in reality, the vase is only this particular shade of brilliant blue under particular lighting conditions such as those of a bright sunny day. In other lighting conditions, the vase might be green or a darker shade of blue, while in dim light it might be black or grey. It will be noted that in each instance of colour in the preceding, I used the verb "to be," rather than variants of the verb "to appear." This is because the colour of the vase is not merely an "appearance," but is a real event characterising the being of the vase. The color of the vase arises from an interplay of the molecular structure of the vase and the wavelengths of light the vase interacts with. The vase really is grey in dim light. It is not that the vase "really" is bright blue and this blueness is just veiled. This is because the colour of the vase is a result of powers or capacities possessed by this machine. The vase-machine draws on flows of light to produce particular qualities of colour as events within a field of ambience.

Actualism has a significant impact on how we relate to machines, because it leads us to believe machines have the same properties or qualities in all possible contexts or ambient fields. For example, we are led to think a machine, like a particular pesticide, will behave in the same way in the field as it does in the controlled environment of the laboratory. Or take the case of the problem student in primary school. She does poorly in her schoolwork, gets in fights with other students, is difficult with her teachers, etc. Actualism leads us to think this student just *is* a "bad apple" in need of severe discipline. We treat these problem behaviours as intrinsic qualities of the student and act accordingly. Apocalyptic subjectivity, premised as it is on ecological ontology, would by contrast attend to the ambience within which the student dwells, treating this behaviour as a symptom of that ecology. Perhaps there are problems at home. Perhaps the student lives in precarious economic circumstances. Perhaps she is being bullied by other students at the school. Revealing such relations, disclosing such an ecology, would not only lead us to abandon the notion that these problems mentioned are intrinsic features of the student, but would transform how we respond to the student, focusing on this ambience as a way of helping

the student.

An apocalyptic pedagogy would attend to the production of subjectivizations both that call into question the discrete ontology and actualism of OEL, and that foster cognition and affectivity proper to ecological thinking. Such a pedagogy would foster student awareness not only of ecological relations with respect to things at the natural, social, and economic levels, but also with respect to their own existence and actions. Students would develop a subjectivity cognizant of how their very existence is dependent on an entire ecology of natural, cultural, and economic relations, and also of how their actions and modes of consumption affect this ecology. Rather than seeing themselves as discrete individuals outside of this ecology, they would instead see themselves as embedded within it.

By way of conclusion, we here might think of the Bloemhof primary school in Rotterdam, Holland. Beginning with an ecological conception of being, this school for young students that are largely disadvantaged children of immigrants seeks to both foster an ecological subjectivity and to directly intervene in the social and cultural ecologies of these students. Thus, for example, students have a vegetable garden that they tend and that produces food used in the cafeteria meals. Waste from the preparation of those meals is, in its turn, used to create compost to fertilize the gardens. The students begin to learn about where food comes from and how much care it takes to produce it. The part of the city where the school is housed is subject to a lot of crime and gang activity. Students and families are involved in cleaning up the neighbourhood and creating parks. This leads to the formation of stronger community relations where greater pride is taken in the neighbourhood, which plays some role in decreasing crime in the neighbourhood. The construction of a different ecology takes place here. Where neighbourhood maintenance conducted entirely by the city disinvests people from the neighbourhood, leading them to think of it as something that is just there, maintenance and building conducted by those that live there invests them in this area and fosters productive social relations. Those that vandalise these parks and streets are no longer just vandalizing "the city," but the dwelling of their neighbours, friends, and family members.

Often one of the problems immigrant populations face in these neighbourhoods is linguistic isolation from the broader culture. Towards this end, parents are encouraged to engage in these building projects and

in the daily activity of producing lunch for the children at the school. Generally, student linguistic competence in Dutch is greater than that of the parents. Through this participation at the school, and the maintenance and building projects, relations are forged between parents from different cultural backgrounds and opportunities are given to develop their language skills that they might not otherwise have. Not only does this enhance the strength of the community, but it also increases their power of acting and living within the context of Holland.

Bloemhof also practices a pedagogy that engages students at the level of affectivity. Part of the curriculum consists of co-ed martial arts for the boys and girls. This affective component of the education serves a variety of functions. First, it helps to cultivate bodily competence and development. It also helps to develop enhanced cognitive function. Additionally, it gives students some ability to defend themselves, thereby increasing their confidence. However, something remarkable also happens at the level of gender relations. At this young age, the girls are generally more coordinated than the boys. As a result, they tend to excel with the martial arts. The culture they come from tends to subordinate women to men, and to promote the subordination of women to men. Through martial arts, these young girls develop greater confidence and an enhanced sense of what they can do as agents. Similarly, the boys develop a greater respect for the girls and their capacities. These martial arts thereby intervene in an ecology of gender relations, contributing to the formation of more equitable relations.

The foregoing discussion of Bloemhof is just a sketch of what an apocalyptic pedagogy aimed at producing ecological subjectivity might look like. Bloemhof does not simply transmit ecological propositions, nor does it simply represent ambience or ecological relations; it *is* ecological. Not only does it foster ecological awareness, but through its practices it intervenes in ecological relations at the natural, urban, social, cultural, and affective level. It is a pedagogy directed at the background that approaches beings in terms of their relatedness and interdependence, rather than one that treats beings as discrete and separated. The production of such agents contributes to the form of subjectivity with the affective, cognitive, and normative powers required to respond to the apocalyptic circumstances in which we today dwell; opening the possibility of the formation of new ways of living.

✠ WHY *THIS* POETRY MATTERS

H. L. HIX

The question that twenty years ago reinserted itself into public consciousness in Dana Gioia's succinct formulation—can poetry matter?—will continue to be asked. And it should be: the answers most often given are unsatisfactory, and no answer can be final or encompassing. The question insists on being asked not just once for all, but again and again.

The answers most often given are unsatisfactory because they reduce a complex interrelationship to one or another of its elements. One kind of answer, the "Great Books" kind, attributes to poetry (in general, or to certain poetry) a quality *intrinsic to the poetry itself*, some version of greatness. Either poetry as a genre (unlike, say, tawdry journalistic prose) has this quality, the answer goes, or *some* poetry does (Donne's, say, as compared to that free verse schlock people write nowadays). Such a basis for affirming that poetry can matter, though, only separates the poem from the reader and from the world, rendering the poem artifactual, a museum piece, a well-wrought urn. Donne's poetry is great, this story says, even though nobody's reading it and even though the world I live in now doesn't look much like the one Donne lived in. It's no problem if no one is in the forest to hear the tree fall.

The other frequently-offered answer, which I will call the "Dickinson" kind, locates the essential quality *in the reader*: as she, Emily Dickinson, so famously put it, "if I feel physically as if the *top of my head* were taken off, I know that is poetry."[1] The problem with *this* kind of answer is that it separates the reader from the poem (and from the world). One reader encountering "There's a certain Slant of light" will feel the top of her head taken off, another will not. The feeling is entirely subjective. Nothing distinguishes having the top of one's head taken off by Gwendolyn Brooks from having it taken off by Ogden Nash. The decapitation is all.

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1 Letter 342a to Colonel T. W. Higginson, *The Life and Letters of Emily Dickinson*, ed. Martha Gilbert Dickinson Bianchi (New York: Biblo and Tannen, 1971). Emphasis mine.

The "Great Books" approach, by locating the relevant quality in the poem, pretends to strict objectivity; the "Dickinson" approach does the opposite, pretending to strict subjectivity. But isolating either the poem or the reader, locating poetry's value exclusively in either one, neglects the complementarity and inseparability of the two so warmly insisted on by Whitman's gesture:

> each man and each woman of you I lead upon a knoll,
> My left hand hooking you round the waist,
> My right hand pointing to landscapes of continents and the pub
>   lic road.
>
> Not I, not any one else can travel that road for you,
> You must travel it for yourself.[2]

The poem (here personified as the poet himself) is active, but so is the reader. The activity and the worth of either cannot be understood in isolation from that of the other. Objectivity and subjectivity both are invoked.

To forfeit the holism Whitman depicts, as both the "Great Books" answer and the "Dickinson" answer do, is to take part for whole, to mistake sign for signified, in a literary equivalent to the way we mislead ourselves economically by accepting indicators as substitutes for what they (once) purport(ed) to indicate. The GDP is supposed to indicate the well-being of the citizenry, but GDP *is* increased when I eat a fast-food burger for lunch (petroleum-based fertilizers and pesticides, antibiotics for the feedlot cows, packaging material, thousands of miles of shipping, the various health-care costs that I incur to treat my obesity), and is *not* increased when I eat a beet salad I made myself from ingredients I grew in my backyard garden. I misrepresent—and misunderstand—my individual well-being and our collective well-being if I employ GDP as my standard of measurement. As we mislead ourselves economically by accepting indicators as substitutes, so do we humanistically. It might be a clue to whether poetry matters if it enjoys esteem for the reasons "Great Books" advocates give: it has "stood the test of time," i.e., *survived* from its origin to the present day, enjoyed relatively

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2 Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself" §46, *Leaves of Grass and Other Writings*, ed. Michael Moon (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002), 72.

wide and fairly consistent readership in the past, occasioned critical discussion, and received commendation from purported experts. And it might be a clue if I respond powerfully to it, if I feel the top of my head blown off. But GDP is not my well-being, and neither the "Great Books" nor the "Dickinson" rationale answers whether poetry matters.

If time indeed conferred worth, as the "Great Books" answer suggests, then the old would rightly be presumed worthy, and the new would need yet to prove itself so. If my feelings conferred worth, then anything I *like* would be worthy, anything I dislike unworthy. There is an alternative accounting, though, suggested by Jared Carter's blunt declaration at the end of one of his poems, that "the purpose of poetry is to tell us about life."[3] In this view, poetry is not reduced exclusively to either subjectivity or objectivity: it tells *us*, and it tells *about life*. Such a premise would shift the burden of proof of validity and relevance from new poetry onto old, and from my subjective response onto truth, or as Plato has Socrates put the matter, from *doxa* (opinion) onto *logos* (reasoned, warranted understanding)). For an old poem to tell me about life as it *is*, not only about life as it *once was*, life as it is would have to be *like*, not only *continuous with*, life as it was; and for my subjective response to have merit, life as it is for someone else would have to be like life as it is for me.

Poetry's relevance to life seems less and less likely the farther from me the poet is in time or in other aspects of cultural context. But I want to assert that this identifies the primary stakes of poetry: to tell about life will include telling about commonalities that may not be immediately apparent. This answer, that poetry matters if and when and because it tells me about life, will resist certain kinds of generalization: what this poem tells me about life and what that poem tells me about life may not be identical. Validation will occur case by case. Consider, then, as one case, a poetry that looks *prima facie* quite unlikely to tell me about life.

Fray Luis de León (1527–91) wrote his poems in Spain more than four centuries ago. The list of differences between life as it was for him and life as it is for us now is indefinitely long. He died before Charles Babbage originated the programmable computer, before James Watt patented a steam engine, before Isaac Newton formulated his three laws of motion, be-

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3 Jared Carter, "The Purpose of Poetry" in *After the Rain* (Cleveland: Cleveland State Poetry Center, 1993), 24.

fore Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet*, before Jamestown was settled. His birth was separated by fewer years from Columbus' sailing of the ocean blue than the present day is from Neil Armstrong's one giant step for mankind. So differently furnished was his world (no cell phones, no TVs, no airplanes, no bicycles, no department stores, no flush toilets) and so differently understood (no Einstein, no Darwin, no Adam Smith, no "*liberté, égalité, fraternité*"), that it is not obvious what his experience has in common with ours. Consequently, it is not obvious what *his* poetry might tell us about *our* lives, and thus what reason there might be for translating his poetry, or for reading it. What makes it "news that stays news"? His poetry was written in a distant *then*; what makes what his poetry tells us about life true *of*, or true *to*, life now?

Fray Luis is recognized as a major figure in Spanish literature, and his poetry enjoys canonical status. Translators and others have offered, as rationales on behalf of his work, numerous variations on the "Great Books" theme of its having stood the test of time. For instance, in *The Penguin Book of Spanish Verse*, J. M. Cohen introduces Fray Luis by noting that his poems "are modelled on Horace, and are concerned with the contrast between earthly life and the spiritual reality."[4] But in expressing that concern, they are not, Cohen suggests, typical of the poetry of his day. They do not simply reflect cultural expectations: "they are far more monumental and far less ornate than the poetry fashionable in his day."[5] Similarly, Eugenio Florit points out that, though Fray Luis's "poetic output was small," many of his poems "are without equal in Spanish poetry." They "reflect the contemplative spirit of their author and the intensity of his love of God." They are admired, Florit notes, for their "serenity and sincerity" and "for the sobriety and clarity of their style, as well as for the sublimity of their ideas."[6]

Not all such rationales are unqualified. Billy Collins, for example, in his introduction to Edith Grossman's anthology of "Golden Age" poetry, implies that the poems are derivative: Collins calls Fray Luis a "kind of Christian Horace," who "praised the simple life of the countryside" only

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4 J. M. Cohen, ed. and trans., introduction to *The Penguin Book of Spanish Verse*, 3rd ed. (New York: Penguin, 1988), xii.

5 Ibid., xii.

6 Eugenio Florit, ed. and trans., *Spanish Poetry: A Selection* (Mineola: Dover Publications, 1965), 45.

because Horace had done so, even though Fray Luis himself "hardly experienced plain-living in his time."[7] Grossman, for her part, gives only a muted appreciation, confining Fray Luis to a role in an historical movement. He is, she says, "generally considered a leading poet in the far-reaching 'Christianization' of the Renaissance in Spain during the sixteenth century."[8] Still, even such qualified rationales rest on canonicity. "It's not perfect," (their remarks imply of the poetry), "but it has held up."

I suggest, though, that it is a mistake to take durability for relevance. The reason to read Fray Luis's poetry (the answer to the question of whether and how a 400-year-old poem might matter) is not that it has hung around, or that other readers' heads have been blown off by it, but that it tells me about life. *My* life, *now*. There may be many ways in which it tells me about life (and if it sustains multiple readings, surely there *must* be). Here, though, I focus on one way in particular, a clue to which lies in the combination of two biographical facts about Fray Luis.

First, he devoted his adult life to the Church. Sent at age 14 to study canon law at Salamanca, he soon left to enter the Order of the Hermits of St. Augustine, to which "he made his solemn profession on 29 January 1544."[9] He took a master's degree in Theology in 1560 and remained in the Order of the Hermits, fulfilling his vocation, for the rest of his life. But the second biographical fact stands in dramatic tension with the first. On 27 March 1572, Fray Luis was arrested by an officer of the Spanish Inquisition. He was found guilty, and spent four years in prison as a result. He was imprisoned, in other words, by the very Church to the service of which he had devoted—was devoting—his life.

The combination of spiritual vocation and imprisonment by the Inquisition stands as existential evidence of what I want to call "box 4 thinking," and insofar as his poems, like his life, engage with (inquire into, explicate, aspire toward) box 4 thinking they offer challenge and edification (they *ought* to blow off the tops of heads) to readers of *any* time period, including our own, and in any cultural context, ours no less than his. What is

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7 Billy Collins, introduction to *The Golden Age: Poems of the Spanish Renaissance*, ed. Edith Grossman (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), xix.
8 Edith Grossman, in *The Golden Age*, 102.
9 Colin P. Thompson, *The Strife of Tongues: Fray Luis de León and the Golden Age of Spain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 5.

at stake, in other words, is essential, not context-dependent: like the law of gravity, box 4 does not vary in its applicability or force according to developments in human technologies or changes in human social arrangements. An explanation of my assertion can begin with the following table, intended to summarize "the four boxes" as a point of commonality between Fray Luis's time and our own time, and thus as a basis for asserting the ongoing (and especially—my point here—the *contemporary*) relevance of his work.

		Immanence Is Ultimate	Transcendence Is Ultimate
Authority Is Final	1. Advocate	1.1: Hobbes	2.1: Aquinas
	2. Exemplar	1.2: Stalin	2.2: "the war on terror"
	3. Epistemological ideal	1.3: clarity	2.3: certainty
	4. Aesthetic ideal	1.4: order	2.4: simplicity
	5. Ideal posture	1.5: loyalty	2.5: piety
	6. Private danger	1.6: hypocrisy	2.6: dogmatism
	7. Manifestation	1.7: dictatorship	2.7: holy war
	8. Public danger	1.8: tyranny/enslavement	2.8: jingoism
	9. Impediment	1.9: How to *sustain* authority?	2.9: How to *select* authority?
	10. Limit question	1.10: What *confers* authority?	2.10: What about alternatives?
Authority Is Provisional	1. Advocate	3.1: Machiavelli	4.1: Augustine
	2. Exemplar	3.2: market economy	4.2: Socrates
	3. Epistemological ideal	3.3: profit	4.3: mystery
	4. Aesthetic ideal	3.4: brand identity	4.4: sublimity
	5. Ideal posture	3.5: self-interest	4.5: reverence
	6. Private danger	3.6: relativism	4.6: insecurity
	7. Manifestation	3.7: wealth	4.7: civil disobedience
	8. Public danger	3.8: monopoly	4.8: anarchy
	9. Impediment	3.9: How to secure one's gains?	4.9: How to rest, decide, commit?
	10. Limit question	3.10: Is there no intrinsic value?	4.10: What assurance is there?

I present this chart only as a means to the end of articulating why the poetry of Fray Luis matters, not as an end in itself. It could be interesting to explore it thoroughly and to discuss it on its own terms, but here I sketch only the minimal outline necessary to arrive at the point I wish to make about poetry. The chart is "strong" in the sense that it divisions are exhaustive and mutually exclusive. Both horizontal and vertical divisions are either/ors: either immanence is ultimate or transcendence is, either authority is final or it is provisional. Consequently, *everyone* is, in principle, in one and only one of the four boxes. The chart is "weak" in that (a) humans are inconsistent (so I might *say* transcendence is ultimate, for instance, but act as if immanence were, or I might treat authority as final when it is convenient to do so, and as provisional when it is not), and (b) there is wide range for variation in how one defines and understands the terms (so I

might understand the terms in such a way that I would place myself in box 2, say, and you might understand the terms in such a way that you would place me in box 1). That most of us, in practice, "cheat" by wiggling from box to box confirms that merely distinguishing the boxes one from another is not an end in itself, but it also reveals the distinction as a valuable means: the more clearly I "see" the differences, the better prepared I am to *choose* a box rather than be pushed into one, and to achieve moral and intellectual consistency by remaining in the chosen box rather than moving according to convenience, or just unreflectively, from box to box.

Here in briefest summary is what I mean by each of the four "boxes" in the chart.

If I regard immanence as ultimate—if nothing "above" the world supervenes upon the world—but I regard authority as final, then my viewpoint resembles that articulated at great length by Thomas Hobbes in *Leviathan*. In his book's most famous passage, Hobbes depicts as disastrous the result of a lack of final authority (and thus denies boxes 3 and 4). There he claims that "it is manifest, that during the time men live without a common Power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called Warre,"[10] in which "every man is Enemy to every man,"[11] and therefore there is no place for industry, culture, arts, and other human goods, but instead "continuall feare, and danger of violent death," and human life is "solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short." To prevent this worst of all conditions for humans, we must, Hobbes argues, defer to a Sovereign, but (here he rules out box 2) that deference entails a denial of transcendence. Even if "God Almighty can speak to a man,"[12] yet still "he obliges no man to beleeve he hath done so to him that pretends it." Since "Miracles now cease, we have no sign left,"[13] and since "Soveraigns in their own Dominions are the sole Legislators,"[14] the "transcendent" is reduced to nothing other than what human authority—the sovereign—says it is. The transcendent is not transcendent at all, but only one guise of human authority.

One way to make the case for box 2 is given by Thomas Aquinas.

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10 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. C. B. Macpherson (New York: Penguin, 1968), 185.
11 Ibid., 186.
12 Ibid., 411.
13 Ibid., 414.
14 Ibid., 415.

