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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by David Paul Hoover entitled "Theaesthetic Experience: A Theory of Embodied Mind, Affective Life, and the Perception of God." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Philosophy.

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THEAESTHETIC EXPERIENCE:

A THEORY OF EMBODIED MIND, AFFECTIVE LIFE

AND THE PERCEPTION OF GOD

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy

Degree

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David Paul Hoover

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For

LAUREL,

RYAN,

&

ALEX

and
in memory of

Donald M. MacKay

ABSTRACT

The thesis which follows is an exploration of the general conditions for acquaintance with God (as opposed to knowledge about God). In terms of strategy, however, the work is neither apologetic nor theological. Objectivity conditions for the perception of God are taken up within the context of problems posed by contemporary philosophy of mind.

The thesis as a whole is an attempt to follow out the epistemological implications of an ontological premise which is developed in chapter one and further elaborated in chapter seven--that human existence is essentially religious existence and that God is the foundational social complement of human flourishing. If this is so, the concept of religious reality pertains to a relational structure between humans and God. The religious character of human existence, therefore, is best regarded as a determinant and condition of epistemic experience rather than a phenomenological object of such experience.

Central to the thesis is that spiritual epistemic competence is a natural competence. Human persons are spiritual in virtue of their character as embodied beings. As such they are communicant members of a social

informational environment. This is developed by taking up Joseph Margolis's concept of embodiment and offering resistance to Daniel Dennett's fragmentation of agency and dissolution of subjectivity.

Steven Katz's constuctivist challenge to religious cognitivism is shown to be a disguised verificationist challenge; constructivism construed methodologically, however, is not inimical to religious cognitivism. What is fundamentally mistaken about Katz's constructivism is its exclusive preoccupation with ideational and indoctrinational pre-conditioning. The present thesis shifts the crucial pre-conditioning from ideology to affective maturation. Accordingly, the fundamental cognitive modality is that required to discern personal presence--a "knowing-whom" rather than a "knowing-that." The basic epistemological issue for religious cognitivism is thus shown to reside with conditions of gestaltic objectivity rather than discursive provability.

PREFACE

There is an easily missed epistemological character of love. Interpersonal love seems conceptually to require, in some sense, a knowledge by acquaintance. In the case of loving family and friends there will hardly be a felt epistemological problem in this regard. The others whom we love are readily apparent; in the case of God loving us and of our loving God, however, the epistemological problem of certifiable acquaintance may seem even acute. In a general way, the thesis to follow is an exploration of the conditions of such acquaintance.

Although the Apostle Paul does not have in mind epistemological closure about God in his well-known reflection on Christian love (I Cor. 13), he speaks of a trinity of virtues (faith, hope, and love) which in effect bind knowledge by description to knowledge by acquaintance. Faith and hope are sustaining virtues--enabling, but incomplete. They are incomplete for religious life, of course, but they are also epistemologically incomplete. Religious faith is an amalgam of belief and commitment for the long haul--a resolve to be true even in the face of appearances that seem contrary to faith. Religious hope is rooted in the ineluctable human need to believe that the

whole of life makes sense; it is the expectation that a scenario of an eternity in which all will be made right will include oneself. However, living in a specific hope, or walking by a specific faith, is at best a dependence on descriptive knowledge and so one's believing, qualified only by faith and hope, risks the ultimate status of credulity.

In contrast to faith and hope, personal love is curiously sighted. The question of whether God loves me is, inter alia, the question of whether God pays a special kind of attention to me; the question of whether I love God likewise involves the question of whether I pay a special kind of attention to him. God's omniscience does not imply his love, for love is not just a knowing-about; it is a kind of communication. It is not just on the divine side that an immediacy of perception is involved; on the human side, being loved by God is, at times at least, surely a feeling valued by a discerned other. Likewise, loving God must surely involve occasions of fellowship with a discerned other. If faith and hope in God are to escape mere credulity, it seems to me that there must be the prospect of perceptual immediacy in relating to God. Paul himself seems to make this claim in another passage (Rom. 5:5) when he assures the suffering faithful that their immediate experience of communicated love from God shows that their hope will not prove delusory. The "ordinary faithful," as I

will call them in the pages to come, are sustained in their "religious" walk by all three of the virtues indicated by Paul--especially by the curious sight which is inherent in the interpersonal love of God.

Regarding "ordinary faith," a useful distinction is sometimes drawn between a crisis of religious belief and a crisis of religious faith. Whereas a crisis of religious belief is likely to portend the imminent collapse of a once cherished belief system, a crisis of religious faith is quite different. The latter seems to be a valley through which nearly all "true believers" travel sooner or later, whether one is a King David, an Elijah, or a lowly parishioner.

Crises of belief tend to mark the departure from faith, whereas crises of faith are actually periods of faith, but faith in the absence of a sense of God's accompaniment or concern. A crisis of faith is almost always temporary, but it is always a deep existential disturbance in the midst of which the believer cannot honestly claim to experience the realities attested to by his or her beliefs. Here too there is a notable difference between the failure of belief, on the one hand, and faith in the darkness of its valley, on the other. Faith experiences the absence of the divine <u>as</u> personal absence, not as the non-existence of the divine. The experience of divine

absence, to anticipate a term I will define momentarily, is a kind of theaesthetic experience; it is an "atheaesthetic experience," so to speak, whose existential poignance is likewise personal and ultimately instructive.

I conceive the present thesis as theoretically complementary to an understanding of ordinary faith, and I shall have very little to say about the existential character of flashy, spectacular, or miracle-attended faith. Neither is my thesis about the coherence of certain beliefs about God or the prospect of their logical defensibility. The thesis is an attempt to construct a model of the experience of God, and by implication, a model too of the character of his experience of us.

Nearly all my concerns come to a focus in the psalmist's exclamation that "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handiwork." (Ps. 19:1) In a more prosaic fashion, Paul tells his Roman readers that the invisible attributes of God are manifested by the visible creation. (Rom. 1:19-20) But how? Is there special mental or spiritual preparation that is necessary--the mastery of esoteric disciplines or techniques, perhaps? Is ideological grooming important? Do only "saints" get the message? Does it help to be an avid member of the Sierra Club or the National Geographic Society? Regarding the experience of God itself, are those mystics correct who

insist that such experience involves both a preparatory mental state of deconstructed consciousness and a transcendence of embodied life? Do mystics come by their special spiritual virtuosity by means of meditational regimens available to all, or are their feats of transcendence to be construed as the exercise of an extraordinary gift that is by no means universally distributed among human beings? An ontological premise is set forth in chapter one which decisively points us away from a nativistically construed inegalitarian spirituality.

For convenience I have coined the mongrel term, "theaesthetic," which I will be deploying only as an adjective. It comes from joining the two Greek words: theos, meaning God; and aisthesis, meaning perception. I will develop the idea of theaesthetic awareness as a uniquely affective experience of either God's presence, or, short of that, as the apprehension of God's personal qualities. "Theaesthetic awareness," which will be mentioned from chapter two following, is literally redundant, but there is little help for that. It is pronounced any way you like, although I think of it as "thay-aesthetic." Even if my term should prove to have little charm, it at least has the virtue of C. S. Peirce's coinage "pragmaticism" which was, as Peirce prophesied, "sufficiently ugly to be safe from kidnappers."

The general approach I have adopted springs from the conviction that human cognitive competence grounds epistemic objectivity. Legitimate verificationist concerns can arise only in tandem with the exercise of native cognitive ability. Therefore, philosophical issues that concern verification, logical proving, and otherwise publicly exhibiting knowledge claims cannot be considered apart from the quite specific nature and acuity of the kind of cognitive talent in use. For this reason, the discussions to follow bear a far greater affinity with contemporary philosophy of mind than with classical or analytic epistemology. In the case that will come to occupy us a good deal, to allege an instance of theaesthetic awareness is to allege an instance of gestaltic objectivity as well. Gestaltic objectivity, however, while surely a perceptual commonplace, does not fare well with traditional verificationist treatment.

The plan of the thesis, chapter by chapter, is as follows. In chapter one I introduce the idea of religious reality in terms of an ontological structure of human relatedness (though not necessarily personal relationship) to God. This is in contrast to a conception of religious reality as constituting a distinctive phenomenology in the way, for example, that aesthetic phenomena (within the domain of art) might be thought to constitute an aesthetic

phenomenology. The idea is that humans are structurally predisposed to occupy a social reality in which God is an essential member. "Religious experience" does not transcend the normal range of human affect and emotion. Transcendent mysticism is declined because it violates this social economy and because the concepts required for its explication are not applicable to the transcendence of personal agency.

Chapter two is primarily concerned with exhibiting embodiment as a primitive relation. I take this up against the foil of functionalist theory in philosophy of mind. I owe most of my understanding of the embodiment relation to Joseph Margolis, but I have also profited from discussions and correspondence with Donald MacKay. The strategic importance of the embodiment relation as a real ontological structure is its value in understanding mental functioning as exhibiting agency, and agency is vital for the concerns of my thesis. I am convinced that functionalism (valuable in its own way) cannot be a theory of agency, for agency transcends any collective of discrete functions. I present the embodiment relation as a way of conceiving the mind-brain connection in a way that saves all the important attributes of personal agency without having to construe the issue in terms of the Cartesian problematic of the interaction of two radically dissimilar stuffs.

Also addressed in chapter two is the question of fundamental dimensional constraints on conceptualization within embodied existence. Intelligibility conceived of as at least the potential to grasp a set of propositions as logically consistent is relativized, it seems to me, to the dimensionally determined availability, say, of auxiliary concepts. There are doubtless philosophical problems that are soluble only within a perspective that is dimensionally richer than that inhabited by embodied human minds.

Chapter three is a discussion of Gestalt qualities and personal saliencies. Personal saliencies are constitutive of the Gestalten of the sense of personal presence and of the sense of personal otherness. On my accounting, it is God "in person" who is experienced; it is not, say, a doctrinally astute apprehension of God "in office." Taking up Jean-Paul Sartre's "The Look" (from Being and Nothingness), I argue that the phenomenology of a two-membered shame episode has a great deal of intersubjective transparency to it. Examining a shaming episode proves to be an exceptionally clear way to exhibit the "outering" of subjective states. In chapter six shame is considered once more as an affective structure which serves along with pride to regulate personal character formation. By extension, shame and pride might also be conceived as analogously regulative with regard to theaesthetic experience.

Chapter four is a discussion of epistemology as it concerns the thesis. I try to exhibit verification as essentially relative to causal dynamics affecting data and the nature of the cognitive ability involved. I conclude that the truth, or objectivity, condition of traditional epistemology is essential vis-à-vis Gill's Wittgensteinian approach, and that Plantinga's moral permission approach to the integrity of religious truth claims is not epistemologically responsive.

The latter half of chapter four is an examination of Steven Katz's constructivism. Here I see a clash between Katz's verificationist leanings and his constructivist assumptions. Katz's agnosticism with regard to religious and mystical experience follows from the former, not the latter. Mediational structures and complex mediational processes do not logically imply a principled agnosticism about the veracity of the experiences which Katz discusses. So far as theaesthetic awareness is concerned, a methodological constructivism is positively invited.

In chapter five I discuss the necessity of intentional life in order to construe human cultural life of any kind. Daniel Dennett's "intentional stance" is criticized as at best equivocal between a meta-order heuristic stance adopted in order to understand and predict a system's behavior, and simply a curious way of indicating

the underlying character of the mental life without which rational stances to any problem simply cannot arise. I argue for the reality of intentional life, and provide a way to conceive its intersubjective epistemic accessibility.

The chapter concludes with a sketch of a neuropsychological model of gestaltic objectivity. The key idea is that the brain may fix socially and affectively nuanced gestaltic perception independently of linguistic processing. Linguistically rendering such Gestalten, therefore, while spoken honestly and carefully, may nevertheless range widely in degrees of precision and apt descriptive metaphor. The point is, the objectivity of the perception is established, if it is, independently of discursive characterization. Aesthetic appreciation and the cognition of personal saliencies are cases in point. Problems arise when overscrupulous verificationist attention is given what is really secondary to the sort of cognition taking place. Particular claims for theaesthetic experience, therefore, may not be epistemologically defeated in terms of fuzzy reporting alone.

Chapter six is a development of the idea of affective life. Since theaesthetic awareness is an inherently affective response to God, this is a fairly critical step in the argument. In contrast to Katz's primarily indoctrinational readiness to have religious experience, I

have stressed basic human affective readiness. The pertinent "constructivist" considerations, therefore, concern general affective development--that is, one's qualifying as a person, not as a religious adept. Much of the chapter discusses, in one way or another, the inherent rationality of affective states and dispositions. Language is vital to this development, but not in its character as any given determinate belief system. I also take up Dennett's objection to inner phenomenology (qualia), and argue the necessity of the latter for human projects requiring reflective awareness.

Chapter seven is an attempt to establish the cosmic social context alluded to in chapter one. God as an affective being is contrasted to the view of Saint Anselm, and I spend some time with a compatibilist construal of the sovereignty of God and the affective vulnerability of God to the humans he is said to love. Finally, theaesthetic awareness is likened to the (certainly) rare experience of mere human social otherness--a social awareness an sich, so to speak. In cases where one is isolated from quotidian social life--for example, on an extended wilderness trek--merely encountering traces of previous human presence (coming across an abandoned campsite, e.g.) is enough to trigger a distinctive feeling of social otherness that is not at all the same as cognitively noting what the data are

and what they might imply. That is suggestive for the sort of occasion which might favor theaesthetic awareness. I conceive of such an occasion as an event in terms of sudden contrast--the din of daily routine quieting into background, against which divine personal saliencies are set off in relief.

My preoccupation in the discussions to follow is with the nature of mind--embodied mind within a divine-human social context. The proliferation of empirically based studies of the mind-brain (as P. S. Churchland calls it) in the past twenty-five years presents an unparalleled opportunity and challenge for the philosophy of religion. The character of gestaltic perception and its cerebral "fixation" strike me as the most important empirical concerns for defining the epistemological issues that affect my thesis.

More than I can say, I am indebted to Donald MacKay for modeling a rare combination of faith and scrupulous intellectual honesty in the face of a bewildering complexity in the study of the human mind. The pursuit of this project owes a great deal to his memory, though my acquaintance with him was all too brief. Many thanks too, to Rem Edwards for his invaluable assistance in reading the manuscript and for pointing me to the importance of discussing whether theaesthetic perception is concept-laden in the theological sense.

Above all, the present work should be regarded as a continuing of the author's own quest for a richer understanding of the life of faith and those life episodes when he, like Job, cannot discern God's presence behind or before, right or left.

David P. Hoover

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CHAPTER ONE

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE, TRANSCENDENCE, AND MYSTICISM

In the literature of the philosophy of religion a chronic vagueness seems to infect such concepts as "religious experience," "transcendence," and "mysticism," Ninian Smart reflects that

> when writers speak of religious experience they [seem to] use it in a special sense, meaning something like a vision or an intuition. Mystical unions, prophetic visions, psychic ascents to heaven, ecstasies, auditions, intoxications--it is such things that typically get bracketed as religious experience.[1]

The individual experiences collected in Smart's comment are fairly exotic, and this is a characteristic of so-called religious experience that I wish to downplay and seriously qualify in the discussions to follow. Resolving vagueness will not be the presenting problem. Granting for the moment that there might be human experience which is transcendent or mystical, I do not believe it could be religious experience in the sense that is often intended. But if these dramatic personal events are not thus religious, then it would certainly seem, a fortiori, that neither are the far less dramatic events of individual prayer, worship, meditation, and the like.

The reason, very briefly stated, is this: religious experience, in the sense in which I wish to discount it,

requires that there be a distinctive religious phenomenology. There is no such distinctive phenomenology; therefore there is no such experience. This puts the matter rather baldly and of course I owe some argumentation--but especially some careful elaboration and clarification. One way to argue my position would be to perform a statistically significant induction of alleged cases of religious experience, then provide plausible demarcation criteria (to tell, e.g., whether a given experience is distinctively aesthetic, distinctively religious, or both at once), and then attempt empirically to isolate uniquely religious experience. Failing to uncover any, and depending on the extent of the induction, it could then be claimed that it is unlikely, highly unlikely, or extremely improbable that there is any such thing as religious experience (in the phenomenological sense, which will be detailed later).

The above project strikes me as nearly hopeless at the outset. It is too open-ended; the quest, I think, would be desultory. Far more importantly, such a project seems to me insufficiently critical from the very beginning. It begins on the assumption that, however vague the concept of religious experience might be, we at least know roughly what it is and that it therefore makes sense to check it out for empirical fit. I shall argue that in the sense that gives the concept "religious experiences" most of its interest in the philosophical literature, it makes no sense to check it

out for empirical fit. This introduces an alternative strategy which is conceptual in nature and which promises a good deal more economy. The strategy I have in mind is the exhibiting of a concept of religion which is far simpler than the concept it replaces and which accommodates putatively religious phenomena in a functional way rather than in a substantive or metaphysical way.

Before meeting each of the concepts in the chapter title head-on, I will make some general remarks about the strategic importance of the discussion in this chapter for the thesis as a whole. Despite the sound of my comments about religious experience, my objective is to develop a model of religious reality which allows the universality of perceiving God. My contention is that the human being is endowed with the cognitive ability to experience the presence of God. The distribution of this ability is entirely democratic; it is not conceivable that a good and just God would scatter such ability only selectively and unevenly--maybe randomly. On the thesis here presented, it is essential that there be a democratization of the possibility of God-perception, <u>so far as cognitive competence is concerned</u>.

One consequence this has is that there are no epistemic saints--no religious elite with special cognitive prowess in matters spiritual. With such obvious exceptions as the brain damaged, the severely retarded, and the

mentally ill, it is reasonable to assume that the human being comes equipped with a standard noetic endowment as concerns the prospects of perceiving God. There are, of course, considerable differences among individuals with regard to the exercise of that endowment. On that issue my project is simply silent.

Religious Experience

The concept of religious experience is logically prior to the concepts of religious transcendence and religious mysticism, so we take it up first. Our overarching concern under this head is whether it takes a religious experience to perceive God. Putting the matter as a question, Is the perception of God a religious experience? The question sounds odd, even silly; but it is not.

There are, it seems to me, two senses of the word "experience" that should be distinguished for our purposes. For lack of better labels, let the first be called constitutional experience and the second be called culturally emergent experience. This is a pretty rough partition of experience. While it seems clear that the two senses are distinct, it is not clear to me that they jointly exhaust all cases in the domain of human experience; but this will not matter. What does matter is that religious experience be exhibited as culturally emergent but not constitutional. The definitions are as follows.

An experience is constitutional if and only if it has a distinctive (re-identifiable) core phenomenology which is endemic to human sentience. Here it is important to note that human sentience is also sapient; the cognitive element of sentient discernment and discrimination varies widely depending on the type of experience. The experience of localized bodily pain, for example, is sheer feeling, whereas the sentience required aesthetically to appreciate the Mona Lisa is highly cognitive. Examples of constitutional experience which are phenomenologically distinct include a wide range of emotions as well as of physical feelings. More clarity is needed but should be provided by way of contrast with experience that is culturally emergent.

An experience is culturally emergent if and only if (1) its environmental stimuli are culturally emergent, and (2) its sentient character (its "feel") is uniquely determined by agent interaction within a particular, contingent cultural environment. Very broadly, "culture" and "cultural" are defined in terms of intentional modification of the environment--modification that becomes regularized by, and embodied in, a society's institutions, traditions, practices, customs, and the like. Thus, a culturally emergent experience is not innate (as constitutional experience is), and its phenomenology is constantly subject to change as a culture evolves.

There is one more definitional matter. The point I want to press possibly could be made more forcefully if I were to speak of "religious feeling" rather than "religious experience," but unless "feeling" were understood in a roughly Whiteheadian way to include "intellectual feeling," the term "feeling" would be too narrow. What is needed is a term whose range of application is as wide as that of "sentient experience" in order to accommodate the latter's degrees of cognitivity.

Here are some examples of the kinds of experience distinguished above. Clear cases of constitutional experience include the physical feelings involved in pain and sex; the emotional experiences of fear, anger, love, joy, resentment, and nostalgia; and aesthetic experience.[2] Instances of culturally emergent experience do not have individuating names, for the most part, and are "built" from complexes of constitutional experience: national pride felt at a patriotic rally, the Muslim experience vis-à-vis the Dutch Reformed experience, and the experience of opening-day football at a major university. I would add religious experience of whatever determinate form to the latter list. I have three reasons for this. (1) The empirical evidence for a constitutional religious experience is meager in the extreme; (2) if there is constitutional religious experience, it is remarkably inegalitarian so far as the distribution of the competence requisite for its occurrence

is concerned; and (3) the very idea that there is constitutional religious experience trades, I believe, on a fundamentally mistaken conception of religion.

As we proceed, I will have very little more to say about (1) so far as testing phenomenological evidence is concerned. With regard to (2), I will add only that this is a very powerful prima facie reason to reject the existence of constitutional religious experience. For if such experience is a necessary condition for perceiving and coming to know and love God, then there are few humans indeed with the capacity for doing so. If so, the God of Judeo-Christian theism cannot be in view. It would be better to re-examine the character of religious reality--the meaning of the concept "religion."

William James, for a reason similar to (1) above, also rejects what amounts to what I am calling constitutional religious experience:

> In the psychologies and in the philosophies of religion, we find the authors attempting to specify just what ["religious sentiment"] is. One man allies it to the feeling of dependence; one makes it a derivative from fear; others connect it with the sexual life; others still identify it with the feeling of the infinite; and so on. Such different ways of conceiving it ought of themselves to arouse doubt as to whether it possibly can be one specific thing; and the moment we are willing to treat the term "religious sentiment" as a collective name for the many sentiments which religious objects may arouse in alternation, we see that it probably contains nothing whatever of a psychologically specific nature. . . . As concrete states of mind, made up of a feeling <u>plus</u> a specific sort of object, religious emotions of course are psychic entities distinguishable from other concrete emotions; but there

> is no ground for assuming a simple abstract "religious emotion" to exist as a distinct elementary mental affection by itself, present in every religious experience without exception.[3]

James then goes on to stipulate the following definition of religion--a definition he acknowledges to be arbitrary:

> Religion . . . shall mean for us the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine (James's italics).[4]

Compare this definition with one by J. Oliver Buswell, Jr. He defines religion as

> any complex of practices, beliefs, and attitudes in which men show that they feel themselves to be bound to any object or ideal which they regard as of supreme worth.[5]

It seems to me that both these definitions accommodate what is culturally emergent about religion but only point to a structure that grounds such phenomena. Both point, that is, to a foundational relatedness of some sort as the essence of religion, rather than to a certain kind of subjectivity. While the various forms of the subjectivity of religious practice might appear to be the most salient characteristic of religion, the forms themselves gain their significance only in terms of the relatedness involved. That is the heart of my proposal.

The sort of definition I will provide shortly should receive some brief notice. It will be neither stipulative nor lexical. I do not regard the latter as unimportant, but

in the case of "religion" I do not think usage or standard usage is a particularly reliable guide to philosophical understanding. The definition I shall offer has been called a "reforming definition." Merold Westphal lists these three characteristics:[6] (1) Reforming definitions recognize the basic need for, and legitimate application of, words already in use--that is, that words whose definitions need reforming already exhibit a measure of knowledge within established usage. Thus such words as "evil," "moral," "good," "time," "soul," "science," and "religion" are words that see heavy popular duty and that do succeed in communicating (however obscurely)--particularly when the communicating does not require the making of fine distinctions. Bringing such terms into clearer conceptual focus invariably generates philosophical disputes (e.g., philosophers have sharply differed over the nature of evil even though the parties to the dispute may agree that the word "evil" can be applied appropriately to much the same range of phenomena). Reforming definitions, therefore, try to achieve fundamental understandings of the concepts at issue--to settle disputes about meaning and provide the rationale for a given term's correct range of application.