Aquinas regards transcendence as ultimate (thus ruling out boxes 1 and 3): there is a God, by Whom the world is governed, and God is transcendent. In Aquinas's own words:

> the universal end of all things is the Universal Good; Which is good of Itself by virtue of Its Essence, Which is the very essence of goodness; whereas a particular good is good by participation. Now it is manifest that in the whole created universe there is not a good which is not such by participation. Wherefore that good which is the end of the whole universe must be a good outside the universe.[15]

The things of creation reflect in their nature this Universal Good. Humans, who have reason and free will, must exercise those capacities in order to participate in the Universal Good. Aquinas rules out box 4 by contending that human capacities and institutions are adequate to this Good. Natural Law endows humans with the capacity to enact Eternal Law, the principle of Universal Good, and the Church and Scripture communicate Eternal Law in terms appropriate to human capacities. In Aquinas's own formulation, "God has the design of the government of all things," but this government will be so much the better in the degree the things governed are brought to perfection. Now it is a greater perfection for a thing to be good in itself and also the cause of goodness in others, than only to be good in itself. Therefore God so governs things that He makes some of them to be causes of others in government—as a master who not only imparts knowledge to his pupils but gives also the faculty of teaching others.[16]

Human government, by realizing divine government, has final authority. (Recall that Aquinas does not assume, as would most citizens of a nation that claims separation of church and state, that government means *secular* government.)

Box 3 receives one clear characterization in Machiavelli. For him, "the chief foundations of all states" are not the fruits of divine dispensation, but "good laws and good arms."[17] How we live and how we ought

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15 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 2nd, revised ed. (London: Burns, Oates, and Washbourne, 1920), Ia q. 103 a. 2.

16 Aquinas, Ia q. 103 a. 6.

17 Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Luigi Ricci, revised E. R. P. Vincent (New York:

to live are radically different, and how we ought to live is altogether ineffectual: "he who abandons what is done for what ought to be done, will rather learn to bring about his own ruin than his preservation."[18] No God, no Justice oversees human affairs. Boxes 2 and 4 are ruled out: there is no transcendence, no Authority over authority. For Machiavelli, it is only a logical consequence that box 1 is also ruled out. In the absence of enforcement by the transcendent, nothing makes any authority final: authority is provisional, always *made up*. His response to the ultimacy of the immanent is the opposite of Hobbes's: for Hobbes, the absence of transcendent enforcement of authority means I should defer to authority for self-preservation; for Machiavelli, the absence of transcendent enforcement means I should seize authority for myself, for self-benefit.

Box 4 finds one articulation in the work of St. Augustine. There are other articulations, such as Kierkegaard's distinction between Christendom—box 3, in which "we have become 'knowing' about Christ,"[19] in which we have transcendence on secure (final) authority—and Christianity—box 4, in which we are "aware, facing the offense of the contradiction"[20] in affirming transcendence without any final authority on which to base the affirmation. I choose Augustine here, though, because Fray Luis was an Augustinian monk. For Augustine, boxes 1 and 3 are summarily ruled out: transcendence, not immanence, is ultimate. God—Augustine's personification of the transcendent—"is the light, the melody, the fragrance, the brilliance that space cannot contain, a sound that time cannot carry away, a perfume that no breeze disperses, a taste undiminished by eating, a clinging together that no satiety will sunder."[21] Yet, unlike Aquinas's confidence that human authority—for Aquinas, the Church—reveals and fulfills the transcendent robustly, for Augustine matters are more complicated in a way that rules out box 2 and leaves only box 4 available. The transcendent cannot be reduced to the immanent. When Augustine asks (in the paragraph immediately following the one just cited), "and what is this God?," he re-

New American Library, 1952), 72.

18 Ibid., 84.

19 Søren Kierkegaard, *Practice in Christianity*, ed. and trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 35.

20 Ibid., 136.

21 Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Rex Warner (New York: New American Library, 1963), 215.

ceives consistent replies from the earth, the sea, and the animals: "we are not your God. Look above us." There is transcendence, and it alone has (and *is*) authority. No human authority can adequately represent it.

Fray Luis, then, on grounds that resemble those articulated by Augustine, is willing to enter into vocation—service of God, the transcendent, the ultimate—but unwilling to accept as final an authority—the Inquisition—that claimed adequately to represent the transcendent.

I repeat that I do not mean here to defend the chart *per se*. A reader need not accept the particulars of the chart, which might itself be deeply flawed but still serve my aim of differentiating one kind of thinking as relevantly different from others. My use of the chart can be formulated in strictly hypothetical terms: *if there were* such categories, box 4 *would be* the most compelling. I do believe, though, that one might be told something about life similar to what I here claim Fray Luis tells us, in other poetry. John Keats's concept of "negative capability," for example, appears to me to be a description of box 4 thinking, and his attribution of negative capability to Shakespeare thus a suggestion of special compatibility between poetry and box 4 thinking, insofar as negative capability is characteristic of the best poets and the best poetry.

The choice is not an idle one, not free-floating opinion or a wholly subjective matter of taste. Choosing box 1, 2, or 3 is a mistake *with consequences*. It was so during Fray Luis's lifetime, it is now, and it ever will be.

Amartya Sen's *Identity and Violence* offers a clear and forceful example of how a conceptual error can result in harm to oneself and to others. Sen points out that, although group affiliations participate in the construction of individual identities, no human's identity is composed exclusively of affiliation with one group.[22] Central to my decisions and to my effects on others is the arranging and prioritizing of these various affiliations in ways appropriate to my ideals and to the context. Sen's point is that if I regard myself

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22 Sen's "small sample of diverse categories to each of which I may simultaneously belong" is vivid: "I can be, at the same time, an Asian, and Indian citizen, a Bengali with Bangladeshi ancestry, an American or British resident, an economist, a dabbler in philosophy, an author, a Sanskritist, a strong believer in secularism and democracy, a man, a feminist, a heterosexual, a defender of gay and lesbian rights, with a nonreligious lifestyle, from a Hindu background, a non-Brahmin, and a nonbeliever in an afterlife." This excerpt is from Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company 2007), 19.

and/or others as identified exclusively by one affiliation, I severely restrict the possibilities for dialogue, and I further the conditions for violence. If, for example, I reduce your identity exclusively to your being Muslim (one group affiliation to which, in post-9/11 American public discourse, identities are often reduced), and my own identity exclusively to being a Christian, then I have eliminated summarily all the common ground—perhaps we both are U.S. citizens, or live in the same neighbourhood, or have children in the same school, and in any case we both are human beings—on the basis of which we might identify common cause. I have cast you exclusively as one of "them" rather than as one of "us." *A conceptual error* (reducing identity to only one of the numerous variables that together compose identity) *results in harm to myself and to others* (diminishing the basis for dialogue and enhancing conditions for violence).

Something analogous holds in regard to the distinction I am making here by means of the chart. Any one of three conceptual errors—denying the ultimacy of transcendence, and treating as final a human authority (box 1); recognizing the ultimacy of transcendence, but still treating non-transcendent authority as final (box 2); denying the ultimacy of transcendence, and regarding all human authority as provisional (box 3)—results in concomitant harm (tyranny in the first case, jingoism in the second, monopoly in the third).

The ill consequence of box 1, of course, is well-captured by the familiar saying, "power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely." Unchecked authority may be, as Hobbes argues, a way to deflect civil war, but that does not prevent its being also the formula for tyranny.

The ill consequence of box 2 is that if I believe both that transcendence is ultimate and that authority is final (that it communicates or is adequate to transcendence), I will be inclined to do as the United States did in the aftermath of September 11: appeal to the transcendent on behalf of my own (immanent) cause and against yours. Since there are many authorities claiming to communicate the transcendent, I will choose my preferred authority over yours, and, in any conflict, attempt to impose my authority on yours. "Freedom" and "God" and other such terms name the transcendent, but since the authority to which I defer is adequate to the transcendent, the authority to which you defer must not be. My freedom is Freedom, and my god is God.

One ill consequence of box 3 is that the untempered self-interest advocated by Machiavelli fails the Kantian test of universalizability and of complementarity of means and end. Only one person at a time can be successful at exempting himself (the masculine pronoun here, to reflect Machiavelli's gender assumptions). Monopoly, in business or in government, benefits one and harms all the rest.

The point is this: "box 4 thinking" is the most to be admired, but also the hardest to achieve and sustain. As the only box that legitimates civil disobedience (obeying, for instance, obligations imposed by Justice rather than those enforced by a justice system, when the latter contradicts the former), box 4 is the box that accommodates our most revered historical figures and even our most revered *characters* (Socrates, Jesus, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Antigone, Cordelia). All who manage it are worthy of study and emulation. My case for the relevance of Fray Luis's poetry is that, as indicated by his life, Fray Luis achieved box 4: he recognized the ultimacy of transcendence, as evident in his life of devotion, but he did not defer to authority as if it were final, as is evident in his defiance of, and imprisonment by, his inquisitors. His poetry, like his life, reflects this important and difficult conceptual achievement. His poetry does not matter because people are still reading it more than four centuries after its composition; people are still reading it because it matters. Fray Luis rewards our attention in the same way that, say, Socrates' conversations (as presented by Plato) do: by elucidating and recommending box 4.

Though Fray Luis draws much of the imagery and language for his poems from the Christian culture of his time and place, he does so, I contend, as an expression of (among other things, no doubt) the culture-independent paradox that "box 4 thinking" in any time and place accepts the following as its conditions: we humans are mortal, yet capable of awareness whose limits extend forward and backward, well beyond the current moment and even beyond the duration of our own lives; we are material, yet imbued with consciousness, self-consciousness, and perception; we are capable not only of response to stimuli, but of such consciousness-dependent states and actions as hope, despair, and decision; we can affiliate (at scales from a couple to a transnational organization), yet our inclusions are also exclusions, so that our affiliations create strife even as they create community; this life is everything and nothing. This paradoxical condition that

is our state as box 4 describes it—transcendence is ultimate but that no human institution realizes it perfectly and finally—calls for *apposition* in at least four domains, with vehicles of apposition proper to each domain. Again, a chart provides a way of condensing the comparison:

domain	metaphysical	ethical	practical	formal
appositional tenor	situation	Ideal	practice	device
appositional vehicle	likeness	adequation	mimesis	repetition
methodology	resemble	live up to	imitate	repeat
metaphor	reflection/ image	harmony	approxima- tion	replication
truth crite- rion	correspon- dence	consonance	congruity	coherence
aspect of humanity	what we are	what we might be	what we do	how we mean

The governing domain is the metaphysical. By that I mean "transcendent" and "immanent" are themselves metaphysical terms. The very drawing of the distinction (whether or not the terms refer to anything "real") is normative: the distinction is a hierarchization. In Fray Luis's time and place, the distinction was drawn in terms of the Biblical theme, introduced in the creation narrative in Genesis, that humans are made in God's image. This way of drawing the distinction still has currency for many people. What I want to observe about it here, though, is that its "truth," the aspect of its meaning that is susceptible to other formulations as well, is that though we humans be immanent, yet we bear likeness to the transcendent (or, more forcefully, our being is likeness to the transcendent).

I call the metaphysical the governing domain because the others depend on and respond to it. It presents as a fact, but it entails value. (As at least some other facts do, also. For example: humans derive their energy from food. Various values depend on and respond to that fact; e.g., I have an obligation to feed my family only because humans derive their energy from food. If we did not need food, I would have no obligation to feed my family.) This is why the division is so deep between boxes 1 and 3, on the

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one hand, and boxes 2 and 4, on the other: who we are, what we ought to do, how we ought to treat one another—each is more radically different if there is not a distinction between the transcendent and the immanent than if there is such a distinction. It is also why the division between boxes 2 and 4 is deep. The answer to the question "*can we* resolve *the distinction between the transcendent and the immanent?*" is another fact that entails value, so one who answers "yes" (enters box 2) pretends to a different identity and embraces different obligations from one who answers "no" (thus entering box 4).

Our metaphysical situation imposes on us an ethical ideal. Insofar as likeness admits of degree, the metaphysical situation of bearing likeness to the transcendent will entail that our ideal be to bear ever *more* likeness to the transcendent, that we seek to adequate ourselves to the transcendent. Or, again in the terms that would have been most familiar for Fray Luis, our being made in the image of God will entail that we harmonize ourselves with that image. If what we are corresponds to the transcendent, then what we might be is consonant with it.

Similarly, in the domain of the practical, the appositional tenor and vehicle follow from the metaphysical. If our ideal must be to live up to the transcendent, then our practice must be to imitate it. Our practice will be mimetic. (As per Aristotle's practical advice that if I wish to be a flute player I imitate flute players: begin doing the things flute players do.) Through such mimesis we will approximate—increase our congruity with—the transcendent. In the language of being made in the image of God, we will seek to make ourselves an ever better approximation of that of which we are an image.

This brings us to the formal domain, the domain of signification and communication, and thus the primary realm of poetry. Here, repetition is the appositional vehicle, the corollary of the vehicles of the other domains, likening the immanent to the transcendent, adequating the real to the ideal, imitating our perfect selves in our flawed selves. Repetition is why meaning is meaningful. To borrow from Wendell Berry a capsule statement about the formal: "by its formal integrity a poem reminds us of the formal integrity of other works, creatures, and structures of the world[…]. Thus the poet affirms and collaborates in the formality of the Creation."[23]

Repetition as an appositional vehicle in the formal domain is not

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23 Wendell Berry, *What Are People For?* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1990), 89.

unique to Fray Luis, of course, or even to poetry. In prayer, for example, repetition is regarded by many as efficacious, as in repetition of such received prayers in Catholicism as the "Hail Mary" or the "Our Father." Similarly, meditation often includes, or is regarded as being induced by, repetition, such as the repetition of the syllable "om." In reference to religious worship, to describe a form of worship as "liturgical" is to note in it the prevalence of structuring repetition.

As an example of repetition with particular relevance to Fray Luis, the Biblical Psalms, many of which Fray Luis himself translated, are structured by repetition. The first few lines of Psalm 100 illustrate the point:

> Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.
> Worship the Lord with gladness;
> come into his presence with singing.
> Know that the Lord is God.
> It is he that made us, and we are his;
> we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.[24]

Repetition occurs at various levels: within lines, elements are repeated, such as the idea that we are the Lord's people, repeated as our being the sheep of his pasture; repetition also takes place as lines, as when the imperative to worship is given in line 2 and repeated in line 3; and even at the level of the stanza, the structure of declaration followed by amplification is repeated. This kind of repetition exemplifies, according to G. B. Caird, "the paratactical style in which [logical] connections are implicit and taken for granted." Such repetition allowed the Psalmist to "set two ideas side by side and allow the one to qualify the other without bothering to spell out in detail the relation between them"[25] with conceptual and cultural effects: "paratactical thinking enabled the ancient Hebrew to set in close proximity two different, and even apparently contradictory, senses of a word, without the discomfort felt by the modern reader."[26]

But the form of repetition employed by the Psalms is not the only form available, nor is juxtaposition of apparently contradictory ideas the

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24 Psalm 100, English Standard Version.
25 G. B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1980), 118.
26 Ibid., 119.

only possible effect of repetition. Metaphor is a form of repetition. My love's being like a red, red rose doubles her: she is in/as herself and in/as the rose. Representation of any kind is—as the word itself indicates—a form of repetition. And repetition need not be transitive to realize the formal aspect of ourselves. I mean: the repetition need not be repetition *of the transcendent* in order to replicate, to cohere with, the transcendent. Music, for instance, the most purely formal of our formal constructions, does not cohere with the transcendent by repeating the transcendent but by repeating notes from a scale. Similarly, poetry repeats sounds, words, lines, rhythmic patterns, and so on.

Insofar, then, as Fray Luis's poetry is the embodiment in the formal domain of the metaphysical condition of humanity as understood in box 4 thinking (as his vocation embodies that metaphysical condition in the practical domain, and his imprisonment in the ethical domain), we would expect it to employ as its appositional vehicle repetition. It does exactly that. Consider as an example Luis's poem "Vida retirada" ("Life Apart"), a poem which begins

> How tranquil life is
> for one who escapes the daily grind,
> and instead follows
> the narrow road
> they've taken, those few wise, once of the world,[27]

and proceeds through a comparison of wise and unwise life choices to its pastoral conclusion:

> Though every other
> make himself miserable by pursuing
> incautious power,
> insatiably thirsting,
> let me lie in the shade, singing.
>
> Lying in shade,
> with ivy and eternal laurel crowned,
> I'll turn my head

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27 This and the next passage are my own translation.

to the sweet sound
of well-tuned strings expertly strummed.[28]

Besides the most obvious forms of repetition (such as the repeated stanza form, itself a pattern of repeated sounds and rhythms), there is in this poem an extraordinary amount of lexical repetition. Not one of the seventeen stanzas fails to repeat at least one word that also appears in another stanza. By my count, 27 different words are repeated, in a poem of only 85 lines (see appendix). That count does not include repetition-based forms of word play, such as the use of synonyms (e.g., two words for fountain/spring: *fuente* in line 21 and *fontana* in line 49) or compoundings (e.g., *oro* (60) / *tesoro* (61), or *zelo* (39) / *rezelo* (40)).

What does such a quantity of lexical repetition *do*? Joseph Brodsky defines a poet as "someone for whom every word is not the end but the beginning of a thought; someone who, having uttered *rai* ('paradise') or *tot svet* ('next world'), must mentally take the subsequent step of finding a rhyme for it. Thus *krai* ('edge/realm') and *otsvet* ('reflection') emerge, and the existence of those whose life has ended is prolonged,"[29] thus asserting that the specific version of sound repetition we call rhyme confers a kind of immortality. My assertion is not identical, but I take it as related: repetitions such as lexical repetition reiterate in the formal domain the metaphysical situation, and thus the most elemental identity, of humans. To take only one instance, *arbol* (tree), Fray Luis is a poet who, seeing spring water "winding its way among the trees," whose roots, silent and fixed in place, draw upon the water to nourish the tree, must see again. Thus does "each tree stirs / with soothing noises" emerge, noting the leaves, *not* silent and *not* immobile, that return nourishment to the tree's surroundings, and the identity of humans, our relationship to immanence and to transcendence, is enacted, and clarified.

Thus even a poem about withdrawing from the world tells me about the world. Fray Luis need not have anticipated the U.S. Congress, 420 years after his death, passing a National Defense Appropriation Act with Amend-

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28 A version of Luis's original poem can be found in *An Anthology of Spanish Poetry*, ed. John A. Crow (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 72.
29 Joseph Brodsky, *Less Than One: Selected Essays* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1986), 265.

ment 1031, which authorizes military arrest of U.S. citizens on U.S. soil and their indefinite detention without due process, in order to identify why that amendment is a tragic error that can have, and will have, harmful consequences: due process is an acknowledgment by authority of its own lack of finality, and elimination of due process is the assertion by authority of its finality. In effect, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights seek to realize in institutional form "box 4 thinking," and the forms of chipping away at civil rights and due process such as the Patriot Act in 2001 and Amendment 1031 in 2011 now realize instead "box 2 thinking," insistence that authority is final, that it perfectly embodies the transcendent, in this case Justice. The Inquisition made the identical mistake in Spain in the 1500s, and Fray Luis resisted it. His poetry tells us about life by pointing out the mistake in this contemporary enactment, and advises us to resist it now as he did then.

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Appendix

Lexical repetitions in "Vida retirada."