(2) A reforming definition will generally come at the conclusion of reflection or argument rather than at the start. In this regard, the reader has already been given a number of considerations that affect the plausibility of my proposal.

Finally (3), a reforming definition is always theory-dependent, or to use Westphal's expression, a "definition-cum-theory."[7] Such defining is not a mere determination to use words in a certain way; it is an effort to show or exhibit how a term has a certain meaning in virtue of its place within a larger web of theory. This is to say that the meaning of a concept is vitally connected to its role within a conceptual model. Needless to say, a concept that is importantly shaped by a seriously defective model may lack empirical fit or suffer incoherence or both.

We have perhaps cleared enough brush. Consider now whether Christianity is a religion. In the author's experience as a boy growing up within the tutelage of a fundamentalist church, the pastor, not infrequently, would thunder, "Religion is of the Devil!" These exclamations I received as inspired oracles and their affect on me was that I felt somehow "in the know," but puzzled. It was only years later, after having been gifted the concepts of extensional and intensional definition, that it occurred to me that the pastor of my boyhood was employing an extensional definition of religion. To define by extension, one identifies the class of particular things to which a term belongs. The term "religion" extends to an enormous range of organized forms of worship (Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Catholic, Unitarian, etc.), as well as to a great variety of less organized, less formal, forms of religious

practice. A Druid or voodoo practitioner is no less religious on an extensional reckoning of "religion" than is a Baptist. Thus "religion," extensionally defined, might easily lead to an impression of a potpourri of tangled, confused, or superstitious practice. So it must have seemed to the pastor.

Take a more sophisticated example. Karl Barth, whom no one is likely to accuse of fundamentalism, seems similarly animated as my boyhood pastor:

> The other literature, ancient or modern, of which we have spoken, may also have religious value for those who think they ought to take an interest in religion. But the church does not take the slightest interest in religion; on the contrary she takes an interest only in God Himself and in His voice and therefore in human testimony in which the voice of God Himself is to be heard and so [also] in the testimony of the Bible. Religion must die.[8]

Why, exactly, must religion die? Whatever the specifics of a response from either Barth or my boyhood pastor, they would surely have this in common: both would come at the question as spiritual partisans, firmly ensconced, so to speak, within the exclusivity of their respective faiths.

Even so, it is one thing to say that the Druid persuasion is of the Devil (must die), and quite another to say that religion is of the Devil. The latter proposition is not entailed by the former. Ironically, perhaps, the passion that is behind "Religion is of the Devil!" is a religious passion. Likewise with what prompts Barth's antipathy toward religion. Both of the above, on my

reckoning, give a religious response to religious traditions contrary to their own. Their responses, that is, are religious and not those of a comparative religionist, a sociologist, or a psychologist.

Barth and the pastor are wrong, however, to use the term "religion" to express the antipathy they feel. This is because the character of their own spiritual partisanship requires a term like "religion" to function in a descriptive rather than in an evaluative way. The matter goes well beyond a quibble of semantics; "religion," as I intend this term, is metaphysically necessary in order to find spiritual partisanship intelligible. One cannot be spiritually partisan without being religious. A more quarrelsome claim, perhaps, is that one cannot be religious without being spiritually partisan, but I believe this latter claim is true as well.

What now of my reforming definition of religion? Two considerations will help me state it. I want briefly to look at the etymology of "religion"; then I will pay some final attention to the question of a phenomenology of religion. First the etymology.

Etymologies are sometimes helpful and suggestive for conceptual elucidation, sometimes not. In the case of "religion" our attention is rewarded. The Oxford English Dictionary indicates that "religion" comes from the Latin religare, meaning "to bind back"; re-, and ligare, "to bind,

to bind together." Accordingly, on the thesis here advanced, "religion" signifies a foundational relatedness between the human being and God. I deliberately avoid the term "relationship" for that could throw us off. I intend "relatedness" structurally, which is logically, at any rate, pre-relational. I am not speaking here of either a developing or an established intimacy. The relatedness I have in mind is the ground which makes personal relationship possible. It is also the structure which determines what are the possible lines of human response and interaction. Religious practice, therefore, is culturally creative activity within that structure for the purpose of cultivating conditions that most favor the bonding of the human being with God.

My meaning may become clearer still if we consider religion phenomenologically once more. In the words of Herman Dooyeweerd,

> with respect to its inner essence, religion can never be described "phenomenologically". It is no "psychological phenomenon", it is no emotional feeling-perception; it is not to be characterized, as is done by RUDOLPH OTTO, as experience of the "tremendum". It is the ex-sistent condition in which the ego is bound to its true or pretended firm ground.[9]

Religion, on Dooyeweerd's point of departure, is perhaps best regarded as a designation of the human being's ultimate environment--an environment that is at root personal. Paul's remark to the Athenians at Mars Hill captures the God/humankind societal unit as well: "In [God] we live and move and have our being."[10]

Couple the foregoing consideration now with the central tenet of Judeo-Christian theism that God created humankind for a freely reciprocated love relationship with himself. The following definition of religious reality is strongly suggested: to say that the structure of personal existence is religious is to say that the human being is created with the need to find existential completion in God--or unsatisfyingly, in a God-substitute. Note that there is nothing of an experiential phenomenology involved so far. There could not be. The religious reality I have sought to identify cannot itself be felt since it is a determinant and condition of experience, not one of its phenomenological aspects.

Religious Transcendence

Western Christiandom, with the few exceptions of its mystics, has shown a great reluctance about taking seriously personal religious transcendence. The reasons are a conceptual mix and spread out over the history of the Church. The first, it seems to me, is the biblical literature itself. Although the New Testament is not without cases of ostensible transcendence,[11] these are irrelevant to the cultivation of a "to be sought after" means of spiritual growth. The few cases of "transcendence" that are mentioned are facilitated by God; no human initiative is involved.

In the well-known case of Paul's being "caught up to the third heaven," Paul relates this event with only oblique reference to himself and with obvious embarrassment. The embarrassment is not over any awkwardness at having had such an experience; it is in Paul's finding himself complying with the Corinthian believers' need for a "spiritual resume" by which to reconsider his apostolic authority. Even though Paul could easily match the qualifications of others whom the Corinthians found spiritually impressive, he makes it clear that to have to engage in a "competition" for spiritual leadership invites a style of relating that is completely out of character with Paul's established ministry among them.

To underscore my point, there is nothing in the New Testament literature which even suggests instruction for the cultivation of an exotic religious subjectivity, let alone psychic ascents through barriers which enclose the mundane. The Corinthian Christians were keenly interested in the spiritually spectacular[12] but they were neither taught it by Paul by way of modeling, nor by way of explicit paths or techniques. Spiritual growth in the New Testament, it seems to me, is always measured exclusively in terms of character development patterned on the character of Christ.[13]

The second reason is theological and philosophical; it is the legacy of Classical Theology. In the Church's philosophical theology, its elaboration of what "deity"

logically entails generated a definition of God that is so absolutist that it is conceptually impossible for him to approach humans and for humans to approach him.

There was perhaps a curious irony at work here as well. The very remoteness and inaccessibility of God (as the Church's early philosopher-theologians were wont to speak of him) may actually have inspired the notion of a non-rational, difficult, mystical and quite rare contact with God on the part of extraordinary (ascetic, dutiful, contemplative) believers--call them "saints." If this is right, the literature of Classical Theology inadvertently helped to spawn a spiritual elitism, even though the pages of the Christian mystics of this period drip with humility. The main effect, surely, is that the Church's intelligentsia logically sawed off the religious limb it was perched upon. I say this because religion, and so its intellectual expression, is quintessentially about human relationship with God, not the negation of such relationship.

A third reason for the Church's reluctance about transcendence affects a far wider audience as well. It has to do with the influence of post-Kantian and constructivist epistemology--the exclusively immanentist character of western epistemology since Kant. J. G. Arapura has summed it up this way:

> As [Kant] had rejected "transcendent insights," the only threads on which the problem of reality hung were faith and its companions, namely, reverence and the imperative

> of moral perfection. In later developments thought shifted its ground and became largely a territory of certain immanentist structures of ends and means, closing humankind within restrictive boundaries. The transcendent was no longer the problem of reality, because no difference remained between appearance and reality so as to justify any such focus. . . . Even in the profoundest expressions of immanentism the transcendent has surfaced occasionally, although mainly as the deepest dimension to which these essentially immanently conceived problems can be pushed.[14]

I think that the above perspective pretty much dominates the negative philosophical response to mysticism of recent years.[15] I will have more to say about that shortly. Suffice it to say here that transcending, and to have cognitive access to the transcendent, would certainly seem to require that one break a fundamental epistemic[16] barrier. That cannot be done if immanentist philosophy is correct. If all theories, paradigms, and presuppositions are necessarily immanentist in their utility for structuring human understanding, and if there are no theory-neutral, paradigm-independent, or presupposition-free data, then any claim to have transcended is simply confused.

Finally. there is a fourth suspicion about transcendence--one that seems to me quite serious but probably least felt by the Church. It concerns the intimate connection between mind and brain. To put it crudely, one cannot go <u>beyond</u> one's own body if one <u>is</u> one's own body. We may put the matter more moderately as a question: if one cannot have experience independent of brain function, what kind of constraint does that put on the prospect of transcending?

Of the foregoing considerations, the first and fourth strike me as the more telling. The first is not philosophical in character although I find it helpful in shaping the relevant conceptual problems that affect the thesis. The fourth consideration--about mind and brain--I find to be completely compelling against what I shall call technique or disciplined based transcendence, but I will not argue that now. Concerning constructivist epistemology I will have a good deal more to say. It would seem that if constructivism does not block God-perception, it certainly renders it systematically suspect. (This will be challenged, however, in chapter four.) So far as Classical Theology goes, it is simply confused and self-defeating in its most absolutist moments. I mention it only to indicate one powerful conceptual influence, down through the centuries, on the Church's (ordinary believer's) attitude toward transcendent religious experience. If this has been a rough overview, I want now to proceed on foot with the concept itself.

For our purposes, the problem posed by transcendence is more nearly a metaphysical problem, while the problem posed by mystical experience is primarily epistemological. The two types of problem cannot be cleanly separated from each other, but pretty clearly transcendence involves some sense of <u>transport</u> from one sort of reality to another, while mystical experience, whatever it may <u>be</u>, involves very non-standard cognitive experience.[17]

It will help at the outset to distinguish two sorts of transcendence in the literature: call the first sort intentional transcendence and the second sort metaphysical transcendence. The first sort seems not to be problematic. It is achieved by the commonplace mental absorption in the intentional object of one's experience. For now, at least, we rule out what are called "pure consciousness events" which are not supposed to be intentional in character. These will come under scrutiny in the next section. In a manner of speaking, intentional transcendence stays immanent in the metaphysical sense. Structurally, one does not go anywhere; indeed, not only does one remain within the reality one already inhabits, that reality is cognitively narrowed--sometimes in the extreme. Only intentional transcendence, for example, is required in this remark by John Y. Fenton:

> In principle, any realm of experience can be transcended in the sense that the effect of that realm upon an individual's own experience can be reduced to zero or near zero.[18]

It is curious to call this sort of feat transcendence, however. Let me quote Fenton at greater length:

> When it is stated that we can become so intent upon an external object that we lose all awareness of ourselves as observers and transcend ourselves . . . by being totally filled with the object, we are inclined to demur, at least about the wording. But we have all had the experience of self-forgetfulness in the process of paying rapt attention. Our terminology (forgetfulness) shows, however, that we do not really think we have done anything more than forget, i.e., we have paid no attention for awhile. Almost all Hindu and Buddhist

> meditation has to do with this kind of forgetting as a side effect of controlled attention. Buddhist exclusive continual attention to object [sic] in the present moment makes it impossible to pay attention to self at the same time. While completion of this process might take a long time . . . it is not implausible that one could eventually block out all experiences of self. Thus, as far as one's direct experience is concerned, self would be transcended.[19]

It is tempting to call this process an impoverishment of experiential awareness rather than somehow an enrichment of it. It is, of course, a kind of stage setting--a preparation on which both Buddhist and Hindu go on to make extraordinary metaphysical claims: transcendence in the metaphysical sense, as I am calling it. For our present concern we simply note that "forgetting," "blocking out," "reducing the influence of a realm of experience to zero," and the like, all express a restriction or deconstruction of awareness. Nothing of the nature of a metaphysical transport logically follows.

Fenton does say that one becomes "filled with the object." Is not this a metaphysical claim? Not if we take his attempt at clarification seriously. In the pause in his article to ease the (non-mystical) reader into a grasp of a transcendence pertinent to Buddhism and Hinduism, he cautiously stays within the logic of intentional transcendence. Logically speaking, however, it is not at all clear how intentional transcendence facilitates metaphysical transcendence. Is the state of preparation causal? Does a given state of intentional transcendence

cause a state of metaphysical transcendence? Not, it seems to me, if the effect is "beyond" the spatio-temporal cause and effect series and is hence radically acausal.

As he describes the salvific concerns of both Buddhist and Hindu, getting beyond cause and effect relations is vital, so how is it accomplished? States Fenton,

> the search for salvation becomes a quest for an uncaused effect, or a state that can somehow be "reached" or rediscovered that is not produced and therefore not subject to change.[20]

At this crucial point we are led to the detail of acquiring an intentional transcendent state. Except for the solecistic language (the non-production of an uncaused effect, etc.), the all-important transition remains baffling. What we are left with, it seems to me, is that Buddhists and Hindus cultivate conditions in themselves which somehow favor but do not produce the sort of metaphysical transcendence they seek.

I want to look now at the very concept of transcendence in the metaphysical sense. Perhaps the problem we have encountered about the transition can be resolved in this way. To begin, granting the omnipotence of God and his ability to intervene in the cause and effect system he created, I have no trouble granting some sort of metaphysical transcendence which he himself initiates. Transcendence as a human doing stikes me as quite a different matter.

One way to analyze the concept before us is through predicate analysis. The question we should like to ask is, How many terms does "transcends" minimally require to preserve sense? The answer may not be obvious--especially if one were of a holistic cast of mind, for in that case the number of terms might be infinite. My exercise is intended only as a rough adjustment of our intuitions about how many terms, and of what kind, must flank either side of the predicate "transcends." What predicate analysis may afford is some methodical clarity on the sense of the terms which are conceptually necessary for the employment of "transcends."

Using the schema "X transcends Y" and its variants, consider "transcends" as a two-place predicate (I skip the possibility that it may be a monadic predicate). Right off, it appears that our first term "X" will need to be disambiguated. There are two quite distinct sorts of term for which "X" might stand as a variable. This is because the first term of a transcendence relation may either designate an individual engaged in an act of transcendence, or it may designate a constant state of affairs which is transcendent with respect to whatever is designated by the second term. We might give as an example of the first sense that a mystic transcended subject-object duality on such and such an occasion. We might give as examples of the second sense that God transcends the creation, and that Nirvana

transcends the spatio-temporal cosmos. Our concern is exclusively with the first sense--the sense of personal transcendence from one domain to another.

What terms, then, are required to make sense of the personal transcendence relation? Let us suppose that Peter transcends his miserable circumstances. We can immediately see that this thought is not complete. Peter might be said to have "risen above" his circumstances in some profoundly satisfying way, but where did he go, if anywhere? Let us then say that Peter transcends his miserable circumstances to a world of pure spirit. Now we have three terms: "X transcends Y to Z." This result, I think, is satisfying. "Transcends," so far as personal transcendence is concerned, is minimally a three-place predicate. For easier reference, let us say that a person "P" transcends circumstances "C" to a transcendent domain "D." The logical scaffolding of our transcendence concept might then be represented "pTcd" where "transcends" is replaced by the predicate letter "T" and the three terms go to lower case.

Under what conditions might we rightly apply this concept? That depends to a very great extent on the meanings we assign to the individual terms. It ought to be borne in mind that in reflecting in this way we are not attempting to decide an existential issue of great cosmic moment by an a priori juggling of concepts. We are exploring certain minimal constraints on the logical

eligibility of any would-be description of personal transcendence. I think that the following is a reasonable way to construe the terms we have identified:

(1) D is metaphysically distinct from C. This entails that the experience of D does not consist in a restricted or deconstructed awareness within, and defined by the structures of, C. Metaphysically, D is not a sub-domain of C.

(2) P is self-identical through and within the experience of transcending. That is, P is not an intermittent entity allowing a gap for each "experience" of transcendence. Thus P is not discontinuous; during the event of transcendence, P (if only in mind) can be identified and individuated in D.

(3) P has transcendence-competence merely by being a healthy inhabitant of C.

(4) In its metaphysical distinctness from C, D is not totally independent of C. Traffic from C to D and back again requires metaphysical structure; if there is total metaphysical disparity between C and D, there can be no such traffic.

Here are some comments. Condition (1) serves to demarcate intentional from metaphysical transcendence. (2) is nonnegotiable. In the case of religious transcendence, the loss of duality in the transcendent state is simply the loss of the intelligibility of experiencing the divine other; love itself is unintelligible without duality. (3) is a condition of parity among human beings insofar as they are knowers of a certain created sort. (4) might be seen to threaten the whole enterprise. It obviously moderates the force of (1): metaphysical disparity cannot entail total disparity. If (1) is moderated a great deal, transcendence

would surely lose its luster as a "going beyond"; it might instead come to look more and more like a "staying put."

In view of these constraints, how does religious transcendence fare? As an empirical thesis, it has little support. There is no compelling evidence that the human being possesses a "transcendence-competence." Buddhist and Hindu mysticism rejects (2) and (4), so the latter's claim for mystical transcendence is conceptually even more precarious than would be a claim satisfying all four. Subjectivity and objectivity are both said to be transcended. I will deal with an allegedly essential element in such "transcendence" in the next section.

What may be granted at this point is that (1) through (4) comprise a roughly consistent set of constraints. If Peter transcends his circumstances, then in some intelligible sense it must be Peter who does so. If on the other hand there is nothing of Peter to be found within the transcendent domain to which he is said to have "gone," then even if sense could be made, say, of Peter's psyche being transmuted into nothingness or into an alternative energy form for a short interval of time, we should have to say that Peter did not go anywhere. I use "transmutation" as a term by which to hypothetically concede Peter's intermittency, but my point is that transmutation is not transcendence. If the idea of transmutation holds water, it is the claim that humans may become personally extinguished

for (presumably short) periods of time. Thus in Peter's state of extinction, even if Peter's "psychic energy" is conserved, nothing about that transmuted psychic residue is distinguishable as Peter; and of course Peter is not "there" to witness anything. On this reckoning, Peter has no more transcended than has grandfather's body now sprinkled as ashes on his favorite fishing hole.

One moral of our discussion of transcendence is that it matters a great deal how we talk about transcendence. The embodiment thesis to be discussed in the next chapter renders much about the issue of personal transcendence superfluous. What I shall recommend is that we proceed from the premise of embodied mind as the fundamental conceptual constraint by which to assess spiritual realities. Although we need to look a little more at conceptual promiscuity (regarding the pure consciousness event), our main interest is a model of embodied religious competence. Our thesis seeks to do justice to the phenomena of everyday faith. There is a profundity in this "ordinariness" that is easily missed because of the value so often placed upon (alleged) flashier spiritual events. Truly impressive faith is exhibited in a life precisely where miracle, transcendence, and mystical experience do <u>not</u> occur. In Christianity, it seems to me, the most extraordinary faith is that which sustains a believer in the complete absence of the "sight" which these exotic experiences might have provided.

Conspicuously absent among the vast majority of the "ordinary faithful" is any claim to have had such spiritual boosts. In this regard it is perhaps worth noting an astonishing irony in the biblical literature. Apart from critical questions of veracity, a theology of inference, and the like, in the biblical narrative itself there seems to be an inverse relation between the occurrence of miracles, signs, and wonders and the cultivation of persevering faith. One has only to note the "faith responses" of the Old Testament wilderness wanderers and of the throngs which followed Jesus about prior to his crucifixion.

Conceptually, our model avoids the bifurcation of the reality habitable by the ante-mortem human. There is no reason to believe that the continuum we do inhabit is transcendable by the exercise of a uniformly distributed competence for an extra-worldly relationship with God.

Religious Mysticism

It is tempting to say that "religious transcendence" and "religious mysticism" are very nearly the same topic. In speaking of the former, our focus was on the meaning of going beyond one's own familiar circumstances to another domain entirely. With mystical experience, on the other hand, our concern is not so much metaphysical "relocation" as it is the phenomenology and cognitivity which are involved in that "relocation." My discussion of mysticism

will be limited to its epistemological viability in terms of the very general claims made for it by those who favor transcendent mysticism. What I shall have to say affects religious mysticism only insofar as religious mysticism is thought to require metaphysical transcendence. Intentional transcendence, surely, is a transcendence generously so called: all we need to concede for this level of transcendence is the methodical elimination of the impact of sentient stimuli and the methodical elimination of cognitive background noise.

Announcing a conclusion at this point would be precipitous, however. If, for example, the case for the "pure consciousness event" (or PCE)[21] can be made good, metaphysical transcendence would appear to have an extra inning. There are indeed advocates of PCEs who regard these events as instances of just this sort of transcendence.[22] More importantly, all our issues come to a logical focus with PCEs.

In Robert K. C. Forman's recent volume, The Problem of Pure Consciousness,[23] there is a collection of essays which defends mystical experience against the constructivist critique of Steven T. Katz and others. Of particular importance for our present concern is the strategy deployed by the contributors to this book. What is defended, precisely, is the "core" mystical experience, or as Stephan Bernhardt puts it, the "universal mystical experience."[24]

The PCE is presented, in effect, as a generic, non-sectarian, non-doctrinaire mysticism that must be conceptually viable if the more partisan mysticisms are to be viable. If indeed the PCE is strategic in this way, then a showing of the untenability of a PCE would be a serious blow to the tenability of Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, and Christian mysticisms.

In Stephan Bernhardt's essay, "Are Pure Consciousness Events Unmediated?" a PCE is characterized as follows:

> The subject is awake, conscious, but without an object or content of consciousness--no thoughts, emotions, sensations, or awareness of any external phenomena. Nothing. During the event the subject is not even aware "Oh, I am experiencing X" or "I am having an extraordinary experience." Yet the subject is not asleep and may afterwards also report confidently that he or she was not asleep. Because one of the problems with the experience of pure consciousness is that it differs so radically from other types of experience, we may not want to call it an <u>experience</u>. With Forman, I will henceforward refer to it as the pure consciousness event.[25]

Of course, if a PCE is not an experience, it cannot be a mystical experience, and this is contrary to the central aim of Forman's anthology. Bernhardt goes on to urge that the philosophical notion of experience (which requires intentionality) be enlarged to accommodate the PCE. Bernhardt's contention is that, whatever else a PCE may be, it is a state of consciousness. Therefore it is an experience as well. On Bernhardt's view, not all experiences are intentional.[26]

I do not want to broach the intentionality issue, for

I think it is better to allow Bernhardt his premise in order to see other profound difficulties with the concept of a PCE. First, very much hangs on retaining a robust consciousness, on the one hand, and absolutely nothing for that consciousness to be conscious of, on the other hand. For emphasis let me rephrase this: the PCE requires a full wakeful alertness without any content present to that wakeful alertness. As an empirical claim, this sounds doubtful to me, but not incoherent. The question that comes to mind is: What empirical difference would there be between a phenomenology of dreamless sleep (an unconsciousness of nothing) and a PCE (a consciousness of nothing)? Phenomenologically the two appear to be identical--indeed, there is the total absence of phenomena in both cases. With respect to content--zero in both cases--only the etiology is different. The nothingnesses are identical.

Perhaps the nothingness in the case of the PCE is ontologized (somehow), whereas the nothingness in the dreamless sleep is not. I do not think this works, but I will return to it shortly. For now, we have a state of consciousness which is alleged to be the same state as normal wakeful consciousness except that it is utterly void of content: a consciousness simpliciter.