árboles	el passo entre los árboles torciendo (52)
	los árboles menea / con un manso ruïdo (58-9)
bastar	de amable paz bien abastada (72)
	me baste (73)
cantar	No cura si la fama / canta con voz su nombre pregonera (11-12)
	Despiértenme las aves / con su cantar sabroso no aprendido (31-2)
	tendido yo a la sombra esté cantando (80)
cielo	gozar quiero del bien que devo al cielo (37)
	al cielo suena / confusa vozería (68-9)
confiar	Ténganse su tesoro / los que de un falso leño se confían (61)
	no es mío ver el lloro / de los que desconfían (63-4)
cuidado	con ansias vivas, con mortal cuidado (20)
	no los cuidados graves / de que es siempre seguido (33-4)
cura	No cura si la fama / canta con voz su nombre pregonera (11-12)

	ni cura si encarama / la lengua lisonjera (13-14)
día	un día puro, alegre, libre quiero (27)
	en ciega noche el claro día / se torna (67-8)
esperança	libre de amor, de zelo, / de odio, de esperanças, de rezelo (39-40)
	ya muestra en esperança el fruto cierto (45)
flor	de bella flor cubierto (44)
	y con diversas flores va esparciendo (55)
huerto	por mi mano plantado tengo un huerto (42)
	El ayre el huerto orea (56)
huir	la del que huye el mundanal ruïdo (2)
	huyo de aqueste mar tempestuoso (25)
libre	un día puro, alegre, libre quiero (27)
	libre de amor, de zelo (39)
mar	huyo de aqueste mar tempestuoso (25)
	y la mar enriquecen a porfía (70)
	sea de quien la mar no teme ayrada (75)
menear	los árboles menea / con un manso ruïdo (58-9)
	del plectro sabiamente meneado (85)
monte	¡O monte, o fuente, o río! (21)
	Del monte en la ladera (41)
oro	que del oro y del cetro pone olvido (60)
	y la baxilla / de fino oro labrada (73-4)
passar	el passo entre los árboles torciendo (52)
	el suelo, de passada (53)
porfíar	quando el cierço y el ábrego porfían (65)
	y la mar enriquecen a porfía (70)
querer	un día puro, alegre, libre quiero (27)
	no quiero ver el zeño (28)
	Vivir quiero conmigo (36)
	gozar quiero del bien que devo al cielo (37)
romper	roto casi el navío (23)
	Un no rompido sueño (26)
ruïdo	la del que huye el mundanal ruïdo (2)
	los árboles menea / con un manso ruïdo (58-9)
sabio	los pocos sabios que en el mundo han sido (5)
	fabricado / del sabio moro, en jaspes sustentado (9-10)
	del plectro sabiamente meneado (85)
seguir	y sigue la escondida / senda (3-4)

	no los cuidados graves / de que es siempre seguido (33-4)
sombra	tendido yo a la sombra esté cantando (80)
	A la sombra tendido (81)
tender	tendido yo a la sombra esté cantando (80)
	A la sombra tendido (81)
ver	no quiero ver el zeño (28)
	Y como codiciosa / por ver y acrecentar su hermosura (46-7)
	de verdura vistiendo (54)
	no es mío ver el lloro (63)
vivir	¡Qué descansada vida (1)
	con ansias vivas, con mortal cuidado (20)
	Vivir quiero conmigo (36)

BETWEEN COMFORT AND DISILLUSIONMENT

Becoming a Self at Play

NOEL GLOVER

Psychoanalysis tells a particular story about the development of a self: the psychoanalytic self is formed in a crucible of anxiety, sexuality, and fantasy, in and through an originary and absolute state of dependence and vulnerability. Building on this narrative, this paper develops an instructive parallel between the formation of subjectivity in early infancy and the development of subjectivity in education, conceived of here as both an institution and a human condition. In other words, education, inflected psychoanalytically, is an experience that hearkens back to infancy. To this end, this paper sets out from two broad research questions: why might education look back to infancy, and how might a psychoanalytic theory of human development open into a theory of developing pedagogy? Keeping an eye on describing how psychoanalysis might meaningfully inhabit the scenes of teaching and learning, my argument is that the psychoanalytic self offers insight into the dynamics of pedagogical relations, the development of pedagogy, and the development of the educational subject.

I will focus here on the theoretical contributions of one psychoanalyst in particular: D. W. Winnicott. Specifically, I investigate the ways in which Winnicott describes the materialization of the self within broader developmental processes, which are animated by inter-dependence, integration, and differentiation—processes that from the earliest moments of life include both a social relationship and a facilitating environment. For the sake of clarity, I will mention here that psychoanalytic theory makes an important distinction between the self and the ego; the "self" refers to the subject of organizational and integrative mechanisms in the psyche, whereas the "ego" refers to the organising mechanism itself of psychic processes in the mind. That is, *the self is the subject who comes to feel integrated and whole*, whereas *the ego is the psychic*

organisation of the self. This paper will treat self and ego together, following Winnicott's own theoretical model. The proximity of these concepts in the present discussion is not meant to suggest that they are interchangeable, but rather simply to emphasize a conceptual variability in the representation of what are essentially correlative, inter-animating, and continuous points of reference in the development of the individual subject.

I will mention two further points here in order to signal the logical and methodological orientation of the following paper. First, at the crux of both my argument and the intellectual point of convergence between psychoanalysis and pedagogy is the developmental paradox Winnicott develops in *Playing and Reality*:[1] during the development of the self in early infancy, the infant—not yet differentiated from its relational position amidst parental and environmental provisions—must *simultaneously* both *discover* and *create* the object of its desire. In addition, as Winnicott notes, the parent must never ask the infant to resolve the question as to whether the object itself was *found* or *created*. My suggestion here is that this paradox reveals an essential element linking psychoanalytic theory to pedagogical practice, an element that offers a means for how education might begin to rethink, rather than resolve, the emotional situations of teaching and learning. Later, this paradox will lead us into a theory of play, and provide a scene for making explicit the role and value of two further concepts, which serve as experiential signposts within experiences of teaching and learning.

The second anticipatory remark I will make concerns methodology. Throughout the paper I draw several comparisons between Winnicott's theory of the development of the self and certain phenomenological articulations that treat a similar subject matter. My aim in this is not to distract from the details of Winnicott's work, but to suggest ways we might open our thinking about selfhood to significations outside psychoanalytic theory. My purpose is to disrupt the common assumption that psychoanalysis offers a *world-view*, and to contribute instead to the characterisation of psychoanalysis as a *style of thinking.* We will find repetitions, and therefore necessarily also differences, between Winnicott's developmental schema and Jean-Paul Sartre's and Maurice Merleau-Ponty's schemas. Whatever else they might signify, these repetitions remind us that there is something universal about the subject of the self, something always-already prior to any theoretical

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1 D. W. Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (London: Tavistock, 1971).

lens we might employ to bring it into view. In this sense phenomenological echoes of psychoanalytic theory will also structure how I envision education, which might be said to betray its most revealing symptoms not in its institutional form but as part of the human condition, constituted in the early and most vulnerable stages of human development.

Education and human development will therefore be treated together here as unresolved theoretical projects raising problems of reference, and I will draw on theories of the mind, to the self and ego, to the acquisition of language, to object relations, etc. In so doing I will alternate between describing an educational environment that comforts and one that also disillusions, and that if all goes well, might also re-illusion. The word "illusion" derives from the Latin *ludere*, meaning play, and so doubles as an etymological root for the theory of play that will round out my discussion. With an eye to this and to its various other associations, this paper carefully examines the realities and fantasies of selfhood within Winnicott's work in the interest, not only of tracing an image of the self that is satisfactorily profound and recognisable (yet still enigmatic and incomplete), but also of speculating in what ways this psychoanalytic conception of selfhood—along with the developmental paradox—might articulate a theory of play as a pedagogical object. The self, as Winnicott beautifully describes, hazards its first tentative bid at realization from the sensation of being held together by an environment of good-enough provisions. From this claim concerning selfhood we might begin to conceive of teaching and learning less as a question of tolerating the privacy of knowledge's impressions upon singular consciousnesses, and more as a question of how individuals are held together—and also come apart—in educational environments. The question is also one concerning how individuals learn to live creatively together, and to play, after all, with others. Play, finally, will be our most illustrious means, as teachers and learners, of conceiving of a world that must be felt as intractably and unremittingly shared in order to be objectively perceived.

Theory in pursuit of self

Winnicott begins his story of the development of the self with the suggestion that "*I am* means nothing unless *I* at the beginning *am along with*

another human being who has not yet been differentiated off."[2] He claims else-where, in this line, "there is no such thing as a baby."[3] At the earliest stages of life, the concept of the self carries little in the way of existential sub-stance. Between infant and parent there is the kind of relating that not only calls into question the stringency of the division between them, but one that also places the world in and within the vicissitudes of subject forma-tion. Self, Other, and environment circulate, for Winnicott, between and on either end of the infant's first instinctual explorations. The presumed centre of this scene, what will later be known as the self, is therefore in the baby constantly displaced. Or rather, and more basically, the centre is precisely that imperceptible displacement that might be referred to as growth, or perhaps even as education—the first stirrings of integrational intentionality.

      The psyche becomes the seat of the self but begins, in Winnicott's developmental narrative, "as an imaginative elaboration of physical func-tioning, having as its most important duty the binding together of past ex-periences, potentialities, and the present moment of awareness, and ex-pectancy for the future."[4] Body becomes psyche in the imagination of the infant, and these imaginative fantasies inaugurate the life of the mind. It is through the exploration of these fantasies, says Winnicott, that "the self comes into existence."[5] The body is held together by the parent's touch and is extended in space and time by the infant's fantasies, which issue from the earliest sensations of inner life toward what will eventually be called exter-nal reality. In the beginning, these fantasies concern the feeling of dwell-ing, gathered in a body that is held. But rapidly, as Winnicott observes, the baby's fantastical ideas become more consuming, pervading its environ-ment. The baby feels anxiety over a world that might be lost, or destroyed, if its needs are not met. These fantasies are the psychical representatives of what Winnicott, following Melanie Klein, calls original aggression. It is this aggression that gives rise to both love and hate, coming from the outside in and from the inside out. We might hypothesize that the ambivalence of this early scene conditions the very dynamics of learning, in its broadest

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2 D. W. Winnicott, *Winnicott on the Child* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2009), 17.

3 D.W. Winnicott, *The Child, the Family, and the Outside World* (Harmondsworth, Eng: Pen-guin Books, 1964), 88.

4 D. W. Winnicott, *Human Nature* (London: Free Association Books, 1988), 18.

5 Ibid.

and most universal sense. The infant learns simultaneously of and from its existence, learning to take itself as the object of its own thinking at the same time that it learns to feel that everything, world and existence, are at stake in its learning anything at all. Indeed, love and hate might be said to found the educational subject. Deborah Britzman, introducing Freud to educational theory, compares the nature of subjectivity in family and in school life, "where we love before we learn and learn before we understand."[6] From what Winnicott describes as the feeling of falling forever, of destroying the world and of consuming what is loved for the sake of loving, the infant's capacity for imagining an outside beyond its bodily limits is the fundamental condition for the development of the self, and may also be the prototype for the emotional situation of becoming a subject who learns.

There is here a correspondence between Winnicott's speculations and certain claims made by Jean-Paul Sartre in his own book on the nature of the ego in relation to consciousness. There, Sartre asserts: "the ego is neither formally nor materially in consciousness: it is outside, in the world. It is a being of the world, like the ego of another."[7] For Winnicott, the ego will through natural human development be securely fastened to the structural interiority of the individual, but the notion—that the ego be found outside in the world, accessible as the ego of another—resembles his theory of how self and ego are built up in the first place. Sartre's assertion points us toward another of Winnicott's important concepts: the transitional object. The transitional object is an object that the infant feels to be at the same time both "me" and "not-me," an object that nourishes ego differentiation. The infant takes the subjective object (for instance, the breast) for itself, and imagines the object as an extension of her embodied instincts. The subjective object is a transitional phenomenon; it marks a point of departure from infancy, one that grounds the formation of the ego, inaugurates thinking, and impels the coming into existence of the self. Thus the notion of the transitional object seems already to carry a certain pedagogical sway. Further, we might ask: does the transitional dynamic Winnicott describes condition the affective tenor of those educational objects (novels, textbooks, essays, lectures, etc.) of which the self must make elaborate use later in the course of its development?

6 Deborah P. Britzman, *Freud and Education* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 82.
7 Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego: An Existentialist Theory of Consciousness* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1960), 31.

In this way, Sartre's view of the ego as of the outside world is the primordial fantasy the child must have in order to take its ego inside itself, in order to think itself thinking in the first place. The ego itself, as organizational phenomenon, is part and parcel of the transitional exchange through which Winnicott imagines the debut of the self. Differentiation between self and other is here for the infant a matter of creative imagining, of the fantasy of being something more than a psyche dwelling in a body or a ghost in a machine. This is Winnicott's contention—a paradox that we must accept rather than resolve: the self comes to selfhood from an outside that it must take inside itself. This claim is comparable to the relationship we come to expect between teachers and learners. The educational subject must similarly relate to pedagogical material, imagining a self that participates in the construction not only of knowledge and ideas, but of the world itself as well, of external reality as something knowable. My suggestion is that we take this parallel as more than a convenient metaphorical or phenomenological repetition, that we recognize it as a fundamental and structural feature of how the self relates to its own learning, and, further still, to its learning alongside others.

Experiences in learning, then, are particularly reminiscent of our earliest encounters with the unknown in infancy, and of the immense value, at the start of life, of our imaginative capacity. Winnicott speculates that there is something particularly generative for selfhood "when the psyche and the body have the same places in space, so that the limiting membrane is not only metaphorically a limit to the psyche, but also it is the skin of the body."[8] The infant *is* its skin, and at the same time it is the skin it has discovered in being held by the parent. The inside of the child literally leans over against its environment. Winnicott here deftly gestures toward the philosophical problem at the heart of Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, where "the problem of the world and, to begin with, that of one's own body, consists in the fact that it is *all there*."[9]

The sense of self, then, "comes on the basis of an unintegrated state."[10] But the "all there" that is a problem for both infant and world is not simply a matter of the extension of the body, it is also a matter of its

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8 D. W. Winnicott, *Deprivation and Delinquency* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 164.

9 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 230.

10 Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, 61.

reflection. In Winnicott's theoretical system the infant's transitional state is "lost unless observed and mirrored back by someone who is trusted and who justifies trust and meets the dependence."[11] The problem of the world is that for the infant it is at a certain point *both* "me" and "not-me" and will, while remaining always there, begin to fail in its ability to meet the infant's needs. By trust, then, Winnicott here refers to the good-enough provisions of an environment that meet enough of the infant's first instinctual strivings to provide it with the sense that the world has survived its earliest aggressive urges. This, of course, also means *failing to meet enough* of the infant's needs so as to help disillusion its omnipotent fantasies, initiating the separation of some of the "me" aspects of world and body from the "not me" aspects. This way the infant can also learn to feel that it survives changes in its environment.

The parallel between psychoanalysis and pedagogy can here be re-emphasized. Engendering a "sense of trust" similar to the one Winnicott assigns at the constitution of selfhood might be projected among the responsibilities appointed to education, where a student might equally be encouraged to learn to distinguish between those changes that do and those that do not threaten the existential integrity of the self. For instance, a student who learns to enact enough separation between herself and the essay she produces such that criticism of the latter does not so deeply become criticism of the former might be said to trust the educational environment into which she has committed her ideas. In other words, trust, in teaching and learning, as it was first in early infancy, is a relationship centered around the limits between self and other, conditioned at the threshold between the comforting and disillusioning of one's (social) environment.

Sounding surprisingly phenomenological, Winnicott proposes that the infant sees itself in the face of the parent, and that it is in this reflection that the infant begins to have a self. "What does the baby see when he or she looks at the mother's face?" asks Winnicott. "I am suggesting," he answers, "what the baby sees is himself or herself."[12] Echoing Sartre's theory of being, which makes use of a similar specular turn, Winnicott holds that "being seen is at the basis of creative looking."[13] In the face of the parent

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11 Ibid.
12 Ibid., 112.
13 Ibid., 114.

the infant identifies a self, and then sets out on the royal road to integration; which is to say, it begins to distinguish between what is subjectively felt and what is objectively perceived. The other, at this early stage, is a trajectory upon which selfhood also appears, a trajectory that leads the subject to objects that might begin to be differentiated off. In psychoanalytic theory, it is precisely upon this ambivalent trajectory that the ego's development and the development of a sense of self begin. Freud summarizes the nature of these reversals: "there is no difference in principle between an instinct turning from an object to the ego and its turning from the ego to an object."[14] It is the turning that makes the self. We might also include education in this fundamental intersubjectivity: turning between "me" and "not-me" might well be what makes, and also breaks, the educational subject.

The self in psychoanalysis lingers in these recourses between integration and intersubjectivity, fantasy and external reality, the comforting of what is created and the disillusioning of what is found. Education reanimates the affective intelligibility of these earliest encounters between what is subjectively conceived and what is objectively perceived. We might here reiterate Winnicott's paradox: "the paradox is that the environment is part of the infant and at the same time it isn't[…]. We know that we won't ask the baby, 'Did you create that object or did you find it?' because we know that the two things are true and that he wouldn't have created it if it hadn't been there."[15] For Winnicott, this paradox has "importance to the whole of object-relating where objects can be seen creatively."[16] It is a question of creativity, and of how pedagogy might begin to conceive its own development as inextricably linked to the development not just of its subject matter, but of its subjects too.

If we are tempted to describe the self as something that comes together in and through a distinctly human development, psychoanalysis proposes that we first accept the reality of a self that comes apart, and that "comes" precisely from having been apart, literally from having been parts. Melanie Klein makes much of the split-off aspects of the subject and its objects. She contends, "the ego builds itself up from the beginning of post-

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14 Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (New York: Bantam Books, 1959), 96.
15 D. W. Winnicott, *Psycho-Analytic Explorations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 580.
16 Ibid.

natal life by its internalized objects; and […] splitting processes of the ego are bound up with split-off aspects of the object."[17] The infant internalizes parts of the parent through a feeling of being reflected, in part, by them. And while it would perhaps be going too far to claim that there is an identical process at work in the construction of the educational self, I propose that we are justified in maintaining that the self within pedagogical relations is prescribed by emotional processes that can be treated as qualitatively akin to, and derivative of, those impressed in early infancy.

The most remarkable outcome of the splitting processes of the ego is precisely the self's sense of being a self—that is, the infant's sense that something survives its splitting. Here the infant gains the feeling of having postulated the self—imagined imagining. This gain, for Winnicott, requires preceding feelings both of being split and of being reflected in the face of the parent. "Only if reflected back," he argues, can the subjective object become "part of the organized individual personality."[18] The reflection of the infant by the face of the parent conditions a human quiddity: to describe the place of ego-life from its genesis is always-already to describe a relation; to describe the awakening of the self to itself is thus always-already to describe a reflection. It is precisely from the vantage point of these two claims that the field of education might begin to look back to infancy.

Self in pursuit of play

By play Winnicott means an individual's ability to live and experience both the subjective and objective as oscillatory *and* conciliatory; both provide opportunities for self-expression, self-discovery, and encounters with others. In other words, the ability to play reflects an individual's capacity to be comfortable with both the separation and the conflation of the "me" and "not-me" aspects in the world. Therapy, for Winnicott—and my argument is that this holds true for pedagogy as well—is made possible when two (or more) individuals can play together.

Winnicott notes that in his paradox of human development he is "linking apperception with perception by postulating a historical process (in

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17 Melanie Klein, "Narrative of a Child Analysis: The conduct of the psychoanalysis of children as seen in the treatment of a 10 year old boy," *The International Psycho-Analytical Library* 55 (1961): 1-536.

18 Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, 64.

the individual) which depends on being seen."[19] So, before turning more directly to the concept of play, let us imagine a theoretical frame around the psychoanalytic self: perceived as apperceiving, apperceiving as perceived, held so as to come apart, and in parts so as to come together. Our theoretical frame, then, is a border traced by the other. What we can know about the self is situated in fundamental relief by an originary otherness.

Britzman gestures towards the strangeness of this uncanny intuition—also insisted upon by Emmanuel Levinas[20]—where knowledge of the self can be made only through a distancing sparked by alterity. She affirms that "somewhere between the tenderness of comforting and the distancing of disillusioning, knowledge of the self and other is made."[21] We have already made much of Brtizman's terminology, where comforting and disillusioning have been presented as elemental to both psychoanalysis and education, and in the constitution and development of subjectivity. In a developmental sense, comfort and disillusionment are primary responsibilities of the parent, who is, after all, the obverse side of his or her infant's selfhood. The question here is, to what extent are these duties appropriately shared by the teacher?

To approach this question, we might examine conflicts in teaching and learning as subsidiaries of the conflicts of infancy, of our developmental beginnings. The pedagogical relation finds teachers and learners at odds, having already loved and lost before either has learned or understood the meaning of these losses, entangled within experiences of the pleasures of reality, the anxieties of fantasy life, and the recuperative possibilities of a desire to know (the other). My argument is that Winnicott's paradox provides a point of entry, that it offers insight into these conflicts and gives us a way of representing the uneven terrain of intersubjectivity in the development of a self.

In Winnicott's psychoanalytic narrative of development, comfort and disillusionment become the contours of selfhood and place the other (and an environment of otherness) at the self's gravitational centre, offering a clue as to what might be an auspicious pedagogical attitude for educa-

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19 Ibid., 114.

20 See, for example, Emmanuel Levinas, *Humanism of the Other* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2005).