For the sake of argument, let us grant that by some technique, path, or meditative discipline one can achieve a totally deconstructed consciousness--a consciousness that is

unmediated, nonintentional, nonsentient, and nonconceptual. Conceptually, what are we to say of this as an experience? Where are we with respect to a transition from intentional transcendence to metaphysical transcendence?

Logically speaking, only the limiting case of intentional transcendence has been reached. Recall Fenton's observation that any realm of experience can be transcended (in the above sense) if the effect of that realm upon one's own experience can be reduced to zero or near zero. The limiting case is simply when all effects from all data sources have been blocked.

Is this, then, mystical experience? Surely not. However salutary the resultant state of transcendence might be for subsequent (afterward) condition of mind and body, the PCE, so far forth, is merely a drastically impoverished state of consciousness. What is yet missing?

While it would be impossible to stipulate what additional step would effect (cause) the sought-after transition to a bona fide mystical state, we can, I think, confidently indicate the missing element. It is the transcendence of duality (e.g., Hindu and Buddhist mysticism) or of separateness (e.g., Jewish and Christian mysticism). Robert Gimello writes:

> In the case of the quality of oneness, there is . . . virtual unanimity among those who hazard descriptions of mystical experience that oneness, in some sense, is always of the essence of such experience.[27]

I am not concerned to challenge the intelligibility of oneness which may be construed within the four constraints of the preceding section. The oneness involved in the communion of love, for example, is rightly considered a oneness--metaphysically so, for it involves a structure of intersubjective transparency--but this oneness requires at the same time a twoness. The issue before us is the claim that subject-object duality itself is transcended in mystical experience.

Suppose, then, a Buddhist avers that he or she has transcended subject-object duality. Could this Buddhist have been in a position to <u>know</u> such a thing? Following out the radical deconstruction of intentional consciousness, the Buddhist loses awareness of self <u>within</u> the sphere of intentional transcendence. Within this sphere, of course, there is no interesting transcendence of self; all we have reason to believe is that awareness of self has been blocked, and from this it hardly follows that a mystical oneness of the kind envisaged has been arrived at. If one's intentional slate is a complete blank, one is no longer in a position to judge whether one's exercise has landed one mystically or not.

Recollection after the event will not remedy the problem. If I am right, the epistemological problem we have generated is intractable. Unless one could <u>know</u> that the moment one loses track of self, one has metaphysically

transcended, there can be no ground for affirming that one has so transcended. There is no principled way to state the difference between an individual who is conscious but attending to absolutely nothing, and an individual whose consciousness has achieved a mystically significant oneness. The very would-be path to self-transcendence has, ironically, precluded the possibility of one ever discovering where it has led. For unless a blocked awareness of self entails the transcendence of self, the sought-after transcendence is methodologically elusive.[28]

What if we waived the foregoing difficulty? Suppose that the attainment of self-transcendence within the PCE were somehow, in retrospection perhaps, self-authenticating? Consider being resident within a PCE in which subject-object duality has been transcended. What are we to say of the consciousness that has emerged? We have to put to one side the fact that our thought experiment does not instance a canonical event within one of the mystical traditions; the only constraint we need observe is that of the PCE defended in Forman's book.

What exists is pure consciousness--pure, not in the evaluative sense, but in the sense that this consciousness is unalloyed with content of any kind. Because the self has been transcended, there is no longer, for the duration of the "event," a substantial self or subject. There is nevertheless consciousness, and it is consciousness of <u>nothing</u>. Does this make sense?

Ontologically, we perhaps have something very like a Sartrian self (or a Kantain transcendental ego), a self that, in Sartre's idiom, exists itself from moment to moment.[29] Even as a Sartrian self, however, the imagined self of the PCE turns out to be attenuated in the extreme. Consider an analogy.[30]

As everyone knows, Dracula casts no reflection in a mirror. He is thus substantial while there is nothing whatever that is substantial "within" the mirror. Now suppose we reverse Dracula's unfortunate problem; he no longer stands before the mirror casting no reflection, but ceases to have any existence before the mirror. "He" exists now only in the mirror: a reflection-reflecting. I use scare-quotes to indicate mirror existence from here on. Thus, Dracula has been somewhat denatured to "Dracula." "He" is now insubstantial but carries on nonetheless. Just so, perhaps, we might conceive a nonsubstantial self as a reflection-reflecting--or, to use a pretty strange grammatical construction, a "contentful" consciousness existing itself.

Our analogy has not yet captured the PCE above. We now eliminate "Dracula" but save the mirror. The mirror now reflects "nothing." The scare-quotes are still important, for this is a nothing in excelsus. It is not the case that there is nothing before the mirror and that that state of affairs is reflected in the mirror. There is no substantial

nothing to be reflected. What obtains, rather, is a reflection-reflecting "nothing," and it is this latter state of affairs that I think is suggestive for our PCE. The PCE is a self-transcendent consciousness of "nothing." That, I submit, is too bizarre for words.

Summary

Whether or not the PCE is supposed to involve self-transcendence, there is a crucial loss of epistemic competence which fundamentally blocks plausible speculation beyond the loss of self-awareness. So even granting that the consciousness of a PCE is pure, the strategy evident in The Problem of Pure Consciousness cannot logically further the cause of transcendent mysticism.

The topics of experiential transcendence and mystical experience are vast. My limited aim has been to cast doubt about whether the human being is the sort of being that has the ability to transcend the structures that define and facilitate his or her everyday affairs. I have only mentioned the resistance of constructivism and the seemingly more-than-contingent connection between mind and brain. Constructivism is not the threat it might appear to be, and I take it up in chapter four. The embodied character of mind will occupy us in chapter two.

Above all else, what I have sought to do in this chapter is to set forth an ontological premise about the

character of religious reality. Humans inhabit a religious social reality in terms of the structure of their existence. If so, self-initiated metaphysical transcendence may be an idea ill-conceived.

Notes

1. Ninian Smart, "Understanding Religious Experience," in Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis, ed. Steven T. Katz (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 13.

2. It is perhaps debatable whether aesthetic experience fits the category of constitutional experience. But I believe it does; aesthetic experience arguably pre-dates the advent of "fine art" and modern philosophy of art.

3. William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience (New York: Random House Inc., 1902), 28-29.

4. Ibid., 31-32.

5. James Oliver Buswell, Jr., A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), 32.

6. Merold Westphal, "The Meaning of 'Good' in the Philosophy of Gordon H. Clark," in The Philosophy of Gordon H. Clark, ed. Ronald Nash (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1968), 107-109.

7. Ibid., 108.

8. Karl Barth, The Knowledge of God and the Service of God (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1938), 178.

9. Herman Dooyeweerd, A New Critique of Theoretical Thought, trans. David H. Freeman and William S. Young (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1953), 1:58.

10. Acts 17:28, NASB.

11. The most striking cases are those of Paul being "caught up to the third heaven," (II Cor. 12:2-5), and John on the Isle of Patmos (Rev. 1:9-10; 4:2).

12. It is important to note that they are, in effect, rebuked for this. Paul writes them that they should not invest themselves in spiritual self-aggrandizement (in terms of spiritual gifts), but to seek "a more excellent way": namely, love. (I Cor. 12:31-14:1).

13. If one were to find special instruction in the New Testament for the development of mystical communion with God, one would surely find it in the letters which follow the four Gospels. But paths to such transcendent spiritual experience are completely alien to these pages. The Christian walk turns out to be a quotidian development in love and character. There is no Jewish or Christian contemplative mysticism either taught or modelled in the Bible.

14. J. G. Arapura, "Transcendent Brahman or Transcendent Void: Which is Ultimately Real?" in Transcendence and the Sacred, ed. Alan M. Olson and Leroy S. Royner (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 84.

15. See Steven T. Katz, ed., Mysticism and Religious Traditions (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983); and Katz, ed., Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978). Katz and company approach the literature of mysticism from the premise that there are no unmediated experiences. So-called mystical experience always occurs within a shaping cultural context and a determinitave belief system.

16. I will be using "epistemological" with reference to theory of knowledge, and "epistemic" as pertaining to personal knowledge and knowing.

17. As I will indicate further on, the terms "transcendence" and "mystical experience" are two sides of the same coin: "transcendence" pertains to the metaphysics of "going" from one domain to another, while "mystical experience" pertains more nearly to epistemological ramifications of transcendence.

18. John Y. Fenton, "Experiential Transcendence in Hinduism and Buddhism," in Transcendence and Mystery, ed. Earl D. C. Brewer (New York: North America, Inc., 1975), 28.

19. Ibid., 27.

20. Ibid., 24.

Notes

21. Robert K. C. Forman's anthology The Problem of Pure Consciousness (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) brings together a number of essays which define and defend the PCE.

22. This is pretty much a consensus in the Forman anthology. It is quite explicit in Stephan Bernhardt's essay, "Are Pure Consciousness Events Mediated?" 220-236.

23. Robert K. C. Forman, ed., The Problem of Pure Consciousness: Mysticism and Philosophy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

24. Bernhardt, The Problem of Pure Consciousness, 225.

25. Ibid., 220.

26. Ibid., 232-234. Bernhardt, I think, is not really arguing so much as making a recommendation.

27. Robert Gimello, "Mysticism and Meditation," in Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis, ed. Katz, 175.

28. X may be said to be methodologically elusive, as I am using this expression, if and only if X has no verification structure. Put another way, methodological elusiveness is the case whenever there can be no detecting procedure in principle for disclosing X.

29. In Being and Nothingness, Sartre categorically rejects a substantial self and holds dogmatically to the intentionality of consciousness.

30. This analogy comes from a class lecture by Richard Aquilla. Professor Aquilla is not responsible for this adaptation of it.

CHAPTER TWO

EMBODIED MIND AND DIMENSIONAL LIMITS

In chapter one I argued against agent-initiated transcendence and agent-initiated mystical experience. What has scarcely received notice thus far is that the transcendence issue carries implications for the mind/body problem: mystical transcendence seems to imply a Cartesian dualism. Indeed, no author in mysticism, so far as I know, thinks that the body itself may "accompany" the spirit which is said to transcend in mystical experience. It seems to me that the ante-mortem body (whatever may be its post-mortem prospects for reconstitution, reinstantiation, or resurrection) is consensually thought to be bound to its material spatio-temporal continuum.

Building now on the primarily negative results of chapter one, I will develop two interrelated topics, only one of which has been touched upon so far: (1) the nature of minds, and (2) the inherent constraints on description which is imposed by the dimensions minds inhabit. Structurally, I shall maintain that humans occupy a domain of access to God. Epistemological issues will have to await chapter four; by then the nature of the epistemological problem posed by my model should be clear.

The Embodied Character of Mind

The first topic concerns a particular construal of the mind/body relation in the context of contemporary philosophy of mind. My overarching goal is to characterize the human being as the sort of individual competent to stand in a certain kind of noetic relationship with God. The present section is an important preliminary to this. With regard to the aforementioned relation I want to discuss, my focus will be quite narrow, although it will take a bit of discussion to get the setting just right.

It seems to me that with the past thirty years of brain research, computer science, psycholinguistics, and allied activity, there is hardly any sense today of a canonical construal of the mind/body problem.[1] The conceptual problems posed by mental phenomena (qualia, propositional attitudes, reasoning) and their physiological basis are being importantly shaped by empirical research, along with cybernetic and functional modeling. At any rate, virtually no one writing today in philosophy of mind sees his or her work as a response to, or a working out of, the Cartesian problematic.[2]

Nevertheless, there is a Cartesian-like issue that has survived the quite radical conceptual remapping of the issues of mind and body. Current strategies (notably functionalism and cognitivism) are strongly linked with science in one way or another, and they are all, ultimately,

either reductive or predict a fundamental shift in our intuitions about the entitative status of the "mentality" that seems to resist reduction.[3] I think there is very good reason to doubt this scenario,[4] but my concern is somewhat independent of the current debate.[5]

What does appear solid from the work of the past thirty years is the holistic character of psychophysical human life. Here I need to make myself clear. I am expressing a confidence about an ontological issue, not a psychological one. Those suffering with multiple personality disorder, for example, hardly enjoy a holistic character to their psychophysical lives in the sense of a well integrated personality. Nor am I expressing partiality in the holism versus modularity of mind debate.[6] What I mean to draw attention to is a confidence that nearly all writers in philosophy of mind seem to have: that mind and brain are so intimately related as to be somehow one--ontologically.

Equally solid, it seems to me, is the conclusion that the intentional is not logically reducible to the extensional.[7] Couple this with the fact that intentionality has proven, thus far, to be ineliminable--to be conceptually necessary to characterize what is salient about mental states and mental processes. The eliminability of the intentional is a programmatic hope among those who favor it, not a reality. Since the scientific and philosophical

career of cognitivism (with functionalism as its underwriting theory) is so robust at present it seems hardly fair--deeply inappropriate somehow, certainly unsporting--to charge the main lines of its approach with a strategic incoherence that will surely doom the whole enterprise. Anyhow, I do not think that can be done--there is no trick argument that can stall the functionalist and cognitivist explorations in their tracks.[8]

I think a Cartesian ghost haunts the enterprise nonetheless. From a logical point of view, it seems to me, all the evidence shows that the ghost cannot be exorcised; but it can be denatured. To state the problem without metaphor, if, as is likely, there is a profound oneness of mind and body, and if the intentional is both irreducible and ineliminable, then no matter what kind of (informational) system the brain turns out to be vis-à-vis functionalist/cognitivist hopes, there will be a residual problem of relationship--a problem of relationship that affects all the issues of human psychology from top to bottom. The problem, in a nutshell, is how to formulate a mind/body monism (in the ontological sense) which accommodates both the intentional and the extensional properties of human persons.

I need to bring all this to bear on the concerns of the thesis before going further. The stake in the outcome of a mature philosophy of mind (informed by the pertinent

sciences) for the philosophy of religion is enormous. The future intuitions about the nature of human agency are involved. Daniel Dennett, for one, envisages an intuitively anchored reconceptualization of the self, a self radically unlike the agent of folk psychology. The following passage from David Lodge's Nice Work,[9] although satiric, is good-naturedly provided by Dennett in Consciousness Explained[10] to introduce his view of the self as "the center of narrative gravity."[11] The fictional character Robyn gives this "fine parody" of Dennett's view:

> According to Robyn (or, more precisely, according to the writers who have influenced her thinking on these matters), there is no such thing as the "Self" on which capitalism and the classic novel are founded--that is to say, a finite, unique soul or essence that constitutes a person's identity; there is only a subject position in an infinite web of discourses--the discourses of power, sex, family, science, religion, poetry, etc. And by the same token, there is no such thing as an author, that is to say, one who originates a work of fiction ab nihilo. . . . in the famous words of Jacques Derrida . . . "il n'y a pas de hors-texte", there is nothing outside the text. There are no origins, there is only production, and we produce our "selves" in language. Not "you are what you eat" but "you are what you speak," or, rather "you are what speaks you," is the axiomatic basis of Robyn's philosophy, which she would call, if required to give it a name, "semiotic materialism."[12]

Dennett is playfully hesitant about the label (he eschews all "isms"),[13] but cheerfully recognizes his own view in this verbiage, albeit somewhat abused.

"You are what speaks you" provocatively captures the heart of the matter. I think that a consistently functionalist account of mind even requires something like

what this maxim is saying,[14] but it is not benign to the sort of self required by the present thesis. Some basics of functionalism will make this evident, as well as bring into relief the strategic ontological issue I have been pursuing.

Joseph Margolis, in Philosophy of Psychology,[15] distinguishes a strong and a weak functionalism. Strong functionalism is, generally, committed to the following three propositions: ". . . mental phenomena are (1) real, (2) really distinct from (not reducible to) the purely physical, and (3) capable of exerting causal influence."[16] Taken this far, strong functionalism is compatible with ontic dualism. Weak functionalism, on the other hand, allows mental terms heuristically--their usefulness is admitted--but the reducibility issue is left open and there is no realist commitment to functional states and properties.[17]

Either way, the beauty of the functionalist strategy is that it licenses a shift from ontological concerns (worry over the entitative status of mental phenomena) to concerns for theoretically modeling psychological states and processes as functional states and processes of physical systems. If there is any remaining ontological work for philosophy here, its character, surely, is very general (e.g., the relationship between form and matter) and not specific to the character of psychological processes. Or so it might seem.

The standard complaint about functionalism is that it leaves some important things out, that however productive it has been for understanding mental processes that may be construed computationally, it is blind to the phenomenology of inner experience.[18] I think that that is a very serious issue, but taking it up would not be the most direct path to make the point I want to make. There is another complaint that one does not often hear talked about. It concerns agency.[19] Whereas one might charitably allow that functionalism is merely silent about qualia, it seems somehow incompatible with agency. Dennett's daring thesis that a "self" is a sheer abstraction, a neurologically "spun" narative, seems to me to be quite consistent with functionalism in this regard. It is consistent, that is, with what appears to me as functionalism's logical confinement to <u>discrete states and processes</u> (whatever their number, frequency of occurrence, or complexity in terms of logical interconnections). If my concern is justified, it is because a functionalist approach to understanding the character of mental phenomena generates this irony: while liberating in some obvious ways, it is inherently too restrictive to give us the kind of theory we want. So: (1) while understanding is inhanced of the units of analysis which are selected by functionalist theory (that really happens and is impressive, especially in the case of machine functionalism),[20] (2) the parameters of investigation

defined by the theory logically preclude insight into other quarry--a thinking entity, for example. To simulate a linguistic happening[21] is not thereby to simulate a case of thinking, still less is it to have procreated an instance of thinking itself. It is easy to concede that structural aspects of a discursive thought process are modeled in a particular way, but that is a far cry from modeling a system which is executing thought or generating real thought fully commensurate with the human paradigm.

There is a deeper worry. Mental states (on strong functionalism) are said to exert causal influence because the latter are functional states which are physically "realized." It is only as physically "realized" that functional states may be causally involved in the production of behavior. That is very important if there are to be functional laws of a psychological kind. Law-like invariances, crucial for science, necessarily involve regularities among physical variables. To have a science of psychology, therefore, we must be able to make sense of functional level invariances as "realized" by physical level invariances.

At this point we need to be reminded that the connection between the two levels cannot be secured by logic: discourse essential in the description of the pertinent physical activity cannot be appreciated to logically entail what is distinctive of the putative

functional regularities. Indeed, the initial promise of functionalism was to secure the reality and causal efficacy of the mental in full view of the irreducibility of the mental. Of course, trivially (or maybe not so trivially), if functional states are reducible (by conceptual means) to physical states, functionalist strategy is rendered superfluous. Functionalism is regarded by "weak functionalists" in somewhat that way, although programmatically: the strategy is an intermediate heuristic in the quest for a more satisfying materialism.[22]

Now the "Cartesian" concern that initiated this discussion can be fully confronted. These are the elements of the problem. Mental states are functional states, but functional states are fully abstract (their designata are causal roles, and causal roles are not themselves causes). So even though a functional state (e.g., the state of believing that p) may be "realized" in indefinitely many ways, it is more than contingently related to a "realizing structure" <u>of some sort or other</u>. A functional state is a relational state. On strong functionalism (thus realistically construing functional particulars), there is no such thing as a functional state faring on its own; it is an essentially dependent particular indissolubly linked with something or other that "realizes" it. Crudely put, "You're nobody 'till some body realizes you."

Joseph Margolis, in numerous publications over the

past fifteen years, has attempted to develop a non-reductive materialism.[23] My sensitivity to the issue I am discussing is largely due to his work. In his (previously mentioned) discussion of functionalsim Margolis raises this question--the question, I believe, that is the right one to ask at this point: "Are functional properties abstract properties or only abstracted from more complex properties?"[24] The answer implicit in the preceding paragraph is that functionalism requires that functional properties be the latter, both as a matter of conceptual necessity, and in the interests of securing causal regularities which are essential to a scientific psychology.

I began this section indicating concern for a certain mind/body relation (not the mind/body problem), and I said that my focus would be quite narrow. What is needed for present purposes is not, in any traditional sense, a full-blown theory of mind: we need not determine whether computational representationalism[25] or connectionism[26] is nearer the truth, whether the brain has incorporated into it a Chomskian deep grammar,[27] a Fodorian mentalese,[28] or neither,[29] or whether the mind is holistic or modular.[30] Let it be conceded, though I will not argue it, that double attribute theory leaves the ontological tension about mind where it found it (double attribute theory being a linguistic solution to an ontological problem).[31] Finally, let it be conceded that the only causal regularities that

obtain in the context of mind and body are physical in nature.

Where are we then? Well, not very far, but we may be poised philosophically to accommodate what is intuitively right about folk psychological agency without doing violence to many of the special concerns of contemporary philosophy of mind. That is a prerequisite for the model I shall offer of theistic awareness. Under the dual constraints of ontological monism and the irreducibility and ineliminability of the intentional, our problem is to give an account of a primitive relation: <u>embodiment</u>. Unlike the relational problematic of classical Cartesianism, it is not concerned with causal interaction between two stuffs which share no properties in common; all causes are assumed to be physical. Unlike the problem noted with functionalism, our approach does not face the difficulty of abstract causes and the fragmentation of agency.

It seems to me that there are two sorts of fundamental duality at play in this problem, and it is important not to confuse or conflate them. One is, roughly, that of <u>form and and matter</u>. The relation which the literature calls "realization" seems to me to be of this sort;[32] but I think that the order of abstraction implicit in this relation is too high, so to speak, to help us clarify the character of the mental vis-à-vis the character of the physical. To put it paradoxically, a strategy which

begs absolutely no questions against either materialism or dualism cannot advance our understanding about mind in terms of its fundamental nature. At a very high level of abstraction, we get something like formed matter out of functionalism, hence a view that sounds very much like eliminative materialism. To be sure, there is a graet deal of formed matter (structured material processes) involved in psychological processes. That is not the point. The point is, rather, that it is not easy to see how functionalism can escape this sort of tendentiousness--the tendentiousness implicit if embracing functionalism is ipso facto the embracing of eliminative materialism as well.

It is interesting in this regard to note John Searle's problem with Strong AI (the idea of an intelligent computer).[33] In his much discussed paper, "Minds, Brains, and Programs," it is the formalism of machine functionalism that bothers him, not the prospect of a machine that thinks (he concedes this--for after all, the brain is a machine and it thinks).[34] Governing Searle's intuitions, I think, is the inadequacy of the level of abstraction for explaining thought and consciousness which launches functionalist theory. States Searle,

> if mental operations consist of computational operations on formal symbols, it follows that they have no interesting connection with the brain, and the only connection would be that the brain just happens to be one of the indefinitely many types of machines capable of instantiating the program. This form of dualism is not the traditional Cartesian variety that claims there

> are two sorts of substances, but it is Cartesian in the sense that it insists that what is specifically mental about the mind has no intrinsic connection with the actual properties of the brain.[35]

I agree with Searle about the importance of an "intrinsic connection with the actual properties of the brain," although he gives us no idea of what an intrinsic connection might amount to. The functionalist can reply that the relation designated by the word, "realization," is an interesting connection, even if it is not intrinsic. We have already seen that a functional state, while abstract, is also relational. If so, a functional property is curiously intrinsic. The reality which a functional property introduces is that of physically-realized-functional-property,[36] where the hyphenation indicates the indissoluble linkage of functional state to the physical system of which it is a state. To put it another way, a functional state is a "subaltern particular,"[37] so even though we can logically expropriate "functional property" from its hyphenated nesting, the logically expropriated functional property cannot be ontologized. What may be ontologized is designated by the hyphenated expression.

Given the foregoing discussion, however, the admission of physically-realized-functional-property risks eliminative materialism on the basis of assumption, not argument, for then we are at the level of formed matter and structured material processes. The alternative to this is

another primitive but (this time) relevantly concrete relationship.

In Margolis's terminology, 'things' may be said to be embodied, whereas 'properties' may be said to be incarnate.[38] Accordingly, mind is embodied; thought is incarnate. Here enters the second duality--the duality of embodied particulars and embodying particulars.[39] Margolis explains "incarnate" this way:

> The idea is that a psychological property designates a certain distinctive way in which a system functions:
>
> 1. the system must have physical properties;
> 2. its functioning as it does cannot be described solely in terms of its physical properties;
> 3. it cannot be said to function as it does except through the physical properties that it has.
>
> The psychological property is, in this sense, both emergent (not reducible to the physical) and incarnate (linked as indissolubly emergent with respect to the physical.) To ascribe psychological properties, though we deny or believe we need not consider the just-mentioned first or third attribute of a system, is to treat the psychological as abstract or in accord with ontic dualism.[40]

Margolis first introduced his construal of embodiment as "a term of art" in an essay entitled "The Ontological Peculiarity of Works of Art".[41] Persons and minds exhibit the same ontological peculiarity as artworks: works of art are embodied by their physical media; human persons and minds are embodied by physical organisms. The concept of the embodiment relation is sketched as follows:

> What is meant in saying that one particular is embodied in another is: (i) that the two particulars are not identical; (ii) that the existence of the embodied

> particular presupposes the existence of the embodying particular; (iii) that the embodied particular possesses some of the properties of the embodying particular; (iv) that the embodied particular possesses properties that the embodying particular does not possess; (v) that the embodied particular possesses properties of a kind that the embodying particular cannot possess; (vi) that the individuation of the embodied particular presupposes the individuation of the embodying particular.[42]

Take Michaelangelo's David, for example. This work of art is a huge chunk of marble. The ontological question about the David is, What sort of relation is introduced by the copula, "is," in the preceding statement? Is it the "is" of identity? Surely not. Even though the David is compositionally nothing but marble, it is clearly more than that. It is also an aesthetic object, a huge chunk of marble that has undergone a great deal of intentional modification. The "is," on Margolis's reckoning, is the "is" of embodiment.[43] No amount of extensional description of the marble will logically yield an intensional characterization of the art object. An irreducible level of discourse is required for that.

On the assumption that the David is real (there is, of course, no question about the reality of the marble), what does the irreducibly intentional (hence intensional)[44] discourse betoken? Asking the question in a concrete example, What is the relationship between the David and the marble? Margolis would say that the marble embodies the David. Applying Margolis's six-fold characterization of embodiment, we may say the following:

(i) The David is not identical with the physical marble.

(ii) The existence of the David presupposes the existence of the marble.

(iii) The David possesses some of the properties of the marble object: e.g., the David has the height, width, depth, weight and color of the marble.

(iv) The David possesses properties the marble does not possess: e.g., 'a classical look,' 'disproportionately sized hands,' etc.

(v) The David possesses representational properties, a kind of property which the marble cannot possess.

(vi) The individuation of the David presupposes the individuation of the marble.

The Aristotelian nature of Margolis's ontology of works of art is fairly obvious. What I should like to press at this point are certain facts in its application to persons and minds. (1) The embodiment relation secures a non-reductive materialism; (2) it is the only candidate relation that weds real particulars in this asymmetric way; (3) the level of abstraction bedeviling functionalism is avoided; and (4) the residual ontological issue this discussion has been about is resolved in complete independence of the Cartesian problematic of interaction. This is surely cause for celebration.

If the foregoing appears fishy, perhaps I can make it appear less so. The relation named by "embodiment" is a relation in good and regular standing, on all fours with causality and logical implication; but note: brain processes, in the first instance, do not cause mental phenomena, nor can discourse about brain processes entail the intentionality essential to the characterization of the mental. The connection (Searle's "intrinsic connection?") between brain and mind is not, so to speak, causally horizontal, but ontologically vertical. These metaphors may prove distracting. What I mean to capture is that the physical level of cause and effect incarnates psychological properties and (holistically) embodies mind.

Have we not purchased theoretical economy at the price of re-obfuscating all the important issues of mind and body? I do not think so. Let me sum up this way: While it is important not to overstate our theoretical gain, the gain is nevertheless solid and straightforward--not esoteric. My exclusive concern has been to defend the unity of agency and the unity of persons as indissolubly embodied individuals. There is, on my account, no meditational solvent which can loosen the bond between mind and body. Whichever meditational techniques may be thought to favor, facilitate, or even cause episodes of transcendent mysticism, one is one's body in the embodiment sense of "is," and this does not bode well for metaphysical transcendence. Nothing I

have said affects the obvious heuristic value of functionalism. However, what I have sought to develop is incompatible with a rather natural tendency of functionalism toward eliminative materialism.

Here is a final reassurance about embodiment. First, there is no occultic baggage that comes with this relation. The embodiment relation is primitive, and given its considerable intuitive appeal, we can, initially at any rate, regard this appeal as a sufficient philosophical justification for its employment. Second, embodiment was introduced because of two profound constraints on our theorizing: ontological monism and the irreducibility and ineliminability of the intentional. Of course we are no nearer explaining how cognition and sentience relate to physical processes if explaining requires an extensional account of all the phenomena, but our theoretical gain, while modest, is that the old problematic (interactionism) has been traded for a greatly simplified and intuitively preferable model--a model without Cartesian remainder.

Is this not dualism? It is certainly not ontological dualism in any ordinary or traditional sense: ontologically, human persons are compositionally nothing but matter-energy. Persons need not be considered to be ontological compounds. The duality required by our view poses no intellectual scandal; this duality is the duality of emergent properties vis-à-vis the properties of physical

systems. If there is something fundamentally suspect about emergent properties, then my strategy will not work, but I take it that emergent properties are conceptually above reproach.

Before concluding this section on embodiment, I want to offer more clarity about I am and am not saying by way of contrast to two other writers who speak much of embodiment: Jerry Gill and George Lakoff. Of the two, Gill comes closer to the meaning employed above. Neither philosopher employs the concept with sufficient rigor. First Gill.

I think that Gill's intuitions about the significance of embodiment are the same as mine, but whenever he attempts to clarify that significance he seems to make another kind of point entirely. He first speaks of "being a body,"[45] "the constitutive character of embodiment,"[46] "the . . . fact . . . that our bodies are both us and part of the world,"[47] and the fact that "we are in the world as bodies."[48] Then, in support of these contentions, he multiplies comments about the influence and utility of the body. The following are "clarifying" comments dispersed throughout On Knowing God (1981):

> Often, as with Descartes and Hume, our experience of the physical world is said to be logically dependent upon our mental experience, and this seems to include our knowledge of our own bodies. Descartes, for instance, moves from his insight "I think, therefore I am" to the conclusion that he exists in space, in spite of the fact that while engaged in working all this out he relied upon--indeed, thought by means of--his bodily skills, physiological processes, and interaction with the environment.[49]

> . . . . . .
> . . . very complex skills . . . illustrate the degree to which we think with our bodies.[50]
> . . . . . .
> . . . our bodies function as instruments for the attainment of knowledge.[51]

The concept of embodiment is more radical than Gill's statements would indicate. Keeping in mind that I am using the "is" of embodiment, some brain activity is thinking.

Lakoff's challenging and delightful book, Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things (1987), persistently employs the term "embodiment" throughout, but is utterly obscure about the nature of the relation it names. The burden of the book is that bodily experience and biological capacities, in interaction with the environment, are determinative of the categories by which we make sense of the world. There are a number of comments that human categorizing propensities flow from the biological nature of man. It is not clear, though, whether Lakoff has in mind the biologically molecular level, the central nervous system, or merely that the human being must be appreciated as a whole living organism (in a symbiotic relationship with the environment). Perhaps he intends all of these; but merely to affirm that there is an ever so tight and productive connection between our "biological nature" and our disposition to categorize experience the way we do, does not give us any clear idea of the nature of the embodiment relation.

Most often, Lakoff's embodiment relata are bodily

experience and the overall environment.[52] I get the impression that Lakoff is really talking about bodily influence on judgments in categorizing. However, embodiment is emphatically not a causal relation, so I do not think Lakoff has a clear-cut use for this concept. There is a thin line here, perhaps. At any rate, either Lakoff should show us how to conceive the bodily connection which is vital to his thesis, or drop "embodiment" and talk instead about the influence upon our thinking that goes with having a body of the sort that we in fact have.

The Perception of God and Dimensional Limits

One result of our enquiry so far is that if persons are essentially embodied, then persons cannot transcend in the mystically interesting sense. On the other hand, if persons are not indissolubly minded bodies, then it is perhaps an open question whether there are techniques that help to effect detachment and so transcendence. Even in that case, we found an intractable epistemological problem: the "transcender," by the very nature of his or her "path," could not be in a position to know the outcome; the status of the "mystical experience" is methodologically elusive. Evaluation of the putative mystical experience is abruptly blocked as the effect of the experience of self has been reduced to zero. It is extremely plausible to suppose that

the moment of zero impact stays within the confines of intentional transcendence. I say all this with no desire to invoke (logical positivist) verificationism (the view that the meaning of an existential truth-claim is its method of verification). I am content, as Dennett has put it, to be "urbanely," or moderately, verificationist on the matter.[53] Not only is there not <u>in fact</u> a verification structure for self initiated transcendence, there could not be

The present section is, in part, an enquiry into limits; in its application to the thesis, the preceding section was as well. Here we want to consider dimensional constraints on knowledge. There are problems that attend the notion of a dimension. We freely--glibly--speak of the physical dimension, the religious dimension, the linguistic dimension, the aesthetic dimension, the social dimension, and many, many more. In popular parlance, there seem to be as many dimensions as there are aspects of things. Dimensions, roughly speaking, are "measurable" parameters of subject matters and problems. What is needed in order to proceed, is a straightforward narrowing of this idea. To profit from a consideration of dimensionality, the dimensions we take up must be homogeneous and relevantly related to the problem at hand. It is the seemingly indiscriminate use of the word "dimension" that makes Gill hard to follow.[54] Despite its pretentious sound, I will take up dimensions as <u>ontic conditions</u> of human reality and

as fundamental constraints on the acquision of knowledge. I think that narrows the "dimensional spectrum" considerably. Thus, the dimensions of space-time are clearly pertinent, while the economic dimension of everyday living is not.

Also important is the idea of an intelligibility framework. My contention will be that the dimensional richness of the continuum we inhabit, in the foregoing sense of "dimensional," fundamentally determines what claims are intelligible and which are not. If this is correct, it yields the perhaps surprising corollary that intelligibility itself is ultimately relativized--relativized to dimensional frameworks.[55]

Finally, I shall give a fuller introduction of my term for the gestaltic apprehension of God--"theaesthetic awareness." Neologisms frequently contribute to needless jargon and masquerade as vehicles of new insight when they do little more than compound already existing obscurity and annoy the reader. I trust, however, that "theaesthetic" will prove quite different. I proceed now to a consideration of the dimensional continuum indwelt by the human being and the import this has for intelligibility.

In God, according to Paul, "we live and move and have our being." I do not want to take up theology at this point except to say that, given Paul's contribution to the New Testament, neither pantheism nor panentheism is implied here.[56] Of importance for our purposes is the proximity of

God--his epistemic availability. If (as within the theological tradition of the author) God is

> infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions (emphasis my own); immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most holy, most free, most absolute (emphasis my own),[57]

then God is, for conceptual reasons, inaccessible to the human being. God's passionlessness guarantees that he cannot care to be involved with creatures, while his absolutivity (aseity) guarantees that creaturely affairs are utterly irrelevant to the completion or fulfillment of divine life and existence (which of course is already as complete as is logically possible). If, moreover, the attribute of "eternity" means "radically atemporal," then the God so described may not relate to, or be related to by, a being whose mode of existence involves changeful succession. That is not biblical religion. Suffice it to say that God's love for human persons implies his vulnerability to human persons in time, and that has far-reaching implications about divine aseity, absolutistically construed.

Beginning, now, with dimensional constraint, a knowledge of God does not follow upon successful self-transcendence. Persons simply do not have to do or perform something in order to be in a mode of confrontation with God. They already inhabit the dimensionalities pertinent to theistic knowledge and worship. They need not

traverse land or sea, alter their metabolism, or obliterate bodily awareness in order to approach God. For although the embodied person might seem native only to the dimensionalities of space-time, biblical religion clearly indicates that human beings indwell a distinctive area of spirit as well--an area whose structural properties may be unusual indeed.[58]

Perhaps spirit is multidimensional (as with space-time); however that may be, it seems reasonable to suppose that embodied persons may be endemic to a range of dimensions, some of which are opaque to embodied human sentience. This may seem inconsistent with the monism affirmed earlier, but it need not be, not if spirit may be construed as an emergent reality. (Also, it seems to me that to deny this move requires the assumption that we know the ultimate nature of materiality; and we do not.) Anyhow, to discover additional dimensions of the self-same reality is not thereby to create an ontic bulge.

Granting all this, it is surely legitimate to think of persons as fully functional in a dimension (or in dimensions) that they are only dimly aware of or not aware of at all. This was the case with Edwin A. Abbott's delightful Flatlanders.[59] These were ostensibly two-dimensional creatures whose very existence and perceptual capacities presupposed the existence of a third dimension--and yet the Flatlander was perspectivally blind

to the third dimension. That is to say, the Flatlander did not have the perceptual means to find the (required) third dimension intelligible. Part of the charm Abbott's story has is the strenuous effort on the part of the Flatland intelligentsia to suppress a revelation of the third dimension.

The point is, there may be conditions of perception that are so pervasive--so conditioning--that they are not detectable or introspectable. More specifically, the moral I want to draw is that human sentience (or better, sapience) may have its own blinders due to the constraints of (neurophysiological) embodiment. (Think of asking a fish, per impossible, what it is like to be wet.) We may be <u>dimensionally</u> prevented from framing a clear and coherent concept of dimensions we actually inhabit. Put yet another way, human sapience may be perspectivally blind to the full structure of its field of operation. So it seems to me.

To perhaps labor the point beyond necessity, to say that we are, by creational endowment, fully functional in, though only inchoately cognizant of, the spiritual dimension, is not to claim that we have a constant quality of experience that may be called religious experience. It makes about as much sense to speak of a pervasive, detectable religious experience as it does to speak of a pervasive, detectable physical experience. We can, to be sure, mark off the phenomenological differences between

touching, tasting, seeing, smelling, and hearing; but to claim that we sentiently experience our experiencing physically (i.e., discern what that is like vis-à-vis non-physical experiencing) seems confused. Physicality is an ultimate condition of sentient discrimination, not a subject matter that can be isolated and savored as such. Moreover, even if we waived this kind of problem, we have already found that religiousness has no distinctive phenomenology.

The facts about dimensionality have considerable importance for intelligibility in general. Let us return, briefly, to Flatland. As was mentioned, the Flatland intelligentsia are very concerned to suppress talk of a third dimension. North, south, east, and west are, so to speak, orthodox; up and down are heresies. The way in which a sphere (a bi-millennial visitor) got a Flatland professor (a square) to cognitively appreciate the reality of a third dimension was by lifting(!) the professor above the plane of Flatland to "see" for himself. Of course, what the professor saw (experienced) was for him indescribable. The professor literally saw inside his fellow Flatlanders and inside their domiciles (without going in); he could state that fact, but could not render the enriched reality coherently in Flatlandese. For Flatlandese is fundamentally impoverished relative to the descriptive framework available to the sphere. For what it is worth, this sorry tale ends

with our hero--now a heretical mystic--in a Flatland prison for the rest of his life.

The moral to be drawn from this fantasy is that logic serves one from within the constraints of a descriptive framework[60]--this, coupled with the fact that the categories of descriptive frameworks are tied to dimensional levels. One more illustration, this time without fantasy.

For the self-same percipient, the left and right eye manifolds must have different descriptions true of them if visual awareness of depth is to take place. If one places one's thumb and forefinger in front of the face with the the thumb about five inches from the nose, forefinger pointing away, then with the left eye closed the forefinger is to the right of the thumb; and with the right eye closed the forefinger is to the left of the thumb. Open both eyes and one is ushered into a visual gestalt of the third dimension and the appropriate proposition becomes something like , "my thumb is in front of of my forefinger." "To the right of" and "to the left of" simply do not get a purchase within the dimensionally enhanced perspective. This is not a trick argument. No amount of additional propositions could combine with those of the two-dimensional framework so as to logically entail the "in front of" proposition.

Our gain from this thought experiment is considerable; intelligibility itself is an inherently relative concept; intelligibility--in the sense of a

discursive account which is logically consistent--is relativized to a descriptive framework. A descriptive framework, in turn, is crucially related to the dimensional complex within which that framework may be appreciated as logically consistent. To grant this point is not to concede that anything goes or that there is license to advance any scheme one might wish. There must be good reason to suppose that logical dissonance in a given system is due, or might be due, to basic--"alien"--data (legitimately) entering that system from an "extra"-dimensional perspective relative to the perspective which gives rise to the "domestic" data. I include scare-quotes around "extra" because the dimensionality it accommodates is not really extra; it is fully integral but opaque in the sense that it is a conditioning factor of experience rather than a phenomenological aspect of experience. That is how it was for the Flatland professor, and so also, it is plausible to suppose, in the case of mind and body. Logical "reconcilability" is not necessarily an acid test of intelligibility when it comes to reconciling dimensionally "alien" with "domestic" parameters. The properties of a 3-D manifold are logically not merely an additive effect of the combined properties of 2-D manifolds; the consequence, rather, is a shift in gestalt. So it is, I am inclined to think, in the case of spirit (an emergent reality) vis-à-vis matter-energy.

Another issue that is tangent to these considerations will be postponed until chapter six. It concerns the reality of what the literature calls "qualia."[61] Briefly, the awareness of God I shall develop requires gestaltic awareness, gestaltic intelligence, and the latter, I believe, requires qualia. I do not think perception of God--personal awareness of another person, whatever else it may be--is possible unless distinctively holistic (i.e., gestaltic, "qualiafied") awareness is also possible. Dennett, for example, who is completely consistent with his central assumptions for understanding consciousness, wants to decompose all mental phenomena in terms of essentially discursive functioning. Indeed, that is the only kind of "mental" traffic his model can accommodate. He believes himself to have "disqualified qualia."[62] I think awareness of religious reality requires qualia--very sophisticated qualia, so I need to meet his argument. I do not want to give the impression that Dennett's goal is a kind of discursive reduction. It seems to me to be far more atomistic than that. Ultimately, he says, all there is are "information events."[63] His strategy ("teleofunctionalism")[64] zeros in on de-qualiafied discursive events, if I may put it so. This is a monumental problem to leap over just now, but I want to sketch in the broad features of the model I will be defending.

The literature of biblical religion (i.e., its

theological tradition) distinguishes two sorts of revelation. One sort, "Special Revelation," is the speaking of God through human agency; it is highly specific, verbal, and pointedly addresses persons in their concrete socio-cultural circumstances. My concern in this thesis does not concern revelation of this sort except in the way the biblical literature occasionally alludes to revelation of the other sort. This is usually called "General Revelation." "General Revelation," as Jerry Gill has put it, stresses "the continuity between our experience and our knowledge of the divine."[65] Historically, Catholicism, following Thomas Aquinas, has held General Revelation in some prominence as the basis for a solid, if meager, "natural theology." Protestantism--especially Protestantism theologically linked to Calvinism--has regarded General Revelation with a good deal of suspicion. It is perhaps better to say that natural theology is what is held in suspicion by Calvinistic Protestants. Of course it is general revelation that is the informational basis for natural theology--the latter being propositions read off of, or inferred from, the creational order of things. Calvin himself embraces General Revelation, <u>not</u> natural theology, in his <u>Institutes</u>:

> Since the perfection of blessedness consists in the knowledge of God, he has been pleased, in order that none might be excluded from the means of obtaining felicity, not only to deposit in our minds that seed of religion of which we have already spoken, but so to

> manifest his perfections in the whole structure of the universe, and daily place himself in our view, that we cannot open our eyes without being compelled to behold him. His essence, indeed, is incomprehensible, utterly transcending all human thought; but on each of his works his glory is engraven in characters so bright, so distinct, and so illustrious, that none, however dull and illiterate, can plead ignorance as their excuse. . . .
> . . . None who have the use of their eyes can be ignorant of the divine skill manifested so conspicuously in the endless variety, yet distinct and well-ordered array, of the heavenly host; and, therefore, it is plain that the Lord has furnished every man with abundant proofs of his wisdom.[66]

The irony is that the clarity of God's self-disclosure rhapsodized above is not generally conceded by "Calvinists" to yield a conceptually straightforward natural theology. Why not?

First, there is a simple empirical observation: at the level of the private, personal knowledge of God that Calvin addresses, it is far from obvious that a Gallup Poll would offer confirmation. On the face of it, that seems odd. Something, in fact, is very wrong here. Is the God of whom Calvin speaks, <u>as evident</u> to a fatherless black teenage gang member growing up in the violence and chaos of a ghetto, as he is to an affluent WASPish Presbyterian growing up on Lookout Mountain?

The claim then becomes that in one's heart of hearts one really knows this God (including our young street-fighter), regardless of what one says. Perhaps so, but that response seems obtuse, and at any rate puts an early end to the discussion. (Recall that the general

revelation in Calvin's description is both ubiquitous and dazzling!) Or consider a young woman suffering multiple personality disorder. From the time she was a toddler, she has been "generating" alternative "selves" to absorb the constant pain of sexual abuse of a sickening severity. Let her reside within the smog-filled, materially impoverished, rat-infested, sociopathic milieu of our black teenager. Would Calvin find it puzzling that she might miss the "divine skill manifested so conspicuously in the endless variety, yet distinct and well-ordered array, of the heavenly host?"

There is a standard theological reply to why there is such manifest failure of subjective response to General Revelation, and I think it goes far to explain the reluctance on the part of philosophers of a Calvinistic heritage (e.g., Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff)[67] to generate "positive apologetics"[68] (the presenting of arguments <u>for</u> Christianity's truth-claims as opposed to "negative apologetics" which aims exclusively at showing falsity, incoherence, or inconclusiveness in argumentation which attempts to refute Christianity). The reply is that though the revelation is really there, the human being has a natural antipathy to it and so represses it.[69]

I think that on this score, there is a wide disparity between the theologian's foreclosure on epistemic competence and the outlook encouraged by biblical religion. The

present thesis is not an apologetic enterprise, but I note this remarkable irony in passing: if the very sentience (in the intellectually broad sense of the term) of the believer and non-believer are utterly incommensurable with regard to the capacity for God-awareness, then the very General Revelation extolled by Calvin is quite emphatically not revelation. To press the Calvinistic tradition here to its own logic, we are being asked to acknowledge an impressive revelation which addresses an epistemic competence which is designed to be blind to what is revealed!--a revelation designed by God to overstep the epistemic competence of those he intended to profit from it. I think it is easily possible to accommodate the issue of moral resistence to what are taken to be offensive data (that is the concern of the theological purists) and avoid this sort of absurdity.

Biblical religion is almost void of theoretical reflection. I suppose Paul's letters in the New Testament come closest to systematic and categorial treatment of the subjects taken up. There is, however one biblical text that may be particularly helpful in clarifying the orientation of the position I have taken about the character of what is "out there" by way of raw (theistic) data and its mode of perception.

The text is a bit of Hebrew poetry--the opening lines of Psalm 19, a Psalm which nearly invariably gets a very misleading intellectualist rendering in English versions of

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The text is a bit of Hebrew poetry--the opening lines of Psalm 19, a Psalm which nearly invariably gets a very misleading intellectualist rendering in English versions of

the Bible. This is my own translation of Psalm 19:1-4 (although the New American Standard Version [1960] avoids the intellectualizing I have mentioned):

1) The heavens declare the glory of God;
   and the heavenly expanse reveals his handiwork.
2) Each succeeding day pours forth speech;
   and each succeeding night displays knowledge.
3) And this without speech and without words;
   there is no sound of any voice.
4) Their (musical) sound goes out through all the earth;
   and their utterance to the extremity of the world.