21 Deborah P. Britzman, *After Education: Anna Freud, Melanie Klein and Psychoanalytic Histories of Learning* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 48.

tional subjectivities. The broader theme I have been signaling, then, is a fundamental and instructive parallel between three meaningful contexts in human life and development: the formation of the subjective self in early infancy, the development of subjectivity in and through something we call education, and the treatment of subjectivity in and through something we call psychoanalysis. These concepts, comfort and disillusionment, reference the facilitating environments of all three contexts, supplying teacher and learner with an insight, and a way to begin thinking the nature of education's conflicts: what is discovered in education always reflects a capacity also to *create* it. In other words, perception invokes at the outset the perceiver's ability to creatively imagine itself as both object and subject, and so, more simply, to live in a way that is playful.

According to Winnicott's developmental temporality, a world that is objectively perceived is a world that is first subjectively conceived, a world that evinces both the subject's creativity and the creativity at the foundation of subjectivity. Creativity here is the play between the "me" and the "not-me," conditioned by trust in an environment that does not attempt to resolve the question of whether its objects, including objects of knowledge, were created or discovered. Play, in other words, exists where the desire to know becomes also a desire for implication in the construction of what is knowable. At stake, then, when it comes to education, is what to make of the relationship between the self's desire to know and its ability to be at play.

To return to Winnicott's self, we have seen that, at least in infancy, "what is desirable is part of the self […]. It makes an appearance as if created out of the infant's need."[22] Knowledge of the self is desirable, firstly, because it is part of an instinctual venture through which the infant meets the subjective object, an object that can be both "me" and "not-me" simultaneously. Knowledge begins for the infant in relation to the meeting of needs and the building of trust in its environment, and includes the feeling that what is needed can be created. This feeling, along with the anxiety of not knowing either the self or the other, and the fear of loss of what is known of both self and other, inaugurate the self's status as an object of knowledge. The desire to know, I am arguing, is a desire for the comfort and disillusionment that are originally indissociable between the vulnerable self and the giving other. That is, learning asks of its teachers and learners

22 Winnicott, *Winnicott on the Child*, 52.

a degree of undifferentiation, a return to the transitional state in which the desire to know began. Supposing that such a degree of undifferentiation contains the capacity for play, it is also a question of envisioning pedagogical practices that linger creatively at the borders between the "me" and "not-me" of educational subjects.

Sartre reformulates the above proposition: "the me seeks, then, to procure the object in order to satisfy its desire. In other words, it is desire […] which is given as end, and the desired object is the means."[23] The desired object is imagined so as to be discovered. Key, where development is concerned, is the desire to know, rather than the specificity of what is known. Winnicott's theory of play also invokes this priviliging of the relation over the object itself. In this way, the desire to know provides recourse perpetually back to its own departure. Knowledge of the self is imaginative play that posits a self so as to become a self; it is inherently creative. Without ever arriving, the self is constantly both coming and going. The same is true of the other, and of the otherness of knowledge. My suggestion for education is that we imagine all learning as fundamentally involving the approach and reproach of self and other, and therefore as being a matter of engendering, and then managing, the desire to know. Knowledge itself is creative, and will be created, perpetually and interminably, out of the subject's desire.

I want to return to Winnicott's comments about the role of play in psychotherapy, and to suggest here that a similar understanding of play can be productively applied to the realm of pedagogical relations. The aims attributed to psychotherapy should diverge from those associated with pedagogy, but the common point of the treatment of subjectivity, on the one hand, and the development of subjectivity, on the other, is their interest in establishing an environment in which an individual can feel supported enough to come together or come apart in relation to her knowledge of self and/or others. Winnicott writes: "*Psychotherapy has to do with two people playing together. The corollary of this is that where playing is not possible then the work done by the therapist is directed towards bringing the patient from a state of not being able to play into a state of being able to play*."[24] Pedagogy also has to do with people playing together, for learning of any kind is founded upon the capacity for

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23 Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego*, 55.
24 Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, 38.

play between the "me" and "not-me" aspects of existence. For this reason, it might make sense to concern oneself less with what can be known in and through pedagogical relations, and more with how knowing references the knower's ability to feel and live creatively. If teaching and learning are actions with actors, selves, and others, then their exchanges are never without multiple affective pasts and wished-for futures, and therefore never without the emotional layering of countless and contradictory reactionary postures. Further, if emotional health might be said to begin with the individual's ability to play, and if, as I have been arguing following Winnicott, a sense of self is established in the infant's first imaginative attempts at creative play, then learning too requires an environment in which each self learning to live with others is able to play, with meaning as much as with the comfort of selfhood and the disillusionment of others.

It must be acknowledged that for education these claims devitalize the content of what is learned, that they devalue the explicit subject matter of institutionalized categories of thought; but this is done in favour of an increased preoccupation with the emotional valence of tolerating desire in the first place. This is not to say that one should ignore or deem irrelevant the specificity of certain subject areas, especially in those areas where it is precisely the technique of a craft that is being elaborated. The more modest point I am making here, in proposing that education should look back to infancy, is to insist that learning of any kind involves an emotional relationship enervated by experienced in early infancy, and that the dynamics of learning must be attended to with a sensitivity to development as influenced by affective life.

Winnicott observes that "the precariousness of play belongs to the fact that it is always on the theoretical line between the subjective and that which is objectively perceived."[25] The self, with its desire to know, approaches what is unknown, and in the absence of an ability to play risks succumbing to dangerous feelings of omnipotence, or, at the other extreme, of objectification. To learn, in this context, is a question of recognition, of being able to recognize otherness, which means being able to find a form of expression for one's formlessness within the abyssal precarity between self and other, between subject and object. To learn also means to be able to create what is found. Winnicott explicitly delineates the implications of play

25 Ibid., 50.

for the self: "It is in playing and only in playing that the individual child or adult is able to be creative and to use the whole personality, and it is only in being creative that the individual discovers the self."[26] One of the aims of education is the expansion and proliferation of selves, which is to say of others as well, selves and others that are discovered and discoverable by individuals learning to live together. Play, therefore, is necessary for learning. Play orients the self which, like the other, is only a horizon at the vanishing point of a desire to know.

Conclusion

Play guides Winnicott's arragmentment of his therapeutic procedures—play with toys and drawings as much as with words and dreams—and my argument is that pedagogy, too, must arrange itself around these skeletal recommendations, like the skin's tissues around the appetites of the impressionable self. For Winnicott, therapy affords opportunities for "formless experience, and for creative impulses, motor and sensory…and on the basis of playing is built the whole of man's [sic] experiential existence."[27] In much the same way, the self develops, not by adding bits of knowledge to a cumulative depository, but by finding itself reflected—formless, creative and vulnerable—in the other—partial, discovered and imagined—and in creating what is found. From here we might begin to imagine pedagogical practices that can also afford opportunities for experiences of formlessness or constructing representations of such experiences, where undifferentiation and re-differentiation, comfort and disillusionment describe or rather reflect the emotional situation of teaching and learning. This situation does not suggest a strategy for forming and maintaining independently sufficient selves, as the neoliberal model might promulgate. Rather, it questions how one might appreciate what is gained and also sometimes lost when individuals are able to play at knowing and not knowing, and to play with others they might wish to know.

Fundamentally, what a psychoanalytic theory of the self offers education is a claim about the specular nature of subjectivity, that selfhood opens a recursive space between the self we discover in the other and the

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26 Ibid., 54.
27 Ibid., 64.

one we must create in ourselves. Britzman sees this space signaled in Freud's psychoanalytic theory, where he "tried to allow for the gap between observable phenomena and theoretical constructs because we are more than the sum of our appearances."[28] Education, too, might do well to think of itself as more than the sum of its appearances—that is, as accommodating selves, others, and environmental provisions that are not easily standarised precisely because they are difficult to differentiate when teachers and learners are at play.

28 Britzman, *After Education*, 51.

HEIDEGGER'S *CONTRIBUTIONS* TO EDUCATION (FROM THINKING)

CAROLYN THOMAS & IAIN THOMSON

Ontotheology and destinerrancy:
Thinking through the disastrous ambiguity

Throughout Martin Heidegger's entire path of thought, "genuine or authentic education" means education in thinking being. In other words, education—understood in terms of what is most proper to it, what brings education most into its own—means readying human beings to think being. Most properly understood in turn, *thinking being* (or *worlding the earth*, to use the "middle" Heidegger's terms) means actively participating in that special kind of world-disclosure through which (1) human beings, (2) the other entities with which we deal, (3) the being of us and those entities, and (4) being itself all "come into their own" together simultaneously in a momentous "event of enowning" or *Ereignis*, a "truth event" or enduringly meaningful happening of ontological truth.[1]

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1 The brevity of this essay—an experiment in collaborative writing which we thank *Chiasma* for hosting—requires us to presuppose a significant amount of previous scholarly work. On Heidegger's critique of the Western tradition's understanding of metaphysics as *ontotheology* and his revolutionary vision of education as the means for leading us beyond metaphysics, see Thomson, *Heidegger on Ontotheology: Technology and the Politics of Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). On how the collapse of *Being and Time*'s guiding project of fundamental ontology gave rise to the later Heidegger's critique of metaphysics as ontotheology and his post-metaphysical thinking of being, see Thomson, "The Failure of Philosophy: Why Didn't *Being and Time* Answer the Question of Being?" in Lee Braver, ed., *Division III of Being and Time: Heidegger's Unanswered Question of Being* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, forthcoming). For an articulation of his positive alternative to the nihilism of modernity, see Thomson, *Heidegger, Art, and Postmodernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), ch. 6 of which provides an orienting overview and explanation of the main text we are drawing on here.

At the same time—in the impossible diachrony of such a momentous event, a linear-time shattering, measure-bestowing "instant" (in which the future draws upon and overflows the past and present and so arrives in the finite and yet never fully comprehensible abundance of its real possibilities)—authentic education does not *only* mean education in the thinking *of* being. For this "of" harbours a dangerously misleading ambiguity between two different ways of understanding being: (1) as the metaphysical being of entities, or (2) as the post-metaphysical "being as such," that *Ur*-phenomenon which has never been exhausted by the entire historical succession of epoch-grounding, metaphysical understandings of the being of entities that "it" both informs and exceeds. The middle Heidegger (most evident in the transitional writings of 1929–38), who first thinks the truth event of *Ereignis*—or for whom this long-haunting word first comes into its own, bringing Heidegger into his own as a thinker with it, albeit shatteringly—is an unstable figure, essentially in transition between these two ways of thinking being, and so *on the way* from his own "early" *metaphysical* (or doubly, ontotheologically foundationalist) ambitions to his "later" *post-metaphysical* project (the project that takes place on the far side of all such ontotheologically foundationalist ambitions).

The famous *Contributions to Philosophy (from Enowning)*, written between 1936 and 1938 (with the core text, the first seven "sections" or "fugues," written between 1936 and 1937, but all withheld from publication until 1989, following Heidegger's stipulation), powerfully documents the most tumultuous moment of transitional thinking that takes place at the end of Heidegger's middle period. In *Contributions*, we can hear Heidegger letting go of his "early" metaphysical attempt to reach back to the first beginning of Western history in order recover a "fundamental ontology" or unified understanding of "the meaning of being in general" (the fundamentalist metaphysical ambition that explicitly drives *Being and Time*, but inadvertently drives it beyond itself and so beyond metaphysics). Instead, we witness him undertaking to *think* (post-philosophically) an alternative-disclosing critique of the core of the Western philosophical tradition's "first philosophy," that is, our tradition-defining understanding and practice of "metaphysics" as *ontotheology*, which means the attempt to "doubly ground" the entire intelligible order by grasping its innermost core and outermost

expression simultaneously and linking them in a doubly foundationalist, floor-to-ceiling understanding of the being of everything that is.[2]

In *Contributions*, Heidegger discovers that real education is not simply education in the thinking *of* being, since that *of* indicates not only the essential matter to be thought (namely, *Seyn* or "being as such") but also the ontotheological understanding of the "being of entities" (*Sein des Seienden*). In *Contributions*, Heidegger recognizes both that (1) this "disastrous" ambiguity facilitated the historical eclipse of "being as such" by "the being of entities" and that (2) this eclipse defines and determines the Western philosophical tradition of metaphysics and thereby generates the fundamental "errancy" (*Irre*) of human being. Such errancy should thus be understood as a going astray in our thinking of being, an errancy that "progressively" subordinates being to our thinking of it, and so initiates and unfolds the withdrawing of being from human being (and so from the being of all other entities, insofar as their being rests on the ontological disclosure of our *Dasein* or "being-here," the making-intelligible of the place in which we happen to find ourselves).

The basic historical trajectory of Western humanity (and increasingly the entire globe, insofar as the whole planet falls under the dominion of our ontotheological understanding of the being of entities) becomes a destiny of errancy—or, to employ Derrida's brilliant neologism, a *destinerrancy*. This is the "destiny"—Heidegger's technical term for the *communal* (that is, common to human being) "fate" or historical happening—of being's eclipse and forgetting or withdrawal. Obviously, this is also Heidegger's phenomenological and hermeneutic *secularization* of the narrative of the Fall. Yet being should not be understood as some quasi-agential entity but rather as an apparently inexhaustible phenomenological source of historical intelligibility that has been overlooked and forgotten by every metaphysical attempt to exhaust being's earthy abundance in a single historical world by doubly grounding that world in an unchanging ontotheological understanding of the being of entities. Ontotheology is thus the

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2 For the most extended and darkly elucidating gathering-together of Heidegger's critiques of (1) Western philosophy as metaphysics, (2) the plights of modernity, (3) the need for an other beginning for philosophy, and (4) the *educational* preparation needed for humans to think that other beginning (and so the central text on which we focus here), see Martin Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*, trans. Richard. Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012).

impossible attempt by finite human thought to secure being (all "reality") by understanding it metaphysically, and so reductively, only as "the totality of entities as such"—as "all that is" grasped floor-to-ceiling, from the microscopic to the telescopic, from the innermost core to the outermost perspective—as if reality could finally be stabilized by being doubly anchored and so secured all the way from the most elementary particle of physics to the ultimate God's-eye-view of the entire cosmological totality.

In one "grand unification" after another, the metaphysical tradition of successive ontotheologies stretches from Plato's thinking of the forms as both paradigms and universals all the way to Nietzsche's "unthought" metaphysics of "eternally recurring will to power." The latter (Nietzsche's unthought metaphysics) preconceives the being of entities as nothing but becoming, mere forces coming together and breaking apart with no goal beyond the maximal perpetuation of force itself. Insofar as we understand "the being of entities" in these ontologically empty terms (these terms that forget being and so empty entities of all their particular, inherent meaning), we tend to relate to everything, including ourselves, as mere "resources" (*Bestand*), on stand-by for efficient ordering and endless optimization, the mere maximization of input-output ratios. This empty and nihilistic "technological" ontotheology supplies the implicit "framework" (*Gestell*) through which we late-moderns increasingly understand, and so treat, everything that is. As a result, the symptoms of being's withdrawal are becoming ever more obvious in the plights of our late-modern epoch, in the growing nihilism and thoughtlessness visible in our ubiquitous commodification of human existence and our unthinking homogenization of existential possibilities and occurrences. Heidegger discovers the evidence of our destinerrancy throughout the Western philosophical tradition of metaphysics as *ontotheology* and so also throughout the historical epochs on intelligibility that this ontotheological tradition focuses, "doubly grounds," and transforms.

Let us take a step back and notice something concealed by its very obviousness. The stand on being that determines the fundamental errancy of the Western philosophical tradition is a "position." It is a *position* toward *all* entities, toward the real, toward "the being of the totality of entities as such," an *ontotheological* stand toward all phenomena and things, all entities, anything that in any way "is." Every "fundamental metaphysical position" is a *stand*, a metaphysical under*stand*ing of "the truth about the totality of

entities as such"—in a word, an *ontotheological* stand. Heidegger discovers that the historical imposition of this position—the doubly fundamentalist, ontotheological stance at the core of every "fundamental metaphysical position"—derives from the first position that the Ancient Greeks took toward being. Thales and Anaximander already understood being reductively, in terms of the *archê* or "ground" of everything that is, albeit differently (in a proto-ontotheological difference), as the "innermost" ground unifying all entities (with Thales's proto-ontological "water") and as the "outermost" ground from which all reality derives and by appeal to which the meaningfulness of reality can be vindicated (with Anaximander's proto-theological *apeiron*, the indefinite or infinite source and ultimate destination of all entities).

In other words, ontotheological position-taking already emerges within the original domains of Ancient Greek questioning and thinking— the inceptual questions and answers that become the Western tradition's first philosophy, its *metaphysics*—and takes decisive hold in Plato's thought. Indeed, the dual ambitions behind (1) Thales's proto-ontological attempt to grasp the fundamental "ground" (or *archê*) of being by isolating its innermost core and unifying element as "water," on the one hand, and (2) Anaximander's antipodal effort to grasp the "ground" proto-theologically by taking up the God's-eye "view from nowhere" and so encompassing and vindicating everything that is by understanding it in terms of its ultimate source and destiny as *apeiron* (the indefinite or infinite), on the other hand, both become unified metaphysically (that is, *ontotheologically*) in (3) Plato's thinking of the forms as both the unifying ground and as the highest expression of what is. This dual, antipodal and yet unified *positionality*, Heidegger thinks, is "the basic position that presides over Western metaphysics" and so over the modern plight that Western metaphysics unfolds.[3] It is also the basic position for thinking being and entities that has been taught (and is still taught today) in "education" within the Western philosophical tradition (because such an ontotheological understanding of being quietly guides its age's unifying understanding of what is).[4]

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3 Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*, 143.
4 Heidegger's lecture on "Plato's Doctrine of Truth" takes Plato's cave allegory as a clear depiction of the essence of "education" and also as a proper positioning of human beings toward what is. See Martin Heidegger, "Plato's Doctrine of Truth" in *Pathmarks*, ed.

According to the critique of the Western philosophical tradition of metaphysics that Heidegger begins to voice in *Contributions*, humans *position* themselves to think beyond entities in their uniqueness and rarity, and instead to think toward essence, essential being. We learn to regard and represent entities by what they have in common (as *eidos*, "Idea," "Form"), such that the uniqueness which each entity holds is denied its presencing, its showing forth of its own inherent, dynamic, polysemic or multi-meaningful presencing.[5] In order to disabuse us of this metaphysical positionalization (by sublating and so transcending it from within), Heidegger thinks "position" in terms of its polysemic essence, thereby discerning the way it points toward its determining significance in the unfolding of the Western philosophical and consequent cultural tradition. Position requires a human stance, implying bodily orientation and its sustaining viewpoint. Position presumes for human being the status or advantage of coming *before*, standing over, and mastering through *ratio* (that measurement and judicious balancing of equivalences at the heart of reason) the entities it encounters. Position also implies job or role, or even ontological duty or office, the conferred power to stand toward and over what-is in order to *make* sense of it. Position is moreover an ontological posit—indeed, one paradigmatically at work, as we have heard, in that decisive, determining metaphysical ground for making sense of what-is (for regarding, thinking, understanding, and saying what-is in terms of the reigning ontotheology). Before becoming the ontological posit metaphysics presumes, then—and this is the *crucial* moment in Heidegger's nascent efforts to undermine and so overturn the metaphysical tradition—position is initially a questioning approach to what-is, an inceptual questioning that only later devolves to the single guiding question that secures the posit as position (or as the basic, presiding, determining ground for making sense of what-is).

As Heidegger has long maintained, the single guiding and presiding question that determines metaphysics as posited within the Western philosophical tradition is: "what are entities?"[6] This guiding question of

William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 155–182; Thomson, *Heidegger on Ontotheology*, ch. 1; and *Heidegger, Art, and Postmodernity*, ch. 1, on which we are drawing here.

5 For an initial articulation of Heidegger's critique of Western metaphysics, see *Contributions to Philosophy*, 133–176; and Thomson, *Heidegger, Art, and Postmodernity*, 169–91.