My intent in what follows is not homiletic exposition. What I want to do is instance a clear expression of the knowledge of God I shall be talking about. The "General Revelation" consistent with this text is neither discursive in its manifestation nor discursive in its mode of subjective apprehension. Some observations: first, the poet speaks of a revelation of God's reality and God's glory (aspects of divine character).[70] Second, this revelation is continuous, and fairly blankets the earth. But third, and curiously, given the tradition's propensity for intellectual theologizing. this revelation is not discursive. Whatever is revealed is not done so by verbal declaration; nor is teleological reasoning somehow invited by this text. In fact, the latter is profoundly uninvited. To think "inference" or "inferential process" is even consistent with these verses is totally to miss the point. The passage has exclusively to do with recognition, and that is quite different. Verse three seems almost a parenthetical

caution--a pretty unusual feature in a flow of poetry; but it is really there. The standard rendition of verse three is: "There is no speech or language where[71] their voice is not heard." That changes the sense entirely.

What, then, is the sense of this text? As I began to say, the only noetic phenomenon implied by these verses is recognition of (possibly communion with) God. There is an unavoidable epistemological issue here, but the first order of business is to clarify the sort of knowledge claim involved.

To return to the passage quoted, the most straightforward line of interpretation is this. Verse 1 invites the reader to conceive of the created cosmos as a work of art--as God's handiwork. In verse 4 we are told that the music of this revelation goes throughout the earth. Thus the "language" of this revelation is essentially aesthetic--gestaltically manifest--rather than somehow discursive.

Thus one's apprehension and/or feeling of God's presence in his works is more like the apprehension of an artist's personality coming through in his or her art (taking, perhaps, the works that range over an entire career). If the exercise of linguistic competence is not a necessary condition for the apprehension of the pertinent saliencies, we have all that is cognitively important for our present concerns. What is needed is the capacity for

personal recognition in the sense of the apprehension of personal presence or personal provenance--however it is that such apprehension might be mediated. The mediation in the case before us, I believe, is intrinsically aesthetic. (My use of Psalm 19 indicated this direction.) Now I can introduce my concept.

A name for a theory that explores the hueristic advantage of an aesthetic model of perceiving God is readily suggested by the basic terms involved. We want to see how one might be thought to experience, non-discursively yet cognitively, the God in whom one is existentially fulfilled. Recall our reforming definition of religion: religion is the condition of a fundamental need for completion in one's God. It is an ontic condition (I allege), not a type or quality of subjectivity.

Accordingly, we address ourselves to a theory of theaesthetic awareness. As mentioned earlier, the term is a joining of the two Greek words, "Theos," meaning God, and "aisthesis," meaning perception. But in addition to the latter meaning, I want to trade on "aesthetic" in its modern connection with art. Involved are a number of properties that attend "the aesthetic" in that sense--including gestalticness, intentionality, and the range of aesthetic value (there is no confinement, e.g., to the sublime or the beautiful, whatever these latter may come to). My claim, to be more detailed in chapter seven, is that religiousness

essentially involves not only a general theaesthetic sensitivity, but a distinctive disposition.

Summary

Our progression so far has concentrated on the demystification of religiousness (chapter one). This was followed in chapter two by the task of ontologically "locating" persons as candidates for religious knowledge. The sort of individual the human person is, is an essentially embodied individual. Religious epistemological readiness, so to speak, is structurally built-in to embodied existence. (I find the great mystical traditions to be gnostic in this regard in the ancient religious sense of Gnosticism--i.e., embodiment is regarded as evil, illusory, the ground of human suffering, and the fundamental impediment to accessing spiritual realities.)

Functionalism was found fundamentally to threaten our enterprise only if (1) functional properties were allowed an ontological detachment inconsistent with their inherently subaltern character, and (2) the roughly pertinent form/matter considerations were not underwritten by a less abstract and substantively germane relation: embodiment. The human dimensional habitat was taken up for the vital bearing it has on the facilitation of, but especially the constraints it imposes upon, both sentient and discursive intelligibility. Finally, a unique cognitive (i.e.,

theaesthetic) competence for the perception of God was urged, one whose peculiarity is tied up in an exclusively gestaltic awareness mediated by aesthetic manifolds. We proceed now to address the latter more particularly.

Notes

1. Still up to date in this regard is Daniel Dennett's survey, "Current Issues in the Philosophy of Mind," American Philosophical Quarterly 15 (October 1978): 249-61.

2. The notable exception is Karl R. Popper and John C. Eccles, The Self and its Brain (New York: Springer International, 1977).

3. Dennett's recent book Consciousness Explained (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1991) has comments throughout to this effect.

4. The phenomena of inner experience, if emergent phenomena, are neither reducible to the physiological processes which embody them nor are they epiphenomenal (if indeed epiphenomenality can even be coherently formulated). For some good discussions of the prospects of "Folk Psychology," which of course embraces qualia, see John Greenwood, ed., The Future of Folk Psychology: Intentionality and Cognitive Science (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1991), especially, "The Autonomy of Folk Psychology," by Joseph Margolis, 242-62.

5. My concern is not a theory of mind, nor is it a critique of major positions in philosophy of mind. Nevertheless, the integrity of human agency is important for human relationship with God and there are versions of materialism inimical to such relationship. But not all materialisms are like that. My restricted interest in philosophy of mind is an ontological one involving a primitive, asymmetric relation that will be detailed later in the chapter.

6. For a nice summary of what is involved here see Kim Sterelny, The Representational Theory of Mind (Cambridge, Mass.: Basil Blackwell Inc., 1990), 74-79, 137-140.

7. For a standard review of the complexities involved see Joseph Margolis, Philosophy of Psychology (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall Publishers, 1984), 8-33.

8. By contrast to pre-1960 "theories" of mind, no current philosophy of mind that is worth its salt can

proceed without a pretty keen and discerning eye to a number of disciplines--including neurophysiology, psycholinguistics, artificial intelligence, and the psychology of perception. The major developments in philosophy of mind in the last twenty years are interdependent with developments within these disciplines. It is naive to think that the main lines of development can be halted by the fancy analysis of a few concepts.

9. David Lodge, Nice Work (London: Secker and Warburg, 1988).

10. Dennett, Consciousness Explained, 410-11.

11. Ibid., 412-30.

12. Lodge, Nice Work, 128.

13. Dennett, op cit., 459.

14. This is, perhaps, far from obvious, but it would take us too far afield to ground this suspicion. Roughly, my apprehension about functionalism as a complete theory of mind is that while it handles mental phenomena in terms of properties and states, it is silent (as a matter of principle) about thinking, the thinker, the agent in whose interest inquiry and goal pursuit take place.

15. Joseph Margolis, Philosophy of Psychology (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall Publishers, 1984).

16. Ibid., 48.

17. Ibid., 49.

18. My contention will be that it is precisely because of the phenomenology of inner experience that awareness of God is possible.

19. Agency implies an important kind of finitude; an agent, because noetically finite, must be able to refer in terms of self interest. The alternative to the capacity for self- and other-reference seems to be omniscience. Perhaps the problem of agency is best summarized within the context of current discussion as the problem of the capacity to refer. See Margolis's "The Autonomy of Folk Psychology" for

a statement of the problem. Margolis is confident that there are conceptual reasons why reference poses an impasse to a computational theory of mind. I.e., while it may be conceivable that a computer might be omniscient, thus obviating the need to refer, no computational device could refer.

20. See J. Haugeland's Artificial Intelligence: The Very Idea (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985) for a balanced discussion of the issues involved.

21. "Linguistic event" says it better, perhaps. My point is that a linguistic event betokens agency only under certain conditions. A linguistic event is not a self and no mere collection of linguistic events constitutes a self. Rather, linguistically competent agents use language to structure their own understanding, to communicate, to amuse others, etc.

22. A great many religious believers respond to the word "materialism" as a code word which instantly marks off positions worldviews apart. I do not regard this word in that way. Neither do I think that the word is very informative. Perhaps we need to distinguish ontological from methodological materialism. On current knowledge, commitment to the latter seems the saner course.

23. Joseph Margolis, Persons and Minds: The Prospects of Nonreductive Materialism (Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1978).

24. Margolis, Philosophy of Psychology, 49.

25. The chief architect of computational representationalism has been Jerry Fodor. His essay, "Methodological Solipsism Considered as a Research Strategy in Cognitive Psychology" is a good introduction to this approach (in Representations: Philosophical Essays on the Foundations of Cognitive Science (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1981), 225-53.).

26. For an overview of connectionism and recent response, see Kim Sterelny, The Representational Theory of Mind, 168-96.

27. Noam Chomsky, Syntactic Structures (The Hague: Monton, 1957).

Notes

28. Jerry A. Fodor, The Language of Thought (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1979).

29. Sterelny, e.g., thinks, as opposed to Fodor, that only some--a very few--concepts are "wired in" in mentalese. He says, "I think we need a conceptual foundationalism without definitions, and in which we give a teleological account of the content of base concepts," 140.

30. Jerry A. Fodor, Modularity of Mind (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1983).

31. P. F. Strawson, Individuals (London: Metheun, 1959).

32. I think it is because nonreductive materialism is not esteemed a viable option that concepts like "realization," "instantiation," "embodiment," and the like are characteristically not analyzed or seriously examined. The latter terms are freely deployed in the literature more or less heuristically when the ultimate intent is a reductive account of mind. I know of no conceptual analysis of what it means for one particular to be realized by another particular. I should make it clear that the relation named by "realize" proves objectionable only when its heuristic use is not made clear and when it is uncritically allowed to be a more concrete relation than it is. I think it signals a relation far too abstract when applied to mental states and processes vis-à-vis neural states and processes. On the other hand, "realize" seems quite appropriate in the context of machine functionalism. My point is that "realize" is not innocent of ontological implication and facilitates our talk about mind and brain in such a way that uncritically bars more germane and concrete considerations.

33. I think Searle's intuitions, though not his sprawling, open-ended thought experiment, have to do with the inappropriate level of abstraction in the computer-to-program connection vis-à-vis the brain-to-mental-process connection.

34. Searle really cannot afford this concession if we are to make sense of his thought experiment.

35. John R. Searle, "Minds, Brains, and Programs,"

in Mind Design: Philosophy, Psychology, Artificial Intelligence (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1981), 282-306.

36. See Margolis, Philosophy of Psychology, 52.

37. The expression is Joseph Margolis's. See his Knowledge and Existence (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 176.

38. My acquaintance with Margolis's distinction between "embodied" and "incarnate" is from personal conversation with him. I do not know whether he has explained this distinction in print.

39. It perhaps goes without saying that a particular may be both realized and embodied in the same medium simultaneously. But the two relations are not identical. Embodiment is a kind of realization as I am using the two terms.

40. Margolis, Philosophy of Psychology, 52.

41. Joseph Margolis, "The Ontological Peculiarity of Works of Art," in Philosophy Looks at the Arts: Contemporary Readings in Aesthetics, Joseph Margolis, ed., 3rd ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 253-60.

42. Ibid., 257.

43. For a discussion of this see Margolis's "Works of Art are Physically Embodied and Culturally Emergent Entities" in Lars Aagaard-Mogensen, ed., Culture and Art: An Anthology (Atlantic Heights, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1976), 32-45.

44. Roughly, the intentional has to do with properties essentially bound up with the mind's being directed upon an object (Brentano), while intensional has to do with meaning.

45. Jerry H. Gill, On Knowing God (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1981), 70.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid., 71.

48. Ibid., 125.

49. Ibid., 24.

50. Ibid., 72.

51. Ibid., 95.

52. In particular, see the Preface, George Lakoff, Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

53. The context is whether Dennett's position versus Nagel (on the inner lives of bats) should be construed as issuing from "the Village Verificationist." Consciousness Explained, 461.

54. Gill says, "An ontological hierarchy can be constructed beginning with the physical or material dimension of experience as the least complex, moving on up through the social, moral, and aesthetic dimensions, and culminating with the religious dimension as the richest, most comprehensive." (On Knowing God, 76.) As dimensions, those listed by Gill are heterogeneous, but this leads to confusion. More profoundly, Gill's dimensionalism bears a striking similarity with the dimensionalism of Herman Dooyeweerd, but whereas Gill seems to champion a distinctive religious experience, Dooyeweerd flatly denies it. See p. 13 where I quote Dooyeweerd to this effect. For Dooyeweerd there is no religious dimension in Gill's sense.

55. I owe the notion of the relation of intelligibility to dimensional frameworks to conversations with Donald MacKay.

56. Paul's New Testament letters certainly exclude pantheism, but texts like Colossians 1:15-20 pretty clearly indicate that his deity's relationship to the creation is not panentheistic either.

57. The Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter II, 1.

58. In Paul's "being caught up to the third heaven," (II Cor. 12:1-4) he emphasizes that being in or out of the body was not something he could determine. If one grants

the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus, the narrative makes it clear that, although he suddenly appeared within a locked room, what appeared was not apparitional or vision-like in the mystical sense.

59. Edwin A. Abbott, Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions (New York: Dover Publications, 1952).

60. To use one of MacKay's illustrations, the descriptive framework for a draftsman providing blueprints for the building of a girder bridge is two-dimensional. The information for construction consists in a good many two-dimensional projections. With an exclusive eye to these two-dimensional drawings, there is no third dimension--neither by visual superimposition nor by the logical relations among the descriptive sentences taking up the visual properties of the drawings.

61. I take qualia to be an enormously varied set of phenomena, including, e.g., the sense of intellectual closure upon solving a difficult problem. Pain and color are the usual grist for philosophical thought experiments on this topic.

62. Dennett, Consciousness Explained, 369-411.

63. Ibid., 459.

64. Ibid., 460.

65. Gill, On Knowing God, 120.

66. John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book I, Chapter V, Part 1.

67. See Alvin Plantinga, ed., Faith and Rationality: Reason and Belief in God (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983).

68. At my request, Nicholas Wolterstorff explained his view of the misguidedness of "positive apologetics" to a class of my students at Covenant College in substantially this way.

69. My problem with this reply is not so much theological as epistemological. The epistemological

implications of the dogma--supposing that the dogma is above reproach--are not what the Calvinist tradition has predominately supposed them to be.

70. The Hebrew word translated "glory" often carries the sense of personal character traits. In the case of God these include lovingkindness, compassion, fairness, etc. The link with character with this word is explicit in Exodus 33-4 when Moses asks God to show him his glory.

71. The underlined words occur in the King James Version of the Bible italicized, which is the device used to alert the reader that the italicized word does not occur in the original.

CHAPTER THREE

GESTALT QUALITIES AND PERSONAL SALIENCIES

"I-It" and "I-Thou"

The present chapter, from the standpoint of the author, is the most difficult chapter to write. That is not because it is the most technical (although there is no reason why it cannot prove to be so). The difficulty, rather, involves another proverbial "raid on the ineffable" with the prospect of coming away with little discursively to show for it. There are, however, two keys to help the reader better understand what is to count as success or failure. The first key is that I want to approach what I have called theaesthetic perception from the standpoint of human learning, not from the standpoint of the deduction from "orthodoxy" (or from rational first principles) to what should be perceived. My view is that theaesthetic perception is the product of a natural human competence. The second key is best developed more extensively. I approach the (theaesthetic) knowability of God as the knowability of a person.[1] That sounds hardly earthshaking, but it is in sharp contrast, it seems to me, to a great deal of the literature in the philosophy of religion. The issue has to do with what it is to experience another person.

Of course, no one experiences God as omni- anything (whether omnipotent, omniscient, or omnipresent). Indeed, that is both a physical and a logical impossibility for finite human sentience. Nor does anyone experience God as "the ground of all being," "the wholly other," "a being a greater than which cannot be conceived," or the like. That cannot be the character of the sentient information involved. I mean no disrespect for theology (I think theology is important), but the systematic description of God along traditional dogmatic, or philosophical theological, lines has very little to do with the problems I shall be discussing. In fact, the conceptualization of God (discursive categorization of attributes and properties, however true or apt), is not, in the first instance, what will concern us. Experiencing a unique person will concern us, never mind for now how one might be disposed to describe such an experience.

While I think it would be naive to deny that theaesthetic perception precludes all conceptual mediation (later we will consider concepts vis-à-vis sentient Gestalten), at the outset, at least, the theaesthetic perception I want to consider is not theologically mediated. There is a blunt, ill-mannered, way to make my point, and I shall stoop to it. Substitute for "theology," "godology," or better yet, "Godology." My point is made the more forcefully if the latter term is not merely crude, but

offensive (certainly to a devout theologian), but I am confident I will be forgiven. What I am saying, of course, is that theaesthetic perception is not Godological. It cannot involve an "I-it" perceptual stance vis-à-vis personal presence; it is not an impersonal observation by a human observer with a theological data-sheet in hand (or in mind). Theaesthetic perception, on my reckoning, is not in any clinical sense, an observation at all; it is essentially interpersonal and does not involve the one-way vulnerability of observation. I will return to this when I compare (at least some instances of) theaesthetic perception to Jean-Paul Sartre's insightful analysis of "The Look" in Being and Nothingness.

Another consideration along this line is this. Given the third person perspective, or objective stance of theologizing, as well as a great deal of "God-talk," the word "God," for all intents and purposes, designates a title, not a proper name. This is an important theoretical point for my purposes--one that deserves more development than I can give it here. Paul Ziff considers briefly what I am about to consider, but misses its import. Consider the following:

> The English utterance 'God exists' occurs in religious discourses in English (not in "religious language"--there is no such thing). The expression 'God' in that utterance is evidently a noun; furthermore, it is not a count noun (like 'bean') since it does not require an article. This is not to deny that there is also a count noun 'god' in English. Thus

> one can say 'If God exists then a god exists' or even 'God is a god.' This indicates that 'God' is not a noun like 'man' in 'Man is a rope stretched over an abyss' for one cannot say 'Man is a man.'[2]

Ziff goes on to say that "God" is neither a pronoun nor a mass noun. So, he says, "it is reasonably clear that 'God' in 'God exists' is a proper noun, a proper name, or for short, a name."[3] However, there is more complexity here than meets the eye. Ziff concludes, somewhat hastily I believe, in view of the linguistic data he cites. Yet, how indeed can one say that God is a god? I admit that the issue is a bit vexed, but understandably so. I accommodate the data Ziff fails to accommodate this way: "God" is far more like "presiding creator-sovereign over the universe" than "the unique person who in fact wields the relevant power and authority." Accordingly, "God" functions more like "president," "king," or "queen" than like "Bill Clinton," "Hussein," or "Elizabeth." Thus "God" is, more often than not, a title with a job description plus a set of qualifications (Classical Theology is ever keen on determining these details.) My contention is that the concept "God," certainly within the Judeo-Christian tradition, is uniformly a count noun, seldom if ever a proper name.

This point is not rendered inconsequential because in monotheism the class designated by the word "God" has only one member. The issue, it seems to me, does not have to do

with the extension or the intension of the concept "God." We do indeed commonly use "God" as a proper name, but probably less often than is supposed. The question, Do you believe that there is a God? is a perfectly good question from a logical or conceptual standpoint. Whether we use an upper or lower case "G" is irrelevant. The point is, the foregoing question does not treat "God" as a proper name. On the other hand, the question, Do you believe that God exists? is logically ambiguous (though not necessarily confusing.) On the view I am advocating, the first question asks whether a being of a certain office--executing each of the functions of that office--does in fact exist. The second question may well ask the same question, but it may also ask whether a certain divine personage exists, packing into the question an implied identity of the deity queried about. In the latter case, "God" becomes, metonymically, a proper name for, say, Jehovah, Baal, Allah, Zeus, Vishnu or some other. Even so, in this latter case "God" merely functions as a proper name thanks only to its metonymically suggesting a determinate personal identity.

Returning to the linguistic propriety of "God is a god," which Ziff concedes, substitute "The President is a president," which I think is fairly analogous. The occurrence of the article before "President" does not upset the analogy; its force is "The current president, namely, _____ is a president." If the current president had always

been and would always be in office we might dispense with the definite article. Convention for addressing doctors and senators might make the point with less distraction.

For what it is worth, the biblical literature is quite consistent with my contention. In the Old Testament, the titular and role-functional import of "God" is, to my eye, unmistakable and explicit. To be a god is to be a unique kind of sovereign, while the metonymic function of "God" as proper name prevails in the New Testament. (The New Testament takes over what is implicit about the God-language of the Old Testament.) Consider four examples from the Old Testament. There are many more.

In Exodus chapter three the name of the Hebrews' god as Yahweh is given to Moses and Moses is commanded to disclose Yahweh's intent to deliver the Hebrews from Egypt. Moses balks at the role of spokesman for Yahweh because he is a poor speaker. Yahweh's solution is that Moses should assume the god-role for Moses's brother Aaron who would then do the speaking (Aaron, thus, would occupy the prophet-role).[4]

The story of Elijah at Mount Carmel is clearer yet. A test is defined to determine which individual, Yahweh or Baal, is really god: which of them can send fire to consume an offering? The wording of Elijah's challenge to the worshippers of Baal makes sense only on my construal of the import of "god":

> If Yahweh is the God [in the Hebrew the article appears before "God," but not before "Yahweh." Compare, "the President is . . .], follow him; but if Baal, follow him. . . . Call on the name (emphasis my own) of your god, and I will call on the name (emphasis my own) of Yahweh, and the god who answers by fire, he is god [the Hebrew has no lower case].[5]

In the book of Isaiah there is another test of deity which just as clearly makes the same point about usage. The challenge is issued rhetorically to "gods" which compete with the god of Israel:

> "Present your case," Yahweh
> says.
> "Bring forth your strong arguments."
> The King of Jacob says.
> Let them [i.e., the competitor gods] bring forth and
> declare to us what is going to
> take place;
> As for the former [i.e., past] events, declare
> what there were,
> That we may consider them,
> and know their outcome;
> Or announce to us what is coming.
> Declare the things that are
> going to come afterward,
> That we may know that you are gods (emphasis my own);
> Indeed, do good or evil [cause catastrophe, e.g.], that
> we may anxiously look about
> us and fear together.[6]

The implication, of course, is that Yahweh had already distinguished himself in feats of knowledge, benevolence, and judgment, while mere pretenders to the position of deity could perform none of the above.

There is also a fairly ubiquitous construction in the Old Testament literature that explicitly makes my point. Psalm 100:3 is a good example of this:

> Know that Yahweh himself is God;
> It is he who has made us and
> not we ourselves;

We are his people and
the sheep of his pasture.

The informational content which is intended on the first line of this verse is not analytic to the concept "God." To put the matter rather untheologically, the reader is told that the unique individual who functions and presides as God is (named) Yahweh; "Yahweh" is a proper name, while "God" designates office.

Why is all this important? My claim, first of all, is that the distinction I am drawing attention to is nontendentious. There is no sectarian advantage implicit in it. Most importantly, failure to understand that "God" is not a proper name invites confusion about what a theaesthetic awareness implies. To put the matter concisely, experiencable personal saliencies are not the same (or not necessarily the same) as qualifications of office. The pertinent personal saliencies of theaesthetic awareness are concrete, non-superlative, affective qualities and they are gestaltic in character rather than (discursively) symbolic. Qualifications of divine office, on the other hand, are abstract, typically superlative, role-defining, and apprehended discursively. What one experiences in theaesthetic awareness are personal saliencies of the unique individual who is God. Before taking up such saliencies directly, it is profitable first to examine the character of a gestalt quality.

Gestalt Qualities

As was indicated at the close of chapter two, the awareness of God which "theaesthetic" is intended to capture involves an aesthetic approach to God-perception. Such perception is aesthetic in two senses: (1) the broadly psychological sense in which the sort of engaged attention is gestaltic rather than discursive, and (2) the sense in which the pertinent perceptual manifolds exhibit "artistry," and hence, in the narrower sense of the term, elicit aesthetic response. In this section, I want to establish the basic character of the data in theaesthetic awareness, although the concluding section will add to this substantially.