6 Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy*, 12ff.

metaphysics (what *are* entities?) is the question *of* being as it is understood *metaphysically* (and so reductively, in terms of that dangerous ambiguity of being explored earlier). This guiding question also leads to a leading question, Heidegger maintains, one which (like all leading questions) narrows the domain of thinking by approaching entities solely with an eye to what they have in common, their common being or "beingness." As Heidegger explains in *Contributions*, "anyone who asks about […]the being of entities is standing in the realm of the very question that guided the beginning of Western philosophy and its history up to its end in Nietzsche. We therefore name *this* question of being (the question of the being of entities) the guiding question." Historically, this most general form of the guiding question of metaphysics "was impressed on [the philosophical tradition] by Aristotle"; *ousia* (usually translated as "substance") is Aristotle's way of understanding "the beingness of entities." For the entire subsequent metaphysical tradition, "being means *beingness*," the being that doubly grounds entities, rather than being as such, the seemingly inexhaustible, polysemically excessive source of their dynamic, phenomenological manifestation.[7] With Aristotle, in other words, the questioning approach to what is that emerges from the inceptual domains of Western philosophy comes decisively to lead philosophy's unfolding into metaphysics, misleading the question of being by directing it into the question of the being of entities (or their essential beingness). In this way, Heidegger teaches us to recognize that philosophical thinking and questioning are led away from entities themselves in their unique, inherent, and myriad presencings.

Of course, Plato already paved the way for our "destinerrancy," in which human beings in their thinking and relating to what is pursue the metaphysical path of essential understanding by trying to see the outer look, form, or idea of the essential beingness of entities—and here Plato himself was following the doubly foundationalist moves already made by Thales and Anaximander. What is most important is that, through these decisive, first (mis)steps of metaphysics, human beings are led away from thinking the being of what is in terms of *phusis*—that is, as what issues forth in nature, what comes forth, lingers, and then returns back from whence it came. Instead of this inceptive *physical* thinking of nature in its unstillable polysemic dynamism, human beings learn instead to seek what issues

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7 Ibid., 60.

forth *metaphysically* by conceiving being in terms of what looks stable and unchanging beyond, above, or within the presencing of *phusis*. As Western "meta-physics" unfolds in this way (above and beyond the dynamism of nature), *phusis* gets rethought as what issues from the meta-physical beyond. For example, the entities manifesting *phusis* get conceived (that is, metaphysically grasped and so posited) as mere instantiations of paradigmatic forms which themselves issue from higher forms, ultimately from that highest form of the divine mover and creator initially posited in Plato's metaphysics and then decisively unfolded in the metaphysical thought of Aristotle and the Church fathers.

Within this Western philosophical tradition of metaphysics, *thinking* itself gets reduced to "*ratio*—reason as the guideline and anticipatory grasp for the interpretation of beingness," and human beings seek to see the beingness of entities in the metaphysical ideas that could conceptualize being as stable and unchanging, instead of discerning and creatively disclosing the polysemic presencing inherent to entities in their dynamic phenomenological manifestation.[8] Thus human beings come to regard thinking and knowledge as the representing *of* entities by conceptualizing their essences, to such an extent that those conceptual representations supersede (and eclipse) the inherent significance of the entities themselves. As the question of being thus unfolds reductively within the Western metaphysical tradition, truth becomes not the disclosing of the unique and myriad presencing of entities but rather the representation of their common or essential look, as in Plato's ideas and in the modern theoretical conceptualizations that continue to refine this "thinking," reducing it to ever more precise cognitive representations allegedly capable of securing a monosemic exactitude that would finally still the polysemic fullness of entities in their temporal unfolding.

The educational resonance of Heidegger's "other beginning"

Education, consequently, becomes quietly guided by this metaphysical positioning of humans toward the being of entities and so increasingly oriented to the teaching of correct representation, the correct or true beholding of the essential look of any entity or group of entities. Heidegger

8 Ibid., 143.

develops this critique in "Plato's Doctrine of Truth," one of his most explicit writings on education. Here Heidegger accepts Plato's allegory of the cave as illustrating the essence of *paideia* or real education as a passage of turning, "leading the whole human being in the turning around of his or her essence."[9] Plato's "real" education is illustrated paradigmatically by the turning of the cave-dweller, initially *positioned* toward the shadows on the cave wall, toward the light of the sun—an educational repositioning that allows him to see what has previously been positioned and posited as truth (and so see its narrowing limitations)—the correct forms of what-is, seen in the bright sunlight of the highest form. Thus, according to Heidegger, Plato "wants to show that the essence of *paideia* does not consist in merely pouring knowledge into the unprepared soul as if it were some container held out empty and waiting. On the contrary, real education lays hold of the soul itself and transforms it in its entirety by first of all leading us to the place of our essential being and accustoming us to it."[10] At the same time, however, Heidegger subtly distinguishes his own thinking of being from Plato's metaphysical *relating* to the beingness of entities. For Heidegger, being's multilateral, multidimensional, burgeoning presencing withdraws (by overflowing any attempt to grasp it), and so hides itself (from any representational positing), leaving in its place merely the common look of being, metaphysical beingness.

It is thus not Plato's description of real education that is errant for Heidegger—it is the way Plato metaphysically yokes this true pedagogical turning to a limiting idea of correctness as unchanging certainty, rather than returning it all the way back into the original domains of human thinking and questioning. In a Heideggerian reading, this would also be an emancipatory return to the domain of the cave itself, a deeper excavation of that cleft opening in the earth and its riches (which already in Plato withdraw by overflowing), concealing a darkness richer than any shadow, an earthiness in which metaphysical positioning has not yet been set up as the attempt to establish a masterful position on the beingness of entities. For Heidegger, then, real education does indeed lay hold of the soul itself and transforms it in its entirety, first of all by leading us to the place of our essential being and accustoming us to it. But this place of our essential being—to which

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9 Heidegger, "Plato's Doctrine of Truth," 166.
10 Ibid., 167.

real education leads us—has withdrawn from us during the unfolding of Western ontotheology, and from Plato first of all.

Instead of the metaphysical thinking that regards entities as dumb, dark objects devoid of their own meaningful presencing until metaphysical representation comes and lights them with its ideas (alighting on or overlaying them with the content of its own representations), Heidegger aims in *Contributions* for a radically other thinking, an "other beginning" for philosophy (and so for human beings), but one that must spring from a deeper thinking of that position on beingness with which Western philosophy launched our destinerrancy in its first beginning as metaphysics. Only real education—a revolutionary reunion with that place which we are, a place from which being's manifest abundance has not entirely withdrawn or disappeared—can prepare humans to think and question inceptually in the originating domain of an "other beginning" for philosophy. Only such real education can acclimate human thinking to its other, more original place and let essential being be—as thinking meaningful presencing.

But is such real education—a radical restart not only for education but also for the ways of existing with which education collaborates (truth, science, arts, as well as philosophy as thinking, questioning, teaching, learning)—even possible? Such real education—a revolutionary education that brings us full-circle back to the place of our essential being—is needed to reverse our destinerrancy, the plight catalyzed by the withdrawal of being's meaningful presence from the life of contemporary late-modernity, and yet *Contributions* deems this withdrawal irrevocable. How then is such real education even possible when it requires thoughtful (and thus being-full) laying hold, turning, leading, and acclimating? *Contributions* answers: only if such an education can first call forth transitional thinking, a thinking catalyzed by a pedagogy practiced as relentless hermeneutic engagement with the ontotheological tradition, a pedagogy that repeatedly undergoes a version of Socratic *aporia*, the shocking experience of the impasse in the path of metaphysical thinking, the collision with the unmasterable that reminds one of one's ignorance, of the unmasterability of the core philosophical problems by representational thought. Such *aporia*, properly guided, can result in the counter-knowledge that one is not yet thinking, since one is unable to answer the call of what remains most thought-provoking within the pre-existing space provided by metaphysical representations and their drive

toward monosemic exactitude. Such is the call for a leap in to a broader kind of thinking, one more capable of doing justice to the true complexity of our existential situation. This, in short, is Heideggerian *teaching*.

How then does Heidegger seek to effect that shock and catalyze transitional thinking in his audiences, in the readership of *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)* particularly? (He thought this future audience would be more likely to consist of those "future ones" who had or were ready to leap from the first beginning of Western philosophy as metaphysics into the "other beginning.") In *Contributions*, the Socratic shock happens in the section called "The Resonating" (*Der Anklang*), which catalogues a shocking list of modern plights and enacts its own shocked thinking as an engaged meditation on the essence of the contemporary plight (both his and ours, though they are not identical). These shocks are meant to resonate with and so provoke our thinking about the stultification of being at the heart of Western destinerrancy, thereby calling forth the most needful education. This most needful education is the thinking transition to an other philosophical beginning in a leap from (or, indeed, many structurally similar leaps from) the Western tradition's first philosophy, its metaphysics conceived and practiced as ontotheology.

"The Resonating" is thus especially focused on the plight of contemporary education. Such late-modern education, Heidegger writes, has become mere preparation for our accelerating "transition to the technologized animal."[11] The framework of such *technologized* education derives from our Nietzschean ontotheology of "eternally recurring will to power," an unrecognized metaphysical understanding of the being of entities that increasingly reduces everything which human beings interact with to the status of mere *Bestand*: inherently meaningless resources on stand-by for endless optimization. The main symptoms of this technological enframing of education include speed, greatness understood only as massiveness (both mass appeal and gigantic size), calculability, and above all, human *machination*—which takes humanity to be the sole measure, maker, and master of all entities. Caught in the grip of such educational enframing, universities are becoming mere "business establishments" guided by the maximization of input/output ratios, alleged "sites of scientific research and teaching [purportedly] ever closer to reality," but where nothing is originally questioned

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11 Ibid., 78.

or decided, where the shackles of our ontotheological cave continue to pass mostly unnoticed (or are celebrated almost as often as they are bemoaned).[12] With the burgeoning of biogenetics, the natural sciences "become components of machine technology and of business." Meanwhile, the human sciences succumb to technological thinking, becoming newspaper sciences of gigantic scope, journalistically interpreting and publishing the current lived experience as quickly as possible in a form comprehensible to everyone (so that no one seems surprised or alarmed by the contemporary reduction of philosophy to "blogging," with its superficial and reactionary treatment of the topics of the day, a herding of mass opinion in which the guiding acronym seems to be TL;DR: "too long; didn't read").[13]

In *Contributions*, Heidegger traces the earlier reduction of philosophy to "historiological and 'system'-building erudition" as a reaction to the "dread of questioning," a questioning which requires us to face our own "ignorance of the essence of truth." Unable to endure the aporetic confrontation with the overflowing riches of a reality that exceeds and so escapes every attempt to master it conceptually, "truth deteriorates into certainty of representation and the security of calculation and lived experience."[14] *Contributions* formulates the essence of our plight quite simply as *the abandonment of entities by being.* In other words, the inherently polysemic meaningfullness of what genuinely exists—a meaningfulness human beings remain called upon to creatively and responsibly disclose—has been eclipsed by the metaphysical tradition's reduction of being to the being of entities. Owing to this metaphysical reduction at the core of the Western tradition, modern human beings conceive themselves merely as rational subjects and so regard what genuinely exists first as modern objects to be mastered and controlled and then as late-modern resources with nothing uniquely meaningful about them, thereby ignoring entities' inherent meanings and instead projecting our pre-existing goals and projects onto them. So insidious is this plight that even our dim awareness of it is withdrawing; the greatest plight becomes "the lack of a sense of plight, [a lack that is] greatest where 'truth' has long since ceased to be a question […] and even the attempt at such a

12 Ibid., 121–22. See Thomson, *Heidegger on Ontotheology*, chs. 3–4.
13 Ibid., 121.
14 Ibid., 38, 72, 93, 122. On the crucial importance of enduring such an anxiety-provoking confrontation with "the nothing" in order to transform it into a *poietic* disclosure of genuine meaning, see *Heidegger, Art, and Postmodernity*, ch. 3.

question is dismissed as a disturbance and inconsequential musing."[15]

Heidegger's *Contributions* is thus his own untimely meditation, fittingly written during the years 1936-38, the most intense period of his hermeneutic altercation with Nietzsche. Heidegger's stipulation that his untimely meditation be withheld from publication for decades (until all his public works had been published) reflects his recognition that at the time of its writing, *Contributions*' time had not yet come. Looking out at his late-modern age (caught up in a war that has yet to end), Heidegger could not yet recognize the ready few prepared to think being transitionally, beyond metaphysics, as the real education of the future ones—the genuinely *post-*modern. But we can, perhaps, by thinking with and beyond Heidegger.

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15 Ibid., 37, 93, 99.

ANNOTATION, NAVIGATION, ELECTRONIC EDITIONS

Toward a Geography of Knowledge*

BERNARD STIEGLER

Translated by John Oliver Beal[+]

SGML (Standarised Generalised Markup Language) is a formalizing metalanguage for structured documents[1] that defines the forms according to which inscription is made in material space. It is interesting to apply to the concept of SGML that of "putting utterances into material form," a concept elaborated upon by Jacques Virbel[2] in order to highlight a true performativity within the materiality of writing. Virbel's work shows that the typodispositional semiotic proper to utterances engenders a meaning that is not present in the oral utterance.

Performativity is a concept invented by the English philosopher J. L. Austin. A performative utterance demonstrates that "to say is to do." For example, by saying, "court is now in session," the judge has, in fact, opened the session. Hence the title of Austin's book: *How to do Things with Words.*

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* This article was originally published as "*Annotation, navigation, édition électroniques : vers une géographie de la connaissance*" in: *Linx*, hors-série n°4, 1991. *Texte et ordinateur. Les Mutations du Lire-Ecrire.* pp. 121-131. It is accessible online at http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/linx_0246-8743_1991_hos_4_1_1191

+ All footnotes are the translator's unless otherwise noted.

1 The phrase "*documents structuré*" is used in a technical sense here. A structured document is an electronic document whose parts are given various structural and syntactical meanings based on the particularities of the code structuring it. Any given electronic document will have coding that describes its physical structure (such as block text, italics, font size, etc.) as well as its logical or syntactical structure (such as whether an element on a page is an image or a caption, whether a certain line of text is a title or subtitle, etc.).

2 For more on Virbel's work as it relates to this paper see *Structured Documents* ed. J. André, R. Furuta and V. Quint, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1989. See especially Virbel's paper "The Contribution of Linguistic Knowledge to the Interpretation of Text Structure" (161).

Emerging from Virbel's concept is an inverse performativity: *faire c'est dire* ("to make/do is to say"), a figure of material inscription produces a meaning.

Toward a hyperlinking of text

At the Université de Compiègne, specifically in the research group PHITECO[3] from the COSTECH[4] laboratory and in the DEA *Science de l'homme et technologie,* we are interested in the material culture of writing and, more generally, of knowledge. More generally still, we study the supports of knowledge and memory, the prehistory of available artificial intelligence and systems called "multi-agents,"[5] the pheromones circulating in anthills, and the virtual realities suggested by the editorial techniques [*manuscripture*] of Flaubert.

There are in fact many lessons to be learned from the study of manuscripts in relation to what concerns us (the text). These lessons might be useful, for example, for the Institute of Texts and Modern Manuscripts (CNRS,[6] Bibliothèque National).

J. L. Lebrave demonstrated the role played by the advent of publication in the spread of the printing house as it relates to the textual relationship between the writer and the reader; he specifically accentuates the separation of the process of writing and the process of reading—the slow disappearance of the manu-script engendering a regression in the part played by the hand .

Manuscript parchment or printing paper are static supports. Yet with the advent of digitization, the text is coming to know a new epoch: that of *dynamic supports where the reader "naturally" merges with the writing.*

SGML pertains precisely to this advent of digitization. If SGML was understood from the start as a format of exchange, it is now an instru-

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3 *Philosophie, Technologie, Cognition.*
4 *Connaissance, Organisation, et Systèms Techniques.*
5 The phrase is in English. Multi-agents, known also as a Multi-agent system, are computerized systems containing several artificial intelligence agents interacting in a certain environment. Multi-agent systems can employ AI to analyze extremely complicated phenomena related to how elements in the environment interact, cooperate, coordinate, organize, communicate, negotiate, correct, etc.
6 The *Centre national de la recherché scientifique.*

ment of automated navigation, with the possibility of generating tables of contents by means of tags, etc. But above all, in the instance that interests me, its use can be extended to the languages of annotation.[7]

Electronic annotation, which takes advantage of the dynamic properties of digital resources, enables the reader's actions to be inscribed in what he or she reads. To read and to write become truly inseparable. To read and write simultaneously on the text is typical for a savvy reader. I am not simply thinking here of writers or academics, but also of engineers, archivists, doctors, etc.

Even so, it is not "natural" to write in a book or on a file. The book is, certainly, very often annotated, but the paper is not intended *for annotation.* The emergence of publication established a separation between what is annotated and, for example, the footnotes, even if this separation is constantly transgressed.

All this takes place as if the dynamic supports and what I call the hyperlinking of the text [*l'hypertraitment de texte*, henceforth abbreviated as HTT] brought a return to the pre-Gutenberg situation of *scriptoria*. Onto the foundation of given information produced by an HTT, the anterior actions of the reader (the activity of the reader consists in the use of the mouse and keyboard) are integrated *simultaneously as information and as instruments of navigation*. The concept of hyperlinking allows us to resolve the dilemma of little Poucet[8]: presented with all the digital (and dynamic) databases, how can users determine the identity of their virtual character and solve problems of navigation proposed to them? Little Poucet, according to the tale, is lost in the forest (he has no sense of direction) and has not yet understood that it is necessary for him to mark his wanderings in order to orient himself. If he leaves breadcrumbs behind him as he walks, the birds eat them all and he makes no progress. Only the white stones, visible in the clear night and unable to be eaten by the forest animals, allow him to solve the problem. Textual hyperlinking rests on a comparable principle.

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7   Stiegler is using "annotation" in a somewhat precise sense. In addition to the familiar uses of the word, annotate also refers to the means by which a given markup language structures its reading of texts. Since the annotation is, in this case, both applied to the original text and is syntactically distinct from that text, it is classed as metadata. Annotations are the means by which diverse texts, images, tables, etc. can be linked together as a corpus.
8 Stiegler is referring to the fairy tales published by Charles Perrault in 1697 under the title *Histoires ou Contes du temps passé*. Little Poucet is known in English as Hop-o'-My-Thumb.

Navigating is nevertheless already a problem in our traditional reading space: the reader marks his or her pathways in a text by means of diverse traditional techniques and tools—the cross folder, etc. If one wants to come nearer to the *work* of the writer regarding his traditional materials, it is also necessary to be familiar with his tools and his places of study: pen, paper, notebook, folders, files, and also the cabinets where these things accumulate, marked-up works, dog-eared works, annotated works, drawers where the folders are stacked, and so many other forms of memory-aid comprising the networks of "metascriptions," which serve as the breadcrumbs that he places along his path. These breadcrumbs form a global process of *archi-annotation*, to which today we obviously can add hard disks, photos, audio and video recordings, and the digital "samples" of multi-media extensions for micro-information systems (such as Quicktime for Macintosh) which now take their turn in the field of a generalised electronic annotation in the heart of apparatuses called hypermedia.

I say breadcrumbs because the traditional reader loses her personal markers in the same ratio as she disseminates them due to the *finitude* of her memory (her capacity for *retention*) and because of the static character of these markers, which are used in order to be replaced.

Before the hypertext and its electronic space, all reading space was *retentional* and *virtual*, static but nevertheless operational up to a certain point, physically framing the writer working at his table. The subtle techniques of annotation, correlation, and classification organize writing from the very beginning; today this process can be transposed into the domain of digital resources to the greatest gain of the reader-writer.

Whether it be the writer, professor, student, "intellectual," engineer, lawyer, journalist or administrator, a "professional" reader utilizes diverse techniques of *tagging* [*balisage*] and of *orientation*, which materialize into "graphic habits" and/or spatial ones, whether he systematizes a usage or not (annotation signs with various meanings; check marks and lines in the margins; underlining in the body of the printed texts; techniques of summarizing and synthesizing, folders, files, etc.). The reader glosses texts, indexes them, puts them in relation to one another through correlation systems (folders), extracts from them passages for citations, and uses research tools (bibliographies, specialized journals, dictionaries, encyclopedias).