There is very little mention of Gestalt qualities or Gestalt properties within recent Anglo-American philosophy of art and philosophy of mind. This undoubtedly is due to these expressions being so defined by, and tightly linked to, Gestalt Psychology and the latter's fortunes as a scientific psychology. I will adopt the notion of "Gestalt(en)," nevertheless, as a term of convenience, and will follow the use made of it by the philosopher Kendall Walton in his seminal paper, "Categories of Art."[7]

Gestalten, of course, have to do with wholes. In Walton's use of the concept, they have to do with the macro-look, or the macro-sound, of visual art or music. Shortly, I will be expanding gestaltic wholes to include

personal saliencies as well. Our immediate focus here is that complex wholes are conceptually slippery--especially aesthetic wholes. How does one get good at--or justify--the application of aesthetic terminology to physically describable manifolds? The discussion of this matter, dating roughly from Frank Sibley's paper, "Aesthetic Concepts,"[8] is worth noting for the blind alley it indicates. The lesson is that the justification for the application of aesthetic concepts cannot be logical deduction from non-aesthetic descriptive properties. The ascription of aesthetic qualities is not straightforwardly defensible in that way, even though, as I am inclined to think, there is not such a clean separation of purely aesthetic and purely descriptive properties. The intricacies of that discussion need not be reviewed here. Suffice it to say that this is just another arena in which an intentionally rich discourse (i.e., aesthetic discourse) is conceptually necessary to characterize phenomena that have a "more basic" non-intentional (physical) characterization. The impasse is the familiar one: intentional discourse does not obey truth-functional logic.

I do not mean to say that this was explicitly Sibley's point (he did not cast it in terms of the intentionality of aesthetic discourse), but it seems to me that this, surely, is what gives such clout as it may have to Sibley's (fallacious) point that the application of

aesthetic concepts is not condition governed at all.[9] To put the impasse now as a practical matter, if the making of aesthetic judgments is not "logically" defensible, how are such judgments defensible at all? Since my aim at the moment is only to sketch the conceptual development of this discussion, I will not take it up in any detail. From here, for my purposes, it is natural to raise the issue of objectivism versus relativism in aesthetic interpretation and criticism,[10] but merely to fly my own colors, I want to eschew relativism and hold forth for a reasonable objectivism. Consider, then, Gestalt qualities and gestaltic phenomena.

To speak of a work of art as gestaltic is to speak of it as an indissoluble whole; it is also to speak of it as a dynamically structured manifold of (for the most part) sight or sound. While the feature of indissolubility is surely uncontroversial, it may seem odd to claim that a static painting is dynamically structured. I will return to this shortly. To take up the first feature, what is crucial for the aesthetic perception of a painting, for example, is for the viewer to acquirer the basic "look" of the work before him or her. This means that the viewer needs to perceive what Kendall Walton has termed the "Gestalt quality" of that particular work.

To perceive a Gestalt quality, however, is not to notice a number of features and from these infer or conclude

that the work in question has such and such a Gestalt quality. The perception of a Gestalt quality is never an inference or the outcome of a discursive process; it is, rather, the acquisition of the structured look of the whole canvass, the entire audition (memory) of the phraseology of a musical composition. The quality of which we speak is a holistic and emergent phenomenon.

Moreover, it is not sufficient simply to recognize that a given painting has all the features that are standard, or necessary, for a particular Gestalt quality--that is, it does not follow that because one discerns certain features pertinent to the Gestalt quality of a work that one also perceives that quality. Walton writes,

> to perceive a Gestalt quality in a work . . . is not, or not merely, to recognize that Gestalt quality. Recognizing is a momentary occurrence, whereas perceiving a quality is a continuous state which may last for a short or long time. (For the same reason, seeing the ambiguous duck-rabbit figure as a duck is not, or not merely, recognizing a property of it.) We perceive the Brahmsian or impressionist Gestalt in a work when, and as long as, it sounds (looks) Brahmsian or impressionist to us. This involves perceiving (not necessarily being aware of) features standard relative to that category. But it is not just this, nor this plus the intellectual realization that these features make the work Brahmsian, or impressionist. These features are perceived combined into a single Gestalt quality.[11]

It is perhaps enough to say that what one strives for in aesthetic perception is the distinctive, holistic look or sound of a particular work, but before moving on I want to

address a kind of analysis which is inappropriate to understanding qestaltic phenomena in general and artistic phenomena in particular. Because theaesthetic awareness shares in the gestaltic features of the latter, the digression will be worth our effort. The style of analysis is, roughly, Humean, and since Hume is as good a Humean as any, I will consider him.

My intent is not to add to Hume scholarship, but to give a simple illustration of how gestaltic phenomena of any kind should not be approached. David Hume's theory of perceptual belief is a theory about a psychological process wherein the mind passively receives, then associates and (rationally) sorts, data. What Hume took to be his unit of analysis, the given of sensory experience, greatly affected the prospects for human knowing within his theory. Hume writes:

> All the perceptions of the human mind resolve themselves into two distinct kinds, which I shall call IMPRESSIONS and IDEAS. The difference betwixt these consists in the degrees of force and liveliness with which they strike upon the mind.[12]

Of interest to us is that Hume treated impressions entering the mind as static and disconnected sensory units. My claim is not that he consistently did so; he did not, but his fine-grained analysis was quite consistent on this point. Taking the sense of sight, for example, one's visual manifold at any given instant, on Hume's reckoning, is to be analyzed as a brute collection of simple impressions

variously positioned within one's visual field. We might, with some justification, think of Hume's initial state of the perceptual process (mind with its impressions) as a photographic model of sensory perception. The head and skull are the body of the camera, the eyes are the shutters, and the mind is the film and developing agent. All cases of seeing, thus, are stop-action photographs. The eyes go "click" and the mind develops a static array of impressions. On such a model of sensing one can never have an observation of motion or of causal efficacy; each click of the camera is stop-action and any given exposure can result only in images that are in frozen juxtaposition.[13] It is from just such a sequence of "photographs" that the human being builds up its beliefs about the "external world." It takes little reflection to realize that if this is a true account of perception, we must admit Hume's destructive analysis of necessary connections among events (objects) and of dynamics in general. The absolute independence of each "original" impression ("photograph") precludes a principled coherence for the "wholes" which such impressions ostensibly constitute.

The above is a bit roughshod (Hume is worthy of far subtler consideration), but with regard to atomistic analysis which Hume epitomizes, it is not a caricature. The criticism intended is not that Hume adopts bad psychology (although it is certainly obsolete scientifically); the

criticism, which I believe still to have enormous contemporary value, is that Hume's analytic assumptions preclude insight into the very phenomena (e.g., the process of perceptual belief acquisition) he is attempting to explain.

What Humean analysis is badly lacking is what I shall call the dynamic aspects of engaged attention as well as the dynamic aspects of the objects of such attention. One way of stating the Humean deficit is to use one of Alfred North Whitehead's expressions: Hume confined his philosophical gaze to reality in the mode of "presentational immediacy,"[14] and from a static and radically isolated presentational immediacy not even the notion of an event can be derived. No one actually experiences perception as a series of acausal, utterly discrete, stop-action photos. Rather, we perceive objects within our visual field as moving, persisting, changing--in short, as having spatio-temporal coherence. More importantly for the perception of art objects, even the manifold of presentational immediacy is not without its dynamic. One does not rightly analyze the manifold that constitutes the Mona Lisa, for example, as merely a constellation of discrete sense data. The Mona Lisa is not a congeries of static blotches even were one verbally to exhaust the actual "blotch phenomenology" of that particular canvass. To anticipate what I should like to draw from Gestalt Psychology, each nuance of individual

coloring, each isolable region of contrasting hue, contributes dynamically (i.e., in a law-like way) to the emergent Gestalt quality of the whole.

The dynamics of a given grouping of sensory stimuli is nicely illustrated by an example from Wolfgang Kohler:

> . . . take a glass of water in which soap is dissolved. The aspect of such a liquid is called "trube" in German, which in English means something like "dim" or "turbid." Now look at it through a little hole made in a piece of cardboard and you will see the hole filled with a certain hue of gray (perhaps a little bluish or redish), but the quality of "dimness" or "turbidness" will have disappeared. It is the property of a more extended field and depends upon more than local uniform stimulation.[15]

Thus in the larger volume of liquid there <u>emerges</u> a certain perceptual quality not perceptible in the small sample. In the larger volume one becomes aware of what Kohler has termed a "dynamical self-distribution" of the quality of turbidness, a quality that cannot be accounted for on a (Humean) notion of a simple aggregate of constant sense data. It is upon this sort of principle that the "macro-look" of an art object is (in part) determined. To recast Sibley-like concerns in these terms, molar aesthetic qualities are indeed condition-governed by the molecular descriptive detail from which the former spring, but the conditioning at work cannot be intellectually grasped by attending to two logically irreducible levels of discourse (the aesthetic and the physically descriptive). Moreover, Humean analysis is blind to law-like gestaltic

organiztion which occurs within percipient-object interaction. One region of a painting can have an important bearing upon how another region looks and there will always be a net Gestalt effect when each regional quality is dynamically distributed throughout the whole.

Enough has been said to offer a more definitive idea of a Gestalt quality. A Gestalt, pure and simple, is a whole whose significance is determined holistically. This is not intended tautologically; the most informative implication of this statement is that the altering of any part of the gestaltic whole alters the Gestalt--changes it into a different (however similar) Gestalt. Delete the dog from the foreground in The Hay-Wain (by John Constable), add blood-shot eyes or a prominent mole to the face of the Mona Lisa, or circumcise Michaelangelo's David and you get different Gestalten. Further, building now from Walton's concept, Gestalt qualities are inherently intentional. They are irreducibly expressions of mind.[16] Here I want to try out a distinction with which I am not altogether comfortable.

How are Gestalt qualities related to the artworks of which they are Gestalt qualities? Because of the inherent intentionality of Gestalt qualities, it is best to say that they are mediated by, rather than embodied in, their respective physical media. So the David is indeed embodied in a certain hunk of marble, but its Gestalt quality (or

qualities, depending on view) is mediated by the embodied whole. To put it another way, Gestalt qualities are intentional saliencies. Whereas things (e.g., works of art) may be said to be embodied, intentional saliencies are mediated. Embodiment is an ontological issue; the mediation of intentional saliencies is, roughly, an epistemological issue.

Gestalt qualities are qualities that art objects possess <u>for</u> percipients of a given kind. This has no tendency to plunge us into subjectivism, although Gestalt qualities, by their very nature, are relativized to percipient interaction. "Beauty <u>is</u> in the eye of the beholder"--and any like-constituted beholder. The old adage is simply false if it is understood to mean that the status aesthetic qualities possess is determined by sheerly idiosyncratic response to whatever manifold. What is far closer to the truth, it seems to me, is that one's neuropsychological dispositions to gestaltically organize stimuli in aesthetic ways are precisely that--<u>neuro</u>psychological: law-like. Aesthetic preference or taste varies across cultures, of course, and it varies within culture, but these facts should not blind us to the fact that the history of the race includes a history of socially distinguished <u>regularities</u> of aesthetic creativity and reponse.[17]

At this point the logical and descriptive issues

(getting conceptually clear about the character of the alleged data) begin to merge with epistemological concerns (i.e., conditions of objectivity for the sentient discrimination of those data). I must postpone that discussion until the next chapter. In this section, it remains to extend the concept of a Gestalt quality to what I have called personal saliencies.

Personal saliencies, as I shall use this expression, are curious in that they are not, in the ordinary sense, evidence for the presence or existence of another person; rather, to experience such saliencies is sometimes, though not always, to experience personal presence. Here caution is needed. The experience of personal saliencies caused by outside stimuli is not, on this view, a self-authenticating experience of another person; I am not offering a solution to the problem of other minds, but I do intend to clarify what it means to experience another's subjectivity. The perception of what I shall be calling personal saliencies may contribute, rather, to the sense of personal encounter, which it often does. The experience is difficult to put into words but is a commonplace. Although other people are regular sources of the stimuli (these stimuli = the Gestalt qualities of personal saliencies) which induce the sense of personal presence, art objects and especially literature and motion pictures may do so as well. Indeed, the sense of personal presence may be imagined or pathologically induced.

Even for the good many cases where the sense of personal presence is a case of perceiving another person, I am quite clearly not claiming some unique epistemological privilege.

What I am building to by introducing the notions of "Gestalt quality," "personal saliencies," and "sense of personal presence" is the sort of knowledge claim theaesthetic awareness involves. Such a claim, it seems to me, must have to do with accessing another personal subjectivity (not one's own), and there are notorious difficulties associated with that problem. I hasten to add too that there is far more to human persons than loci of subjectivities. Human persons are essentially embodied entities; in that sense human persons are bodies. Minds, while embodied, are the subjectivities of human bodies. Minds, nevertheless, independently of the question of whether they may be reified apart from body, are personal. Moreover, that which is expressive of mind is likewise personal. Works of art, because they are expressions of mind, are thus personal and often contribute to percipient occasions of the sense of personal presence in terms of their affective (especially emotional) import.

To help me make the point about what is and what is not our fundamental datum (i.e., the status of the discernment of personal presence by way of discerning personal saliencies), consider the conundrum of other minds with the aid of a colorful metaphor from Dennett (a metaphor

he rightly seeks to discredit). First we need the elements of the problem. The intractability of the problem of other minds seems to me to have to do with two fundamental characteristics of other minds: (1) to discern another mind is literally to discern another subjectivity, and (2) human minds, in any case, are embodied and may only be known, if at all, by mediation. Dennett proposes a paradigm shift about our intuitive regard for the nature of mind (i.e., the nature of consciousness) which, if I understand him, involves the scientific dissolution of subjectivity. That is too long a story to tell for our present concerns, but it does contain some exquisite demolition work on residual Cartesian structures (Cartesian memes)[18] still influencing theory about mind. One such structure is what Dennett dubs the Cartesian Theater.

Continuing, one way to think about sensing personal presence is to fancy oneself--one's own mind--in an act of mind-melding with another mind. That was Mr. Spock's particular talent on the celebrated television series, "Star Trek." Mr. Spock would lay his hands on an alien sentient being and quite literally tap into its sentient states. To pick up on Dennett's metaphor, Mr. Spock would enter the Cartesian Theater of the Other and presumably experience the Other's experiences. But is that even conceivable? Could there be that kind of "optimal viewing distance" of another consciousness? To use the jargon of recent decades, does

privileged access or self intimation constitute an epistemic barrier that is insurmountable in principle? The answer is both yes and no, but this is to anticipate. What I wish to do, with the help of Mr. Spock, is to reset the stage for the query Thomas Nagel pursued in "What Is It Like to Be a Bat?"[19] I agree with Nagel (contra Dennett) that there is a kind of epistemological impasse here, and clarity on the nature of this impasse, it seems to me, has importance for understanding what it means to sense personal presence.

The impasse may be represented as follows. In the interests of a "hands-on" inspection of the Other's consciousness, Mr. Spock enters the Cartesian Theater of the Other (never mind how). For a very important reason which we shall come to he must enter as a "pure" monitor. For purposes of mind-melding Mr. Spock must become a guest "little-man-in-the-brain," because epistemologically, there is no other way to sample the host "little-man-in-the-brain's" phenomenological show. Further, we need to keep in mind that the phenomenological show is the <u>entirety</u> of the content of the host's consciousness for the duration of Mr. Spock's mind-melding. The host, of course, must also be a "pure" monitor; there cannot be a yet "smaller-man-in-the-brain" within the host-monitor. Pure monitoring seems the only way to stop an obvious regress. Besides, no interesting phenomenological point would be served by Mr. Spock monitoring the very monitoring of the host; the

thought experiment proceeds on the assumption that the monitor "him-" or "herself" has no phenomenolgy but the "show" "he" or "she" attends.

To get the stage-setting complete, it is important to add that the "show" which the Spock-monitor entertains is (1) the Other's occurrent awareness, not the Other's so-called subconscious goings-on as well, and (2) the phenomenology of the "show" is gestaltic; there is no way to carve it at the joints, so to speak. Also, neither the Spock-monitor nor the Other-monitor brings so much as a drop of phenomenology into the Theater with him, ex hypothesi. The upshot is that however the Other-monitor is appeared to, the Spock-monitor is also appeared to.

The moral of my story has probably been obvious for some time. The very conditions of such direct access to the consciousness of the host preclude the possibility of the usual outcome attributed to Mr. Spock. For mind-melding to be the exciting thing it is portrayed to be on "Star Trek," Mr. Spock's own personal identity cannot be fundamentally compromised as he becomes voyeur to the Other's sentience.[20] The Spock-monitor cannot enter the Other's Theater with "noise" from his own Theater (including, perhaps, quantum effects); only then are the pains, worries, thoughts, et cetera certifiably the Other's and not those of Mr. Spock. But if it is also true that the Spock-monitor is not individuated from the Other-monitor phemenologically (a

phenomenology inclusive of all verbal phenomena), the ensuing "show" is as much Mr. Spock's as it is the Other's. Concisely put, the irony is this: mind-melding (cognitively entering the subjectivity of another) cannot take place without entering the other mind from the point of view of one's own consciousness, but if one thus enters, there will be two Cartesian shows going at once: bedlam; if one check's one's own phenomenology at the Theater door of the Other, then the "show" that is entertained is logically one's own. Subjectivity-melding is logically impossible.

There are adjustments to the foregoing fantasy that are quite reasonable to demand, but they would not affect the outcome. The least of these is to replace "melding" with a better metaphor; melding, after all, suggests blending and that would be counter-productive. But "melding" has a nice ring to it and is clearly defined in the context. Far more serious is whether mind-melding makes a kind of hypothetical sense if mind is, say, as modular as Jerry Fodor supposes it to be.[21] Modularity will not help.

Roughly, Fodor's idea is this: mental structures form a kind of task oriented bureaucracy--at least at the peripheral (perceptual) level. "Information processing," accordingly, follows the sequence: environmental stimuli (energy), sensory transduction of stimuli (signals), processing of sensory signals by input systems (vision, hearing, touch, etc.), and finally processing and editing by

central systems. From the skin inward, then, we have transducers, input systems, and central systems. It is the input systems that are modular, and there are modules for acquiring language and sentence parsing as well as for processing sensory information. The modules themselves are "encapsulated" systems and are "hard-wired" to do their work in complete independence of what the rest of the systems are doing. Input systems cannot communicate with one another, but deliver their specialized information to central systems which are non-modular. It is central processing which thinks, hypothesizes, generates behavioral strategy, and the like. States Fodor,

> A lot is known about transformations of representations which serve to get information into a form appropriate for central processing; practically nothing is known about what happens after the information gets there. The ghost has been chased further back into the machine, but it has not been exorcised.[22]

To put Mr. Spock's mind-melding into a Fodorian Other might then be conceived of as interfacing Mr. Spock's central processing with the modules (all the input systems) of the Other. But that would not deliver the consciousness of the Other--only the peripheral states of the Other <u>as adjusted (gestaltically organized) by Mr. Spock's own central processing</u>. The Other's awareness and interpretation of those states would be utterly opaque. The more obvious move--that of interfacing Mr. Spock's central processing with the Other's central processing--would, as

before, violate the inherently gestaltic integrity of both systems; the result would be a cacophony.

Let us raise our primary question once more: Does privileged access or self intimation constitute an epistemic barrier to accessing other subjectivities which is insurmountable in principle? The answer I gave was both yes and no. The sense of the "yes" answer is reasonably clear. What of the "no"? In a nutshell, our intimate knowledge of others--other subjectivities--is accomplished by the communication of personal saliencies. To this we now turn.

The Communication of Personal Saliencies

There are two sorts of ultimate environment that bear crucially on the epistemic prospects of human beings, as well as intersubjective and theaesthetic awareness. One is physical, natural, and extensionally describable. The other has no less reality than the first, but seems, at first mention, intangible, wispy, metaphoric, and wholly lacking in scientific credentials. It is the cultural environment. The latter is not extensionally reducible, but nevertheless supervenes on a broad range of physical phenomena. The culture-nature problem (as we may call it) is the mind-body problem writ large.

The "natural kinds" of the cultural environment are not inanimate objects, sub-atomic particles, fields, atoms, molecules, biological cells, and organisms. They are

persons, practices, traditions, customs, institutions, and the like. Whereas the behavior of the natural kinds residing in the physical environment may be represented as strict or statistical mathematical invariances (law-likeness thanks, roughly, to covering laws), the behavior of the natural kinds of the cultural environment are describable only in terms of (relatively) invariant social regularities and, to use Margolis's apt expression, "covering institutions."[23] At the core of physical relatedness--so goes the current scientific orthodoxy--are four primary interactions: gravity, electromagnetism, strong and weak nuclear interaction. By contrast, the regularities of the cultural environment are not law-like in that severely extensionalist sense, but rule-like. They are, nonetheless, no less regularities for that. To a large extent, the cultural domain is linguistically shaped and its infra-relational interactions presuppose the exercise of linguistic competence, though not exclusively. Communicating intentional saliencies of a non-lingistic sort also powerfully contributes to the cohesion of a given cultural environment.

Admitting the co-realities of culture and nature, it seems to me, constitutes an ontological square-one for considering the issues before us. What matters to us here is social regularity and the communication that takes place thereby. Persons communicate themselves, not merely

evidence of themselves, by way of communicating the Gestalt qualities of personal saliencies. Let us become a lot more specific about this.

To be sure, personal saliencies include idiosyncratic verbal expression, but more pertinent to our narrower concerns, they include gestures, facial expressions and most importantly, anything that is expressive of aesthetic quality or affective state. Here a distinction drawn by Nicholas Wolterstorff is helpful. He distinguishes, in the domain of art, "expression of," and "expressive of."[24] It is the latter that has immediate epistemological import for the communication of personal saliencies. Whereas someone's jogging might be an <u>expression of</u> anger, let us say, that very jogging might not in any way be <u>expressive of</u> anger. The rhythm and flow of movement might well be expressive of grace, balance, strength, composure, serenity--beauty. What something is expressive of is by its very nature communicable; what something is an expression of, by contrast, is often opaque--even to the one whose expression it is.

Personal saliencies may be ever so subtle or they may be completely obvious. But whether subtle or not they are eminently accessible epistemically. By non-verbal personal saliencies one may communicate surprise, admiration, anger, puzzlement, gentleness, determination, disappointment, indifference, understanding, sympathy, fear and many other

attitudes. But just as we can speak contrary to what we mean, we can also appear contrary to the way we feel. The fact that there can be variance between what a Gestalt may be an expression of and what it is expressive of does not hurt the epistemological point I am driving at. What a Gestalt is an expression of has to do with the emotional etiology of that Gestalt; a given etiology may or may not "surface" to be communicated in the form of personal salience. What a Gestalt is expressive of, on the other hand, is communicable personal salience; and, it seems to me, the "rules" of the gestaltic organization of such saliencies constitute invariances. It is because of these culture-wide invariances that the institutions of, say, art and literature are even possible. Gestalten may be expressive of sadness, elation, concern, boredom, and the list goes on indefinitely. Personal saliencies are the universals of much art and literature. The paradigm for these is actual human social life.

The perception of personal saliencies may become the occasion of a sense of personal presence. I look at the Mona Lisa and am drawn to that enigmatic smile. I think about Leonardo da Vinci and about what the women of his day were like. I have little idea of what they were like--what she was like--but from what little I do know, it is reasonably certain that she lacked to a considerable degree the social, political, and especially the educational

privileges of the men of her time. I return to the smile, but with sadness; the smile has now taken on a meaning for me; I see it as the smile of credulity. There are lots of other possibilities, of course, but that, for me, is the one that intrudes. Up until then my aesthetic attitude had a certain "aboutness" to it--a distance, perhaps the distance so much fussed about by aestheticians as disinterested contemplation. But now, though frozen in time, a woman is present to me in the Mona Lisa exhibiting a plight which she herself did not have the resources to even begin to imagine. Her plight was not to receive adequate and detailed exposition by women for centuries. (The Feminine Mystique and its like were not to appear for another five hundred years).