All these reading techniques aim at creating qualifying lines between documents or passages in documents. Hypertextual techniques, combined with descriptive languages of structured documents, allow the rigorous integration, by automatization, of these operations. Integration results in languages of electronic annotation or the hyperlinking of text. The advantage in hyperlinking is that the memory of the machine does not forget, whereas that of the reader is essentially fallible. Before digitization it was a time of notebooks, books, folders, files closed up in shelves of the library or in a desk—all the interventions on the corporeal material bearing the marks of countless kinds of glosses, marginal comments half-written in notebooks, disseminating themselves throughout the workspace, strewn about and superbly unaware of themselves. The genius of the reader lay in synthesizing all this that I have just described. The genius of the machine allows not only the verification of the readerly genius, still less the replacement of it, but in every case it guarantees the most rigorous conditions of exercise. For the traditional reader, the exact retentional visibility of the text bears only on a few or perhaps a couple dozen of pages before and after the passage being read at any given moment. Beyond this range, the fidelity of the reader to his work is irremediably given over to the unreliability of his subjectivity. The assistance of the machine inaugurates on the contrary a time of *high fidelity of reading*. The reading of the machine is flawless, instant. Its visibility of the text is total and instantaneous. This obviously does not mean that the reader becomes objective, but that the reader gains rigour and lucidity *concerning the operation of reading*.

The static retentional space is virtual and made actual only with great difficulty by a physical orientation that rests on an intuitive perception of space. In dynamic space, *virtuality* is simultaneously more felt and manifest (because I can entrust to the machine the instructions of updating, memory is always open, etc.). But this virtuality presumes a very rigorous organization of orientation and therefore of annotation: one knows the fault of hypertexts, the inflationary overproduction of connections and links where the very one who has created them can no longer retrieve them; from another viewpoint, it is a question of inventing a *geography* (that is to say an art of cartography) of a new type, or to speak like Virbel, of new norms of giving materials form.

One may analyze, model, automate and integrate the manuscriptural interventions that a reader makes on the printed resources into primitive functional forms of digital annotation that correspond to the norm of a work of reading that initiates a writing process (and it can bear upon a text of which the reader is himself the author).

To say that the reader (student or scholar) is an operation of inscription means that reading consists firstly of appropriation of the text by direct intervention onto the *static* material of the paper. The *dynamic* digital support, on the other hand, allows a multiplication of operations and an automated and systematic exploitation of these operations modeled according to the techniques of informatics.

The acts of annotation rapidly produce, beyond solitary markers or graphic codes, *writing*: notes in margins, keywords, commentaries. Keywords create still more links, more correlations. These are on an equal footing with, for example, lists or thesauri, which are just so many systems of navigation in the archival memory of the reader. A system of reading assisted by a computer can thus systemitise and integrate traditional techniques. Computer-assisted reading results in new instrumental possibilities of orientation, by means of combinations and extrapolations, aspects of which I will describe later.

At first glance on can distinguish two large classes of intervention in the text:

> 1) operations of *hierarchizing*, which regulate the weight given to textual passages, which correspond to the underlines in the corporeal text and the vertical marginal marks on printed resources.
> 2) operations of *qualification*, which consist of attributing semantic values to these regulations, by diverse means:
> > - insertion of keywords
> > - insertion of personal notes
> > - abbreviated comments
> > - connections with other documents (other passage
> of the same or other texts, for example: primary manuscripts, varying editions, texts referred to, translations, accepted glosses, bibliographic references, etc.)

Hierarchization and qualification have been modeled in an informatics mock-up, LECAO,[9] produced at the Université de Compiègne, where the hierarchizing operations consist in using *coloured characters*, whereas the operations of qualification are represented either in coloured underlining of the text being commented on, or in the creation of links between visible documents by the opening of windows that associate "related texts" with the document being commented on, or by the apposition of keywords. Naturally, each intervention into the text is registered by the machine, which can then treat them like information. This registration enables searches carried out specifically on a given level of hierachization. More generally it makes possible the combination of numerous criteria *that apply themselves both to the read text and to the textual specifications added by the reader*.

The inscriptions in the margins or in the body of the read texts, the notebooks full of notes, the folders, the files, and their physical orientation in the shelves of the private library or the desk constitute so many personal systems of orientation and of navigation in the at-once material and spiritual (temporal and virtual) space of work. Materializing textuality and reading is carried out not only in the two dimensional space of the paper material, but in the *three dimensional volume* of the desk and the library.

What results from this transfer of the material form of the reading-writing to the dynamic supports of the hyperlinking of text is a major trans-*formation* of access not only to the text, but to the reading passing over this text, such that it materializes itself textually, *à la lettre*, across the entire gamut of the interventions summarily described here.

Levels of adaptation for a computer-assisted reading tool

The PLAO,[10] whose specifications are much richer according to the general point of view expressed here, has been prototyped by the AIS (Ad-

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9 Computer-Assisted Critical Reading and Writing ("*lecture et écriture critiques assistées par ordinateur*"). This was a program that Stielger launched in the early 90s with the support of the Ministry of Research.
10 Station for Computer-Assisted Reading (*Poste de Lecture Assistée par l'Ordinateur*). For more on the history and function of the PLAO, see Alain Giffard, "La lecture numérique à la Bibliothèque de France," http://alaingiffard.blogs.com/culture/2006/08/la_lecture_numr.html.

vanced Information Systems) society of the Berger-Levrault group,[11] under the direction of François Chahuneau.[12]

In the AIS system, there is not an *a priori* categorization of possible annotations: the categorization tools are largely able to be adjusted (it is the same logic as SGML), with the obvious exception of preference windows, forms allowed by the thesaurus, etc. Adjustment gives a great generality to the instrument.

But this generality presents certain inconveniences and above all poses a very interesting editorial problem—proper dynamic supports: the reader unfamiliar with the program feels first a certain difficulty in understanding the logic or methodology of using it and what precisely manages his work. AIS has adopted the principle that the user ought to have the power to define for himself the characteristic of his type of annotation, goals, etc. All this F. Chahuneau calls the unified logic of découpage (ULD).

Such freedom is a very great advantage, which is practically never offered in the domain of micro-informatics (or only in a very limited manner, for example with Microsoft Word, which allows the naming and defining of different styles, such as citations, ends notes, etc.). But self-determination is also a grave inconvenience if the user is not clearly aware of the liberty of intervention that such a conception makes possible and of the large classes of possibilities offered to him.

Thus, the reader must understand the option of attaching a keyword as a possible attribute for all ULD, or the user will not understand the considerable advantage presented. He will define for example a ULD "keyword," based on which he will make several ensuing searches, and then

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11 Berger-Levrault is the name of the oldest publishing house in France, whose origins date back to 1474. Today, the company specializes in editing software, producing regulatory documents and forms, and developing databases for various clients. According to their website, the company provides the necessary means of intervention into the public sector—from health to civil society.

12 In his 2014 book, *The Re-Enchantment of the World: The Value of Spirit Against Industrial Populism*, trans. Trevor Arthur, (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), 48, Stiegler mentions Chahuneau and the work being done at the time by the AIS-Berger Levrault Society. Stiegler notes that this work was interrupted in 1993 when Édouard Balladur took over as the head of French government. Concerning the AIS prototype, Stiegler says, "this prototype, which still exists, asks only to be reactualized: the concepts that were developed are absolutely reinforced by the development of what the W3C group, which piloted the evolution of the internet network, called Web 2.0" (48).

follow a string of results that is hardly economic (it is much more reasonable to attach keywords to a common meaning already in accordance with ULD than to define a specific ULD in order to know the keywords).[13]

Said otherwise, these operating modeling chains ought to be proposed as standarised to the user. They ought not incite him to remain closed within perceived limits, which would be contrary to the opening of the system and to all the analyses that have subsequently been done by the work group of the Bibliothèque de France.[14] The mock-up ought to be adjustable according to the needs expressed by the users, but these models must give him efficient illustrations of the way to construct personal operative chains to best utilize the founding concepts of the system (ULD, aims, annotations, links).

It is therefore indispensible to formalise the primary classes of procedural approaches to texts, whose number would equal that of the combinable elements offered by the interface, in accordance with the larger tasks that characterize the modalities of scrutinizing texts by reading and writing proper to different methods of reading.

Such categorizations would be so many models both scientific and editorial: languages of annotation and navigation. Inscription of the act of reading in the material implies an open and generic normalization of modalities of annotation, as well as a formalization of the rigour of the original texts along with chains of operations (erasing the ambiguity of manuscript annotations, the excessively empirical aspects of their use). All of formalisation is done in order to allow one to move between different stations and different systems, and also to normalize the modalities of navigation—one cannot in fact distinguish the work of annotation affected by the reader from the system by which the reader is given access to the corpus.[15] In other

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13 To give a contemporary example for the sake of clarity and comparison, what Stiegler is describing here is in some senses similar to how Twitter manages content versus the algorithms used by Google. Hyperspecific hashtag searches yield little to no results because no content is bound to these searches. More general searches or "trending" searches, on the other hand, provide access to far more related content.

14 Reunified by the initiative of Alain Giffard and composed of Philippe Aigrin, Patrick Bazin, Rolland Bertrand, Patrice Bouf, Alain Lelu, Dominique Maillet, Philippe Roquinarch, Bernard Stiegler and Jacques Virbel [Stiegler's note].

15 I believe Stiegler uses the term "corpus" here in the sense of "corpus linguistics," a branch of linguistics that uses samples of common or everyday speech/text as its object of

words, it is the cumulativity of knowledge conserved and elaborated upon by the dynamic supports that are in play.

These various formalizations can be listed according to separate levels:

- a reserve of operative chains common to all reading practices,
- a reserve of operative chains for each practice,
- within each practice, specific modalities of operative chains,
- the operative chains that elevate the idiosyncracies of each reading to the level of a text—this level of formalization is therefore completely dependent upon the reader.

Each reader has different ways of beginning a text, which holds for several elements, in particular:

- the corpus under consideration (the nature of this corpus, of its accessibility, etc.),
- the reader's training, from primary school up to university or research lab,
- the discipline in which he exercises his knowledge,
- the unique concepts at which the reader arrives, largely dependent on the methods of reading, and the inverse as well (truly most often the reader has only an extremely vague awareness of this *material* dimension of his spiritual, conceptual, or *ideal* work).

The difficulty is therefore to make distinctions within these levels.

In the framework of the AIS mock-up, the tool itself is limited in distinguishing between levels by certain factors. The process of *reasoning in terms of markups and links,*[16] in terms of synthetic representations of a specific content, and in terms of reading-writing that introduces the personal semantic of the reader into the semantic of the read text, already determines certain constraints.

study. The corpus in this case is the collection of samples that are linked, for example, by keywords and which, when taken together, form an ever-changing "body" of references. See note 7 above.

16 Markup language refers specifically to a way of digitally annotating documents by means of tags. These tags serve as signals to the software being used to present the text in a specific way. The tags are syntactically distinct from the primary text and do not appear in the version read by the user.

These remarks require us to give a more general explication of considerations regarding the framework of the AIS mockup.

We must distinguish between what concerns the structuration of the text and what concerns the structuration of the grid of reading that itself becomes a text.

Generally, many possibilities are open when it comes to approaching a text, and they correspond 1) to the *different tasks* in one case, 2) to the *alternatives for the same task* in another case.

Here are two simple examples.

Example #1: performing different readings tasks for one text:

- performing a detailed reading of a work in order to give a *global interpretation.* This can be done by a *systematic appropriation* and *reduction* of content. This approach obtains primarily and in the first place when it comes to *sequential reading.*
- performing a reading of a work *in the service of another reading* from another work, or *in the service of an idea that does not constitute itself in the first place within the read work*, and, by doing so, mobilizing the elements of the work without pretending to make a global reading. *It is thus not necessarily a question of a reductive operation.*

Example #2: examining alternatives between several approaches to the same task:

- one can imagine a work that *has already been read in its entirety*, traditionally, linearly, could then be the object of a work of LAO[17] that will not consist in sequentially recommenting upon the *entire* work, all the while preserving a certain sequentiality using the methods of the electronic annotation (eventually in transferring the annotations already made onto paper).
- on the other hand, one can begin, as in the first case

17 "*Lecture Assistée par Ordinateur*," in English: "computer-assisted reading."

when a work has *already been read in its entirety* (for example a dictionary constituted from the start by a digitized corpus), then go search the isolated elements there, relying more on the vision of the whole that one has acquired in the tra-ditional sequential reading than on an informatics-based reformalization of the same operation.
- Etc.: there are still more possibilities.

It is evident, though, that these different possibilities are to be recon-sidered according to whether the corpus is in image-mode or text-mode.[18] I restrict myself here to the text-mode.

It is a question of determining the standards and the markup, and also a question of the tools of annotation that characterize the methods for approaching the works and giving structure to them. J. Virbel proposes to draw up these standards by the expression *formalised description of structures*.[19] The question is how to bring the systems of DFS to the level of the user, knowing that this concerns three levels.

1) There are, first of all, the DFSs on which the reader depends—that have been produced by the resources that he uses. Example: the BdF tags, whether in image-mode or text-mode.

If these formalizations have not been produced by these resources, it is necessary then to propose to the reader standard methods or norms of producing such tags by him or herself, knowing that he or she can always modify these norms himself, having understood the mechanics of the inter-face.

This first level is the physical description of the material forma-tion[20]of the body of work, of the same sort as a textual geography.

2) The second level is the syntactical découpage that will allow to the user to construct a grid of reading, and to for-

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18 The difference, for example, between a .pdf or .jpg file and an editable .doc file.
19 "*description formalisée de structures*," henceforth abbreviated as DFS. 20 "*mise en forme matérielle*," henceforth abbreviated as MFM.

malise it for himself, making the texts objects of dynamic interrogation, it being given that this grid rapidly becomes itself a complex hypertextual object.

This syntax is what commands the conception of ULD by the user in their relationships between keywords, annotations, tags and links.

In the case of an exhaustive reading of a work for the purpose of a global interpretation—the case to which we restrict ourselves here—an essential moment, and one that conditions all the others, is the decoupage of the text in ULD constituting the unities of meaning.[21]

One can imagine that this decoupage could be automated, depending on the elements given by the DFS and the MFM, and putting the DAZ[22] function to work. But this is not always evident. This can constitute a first phase, that of demagnification, which ought to be then refined by a sequential reading. A US can bring together many elements of DFS/MFM, but it can also be the most granular of any unity at this level.

The syntax that must be explained here is the MFM of pertinences—that is to say of differences, if one calls pertinent a difference in the sense of Troubetskoï, and I indicate this less as a structuralist theoretical argument than as an example—by the user. Syntax is already marked out by the user, it concretizes when the user puts his or her reading grid into material form. However, the user is still free to roam about the *geography* of the text, or the *histology*, simultaneously *horizontal* and *vertical*. It is necessary to consider both the *horizontal extension* of a pertinent unity of meaning (for example the indentation of a given paragraph in some chapter of some part of some such book by some author in a given discipline) and its "height," of its "pitch," that is to say of its specific weight which allows it to be raised to a certain *verticality*. What I have named hierarchization demonstrates this dimension. This syntax, it is important to emphasize, already allows a synthetic reduction of the text as regards its verticality: if the user has delimited certain passages of ULD as "very important" their sole selection makes it possible to give a summary, in the manner of the SUP collection of texts published by the Presses Universitaires de France.

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21 "*unités de sens*," henceforth abbreviated as US.
22 "*découpage automatique de zones,*" in English: the automatic découpage of zones.

The third level is that which allows:

3) a semantic elaboration that is responsible for sensing
the "syntax" of the DFS of the first two levels, and which
makes possible a linear reduction, for example by an auto-
matic publication of commentary in the sequentiality of
the text commented on;
- a navigation in the elements that does not have to be
linear since it makes correlations between them, facilitating
a jump from salient point to salient point. navigation makes
it possible to reassemble the entire ULD pertaining to a
concept belonging to the reader or to the commented text
(and eventually of fomalizing these routes in order to make
leaps among entire ways of reading). In the first case it is
a question of searching the ULD specified by a keyword[23]
supplied by the user (including the case where the keyword
is present in the text: the sole fact that it has been selected
as keyword implies that it is no longer the word of the
author, but also of the reader, or a common link—in the
Aristotelian sense—between them);
- a synthetic representation, divided according to different
levels; a cartography. Said otherwise, synthetic representa-
tion is also a radiography of sorts of the textual semantic
itself, whether it be by clouds of points, graphs, or more
simply lists of thesauri, different dictionaries, etc.;
- all this is amounts to the textual production of the reader,
who can now manage his or her own notes as he or she
builds or generates the annotated text.

The third level is the same as the generation of a new type of tables
of contents,[24] the one associated with the author, the other with the read-
er—the two able to be confused with one another, but still able to remain
distinct. This third level corresponds to the historic understanding of effec-

23 "*mot-clé*," henceforth abbreviated as MC
24 "*tables de matières*," henceforth abbreviated as TDM

tive reading, constituted by a hypertextual object that serves as the scaffolding of dynamic reading.

Consequently, one must distinguish *four large categories of operations*, which are the functional bases of electronic annotation and which allow, by the their combination, the effective realization of the previous three levels:

> - hierarchization: simultaneously by the creation of US and by the implantation of the ULD having been put in place (horizontality and verticality);
> - qualification: keywords, annotations, commentaries, etc.;
> - navigation and searching: creation of links and of protocols of necessary correlation: the defining, for example, of categories of links that specify the nature of the attached documents: canonical commentaries, translations, manuscripts, references made accessible by the commented text, search windows, etc.;
> - representation (assistance with navigation and with searching): diverse grids, including the table of contents, 'perspectives' on the work corpus (including the development of a finder[25]—a function missing or still poor in the AIS mockup), but such that these means of representation articulate syntaxes and semantics.

These formalizations are so many hypotheses for the formalised description of documents structured specifically as electronic documents. Said otherwise, our project concerns a standardization of electronic formats. Standardisation is absolutely necessary: it would be beyond belief that the works of annotation produced by the great readers could largely be inaccessible and unpublishable, annotation becoming here an integrated part of the critical work and even of the work *tout court*, since it makes accessible the unique work of preparation. It is a new era that could then open itself up to the elaboration and the transmission of knowledge.

One can go very far with the hypothesis that an idiosyncratic system of annotation reflects a theoretical gesture that is applied to the corpus under consideration: to each type of reader will correspond a technicity of annotation and of unique navigation. The question will then be the possi-

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25 In English in original.

bility of a normalization that would be generic, that is to say one that would allow at the same time the sharing and the exchange of knowledge, as well as the emergence of originality.

In fact, it is a question comparable to that of the thesaurus: some make reference to it, others do not. Methodologies establish themselves, with variations, etc. It is necessary to have room for both the norm and for variability. Conceptualizing the question of standards in the case of dynamic supports cannot be the same as the case of static supports: the adaptability of the reader engendered by the digital dynamic entirely renews the editorial question. In consequence, it is a question of defining the formats of exchange that are at once technical and intellectual, of determining what will be the strict norm in terms of markups and what ought to remain open to variability, all in proposing dominant models for all types of annotations and all types of structurings.

❖ REVIEWS

TEN LESSONS IN THEORY:
AN INTRODUCTION TO THEORETICAL WRITING

By Calvin Thomas. New York: Bloomsbury, 2013. 240 pp.

REVIEWED BY KENT L. BRINTNALL

In the opening pages of *Ten Lessons in Theory*, Calvin Thomas explains that his wide-ranging, incisive and sometimes polemical tour through contemporary literary theory "stakes itself upon three major premises" (xi). First, he contends that an adequate understanding of theory "depends upon a much more sustained encounter with the foundational writings of Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud than any reader is likely to get from the standarised introductions to theory currently available" (xii). Second, among theoretical writers, contributions by Jacques Lacan are the "richest," most generative, and most important (xii). Finally, "'literary theory' isn't simply highfalutin speculation 'about' literature, but. . . theory fundamentally *is* literature. . . . 'The writing called theoretical' is nothing if not a specific type of 'creative writing'" (xii).

Thomas develops his first premise by devoting an entire Lesson to the work of Hegel–providing both a quick overview and a detailed exposition of the master-slave dialectic. He frequently returns to the ideas and contributions of Nietzsche, although a reader unfamiliar with Nietzsche's work would need a fuller introduction than the one provided here to understand Nietzsche's importance for contemporary critical theory. While Thomas's over-arching approach to the nature, work, and contribution of theory purportedly depends on Marxist concepts, the book as a whole shows little sympathy for Marxist analysis and spends virtually no time examining capitalist exploitation.