The sense of personal presence is facilitated by personal saliencies--but not as long as one is observing those saliencies. What is needed is a kind of vulnerability to what is before one, the closing off of distance in virtue of which one is touched or affected by the same sort of subjectivity that one experiences oneself to be. This is a commonplace in both good literature and motion pictures as well as in the daily social interactions of real people. Jean-Paul Sartre gives a very perceptive, if overstated, analysis of the sense of personal presence in Being and Nothingness. It is his account of personal distance and the complete closing off of that distance in "The Look."[25]

His key illustration is an analysis of a case of involuntary vulnerability--a man caught in the act of voyeurism. The voyeur, let us call him, looks through a keyhole at a scene not intended for anyone else until he suddenly becomes aware that another is regarding him from behind. Another subjectivity has "objectivized" the voyeur's freely chosen project and reduced it to rubble by a "mere" look. The "look," of course, is not the aim and focus of the Other's physical eyes; it is the Other's regard, the implicit appraisal. Analysis of the "look" is strategic for Sartre because the dynamic involved serves as a paradigm of intersubjective relating, not merely as an account of shame or shaming. To get Sartre's project in focus here, we need to cast a backward glance at Hegel.

The ancestor of Sartre's analysis of "being-for-others" (to be contrasted with "being-with-others") is Hegel's parable of "Master and Slave."[26] The master-slave story is Hegel's account of the acquisition of self-consciousness, not the mere attainment of brute self-reference (which is conceptually barren), but in modern parlance, the attainment of a self-concept--a way of representing one's self to one's self which is <u>conceptually rich</u>. Hegel is not concerned with a Kantian transcendental ego which, by the very terms of its postulation, is beyond <u>conceptual</u> access by the categories of the understanding. If I understand Hegel, the self of

self- consciousness is a self that can be discerned to be loving, grateful, angry, et cetera, and self-aware of its own projects in the world. In highly encapsulated form, Hegel's claim is this:

> Self-consciousness exists in-itself and for-itself, in that, and by the fact that it exists for another self-consciousness; that is to say, it is only by being acknowledged or recognized.[27]

Hegel tells this story. Two (would-be) self-consciousnesses encounter each other and a conflict ensues; as self-consciousnesses each is driven to establish its own autonomy (freedom) and independence to itself and in view of the other. The first discovery is that the other does not respond as an object. (One might use Dennett's language and say that neither the physical nor the design stance is possible.) This demands that each regards the other as an independent consciousness. To acknowledge an independent other, however, implies that one's own self is fundamentally limited. One must then prove one's own freedom and independence to one's self and to the other. A fight to the death is envisaged and then rejected as meaningful strategy because the death of one of the combatants secures only the destructive goal of the conflict--eliminating an alien independence which threatens one's own. The constructive but contradictory aim of the struggle is to gain the recognition of the other, and that goal is defeated if the other is dead. So another discovery

is that one's own self-concept (to advert to modern parlance) is essentially mediated by the other. There must be a more civil means of having it both ways: establishing one's own freedom vis-à-vis the other and at the same time gaining the other's recognition. But being master over the other as slave is self-defeating as well. This ends up as the master's dependence on the slave's dependence. Moreover, the slave gains a material self-sufficiency in his work, according to Hegel, and the master is the true dependent twice over. He needs the slave both materially and psychologically. The moral is that the master-slave relationship does not secure the autonomy which the master sought.

Whereas Hegel treats this tale as showing the dialectical emergence of self-consciousness which is itself to be transcended, Sartre takes the conflictual character of intersubjective relating to be ontologically basic.

> The essence of the relation between consciousnesses is not the Mitsein [the harmonious being-with-others of Heidegger]; it is conflict.[28]

"The look" epitomizes this conflict. In stating my own misgivings about what Sartre does with this in the shaming he instances, I will bring our attention back to a more solid basis for the epistemic accessibility of other minds. The task of adequately criticizing Sartre on "the look" is daunting in the context of the present thesis because one cannot really do that without construing that situation

within the whole of his ontological theory. That is very far from our present concerns. What I think both Hegel and Sartre have got right is that human subjectivities manifestly affect one another as subjectivities, and not as a physical object might affect a human percipient. I am inclined to hold that in addition to "knowing that" and "knowing how," there is "knowing whom," the latter being epistemically sui generis. What I also think they have got right is the social dependence of self-consciousness, but I also think that Sartre's ontology of persons is strategically flawed--the phenomenology of Being and Nothingness really cannot sustain the thesis that one's own self-consciousness is essentially mediated by the consciousnesses of others. It is highly instructive for our concerns to see why.

Sartre's ontology of human freedom (i.e., the Sartre of Being and Nothingness) requires scrupulous attention to identifying anything that would put absolute freedom at risk. Indeed, to use Sartre's idiom, authentic human existence means to "exist" one's self in the complete absence of external authority, external normative structure of any kind. Although he refuses, in a quite radical way, a substantive Cartesian self and a Kantian transcendental ego, it seems to me that he begins and ends with the individual in a kind of Cartesian isolation--ontologically requiring, yet fundamentally imperiled by, the integrity of the freedom

of others. Returning to "the look," we find Sartre penetratingly describing an irreducibly social situation whose ontology is at odds with the ontology Sartre is trying to exhibit.

Sartre cannot tell his story about the voyeur without assuming a basic social reality within which both voyeur and onlooker are participants. By itself, this point may seem entirely consistent with what Sartre would affirm, but it is not. Sartre asks us to imagine two subjectivities whose essence is radical freedom. Each, nonetheless, requires other-acknowledgement as a necessary condition of its own existence as human existence. The price of acknowledgement (the look, e.g.) is objectification and the loss of the subjectivity that one is. Objectification is to be rendered thing-like and thus compromises the freedom that one is.

What Sartre is really asking us to imagine is the essentially conflictual nature of intersubjective relating without the presupposition of normative social structure which defines the combatants and their strategies. Manifestly, he cannot do that, and he has not, for we cannot appreciate Sartre's point about the voyeur's plight unless we also grant shame and shaming as phenomena that are socially constituted and socially learned. Shame is an inherently normative phenomenon, and "shame" is an inherently normative concept. The reality of shame and pride in one's life is not a matter of radically free

resistance or radically free choice; rather, its reality in one's life has exclusively to do with one's induction into culture. Moreover, culture as such can only be conceived of as the underlying condition and arena of choice (freedom), never the object of choice. To turn this point explicitly on the Sartrean analysis, there can be no "look" of any importance for Sartre's phenomenology of others that is a look simpliciter. Only the look of a culturally apt, culturally competent, consciousness will do. And indeed, Sartre nicely describes two fully inducted consciousnesses; the conflict that ensues would be unintelligible otherwise.

If the above is correct, we must look at human existence ab initio within an ontologically richer setting than Sartre allows--one whose inherent structure facilitates, limits, and defines human freedom. Drawing attention to the phenomenon of shame is an exceptionally clear way to focus this issue because while shame is a normative phenomenon, its social function can be understood quite apart from the particularized values of a given society. It is the social function of shame that is important for present purposes and not the intentional content of shame (whatever it might be that one is ashamed of). Consider briefly the contrast between the ideas of shame and guilt which are often confused or conflated in popular parlance.

As Dick Keyes has suggested, there are two lines of

consideration here.[29] Shame and guilt have different opposites and different standards of measurement. With respect to opposites, the opposite of guilt is innocence, whereas the opposite of shame is honor, integrity or their near synonyms. With respect to measurement, guilt is assessed by evaluating behavior in terms of rules. Shame, on the other hand, is measured (qualitatively) against an acceptable self-image or character model. Whereas the presence of guilt betokens behavioral deviation from acknowledged rules, the experience of shame is to experience oneself as deficient in character or self-image (to whatever degree)--to be less than the person one aspires to be. Because one can, at the same time, both subscribe to a moral code and be attracted to a model that are at odds with each other (i.e., the model does not exemplify the code), it is possible to feel shame in the absence of guilt and to acknowledge guilt without feeling shame. All this can be refined a great deal, especially in view of guilt and shame based pathology.

Our concern here, however, is the strategic role of shame for social cohesion among human beings. The capacity to experience shame, it seems to me, is the capacity to be shaped culturally. It is the capacity to be formed according to ideals and character, to be shaped as a person. The voyeur's vulnerability to the appraising look is not a species of canceled freedom in an inevitable

objectification as one subjectivity regards another. Both voyeur and onlooker inhabit a cultural milieu in which voyeurism is disgraceful. Neither voyeur nor onlooker have abstract existence or freedom independently of that milieu. The engaged attention of the onlooker jolts the voyeur into accountability to a norm which is internal to both. The voyeur's self-regard, on this occasion, is mediated by the other and his subjective response makes sense only in the context of an antecedent socialization.

Sartre seems to imply that the voyeur would be freer if he noticed the onlooker with complete subjective indifference. In a sense this is true, but in that case the voyeur would not be freer as a human person. We need to be reminded that it is the dynamic of human freedom within intersubjective encounter that Sartre's analysis is about. A mere object can have no inclination--hence no freedom--to hold itself accountable to self or others. It cannot be socially free. Likewise the fully shameless human being. However psychologically unimpeded such an individual might be, it would be confused to call such an individual socially free.

In initially learning the shame response (early in life), character accountability is to others; it is only after this initial learning that shame can take the form of accountability to self. The onlooker's appraising gaze, therefore, is both the occasion of the voyeur's acute sense

of accountability to himself for failing his own self-estimation, as well as his acute sense of accountability before a morally qualified observer. The voyeur cannot remain inwardly calm or indifferent in the midst of being discovered precisely because his social identity, and hence his very self acceptance, has been disturbed. Episodes of shame, it seems to me, differing of course in degree of severity or intensity, are always occasions of personal crisis because of their ontological character. An acceptable self (the ontological self) is at stake, and some kind of adjustment, healthy or otherwise, must follow.

To return to my general point, insofar as humans are cultural entities, human selfhood is constituted by its social identity. If, however, I have made good my ontological point, my epistemological point carries as well. The social function of shame implies the epistemic accessibilty of actual selves.

To conclude our reflections on Sartre's example, there is no power in "the look" beyond a normative socio-cultural environment. In a non-metaphorical sense the human being indwells a cultural environment in which distinctively human life is lived as communication. Tarzan and Mowgli notwithstanding, there are no feral children; and if there were, I should think they would be feral--perforce acquiring the primitive social organization of the wolves,

apes, or whatever. Tarzan and Mowgli, of course, possess the charm they have precisely because they allow us to view their animal brethren from the standpoint of a miraculously acquired linguistic and cultural competence.

We have come full circle. It is the environmental character of human culture that has been of concern in this section. Relative to individual human maturation and development, culture is an inertial system. Fundamental to human flourishing within that system is participation within its informational media. While mind-melding is not possible, there can be intersubjective knowing because human beings are, inter alia, informational systems, systematically qualified by the particular cultural environment they inhabit. By systematically meaningful language, behavior, gesture, body-language, facial expression and the like, one is rendered socially transparent--epistemically accessible. My chief concern in this section is the relatively invariant character of this systematicity. Such systematicity is an essential condition for one's induction into culture.

Summary

Marking progress at this point is difficult because in this phase of our discussion we are in mid stride. We have seen that theaesthetic awareness is essentially personal--roughly "I-thou" rather than "I-it." It is thus

fundamentally mistaken to suppose that a classical (i.e., theoretical) concept of God is communicated by such awareness. "God" is best regarded as a count noun, not a proper name. The intersubjective disclosure of the person who is everlastingly God should not be expected to yield, by a kind of conceptual necessity, the formal titular definition common to catechisms or philosophical theology.

We then examined Gestalt qualities in anticipation of the gestaltic character of personal saliencies. Gestalt qualities were found to be holistic and not amenable to part-whole analysis. Thanks to law-like regularity, percipient interaction with Gestalten can be relatively uniform within and across cultures. Wolfgang Kohler has called attention to the peculiarity of part-to-whole relating with a Gestalt as due to the "dynamical self-distribution" of its properties. Although I confess to not being entirely happy with this way of expressing the matter, what is surely plausible is that the brain facilitates the gestaltic organization of stimuli in such a way that local or regional nuance is distributed in the perception of the emergent Gestalt quality.

Personal saliencies were introduced as Gestalt qualities that may occasion the sense of personal presence. The latter's most distinctive characteristics include social vulnerability (not to be confused with feeling psychologically fragile) and the closing off of object-like

distance. Phenomenologically, Sartre's account of "the look" nicely dramatized the closing off of distance, but left the very phenomenon of shame inexplicable. An analysis of shame proved strategic for our purposes because it evidences the social nature of persons and a uniquely cultural environment within which personal saliencies are common communicative coin.

Notes

1. I will ignore the complication that in orthodox Christianity God is triune--three persons, yet one God.

2. Paul Ziff, Philosophic Turnings: Essays In Conceptual Appreciation (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1966), 93.

3. Ibid., 94.

4. Exodus 4:14-16.

5. I Kings 18:21, 24.

6. Isaiah 41:21-23.

7. Kendall Walton, "Categories of Art," in Philosophy Looks at the Arts: Contemporary Readings in Aesthetics, Joseph Margolis, ed., 3rd ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987).

8. Frank Sibley, "Aesthetic Concepts," Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism 23 (Winter 1964): 219-25.

9. Ibid., 220.

10. A very nice focus on this issue is given in the back to back articles "The Testability of Interpretation" by Monroe Beardsley and "Robust Relativism" by Joseph Margolis in Philosophy Looks at the Arts: Contemporary Readings in Aesthetics, Joseph Margolis ed., 466-498.

11. Walton, 58.

12. David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature, L. A. Selby-Bigge Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 1.

13. It does not seem to the point to me to object that visual perception of motion pictures may be analyzed this way. Hume's underlying assumption is quite clearly the radical independence (both logical and causal) of discrete sensa. The entirely predictable illusion produced by motion pictures cannot be explained on such a starting assumption.

14. Alfred North Whitehead, Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960), 125.

15. Wolfgang Kohler, Gestalt Psychology: An Introduction to New Concepts in Modern Psychology (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 1947), 188.

16. The sense in which the aesthetic properties of the David are intentional is the sense in which the aesthetic properties of an artifact are irreducibly intentional modifications of a physical object and may only be savored as such.

17. To speak of regularities of aesthetic creativity and response may sound odd. My point is that the very development of culture-wide aesthetic sensibilities, taste, preference, as well as the development of "standard" aesthetic genre and styles are evidence of "law-likeness" in aesthetic production and response. A complex environment is presupposed--a cultural embodied by a physical--which singly constitutes a relatively inertial system. The evolution of aesthetic practice (production as well as response) is thus facilitated by the conserving elements of (i) language, inventions, institutions, and the like, in addition to (ii) neuropsychological invariances.

18. Dennett, Consciousness Explained, 200-10. Memes are an evolutionary "kind" introduced by Richard Dawkins (The Selfish Gene (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976). The meme is

> a unit of cultural transmission, or a unit of imitation. 'Mimeme' comes from a suitable Greek root, but I want a monosyllable that sounds like 'gene' . . . it could alternatively be thought of as being related to 'memory' or to the French word même. . . .
>
> Examples of memes are tunes, ideas, catch-phrases, clothes fashions, ways of making pots or of building arches. Just as genes propagate themselves in the gene pool by leaping from body to body via sperm or eggs, so memes propagate themselves in the meme pool by leaping from brain to brain via a process which, in the broad sense, can be called imitation. If a scientist hears, or reads about, a good idea, he passes it on to his colleagues and students. He mentions it in his articles and his lectures. If the idea catches on, it can be said to propagate itself, spreading from brain to brain.[206]

Notes

The meme's only virtue is its survival value, not its truth, and in Dennett's account of the narrative self, the meme seems to be the evolutionary unit. They are literally to be taken as parasites which "direct" the brain's narrative production.

19. Thomas Nagel, "What Is It Like to Be a Bat?" Philosophical Review 83 (1974): 435-450.

20. By "sentience" I have in mind cognitive, affective, as well as perceptual states.

21. Jerry Fodor, The Modularity of Mind (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press/A Bradford Book, 1983).

22. Ibid., 127.

23. Joseph Margolis, Culture and Cultural Entities: Toward A New Unity of Science (Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1984), 12.

24. Nicholas Wolterstorff, Art In Action: Toward A Christian Aesthetic (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 215-221. See also Wolterstorff's far more ambitious volume, Works and Worlds of Art (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 22-29.

25. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Simon and Schuster Inc./Pocket Books, 1956), 340-400.

26. G. W. F. Hegel, The Phenomenology of Spirit (1807).

27. Ibid., 229.

28. Sartre, 525.

29. Dick Keyes, "The Meaning of Shame and Guilt," in What in the World Is Real? (Champaign, Illinois: Communication Institute, 1982), 103-107.

CHAPTER FOUR

OBJECTIVITY AND CONSTRUCTIVISM

The primary intent of chapter three was to build toward the concept of theistic personal saliencies and ultimately to theistic personal presence. That job was not completed but we have in hand the notions of personal saliencies and personal presence as well as the gestaltic character of both. In a somewhat serendipitous way we also encountered in Sartre's description of intersubjectivity (the look) an epistemic access to other minds with a directness that involves neither mind-melding nor a reduction of mind to bodily behavior. While refusing Sartre's governing presupposition of anormative freedom, the phenomenology of the shame experience was seen to exhibit the closing off of an important kind of distance. Putting to one side the logical possibilities of feigning and perceptual malfunction, in the case of Sartre's "look" there simply is no epistemologically disturbing distance to be closed off between two subjectivities. Indeed, for the moment at least, distance (opacity) is the fervent desire of the voyeur, but distance (hence the prospect of noetic obscurity or ambiguity) is precisely what is unavailable and the reason for the pain.

Earlier I used the metaphor of "common communicative coin" as applied to personal saliencies (the look of disapproval in the case of the onlooker). The metaphor is perhaps a bit misleading in the present case. The personal saliencies involved in "the look" are not <u>instruments</u> of communication deployed by the onlooker to humble the voyeur, although I suppose that they could be. It seems to me that the onlooker's subjectivity is literally <u>outered</u> in the personal saliencies discerned by the voyeur. On the other hand, it is the voyeur's <u>self</u>, not merely his body, that is exposed. The point is, human selves are culturally formed and culturally normed. Selves, whatever else they are, are informational systems, and such systems are necessarily social. There is no more of an intrinsic epistemological liability in the perception of other selves (minds) than there is in the perception of physical objects. In neither case can there be a "substance-melding" to ensure epistemic directness and immediacy. Physical objects "give off" sensorily transducible information; selves, with a great deal of selective control, "give off" intentional (i.e., cultural) information. As we saw in the last chapter, there is, by the very nature of the case, a fundamental epistemic barrier: one subjectivity cannot literally experience another's sentient states. The point to be won, however, is that human epistemic adequacy within the cultural environment is a <u>social</u> adequacy. It seems to me that this

point is systematically elusive if one conducts epistemology from the standpoint of Cartesian isolation.

To leave the matter here is to leave it pretty embryonic, but our direction is reasonably clear. In chapter six we will return to personal saliencies as social phenomena, tying these phenomena to the basic religious relatedness of man to God identified in chapter one. Our immediate concern, however, is an accruing epistemological debt. What is to be said for the epistemological integrity of our account so far? The answer depends on how the epistemological question is posed.

Noetic Competence Versus Argumentative Proof

The general epistemological problem that affects the present thesis can be clarified by first focusing on a two-fold problem about data and their deployment within discursive arguments. In the forty or so years since the demise of logical positivistism it seems that Western philosophical perfectionism about the nature and ascription of knowledge has become far more relaxed. Too relaxed, perhaps. Analytic epistemology has been tempered by philosophy of mind while our very concept of data has been recast by Kuhnian-like considerations. All our noetic holdings are suppose to come filtered and constructed by theories, worldviewish presuppositions, paradigms, and the like--maybe Fodorian mentalese or even "Kantian" categories.

In hindsight it is not hard to see that the positivists were naive about data. The mind, we are told, is not a "mirror of nature." W. V. O. Quine,[1] Richard Rorty,[2] Richard Bernstein,[3] Joseph Margolis,[4] Nelson Goodman,[5] and others have written much to disabuse us of the notion of cognitive privilege which grounded logical positivist epistemology and foundationalism in general. Data, it would appear, are fundamentally problematic and seemingly require relativistic strategies in epistemology to accommodate them.[6] That is perhaps the more basic problem and in the section to follow I will take it up as the problem of constructivism.

The other side of the problem is the legacy of analytic epistemology in which the analysis of knowledge as justified true belief has received endless adjustment. There are two considerations I would like to bring to bear about this analysis. One concerns what I regard as its intuitive value, the other concerns a counterproductive rationalism (foundationalism) it invites. I take the traditional analysis, as we may call it, as simultaneously the attempt to solve two logically distinguishable problems. The first is to provide an intensional definition of knowledge, and the second, <u>in</u> accomplishing the first, is to provide a criteriology for knowledge ascription. In the case of a theory of knowledge, these two desiderata seem curiously to converge. The problem of what it <u>means</u> to say of a subject S that he or she knows some arbitrary proposition p does not

seem independent of determining criteria by which we might tell whether S does in fact know that p. By contrast, in the case of a theory of truth there does not seem to be such a convergence. Margolis reflects that

> we never suppose that any reasonable analysis of truth will in itself yield criteria on the strength of which the determination of particular truth claims with regard to truth and falsity can be decided; and where we possess such criteria, we cannot separate the determination of truth from, at the very least, the exhibition of knowledge. On the other hand, it seems preposterous to suppose that we could supply a compelling theory of knowledge that would not, in some fairly direct way, yield criteria whose application would actually determine would-be instances of knowledge to be contingently such. The reason seems to be . . . that we cannot suppose that we know what it is for us to know unless we know how to determine when it is we actually know, though it makes perfectly good sense to suppose that we know what it is we mean when we say that a statement is true (as for instance by way of correspondence and coherence theories) without prejudging in any way procedural questions of the confirmation and verification of particular claims.[7]

The truth about this, I think, is that formal analysis (whatever our epistemological theory stipulates) cannot help but be applied in this or that case by a fallible and finite competence. In the nature of the case, theory of knowledge is the investigation of an optimal state. It is the optimal noetic state for human beings, to be sure, but it is nevertheless optimal. Knowledge, thus, is a limiting concept and an idealization. I will talk more about this shortly. What I mean to stress here is that to concede that we are only fallibly competent to apply our knowledge concept is not the kind of concession the skeptic would have

us believe. Both our epistemic competence and its limitations are themselves susceptible of systematic investigation. We know we are epistemically competent to conduct such investigation because we in fact conduct it. Neurophysiology, psychology, psycholinguistics, studies of human perception, work in artificial intelligence, and like disciplines have made systematic contributions to our understanding of ratiocination and epistemic competence.

We can now focus the peculiarity about theorizing the necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge in a more perspicuous fashion. The question of identifying our considered intuitions about knowledge is a prediminately philosophical issue; the issue of the nature of our cognitive powers (i.e., human epistemic competence) is a largely empirical issue.[8] Standing back from these considerations, one preliminary result is that we may indeed be able to characterize the optimal human noetic state without being able formally to guarantee any putative application of such a characterization. Our epistemic competence may be restricted to various strategies of evidentially vindicating knowledge claims, but never logically validating them. So it seems to me. I want to divide the question of epistemic competence, then, from the question of certifying the optimal exercise of that competence. It would be perverse to deny that, for example, I can see my word processor before me (owing to my visual

competence) because I cannot prove (overcome Cartesian-like doubt, let us say) that my vision is veridical in this case. The point is a logical one: successfully to exercise a certain competence does not entail that one possess a further distinct competence, or second order competence, by which to guarantee that the first has been successfully exercised. It is enough to exhibit first order know-ability.

Before proceeding to what seems to me to be intuitively right about the traditional analysis, it is worth remarking that "justified true belief" concerns propositional knowledge, knowledge about states of affairs. It is an analysis of "knowing that" and is silent with regard to the knowing alluded to earlier, dubbed "knowing whom" (and of course "knowing how"). It is also silent about cognitive competence. For this reason, I think, the traditional analysis lends itself to overly rationalist construal or treatment, requiring especially for the justification condition the ideal of pencil-and-paper provability for the attainment of philosophical closure.