But Thomas's prose comes alive when he engages the work of Freud and Lacan. The first five lessons are grounded in psychoanalysis and its relationship to structuralist theories of language. Any student or teacher of theory who has trouble giving a sympathetic audience to psychoanalytic

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concepts and approaches would benefit from the first half of Thomas's book. Thomas has a gift for not only making Lacanian psychoanalysis clear, but also for making these concepts seem virtually self-evident. Thomas focuses on how the subject comes into being in the midst of a social environment and as the product of a social process. Because Lacanian psychoanalysis reveals the relationship between the subject and language, it is *necessarily* also a theory of literature; concurrently, any approach to literature must *necessarily* grapple with Lacanian psychoanalysis. In the second half of the book, when Thomas turns to Lacan's treatment of the phallus and sexuation, one wishes he had explained, described and, most importantly, translated Lacan's ideas with the same level of care. Unfortunately, Thomas's discussion of the phallus and sexuation in the second half of the book lacks his earlier clarity. In this latter encounter, when presenting Lacanian ideas that are much less straightforward, Thomas merely restates Lacan's conclusions, rather than doing the careful work of explication that he performs in the first half.

Thomas's commitment to Lacan makes sense given the broader thrust of his text. As he clarifies in the introduction, he is "concerned less with *what theory is* and more with *what theory does*" (4). According to Thomas, theory is, fundamentally, an activity—an operation against nature (xiii). Theory is a practice of interrogating, examining and questioning that which seems most real and commonsensical. With this definition, it makes perfect sense that Thomas places Marx and Lacan next to each other (31). Marx pulls back the curtain on operations of labour; Lacan pulls back the curtain on operations of language. There is a shared concern, according to Thomas, in thinking about how what is named as reality occludes the real, and it is the work of theory to identify this occlusion and its consequences.

This conception of theory not only helps Thomas determine who and what count as theory—Lacan, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Althusser, Foucault, Derrida, and certain feminist, queer, and postcolonial theorists—but also who does not: formalists, religious adherents, and all those who think that reality is somehow directly accessible to our senses and our understanding. This conception of theory also helps Thomas explain why theory is necessarily difficult. Insofar as theoretical writing has as its purpose the unsettling of our commonsense assumptions about what is most self-evident, it must rattle every common point of reference. For theory to do what

it seeks to do, it cannot *not* be challenging. Just as theory seeks to do work on the world, we must do work to grapple with theory.

Once again, Thomas comes up short in terms of his third premise: theory as a practice of writing. One of the great virtues of Thomas's *Ten Lessons* is their clarity and lucidity. Thomas digests so many different notions that *Lessons* hides the complexity of his primary texts. This is especially true of Thomas's treatment of Lacan. It is Lacan's writing style that makes his ideas so daunting, and so one could master Thomas's Lessons but still be at sea when turning to Lacan's seminars. Thomas has an impressive grasp on the thinkers he presents and engages (especially those with whom he agrees). Through the clarity of his exposition, however, Thomas subverts his own ends. If, as he states in his concluding chapter, theory has a restlessness that negates and undoes all positive claims (271–74), it is unclear how *Ten Lessons* itself becomes restless. Lacan may unsettle us, but nothing in Thomas's text unsettles Lacan.

In fact, Thomas rarely grapples with the tensions that exist between the figures he presents. For example, on a number of occasions he notes the "universal" and "transhistorical" assertions of Lacan and Freud, without noting that Marx and Foucault are very concerned with historical variability and particularity. How one thinks Marx with Freud, or Foucault with Lacan, are live scholarly questions, but a reader of Thomas's lessons would not know that. Similarly, in his otherwise masterful presentation of the relationship between Lacanian psychoanalysis and structural linguistics, Thomas never pauses to think about what the introduction of Charles Peirce does to his analysis. While Saussure insisted that the relation between signifier and signified was arbitrary, and while Lacan followed him, Peircian semiology suggests that there are a range of signs where this relationship is *not* arbitrary. And there are at least some readings of Kristevan semiology that would suggest something similar, insofar as some signs have connections to bodily processes. While it may be the case that no important Lacanian concept is altered by acknowledging that some signs are not arbitrary (if, in fact, that is something we should acknowledge), Thomas's failure to grapple with the ways in which certain orthodoxies and pronouncements may need to be qualified or complicated makes his book, overall, come across as more dogmatic than it could. Given Thomas's obvious passion for certain theoretical modes of inquiry, and given how clearly and painstakingly he makes

his case, this patina of dogmatism is significant because it will likely alienate readers already hostile to the theoretical project for which Thomas is making a case.

(This does raise a much more general question about the ultimate audience for Thomas's book. Is he giving readers already committed to these modes of thought talking points for understanding and defending them? Is he trying to present a coherent account of a wide range of theoretical ideas, concepts and approaches? Or, is he trying to show readers who have no facility or sympathy for these approaches why they matter? My sense is that Thomas is more invested in the former projects than the latter. Insofar as his book reads in this way, then it is vulnerable to the attacks of theory that contend it is insular and exclusive.)

Thomas's dogmatism becomes most problematic when he lands on terrain where he seems to feel most comfortable and conversant—feminist theory. In "Lesson Ten" the tone of the writing changes dramatically. In fact, Thomas calls this chapter a "credo" and organizes it in terms of propositions and pronouncements. This characterization and presentation is unique to the book. More than almost any other Lesson, Thomas allows himself to engage in a sustained critique of theoretical ideas. Thomas produces a pointed, extended critique of an example of third world feminism (259–64), rejecting utterly its interrogation of Euro-American feminist accounts of agency and liberation. Here, quite contrary to Thomas's conception of theory, he is quite ready to assert that he *knows*—that *everyone* knows—what freedom and agency really are, and that Third World feminists simply refuse to recognize it. Most troubling is that in his excoriation, Thomas refers to himself as a "conspicuously pale male feminist theorist" (260). With this flippant parenthetical, Thomas dismisses an appeal to particularity, context, history and cultural difference, which reveals a failure to grapple with the nature of the challenge he rejects virtually out of hand. It is unclear how this "credo" fits with the "restlessness" Thomas champions elsewhere in the book.

And Thomas's treatment of religion—which becomes more present and more insistently vociferous as the book progresses—is typified by a similar dogmatism. Thomas speaks confidently about all world religions, their origin, and their purpose, and cannot imagine any way that anyone could engage in religious meaning-making (255–56). Thomas treats Hegel's

religious belief as an embarrassment, as something not to be taken seriously (138). Although he adores Lacan, he never acknowledges Lacan's fascination with mystical writings and religious practices. While Thomas's prior writings rely heavily on the work of Georges Bataille, the thinker merits only a passing mention here (and no listing in the index). Is it because Bataille takes religion and the sacred seriously in his own restless approach to theoretical engagement? Is he too difficult to fit into the anti-religious characterization of theory that Thomas articulates? Thomas can only think religion as a commitment to presence, to reality, which shows the narrowness of Thomas's conception of religious texts and approaches. Mysticism, apophaticism, and negative theology do not show up as religion/religious for Thomas. I point out this particular dogmatism not to make any particular claim for religion, but only to note that the worries about language, about meaning-making, about unknowability, and about restlessness have been apparent to religious thinkers for centuries. Like many committed theorists, Thomas characterizes religion and theology as enemies, whereas they may often be generative compatriots.

Ten Lessons in Theory should be read widely. Thomas makes a passionate, compelling case for the work of theory, for the political purchase of a certain way of thinking and writing theoretically. He also does an exceptional job of making surprising connections across theoretical approaches and ideas. For the student who does not understand why virtually impenetrable texts are being assigned with such frequency, or why they are considered a necessary part of one's education, Thomas's book will not only help clear the conceptual ground, but will also give the student some sense of why grappling with complexity and density is worthwhile in the first place. For the teacher who does not understand why certain students are drawn to abstruse texts, why they so readily incorporate them into their writing and conversation, Thomas's book will provide a glimpse into why such encounters can be a fount of inspiration and excitement.

What all of us can learn from Thomas's text, however, is the lesson of restlessness, the capacity to be fully open to having our most fundamental commitments and certainties, our most precious dogmatisms, buffeted by the waves of the unfamiliar and the unwelcome. Positively and negatively, explicitly and implicitly, then, Calvin Thomas's *Ten Lessons in Theory* performs the promise and peril of doing the work of theory.

GEORGES BATAILLE: PHENOMENOLOGY AND PHANTASMOLOGY

By Rodolphe Gasché, trans. Roland Végsö.
Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012. 352 pp.

REVIEWED BY JAN PLUG

In 1979, a full seven years before *The Tain of the Mirror* would make his reputation as one of the premier readers of Derrida, in particular in terms of the continental philosophical tradition, Rodolphe Gasché published an essay on deconstruction that, although not included in it, set the tone for that later work. The title of that essay, "Deconstruction as Criticism," resonates with a certain irony as it nearly doubles the title of the statement publication of what has for better or worse come to be known as the Yale school of deconstruction, *Deconstruction and Criticism.* The "as structure" of Gasché's title hints at a critical stance he soon makes explicit and for which his seminal books on Derrida have come to be known: "The stand taken here is critical of deconstructive literary criticism and maintains that it is incapable of living up to its pretentions" (178).[1] Gasché's criticism, not to be confused with the criticism of which he is critical, is leveled at those pretensions of a so-called deconstructive criticism that has become a "mechanical exercise similar to academic thematism or formalism" and that has become mechanical primarily because of its "naive and sometimes even . . . ridiculous *application* of the *results* of philosophical debates to the literary field" (178). "Theory," as this mode of commentary came to be called, suffered in Gasché's eyes from a "generally intuitive understanding of conceptual systems," from the "absence of all rigorous formation in pilot sciences such as anthropology, linguistics, and especially philosophy" (178-9). While acknowledging the contributions of deconstructive criticism to an investigation of the manifold linguistic density of the work of literature itself" (181), Gasché nonetheless identifies the

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1 "Deconstruction as Criticism" in *Glyph Textual Studies 6* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979): 177-215.

limitations of its "philosophically untrained readers" and finds problems in deconstructive criticism that, while hidden from its practitioners, are "obvious to the philosopher" (183). And so the problem with the literary deconstructive critics is plain and simple: they are *not* philosophers.

The itinerary for Gasché's work on Derrida was thus set. While the debate may seem remote today, Gasché was all too aware of the controversy that an account of Derrida "in the perspective of philosophy" (1)—and indeed as a philosopher—would have with his 1986 publication of *Tain*.[2] Given the often polemical tone against literary deconstructive criticism with which he cleared a path in order to resituate Derrida and deconstruction in general, the crucial fact that Gasché does so in order to rescue literature and with it the possibility of a genuinely literary mode of interpretation *from philosophy* is easily overlooked. Indeed, already in *Tain*, while repeating his criticism of the reductive application of Derridean thought in "deconstructive criticism,"[3] Gasché begins to outline the conditions necessary for a literature that would possess a "specificity of its own," that would no longer be a stillborn proxy for concerns that are ultimately philosophical[4]. The interrogation comes together in a "fundamental reflection of the nature of literature"[5] in Gasché's collection of essays on literature, *The Stelliferous Fold*. The "distinctness of literature", Gasché argues, lies in its "response to the trace of an other that divides it from within"[6], and the "appropriate attitude" one must take when faced with literature is thus "to refrain from imposing one's own gaze on the work and instead to let oneself be surprised by the work".[7] Gasché's contribution to the understanding of deconstruction as an engagement with philosophy, then, has at the same time been a project to define and elucidate the literary as such.

It will come as no surprise to those already familiar with his seminal work on Derrida, de Man, Kant, on the concept of relation, and on Europe, just for starters, that Gasché's work on Bataille is characterized by the

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2 *The Tain of the Mirror: Derrida and the Philosophy of Reflection* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986).

3 Ibid., 255-6.

4 Ibid., 256.

5 *The Stelliferous Fold: Toward a Virtual Law of Literature's Self-Formation* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011), 4

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

same painstaking attention to the details of the texts he reads as his more recent work. Written as his doctoral dissertation at the Free University of Berlin, the book in fact shows that reading at something close to its sublime limit and in a syntax still more Germanic than Gasché's works penned in English. (One of the many qualities of the translation is *not* to have over-translated the text's syntax, and with it an entire mode of thinking, into an English too familiar and comfortable.) But that this most careful of thinking should be ushered forth in the service of an argument about how crucial texts by Bataille "can be located at the point of intersection at which the usually clearly separated domains of philosophy and literature overlap, cut across each other, and mutually cut into each other" (4-5) is decidedly less evident given Gasché's statements about a kind of willy-nilly blurring of disciplinary lines in recent deconstructive criticism.

This is not to say that Gasché himself participates in that obfuscation that he later identifies, still less that he finds in Bataille an early instance of disciplinary messiness run amok. Rather, Gasché's early work offers a fuller perspective on the relation between literature and philosophy and another opportunity to ascertain how his own deep commitment to a certain mode of philosophical thinking might offer a way of reading that relation without succumbing to the bad faith of subsuming it to a philosophical inquiry or the naiveté of having philosophy's claim neutralized in light of the blurring of the lines between philosophy and literature that they expose. *Georges Bataille: Phenomenology and Phantasmology* is a masterful and sometimes magisterial account of a "movement on the body of philosophy, which makes the expulsion of the pineal body ["the conspicuous organ that according to Descartes binds body and soul together"[8]] into a precondition of the constitution of its body".[9] What that means, here, is staging the "concepts that secure the linearity of philosophical representation" in order to confront them with the irreducible element that had to be excluded so that the concepts could constitute themselves".[10] In other words, Gasché's minute analysis, one that we can no longer simply label "philosophical," given that its emphasis on the materiality of language refuses the supremacy of the concept, given too this very disclosure of the elements constitutive of

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8 Gasché, *Georges Bataille*, 1
9 Ibid., 2.
10 Ibid., 23.

philosophical discourse, his quasi-philosophical analysis, then, allows for the formulation of what he calls *phantasmology*: "the irreducible movement of Bataille's text".[11]

While Gasché marshals a good many discursive and conceptual weapons (the military rhetoric of his Introduction [see page 24, for example] is noteworthy) in the service of a "deconstruction of philosophy" by way of a reading of "The Pineal Eye," this is hardly the only text he considers. To the contrary, one of the most satisfying aspects of *Georges Bataille* is its exploration of texts both familiar and understudied, both for themselves and for what they can tell us about Bataille. The long exposition of Schelling's *Philosophy of Mythology* is the clearest instance of a text outside the mainstream of philosophical and theoretical investigation to receive close attention here. That attention produces one of the most incisive accounts of mythological representation and both the dangers of the Romantic conception of myth (in a manner that fleshes out beautifully the more elliptical remarks in a similar vein by Nancy in "Myth Interrupted") and an alternative understanding that seeks to formulate a genuine "outside of philosophy" and to understand how philosophy "establishes itself . . . through its rejection of the mythical code of explanation".[12] What Schelling allows Gasché to think, then, is "an area that, being excluded from philosophy . . . exceeds it as something in which it is included and represents the kind of 'blind spot'" in which he can see "Bataille's 'concept' of the mythical operate".[13] The devil of Gasché's argument is in the mythical details, of course, not least because the kind of reading he calls for and enacts is inextricable from the material, textual particulars he reads—and writes. Suffice it to say here, then, that the detailed account of Schelling (the chapter comes in at nearly 85 pages) are well worth the slow reading they require for their performance of a deconstruction of philosophy that falls prey to none of the superficial and reductive applications of which Gasché would later pronounce himself wary.

With his second chapter and its exploration of how precisely Bataille, in his own words, introduces "a lawless intellectual series into the world of legitimate thought" (111), Gasché begins to formulate what might well be his most thorough intervention. As Gasché points out, Bataille

11 Ibid., 24.
12 Ibid., 31.
13 Ibid., 37.

slips the lawless into the legitimate in the form of a chain of "intelligible images",[14] and Gasché follows the logic of this chain and of these images by reading Bataille with Hegel and Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*. Bataille's images, and Gasché's tracing of their philosophical and psychoanalytic lineage, serve to "shatter the systematic order of science and philosophy",[15] but can do so only by shifting from the order of concepts to the irrationalism of symbols.[16] As Gasché puts it, "to drive reason, philosophy, and science beyond their own limits, what is required is merely the injection of the signifier, the image, or the primal scene into that which keeps the signifier in a slavish dependence on the signified".[17] In Bataille's "phantasms produced by science or philosophy after the injection of their repressed or cast-down elements" Gasché finds "the confrontation of the homogeneous world of knowledge with the heterogeneous element of the signifier".[18] Indeed, one of the great merits of Gasché's work is his careful tracing of what might otherwise appear to be "merely" playful elements in Bataille. Thus, he is able to show not only how the phantasm is born from a crack that tears the body apart, from the "crack of the buttocks"[19] (his commentary— "Nocturnal pit, abyss, hell!"—gets a vote here for one of the most satisfying in the book), but why such a birth is necessary to tear apart the "phraseology of philosophical homogeneity".[20]

Gasché moves on to the linguistic nature of the phantasmatic text in his third chapter in order to explore how the sign itself is displaced[21] in Bataille. The move produces some of the most exciting readings in the entire book, not least the brilliant exploration of the sign or scene of girls visiting a zoo and finding themselves "stunned by the . . . lugubrious rear ends of apes".[22] The sign (*signe*) of the ape (*singe*) becomes in Bataille's hands, and again in Gasché's exploration of it, a dramatic performance and rewriting of the Lacanian bar to signification, that bar here made material in the bars of the cage.

14 Ibid., 111.
15 Ibid., 141.
16 Ibid., 142.
17 Ibid., 145.
18 Ibid., 146.
19 Ibid., 148.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid., 173-4.
22 Ibid., 171.

> In the signs anagrammatically inscribed in the text, we have found
> what henceforth we want to call the sign *of* the phantasmatic text:
> a reversed sign. It only ever appears in the text as an image in
> accordance with the phantasmatic "theories": it is always already
> staged, and only this way is it effective. It cannot be removed
> from this stage and be defined in a positive way.[23]

Thus, while one can generalize to say that the development of an "econ-
omy of expenditure is the objective of *every* one of Bataille's texts",[24] pre-
cisely how that economy functions cannot be dislocated from its stage and
staging. Gasché is masterful at working those stages and relating them to
that economy without allowing either stage or economy to take precedence;
that is, he is masterful at disclosing their interweaving. Tracing the various
strands of this fabric in Gasché's treatment of Bataille will ultimately mean
touching upon some of the more tantalizing aspects of his work, but to lend
them the rigor they are due. In this way, for example, Gasché will elucidate
the liberating effects of sexual aberration and sacrifice.[25]

What is utterly novel here and what constitutes one of the book's
most important contributions is the elaboration of freedom in terms of
the phantasm and phantasmology that Gasché is alone to articulate fully.
Freedom here consists of the "abolition of mastery as such, of the explo-
sion of the dialectic of the master and the slave",[26] which is of course to
say that it consists of a headlong engagement with Hegel's *Phenomenology
of Spirit*. In his final full chapter, Gasché's careful, indeed minute, analysis
bears full fruit, not least because it frees Bataille and deconstruction from
some of the clichés that have dogged both. Now, the freedom from the
Hegelian system does not indulge in a simple "glorification of the individu-
al or the self, "and Bataille does not stop at the simple disproportionality of
irreducible opposites".[27] Rather, Gasché follows the movements whereby
Bataille's text undoes that system in a "reciprocal fragmentation of the self
and the universe" that are "unreal elements of the nonplace of infinite

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23 Ibid., 179.
24 Ibid., 181.
25 Ibid., 187-9.
26 Ibid., 200.
27 Ibid., 243.

particularization".[28] This particularization refuses the "illusion of being and fullness".[29] Gasché himself describes his reading of Bataille and Hegel best.

> Bataille conducts his disagreement with Hegel through the perspective of materialism, psychoanalysis, and anthropology, which shake themselves to their own scientific foundations through their mutual intersections. Such a disagreement with Hegel can no longer simply be called negative: Hegel is in no way a victim of an attack. The contact of particular "scientific" discourses with the Hegelian text will, rather, disturb his philosophy in such a way that it brings for the from within itself what it cannot master: one Hegel exceeds the other. What takes place in this debate with Hegel and the simultaneous shattering of the invoked scientific discourses is not the birth of a new science resting on reinforced foundations but rather the "birth" of what we call *phantasmology*.[30]

It is no doubt the greatest achievement of *Georges Bataille* to have articulated this phantasmology, a "science" that is not one, an alternative to (Hegelian) phenomenology that nevertheless neither inverts nor merely opposes the master discourse of spirit but rather is the "product of the deconstruction of phenomenology",[31] as Gasché puts it in his concluding chapter. The light of this phantasmology, a light Gasché is alone to have allowed to shine, is necessarily not the bright and full light of day but merely a "splitter of light".[32] To have let it shine without blinding us in the radiance of philosophy, to have allowed it to peak through and with it Bataille's achievement, is a task at once monumental and absolutely small, minute, fleeting.

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28 Ibid., 244-5.
29 Ibid., 245.
30 Ibid., 255-6.
31 Ibid., 285.
32 Ibid.

DUKE-BOLOGNA SCHOOL ON GLOBAL STUDIES AND CRITICAL THEORY

Summer 2014

REVIEWED BY ASAD HAIDER

The first session of the School on Global Studies and Critical Theory, a summer program co-organized by Duke University and the Department of History, Culture and Civilization at the University of Bologna, was held in 2014. Having made some minor progress in my study of Italian, the possibility of a summer trip to Italy came to me at an opportune time.

But the primary draw was the range of topics covered in the Summer School's lectures and seminars and the faculty members' importance in their fields. The focus of the program was "Space and Politics in the Global Age," an expansive topic, toward which the Summer School took an equally expansive approach. Its description promised "a radical rethinking of our theoretical tools and critical exchange among different research fields" aimed at "the collective production of knowledge and critical thought." To this end, a diverse group of graduate students from the United States, Europe, Latin America, and Asia were in attendance, representing a wide array of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. The United States and Italy were the structuring national influences, and indeed the faculty were entirely drawn from either American or Italian institutions. This was not necessarily a limit on the program's scope, as the juxtaposition of two quite different cultures and pedagogies of theory opened a wide field for intervention by the international assemblage of graduate students. The two-week program was divided into week-long units of morning courses and two afternoon seminars, punctuated throughout by three lectures.

The immense organizational efforts of Raffaele Laudani, Greta Messori, and Roberto Dainotto were immediately apparent. I have to confess that I did not attend as many sessions as the organizers—of the two op-

tional seminars offered, I chose one each week. Without this time it would simply have been impossible to do the readings or take advantage of the opportunity to adopt the Italian practice of an evening *aperitivo* with our new colleagues—both integral components of the practice of critical theory.

The opening lecture by Carlo Galli presented the local Italian context for the critical analysis of space. One of the most influential political philosophers in Italy (and a member of the Italian parliament) Galli's analyses of political philosophy, extending from Niccolò Machiavelli to Carl Schmitt, have placed the problem of space at the center of the political. Speaking of a "spatial turn" in political theory, Galli's political argument brought out the stakes of the conceptual categories of space and time. For Galli, the political philosophy of time was tied to the philosophy of history, to the inquiry into the subject and goal of the historical process, represented in the Hegelian problematic by political revolution. After the "spatial turn," we are required to rethink the history of political philosophy—to understand the political space constituted by modernity and how it has been transformed by globalization. This implies that political possibilities today lie in the re-imagination of political space—which means leaving temporality, the philosophy of revolution, behind. This dramatic encounter, this tension between a critical liberalism and the coded reference to Marxism played out in the historical constitution of global political space in modernity, turned out to be a defining thread of the Summer School. Indeed, Galli remarked in a discussion of Carl Schmitt, about whom he has written a book of over 900 pages, that while liberalism's politics remain correct, its theory has been slow to catch up—the task now is to incorporate the insights of the critique of liberalism, to forge a liberal *theory* adequate to liberal politics.

We proceeded the next day with the morning course of Sandro Mezzadra, whose recent book *Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor*, written with Brett Neilson, has presented a very different methodology for the analysis of globalization. In his course, "Global Borders," Mezzadra suggested, in contrast to Galli, the possibility of "bringing time back in"—which meant bringing revolution back in. This was not, however, the Hegelian conception of revolution within a historical teleology; it implied instead a theory of the differentiated and articulated temporalities historically specific to capitalism. But in keeping with the workerist tradition within which

Mezzadra situates himself, these temporalities have to be understood from the viewpoint of capital's antagonist. This means labour-time at the point of production, to be sure, but also the time of the detention camp, the time of the practices of "benching" that hold labour in reserve, which frame the experience of the migrant labourer. There has been a temptation within Italian "post-workerism" to revert to a philosophy of history—to understand capitalist development in progressive terms, even if this progress is viewed from the perspective of the increasingly socialized forms of labour, manifested today in the hegemonic figures of "immaterial labour." Mezzadra's work has been instrumental in subjecting this perspective to the challenges of postcolonial theory and research into the supply chain, which require us to rethink the relation between space and time in capitalist development. This course guided us toward the examination of flows of labour and goods across and through a world of borders, *constituted* by borders, rather than the erasure of borders by a sovereignty beyond nation-states.

Raffaele Laudani's seminar "Nova Totius Terrarum Orbis" brought these questions back to the constitution of modern political space with a focus on the relation between land and sea in the work of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Thomas Paine. Colonialism, the Atlantic slave trade, and the peculiar role of piracy were fundamental to understanding the political role of oceanic space. Here Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker's work on the Atlantic proletariat, whose insurgencies challenged the emergence of capitalism, shed light on the role of the ocean in modern political philosophy. At first, the Atlantic represented a space of disorder, which had to be countered with the stability of sovereignty on land. But responding to Linebaugh and Rediker's suggestion that political philosophy discovered the "rights of man" when the Atlantic proletariat put narrowly conceived national conceptions of right into question, Laudani suggested that the shift from Hobbes to Locke represented a radicalization of the theory of control. Colonial America appears in Locke's texts as the space in which natural right is derived, projecting property into the state of nature rather than understanding nature as a state of war that a socially constructed sovereignty must arise to control. What seems like a shift towards a gentler liberalism is in fact retroactive introduction of the logic of stabilization into the New World itself—the pacification of the Atlantic.

Galli, Mezzadra, and Laudani formed a kind of introduction to the Italian field, a hybrid one which presented innovative analyses of English

texts. Claudia Milian's course "The Global South," of which I was able to attend only one session, and Rey Chow's lecture "Skin Tones: About Language, Postcoloniality, and Racialization," brought in the approaches representative of the American academy—again hybrid in its own way— drawing on work addressing Latin American, African, and Asian contexts, and incorporating the European theorists usually brought together in the uneasy united front of "poststructuralism." In the course and the discussion following the lecture, interesting questions of pedagogical and theoretical translation arose, as the European and international students encountered debates characteristic of the U.S. academy which are not widespread abroad—namely, the often contentious debates between Marxism and the various "posts" (postructuralism, postcolonialism, etc.), which are remarkably difficult to translate into non-Anglophone discussions.

This work of translation continued the following week in Harry Harootunian's course "Marx Beyond Europe: The Expansion of Capitalism and the Formation of World History." Harootunian used three classical texts of the Marxist tradition—Karl Marx's manuscript "Results of the Immediate Process of Production," Rosa Luxemburg's *The Accumulation of Capital*, and Antonio Gramsci's "The Southern Question"—to argue against the perception of Marxism as a Eurocentric, progressivist theory of history. Instead, these texts made it clear that the Marxist tradition was preoccupied with the problem of the relation of the West to the colonized world and sought to formulate theories of development that broke with progressivist schemas. Harootunian suggested that this potential in Marxist theory had been obscured by the theorists of Western Marxism, who erased the non-Western world and imagined that the process of capitalist development had been fully achieved. While there is no space here to review the complex exegetical questions this analysis raises, we should take a moment to mention the important and underappreciated texts from Asia that Harootunian also introduced: from Japan, Uno Kozo's "The Agrarian Question" and "What is the Debate on Japanese Capitalism?" and from China, Wang Yanan's *Principles of the Chinese Economy*. These fascinating texts brought out the questions of primitive accumulation and uneven development with direct reference to their respective national experiences of integration into the world market. The most promising texts were those of Uno, whose analysis of Marx's critique of political economy was the most

sophisticated of all the interpretations presented, and whose account of Japanese capitalist development merits further translation and interpretation in English.

The discussion in Harootunian's course of Dipesh Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe* provides a bridge to the course of Paolo Cappuzzo, in which it also took on decisive importance. Chakrabarty's influential critique of Marx had the potential to hit upon the questions which Harootunian had demonstrated Marxism had already raised. However, it frequently ran aground because of its ambiguity regarding categories like abstract and living labour, which were defined eclectically and hastily. The core problem, which there is no space to elaborate here, was of adequately identifying the breaks in Marx's conceptual development, which make it necessary to exercise caution when taking categories from the *Grundrisse* and placing them alongside those of *Capital*.

Cappuzzo's course, "Time and Space in World History," situated the broader work of Subaltern Studies within an overview of the concept of time in Western historiography. Moving through Hegel, Marx, Weber, Koselleck, and Said, Cappuzzo presented the linear and dialectical notions of progressive time that constituted the Eurocentric cartographies of history. Here the break between Marx's early and late writings took on a considerable importance. Working within Hegel's paradigm, Marx's writings on India represented a powerful, dialectical, and Eurocentric conception of time. I suggested that Marx's later writings on Ireland and Russia represented an important rupture with this earlier conception, and Cappuzzo immediately agreed. We had less time to reexamine the Leninist conception of time, which seemed to be resolved into the linear conception, but I would argue it also contains the possibility, most clearly argued by Althusser, of a kind of differentiated temporality revolving around the theory of the conjuncture.

Subaltern Studies represents a crucial critique of the progressivist models of historiography, as Cappuzzo demonstrated through his analysis of the work of Ranajit Guha and Chakrabarty's analysis of labour in the jute mills. However, despite Chakrabarty's emphasis on histories of difference, it was not always clear that his more methodological statements on the character of postcolonial critique paid adequate attention to the unstable blurring of categories in the reality of historical fact, which make divisions

into a "History 1" and "History 2" problematic. Chakrabarty's important critique of "historicism," moreover, ran into genealogical difficulties. The term, originally properly applied to the relativistic German school of historiography, is applied in the peculiar usages of Croce and Gramsci to an entirely opposite Hegelian, teleological, and universalist model of time. By the time Althusser's critique of this Hegelian "historicism" came to be widely read it was somewhat indiscriminately mapped onto Benjamin's elliptical critique of the German variant, which is articulated *alongside* a critique of Second International teleology. In Chakrabarty's usage, "historicism" is a highly indeterminate concept; it is not clear whether it is relativism or universalism being criticized, how these two different notions of time are in fact related to one another, whether they share a common problematic, or what alternative is on offer.

The closing lecture of Fredric Jameson brought our intellectual work into the global totality, which was at that time structured by the World Cup. His talk, "Globalization and Narrative," presented the international circuits of soccer as an allegory for globalization, tracing lines from the movement of players across borders to the figure of the expatriate writer of modernism. I had earlier discussed with Jameson, at the hotel breakfast, the *Cinema Ritrovato* festival that was also taking place at the time, and at which I had had the opportunity to see some surprising and remarkable silent films while seated in the Piazza Maggiore. Our discussion moved towards science fiction, and I presented my theory of the differing conceptions of time in *Star Trek: The Original Series* and *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, in which the transition towards a liberal adherence to the Prime Directive disguised the turn away from the differentiated temporality of the conjuncture towards a stagist teleology. I am much better at *Star Trek* than I am at soccer, so I leave the discussion there.

I have not spent nearly enough time explicitly addressing the important and substantive contributions of the other graduate students who were there; suffice it to say that their interventions were altogether fundamental in shaping the course of the discussions as I have described them. As this all-too-brief survey of the many discussions at the summer school suggests, both the *range* of topics discussed and the *rigour* with which they were presented were remarkable. The challenge of the School on Global Studies and Critical Theory will be to continue to balance between the two—a

challenge faced by any interdisciplinary program, especially one that works at this level of international collaboration. On the one hand, gathering together such a wide range of disciplinary and thematic directions allows the collective inquiry to approach unexpected and essential questions, and it also allows for the inclusion of many extraordinary participants. On the other hand, it is not always clear how to proceed from this array of themes and approaches towards the more precise and delimited analysis which has now become possible and necessary. It may be that this tension is irresolvable, and the condition of critical inquiry. I would strongly encourage those who are interested in the future of theory to keep a close eye on the Duke-Bologna School on Global Studies and Critical Theory, in order to observe how its structure and methodology evolve to continue the rich and far-reaching collective inquiry it has established.

CRITICAL THEORY BEYOND NEGATIVITY

The Ethics, Politics and Aesthetics of Affirmation: a Course by Rosi Braidotti

AGGELIKI SIFAKI

Were a possible future attendant to ask me if the one-week intensive course, entitled *Critical Theory Beyond Negativity: The Ethics, Politics and Aesthetics of Affirmation* and directed by Rosi Braidotti, is a critical theory- or philosophy-oriented course, I would have to answer that it has little to do with either of the above. Instead, I would claim that it is mainly a course about dance. It is above all else a dance course: its vitality looks like a rock and roll performance; its intellectual subtlety and fertility of invention brings to mind the delicacy and elegance of a waltz; whereas its precision, distinctness, and passion, especially when the rhizomatic development of concepts and cartographic readings of our era are foregrounded, resembles a tango. Hence, to a greater or lesser extent, it is up to the participant to leave themselves free to experience the rhythm and intensity performed by the tutors.

This summer was the second time that I attended this critical theory course offered at Utrecht University. Situating myself in the social sciences—more specifically, the educational sciences, with a special focus on gender studies—at the beginning I caught myself wondering if I would manage to meet the academic requirements of the course. Having been taught that the traditional division between theory (i.e., humanities) and practice (i.e., social sciences) is still effective, I expected that the works of the major figures of Continental philosophy tradition, such as those of Gilles Deleuze, Luce Irigaray, Henri Bergson, and Rosi Braidotti herself, would be difficult to grasp. Fortunately, my expectations proved to be wrong.

If the aforementioned course could be easily slotted into any of the academic disciplines, it would fail to achieve one of its fundamental commitments: *interdisciplinarity*. As it is, its interdisciplinary character does not emanate from or correspond to the need of our time to cross disciplin-

ary boundaries in an instrumental way, meaning interdisciplinarity for the sake of interdisciplinarity. Rather, it comes from the course leader's genuine concern:

> in postmodernity, what is needed are new transversal or intersectional alliances between postcolonialism, poststructuralism, and postgender theories. This would correspond to new interdisciplinary dialogues between philosophy and fields such as legal studies; critical studies, and film theory, social and political thought, and economics and linguistics".[1]

Indeed, Braidotti's course does break down the false divide between academic disciplines, on the one hand, and theory and practice, on the other, while keeping at the same time a lively and continuing dialogue going between them. Breaking out of methodological "territorialities," which she herself calls "methodological nationalism," is the condition *sine qua non* for overcoming negativity and bringing affirmation to the fore as the political urgency of our era.

It is at this point that a crucial question arises: in the context of the forenamed course, what exactly do we mean by the term "negativity," and why is it important for us to move beyond it? In the framework of Hegelian dialectics, difference, in the sense of "being different from," has come to mean pejoration, meaning to be "worth less than," and desire is defined as lack. The challenge we face is both how to find alternative representations for the kind of subjects we are in the process of becoming that avoid either/or dualisms, and how to articulate and activate these representations in theoretical terms. Here is the moment of the course where the politics of location, creativity, intensity, and passion are introduced, and where they play a major role in the process of building oppositional consciousness, meaning criticism and *creativity* as a way of resistance to the challenges of our era. In other words, or to put it in Braidottian terms, here is the point where the figuration of the nomadic subject emerges in order to redefine desire not as the site of lack and otherness, but instead as the meeting point of interconnectedness and affirmation.

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1 Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 106.

The course consists of keynote lectures in the mornings and thematic tutorials during four afternoons. Arranged thematically, the sessions of the course explore the different aspects of critical theory debates about contemporary subjectivity: the function of the negative and the need for more affirmative praxis. During each lecture the reading material is analyzed and discussed in depth, while the students actively participate by addressing the issues that emerge. The crucial concepts introduced here are those of "practical philosophy," "cartography," and "experience." Starting from the assumption that we are in the midst of a "posthuman turn"[2]—meaning that intense technological mediation and global networks have blurred the traditional distinction between the human and the non-human—the assumption that philosophy is constituted by a set of obscure notions and legitimizing practices that exclude everyday experience breaks down. Braidotti, acting above all as a charismatic teacher, manages to illustrate the different approaches historically developed by different philosophical streams of thought. She connects these streams to embedded and embodied experience, demonstrating their effect on the different social positions of the subject, and in so doing she offers an escape from the canonized and institutionalized version of classical philosophy.

Braidotti, a philosopher, feminist theorist, and distinguished university professor at Utrecht University, co-taught the course together with Dr. Iris van der Tuin and Maria Hlavajova. Van der Tuin is Associate Professor of gender studies and the philosophy of science in the graduate Gender Programme of Utrecht University, with a special interest in epistemology and New Materialism. Having recently initiated the COST action *New Materialism: Networking European Scholarship on "How Matter Comes to Matter,"* her lecture and tutorials addressed concepts such as matter, materiality, materialism, diffractive reading, and cartography. In the framework of New Materialism, many qualitative shifts have taken place and "the dualist gesture of prioritizing mind over matter, soul over body, and culture over nature that can be found in modernist as well as post-modernist cultural theories" have been challenged.[3] Thus, "how do we engage in epistemology differently?" asks van der Tuin. Understanding matter as a major factor in feminist theory, she explained how we can effectively get involved in the

2 Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013).
3 Rick Dolphijn and Iris Van der Tuin, *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies* (Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press, 2012), 119.

procedure of breaking down dualistic oppositions. She actively participates in the dialogue between second- and third-wave feminism and explores the possibility of finding "examples of a positive generational feminism around us," moving beyond the influence of the politics of negativity.

Last, Maria Hlavajova is the founding artistic director of BAK, Centre for Contemporary Art in Utrecht, and she has initiated and developed numerous exhibitions and projects through an international collaborative effort involving a dense network of researchers and art institutions. In the context of contemporary neoliberalism, Hlavajova reflected upon the essential role of art and asked the following question: "How can we—with and through art—trace from here the prospective itineraries pointing towards what we once used to call the 'future'?" Through the screening of the film *Auslaender raus, bitte liebt Oesterreich* ("Foreigners out, please love Austria"), released in 2000, and the discussion that followed, Hlavajova stressed the subversive and provocative role that art can play.

One guest lecture was also given by Nicole Dewandre, an Advisor for Societal Issues to the Director General of the Directorate General for Communications, Networks, Content and Technologies (DG CONNECT) at the European Commission. Her talk engaged with Hannah Arendt's affirmative philosophy and its implications for contemporary society and politics.

If we take seriously Vincent Descombes' statement that "the text we fall in love with is the one in which we never cease to learn what we already knew"[4] then without a doubt the course Critical Theory beyond Negativity is one worth attending. The participants who are already of an advanced level, and who have a critical and curious intellectual disposition, will have the opportunity to expose their beliefs to "a healthy dose of a hermeneutics of suspicion,"[5] learning at the same time how to make more rigorous distinctions between different categories of thought and the theoretical tools that they engage. Becoming aware of the political implications of one's involvement in knowledge production leads to greater accountability. Participating in the course amounts to an active endeavour to learn to think differently, to taking the risk of throwing oneself into the water: "thousands

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4 Vincent Descombes, *Modern French Philosophy*, trans. L. Scott-Fox & J. M. Harding (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 14.
5 Braidotti, *Nomadic Subject*, 159.

and thousands of variations on the theme of walking will never yield a rule for swimming: come, enter the water, and when you know how to swim, you will understand how the mechanism of swimming is connected with that of walking".[6]

6 Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (New York: Dover, 1998), 193.

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CAROLYN THOMAS first encountered Heidegger when she was a student in the Graduate Institute of St. John's College. Heidegger's work on thinking in the modern age especially resonated with the opening into thinking she experienced as a student and teacher. Now a Ph.D. candidate in philosophy at University of New Mexico, Ms. Thomas is completing a dissertation on Heidegger, thinking, and education.

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THOMAS WORMALD is a PhD candidate at the Center for the Study of Theory and Criticism who wrote his Master's thesis on the work of Catherine Malabou. When not spending time with his partner Chelsey, or their Brittany Spaniel, Lucky, he spends his time reading and thinking about contemporary variants of materialism—and awaits Malabou's next book-length publication.