These preliminaries aside, the traditional analysis may be rendered: S knows that p, if and only if,

(i) p is true,
(ii) S believes that p,
and
(iii) S is justified in believing that p.

It is the intuitive force of these conditions that is the present concern, not the well known problems connected with each (especially the seemingly intractable problems that go with formulating the justification condition). A truth-like condition (i) seems necessary if we are not to dispense with a significantly common world to be cognitively addressed. A belief-like condition (ii) seems necessary if the relationship involved in knowing is to be between an epistemic agent and his or her world; that is, the world is taken to be this or that way in this or that regard. Whether or not such "taking to be" is tacit, logically implicit, or occurrently explicit need not concern us. A justification-like condition (iii) seems necessary if lucky guessing and insufficiently systemic connectedness between an agent's beliefs and world are to be ruled out. Accordingly, on some suitable theory of truth, belief, and justification, (propositional) knowledge certainly seems to be justified true belief.[9]

What is wrong about it has to do with certain rather strategic considerations that have already been broached. As mentioned earlier, the knowledge concept of the traditional analysis, especially in view of the truth condition, seems to be a limiting concept and an idealization. It is a limiting concept because the fundamental competence it presupposes cannot conceivably be transcended for the sake of greater clarity, objectivity or

certification with regard to our epistemological efforts. It is an idealization, not because it is unattainable (knowing is a commonplace), but because it focuses our epistemological intuitions, normatively, for adjudicating beliefs. "Knowledge" is, so to speak, the highest encomium that can be paid out to a belief, and we are intuitively disposed so to characterize a belief if we perceive that, on some reckoning of truth, belief, and justification, conditions (i) through (iii) obtain. In ordinary parlance we usually pay it out for far less. Nevertheless, I think it is reasonable to think that the intuitions which the traditional analysis attempts to safeguard tacitly, at least, govern our sense of propriety about knowledge ascription, especially to the degree we intend to be scientific. That is, in affirming that S knows that p we genuinely <u>mean</u> to grant that S's belief is both true and adequately supported by, or systematically nested within, S's other noetic holdings.

An alternative way to make the same point is that the above knowledge concept is regulative with respect to ranking beliefs. No society can do without such ranking; the absence of the function of a knowledge concept would lead to an intolerable democratization of belief. Nothing I have said should be taken to imply that knowledge is not real, but knowledge exists, in the propositional sense, as the <u>status</u> of a belief. I think that Margolis is correct

that if knowledge is fundamentally a matter of epistemic status, then a purely causal theory of knowledge is ruled out.[10] Since this status is not the sort of thing that can receive an infrapsychological analysis, it cannot in any strict sense, receive a causal analysis. Returning to our point, given the function of the knowledge concept, the status of knowledge is awarded--in principle at any rate--as a matter of discovery, not decisional fiat. Even so, by virtue of the nature of the first-order competence by which such discovery is determined, there cannot help but be an inherent informality to knowledge ascription. There is no contradiction between an essential formality in the analysis or definition of knowledge on the one hand, and an essential informality in determining knowledge ascription on the other hand. As informality implies, however, there can be no premise complete, deductively valid argument in this or that case of correct knowledge ascription; sentient abilities (in the broad sense of sentient provided earlier) are ultimate, not discursive proofs.

I have already indicated that what goes wrong is not conceptually part and parcel with the task of formally elucidating the concept of knowledge as an optimal state. As I have indicated, the problem comes in theoretically construing the concerns of knowledge ascription in a logically perfectionistic way. That is invited whenever condition (i), but especially condition (iii), gets a

foundationalist construal. I should add that it is not so much the assumption of "cognitive privilege" that is wrongheaded about foundationalism. Cognitive privilege, or less pejoratively, cognitive competence, does not entail foundationalism, although foundationalism does entail cognitive competence. I take the signal problems of foundationalism to be two: (1) the tendency to model noetic certitude on discursive provability, and (2) a false to human experience view of knowledge as a single system which is logically built from a set of indubitable truths. Genuine human knowledge, which is typically piecemeal and fragmentary, is not systemic in the grand way required by foundationalist theories.

There are two general considerations we might bring to bear on the prospect of discursively proving any empirical truth claim. Both arise because of the inherent finiteness of the human as a knower. One concerns guaranteeing that <u>enough data</u> have been considered to warrant the claim in question; the other concerns guaranteeing that the data that <u>are</u> considered have been <u>rightly interpreted</u>. As matters of logical proof, neither kind of guarantee could ever be available to human knowers. Call the first limitation the finitude of partial perspective, and the second, hermeneutic finitude. We may pose the overall problem this way: given the limited hermeneutic talents of human beings within a possibly infinite domain of data, is <u>partial knowledge</u> possible?

One unsatisfactory answer, I believe, involves gerrymandering the data base--regarding the human knower as inhabiting an arbitrarily shrunken domain where the data are finite in number and hermeneutically manageable given the existing stock of definitions and heuristics. To use an analogy from Artificial Intelligence, the human knower, within his or her "micro-world," might function as a veritable "expert system,"[11] wonderfully knowledgeable about mundane matters (workaday perceptual judgments) but fundamentally blocked when it comes to scientific inquiry. There is, of course, a considerable disanalogy between the sorts of world exemplified by SHRDLU's blocks world[12] and, say, the medieval world of twelfth century England or the current western scientific world, but there is enough of an analogy logically to carry my point. A rigorous, if fanciful and impracticable, way to solve the problems of the finitude of partial perspective and hermeneutic finitude is to count only a drastically restricted domain of data and a received canonical hermeneutics as epistemologically relevant. But for non-arbitrary reasons, I should think, we all would prefer to freeze the data domain in its current state than in medieval England. (I include my own quest, for even though medieval England might give three cheers for theaesthetic awareness, though hardly for my reasons, it would also celebrate the conviction of witches and regard bloodletting as therapeutic.)

Another unpromising answer is one that is brought into conceptual relief by Jerry Gill's dispensing with the truth condition of "justified true belief." His claim is that knowledge is "justified belief, period."[13] If the first alternative is that of gerrymandering the boundaries of the data domain, this one might be considered an epistemological version of "floating the dollar." The infinitude of both data and prospects of interpretation is left to stand while the anchoring of knowledge ascription becomes a function of the de facto justificationist practices within a language game. The criticism of this answer does not reside in an implied negative judgment of the economic soundness of taking the dollar off the gold standard. It seems to me that we might indeed float the knowledge concept as justified belief on the sea of linguistic practice if we had reason to suppose that this is a theoretically adequate response to the problems of infinity mentioned above. There is very good reason to think that it is not.

As nearly as I can tell, Gill gives two reasons for abolishing the truth condition. Both are standard complaints. (1) The truth condition is a circular component within the standard analysis--criteriologically considered, the truth condition cannot be appreciated as satisfied independently of knowledge; and (2), "there is no 'litmus paper' test for truth."[14] So,

> in short, in the standard approach, knowledge is defined in terms of truth and truth is defined in terms of justified knowledge claims or beliefs. Each is understood and achieved by means of the other.[15]

(2) strikes me as the telling problem, not (1). That (1) is not the problem may be seen as follows: first, as Margolis observed, the concept of truth can receive an analysis which is independent of its ascription; second, the concepts "truth" and "knowledge" do not mean the same thing; third, there is the strongest of an intuitive link between "knowing that p" and "p being true"; and fourth, the truth condition is an objectivity condition which, depending on how truth is theorized, puts an essential conceptual constraint on what it means to justify a belief.

It seems to me that (2) is the more fundamental of Gill's worries, and we will return to this in a moment. First, what of Gill's Wittgensteinian way of "floating the dollar?" Gill says that adding the truth condition to "the defining characteristics [of the knowledge concept] is a fine example of language idling, while at worst it conjures up transcendent yet inaccessible realities."[16] He then quotes Wittgenstein as follows:

> "So you are saying that human agreement decides what is true and what is false?"--It is what human beings say that is true and false; and they agree in the language they use. This is not agreement in opinions but in form of life.
>
> If language is to be a means of communication there must be agreement not only in definitions but also (queer as this may sound) in judgments. This seems to abolish logic, but does not do so. It is one thing to

> describe methods of measurement, and another to obtain and state results of measurement. But what we call "measuring" is partly determined by a certain constancy in results of measurement.[17]

What Wittgenstein is doing, of course, is legitimating the epistemic characterizations in our language in a fundamentally non-epistemic way. He grounds epistemic ascription in terms of "the viable practices and activities of a society rather than in epistemically specified cognitive . . . powers."[18] In Gill's words,

> that a given belief is true, and can thus be counted as knowledge, can only be known by means of the various processes and procedures available to us, and therefore the meaning of the concept of truth itself can only arise out of and be understood in relation to such activities.[19]

I have two problems with thus relativizing the concepts of truth and knowledge and their ascription. Both may be seen as arising from Peirce's dictum that we not block the road to inquiry. Gill's spectre of hitching our truth concept to transcendent and inaccessible realities gains its power--perhaps exclusively--from a false model of noetic certitude which was earlier identified as discursive provability. Why indeed should I have the slightest reluctance to accredit my belief as true that I sit before my word processor typing out this sentence unless I also believe that Cartesian-like doubt must first be argumentatively defeated? I cannot argumentatively defeat such doubt--not all of it, at any rate--but may I not be epistemically competent to see that my word processor is

before me without the further, or meta-order, competence to logically guarantee the truth claim I make in the exercise of the first-order competence? Is the claim that I utterly know the proposition in question the claim to have acquired "transcendent and inaccessible realities"? Does it help to say that my conviction that I see my word processor before me is sanctioned by the form of life I inhabit?

I have no doubt that my claim may be sanctioned in that way. On the systematic practices that bear on the accreditation of such truth claims as the above, mine would pass with flying colors. But the epistemological issue that I am raising has to do with the exercise of sentient and rational ability. The question is whether knowing the world is largely, at least, grounded in cognitive ability which itself may be scientifically investigated, or whether knowing is grounded, at any given historical stopping place, by the slowly evolving linguistic practices that hold sway therein. I do not intend this question rhetorically. If the Wittgensteinian concern with the praxical nature of human knowing could be put in a way that acknowledges the relevancy of native cognitive ability, there would be no dispute here. Gill's Wittgensteinianism shows no sophistication about this issue at all.

The second problem I have with Gill's relativizing the knowledge concept and its application--his radicalizing of justified belief--is related to the first, but more

general. The first criticism concerned blocking or ignoring the relevance of scientific inquiry into human sentience and rational ability; the second criticism is a more historicized version of the first. Margolis, who himself is in pursuit of a relativistic theory of knowledge, thinks that although Wittgenstein moves to a non-epistemic, pragmatic legitimation of our cognitive powers, must for that reason

> give up, in so doing, the direct legitimation of distributed claims. For the argument holds only en bloc. Alternatively put, Wittgensteinian "forms of life" signify an extremely abstract acknowledgement of the praxical nature of human cognition--without, that is, any account of the historically determinate conditions under which human life is actually produced and reproduced (as on the Marxist view).[20]

Accordingly, it seems to me that Wittgenstein's view shows itself most plausibly when considered synchonically and within a given culture for the historically short run. Diachronically, it is difficult to conceive that a general theory could be formulated--on a scale with Marx's empirically based "discovery" of the law of human social development--that would not assume or reintroduce the very cognitive privilege that a Wittgensteinian strategy might be thought to obviate.

Let us return once again to the problem with which this discussion began. Does partial knowledge entail exhaustive knowledge? Since British Idealism that has not been a noticeable concern in philosophy--except, that is, by

way of tacit requirement to secure indubitable truths for the foundation of knowledge within foundationalist epistemology. The more world-relevant and the more logically promising for the production of the edifice of knowledge a putative indubitable is, the more difficult it is logically to establish it as indubitable. The quest is quixotic precisely because it assumes a kind of second-order knowing (knowing that one knows) that transcends the two human finitudes mentioned above. Short of omniscience, that is simply impossible.

The answer is that first-order knowledge is ultimate; and, of course, so is first-order knowledge of any premises brought to bear in the vindication of first-order knowledge. First-order knowledge, in turn, is grounded in cognitive competences of whatever determinate sort (sensory as well as rational/linguitic competence), and if that is cognitive privilege, then so be it. But cognitive competences are not occultic powers; and here, I believe, is the only final response to whether the human being may know partially in the face of a possible infinity of data. Cognitive competence and its exercise is grounded in the law-like or causal regularities of the brain/environment interaction which facilitates our noetic response to the world. Causal regularity, it seems to me, is the ultimate ground of partial knowledge (notwithstanding its own philosophical perplexities), and not an arbitrarily

gerrymandered data base or letting knowledge ascription drift with the vicissitudes of linguistic practice. The latter practice is itself rooted in a competence which constitutes an increasingly accessible domain for scientific inquiry.

The foregoing is admittedly very general, but it does purchase the theoretical ground which is crucial for the competence I allege to be theaesthetic competence. Before looking at the problem of data construal and constructivism frontally, I want to offer some remarks about two recent approaches in the epistemology of religion which afford very dubious advantage, if any, for theaesthetic awareness.

Religious Truth Claims and Epistemological Immunity

The problem of theaesthetic awareness concerns a certain epistemic competence and a corresponding objectivity. That, I think, is the form the relevant epistemological problem takes. The problem is not that of proving the existence of God but of providing a plausible account of personal objectivity within (let it be frankly admitted) the structure of a subjective (i.e., private) experience. But the privacy of theaesthetic awareness is no more (or less) a problem than, for example, the privacy of the experience of remembering a past mental episode (e.g., the genuine recollection that one pondered the problem of

free will while waiting for a brook trout to bite at a mountain lake on last summer's vacation). The issue of verification for both is fairly analogous: for the first, because it concerns an essentially private awareness of theistic personal saliencies for which no independent verificatory criteria are possible; for the second, because it concerns an essentially private experience of an episode for which there could likewise be no public verification (the past mental episode did not issue in any external linguistic behavior). On the other hand, neither of these cognitive experiences is independent of social determination. That will be addressed--in the case of theaesthetic awareness--in chapter five. To introduce the problem of constructivism, which is our present concern, consider briefly two kinds of epistemological immunity that I do <u>not</u> want to claim for my thesis.

Alvin Plantinga, Nicholas Wolterstorff, and William P. Alston have talked a good deal about "basic beliefs" versus "non-basic beliefs." A basic belief is one, the holding of which, is within one's epistemic rights. If belief in God is properly basic (for me), so this persuasion goes, I do not need reasons or arguments for that belief to be esteemed rational, or for that belief to serve me in a "foundational" way. Philosophers and other overseers of meaningful thought and intellectual commitment cannot hassle me about it. But while I have profited from from their

work, admired the ingeniousness with which it has been advanced, it does not provide the basis for the kind of epistemological closure my project requires.

Ironically, perhaps, it is a kind of riskless closure that is wrong about it. I am not seeking epistemological immunity. Current work which helps us understand human knowing, it seems to me, is neglected or esteemed trivial by that kind of preoccupation. Anyhow, the immunity is not what it seems. Plantinga and company do want to disallow proper basicality, for example, to belief in the Great Pumpkin, and, I should imagine, much else. But to get rid of the Pumpkin, verificationist cudgels are used to squash it.[21] That should give one pause. Moreover, as George Mavrodes has observed, the basic belief tack is about a kind of moral <u>permission</u> to hold rock-bottom beliefs whose very diversity includes options that are mutually exclusive.[22] Thus one believer might hold belief A as properly basic while another believer might hold belief B as properly basic when B entails not-A. Both A and B are permitted and that is the end of the matter.

If Christian truth claims gain a dubious immunity by the purely defensive ingenuity of the practitioners of the foregoing strategy ("you cannot prove me wrong or pathological" <u>constitutes</u> my epistemic entitlement to count certain religious beliefs as properly basic),[23] a well known Wittgensteinian move may be seen to do so as well.

Essentially, it comes to this: a particular religious language game, which helps to make up the fabric of a form of life, enjoys the integrity of that form of life. I take it that while the Wittgensteinian wants to entertain a cultural language game as globally as possible, in practice language games greet us both locally (highly idiosyncratic) nested, consistently or not, within more encompassing language games--ideally within a limiting Sprachspiel. But bear in mind, as Margolis has noted, that without a theory which supplies a diachronic account of the production and reproduction of forms of life, the Wittgensteinian lacks principles by which to criticize distributed claims--and that includes religious claims. So although a given religious claim--e.g., the claim for theaesthetic awareness--may enjoy an epistemic integrity within the overall language game which gives it "life," the integrity which results on such a reckoning is, so to speak, a bracketing of the community's tendency to think its own thing according to the practices and linguistic constraints of the going form of life. At best the status of the community's convictions is historically quaint; at worst, the sort of philosophical tolerance involved comes to little more than a "kiss of death."

D. Z. Phillips, for example, regards religious discourse about survival after death on the model of a Wittgensteinian Sprachspiel.[24] When taken in this way, such

discourse (presumably whether its participants think so or not) is not literally about a post-mortem duration of conscious existence. The beliefs in question are, rather, special features endemic to a religious language game and are not subject to the same criteria of rationality as are straightforward claims to fact outside that language game--even though these beliefs are ostensibly just that.

According to Phillips, religious beliefs do not gain their importance by being about claims that are either true or false, but by contributing to a way of looking at the world which then influences the way the religious person lives.[25] Such is the nature of the epistemological asymmetry between participants and nonparticipants of a given Sprachspiel. States Phillips, the "criteria of meaning in religion must be intrinsic to religion itself," and with Wittgenstein, "whether a thing is a blunder or not--it is a blunder in a particular system."[26] So while the religious community does not blunder in its believings, it does not enjoy Phillips's "superior" perspective to see its believings for what they are. (Phillips's perspective arises, evidently, from a more global and hence more encompassing Sprachspiel--but one which Phillips fails to acknowledge as an historically arrested Sprachspiel.) But this manner of salvaging religious discourse as meaningful cannot help but be received by the ordinary believer as a hardly disguised form of patronization. Of course, in

keeping with our earlier observation, in the absence of a general theory of the evolution of Sprachspielen, Phillips's own perspective is vulnerable to patronization, shall we say, by a yet hardier form of life.

Constructivism

We might introduce constructivist concerns by way of a dilemma suggested by the foregoing discussion. Either we float religious knowledge claims in a somewhat Wittgensteinian fashion (optimistically, as in Gill's writings; or pessimistically, as in Phillips's writings); or, accepting the impossibility of foundationalist proof, find a haven for such knowledge claims within a defensively drawn circle of properly basic beliefs. To get beyond this impasse, it seems to me, is to grant priority to basic cognitive abilities. In this regard, there is, perhaps, a surprising twist in the solution I have in mind. Although it is because of apparently powerful constructivist considerations that post-Kantian religious epistemology is so anemic, tentative, and clearly ineffective, I do not see why religious knowledge claims cannot be firmly grounded by a methodological constructivism. This proposal may sound crazy, but it is not.

Constructivism is the general view that the human mind contributes substantially to the shaping of cognitive experience. It is the view that mental prepossessions not

only form a hermeneutic matrix by which experience is interpreted, but they also determine the character of the experience that is thus interpreted. Putting the fundamental worry quite generally, how can there be any objective access to the world (which we ostensibly perceive and theorize about) if it is not possible cognitively to tell when it is that the very conditions of cognition impose a false, misleading, or merely utile construction on our experience? In particular, how might objective theaesthetic awareness be distinguished from imagination or fabrication? And if there is not a principled way to tell the difference, does that logically imply that theaesthetic awareness is impossible or ill-conceived?

Steven T. Katz nicely provides the constructivist contention this way:

> There are NO pure (i.e. unmediated) experiences. Neither mystical experience nor more ordinary forms of experience give any indication, or any grounds for believing, that they are unmediated. That is to say, all experience is processed through, organized by, and makes itself available to us in extremely complex epistemological ways. The notion of unmediated experience seems, if not self-contradictory, at best empty.[27]

There is nothing particularly disturbing about Katz's statement for theaesthetic awareness as I hope to clarify shortly, but Robert K. C. Forman and those contributing to his volume, The Problem of Pure Consciousness, do see something disturbing, for they define what is central to mystical experience as pure--unmediated. Theaesthetic

awareness is emphatically not a scrubbed, scoured, and antiseptic awareness in that sense of "pure." Nor is it mystical in the sense of being transcendent. The contributors to Forman's book have two problems, it seems to me: (1) the empirical decidability of whether a given consciousness event has attained total conceptual deconstruction--and hence attained the relevant purity, and (2) the conceptual issue of the intelligibility of a pure consciousness event as the core of a transcendent mystical experience. I concluded negatively about (2) in chapter one and left the satisfaction of (1), were it the case, a pretty innocuous achievement and without any logical implication for mystical transcendence. Actual attainment of the requisite purity, in fact, is to arrive at an epistemological cul-de-sac. Let us now take a closer look at Katz's constructivist principle.

A major frustration with Katz's constructivism expressed in Forman's volume is that Katz leaves his statement about the mediation of all experience undeveloped. Katz seems to trot out his conviction about the linguistic and social mediation of religious and mystical experience as though it were an a priori assumption. What is more likely, however, is that Katz asserts his mediation principle as a received or established view (as, e.g., in the sociology of knowledge or philosophy of science) to exhibit its success in helping to make sense

of the diversity of phenomena in the literature of mysticism. Even so, Katz's critics are right to complain that his constructivism is far from clear. I will attempt to draw some boundaries in a moment. My present concern is that Katz's statement (though perhaps not Katz himself) stays neutral about the issue of objectivity. However particular mystical claims or particular mystical traditions might fare under a Katzian scrutiny, to say that "all experience is processed through, organized by, and makes itself available to us in extremely complex epistemological ways" is entirely compatible with a notion of mediational processing and organization that may be understood in principled ways. That is to say, the various forms or structures of mediation may themselves exhibit systematic regularities whose functioning may facilitate rather than block objectivity. Increased mediational complexity, especially if only abstractly considered, increases the ways a cognitive system may conceivably go wrong, of course, but this is not logical grounds for a "hermeneutics of suspicion" on the present consideration. Systematic mediation, whatever its complexity, is not logically antithetical to objectivity; it is only if one begins with a simpleminded assumption that mediation necessarily (and even randomly) shortchanges cognition, that we are faced, ab initio, with an intractable problem. To return to Katz, I think his statement about mediation is impressively

warranted by the phenomena he cites, but the statement itself is best regarded as programmatic: the details of mediation for which we have empirical evidence are being pursued on a number of fronts.[28] At any rate, to concede that all experience is mediated does not entail a relativism that would fundamentally undermine objective awareness of God. Nor does Katz regard his own position logically to exclude such awareness.[29]

More narrowly, what are the candidate ways the mind might be thought to be constructively active in shaping and interpreting its own experience? Historically, two readily come to mind--one Kantian and formal, the other, content oriented, involving the influence of full-blown belief systems, presuppositions, scientific paradigms and the like. Yet a third factor in the construction of experience may appear increasingly plausible within the development of neuropsychology and psycholinguistics: the contribution to conceptualization by neural embodying structures and/or embodying processes.

Kant's own transcendentally determined categories of the understanding synthesize (intellectually structure) the empirical flow of conscious life and expressly preclude sensing the mystical or divine. Although Kant's original project might conceivably be expanded to accommodate the thinkability or perceivability of theistic personal saliencies (given that such saliencies are, <u>inter alia</u>,

empirically mediated saliencies), the success of a Kantian-like project of any kind seems very doubtful to me. If the project itself requires a human competence aprioristically to determine the formal and absolute boundary conditions of cognition, then it must be limited by the inherent inconclusiveness of any transcendental reasoning. I take the fundamental quest of the latter to involve metaphysical models that provide the most satisfying conceptual fit for current, and of course a posteriori, understanding of the world--whether such reasoning is trained upon embodied cognitive competence or the character of reality. The enterprise, while extremely important and valuable in my opinion, is inextricably bound to our current and best empirically informed theories; it is thus, in an entirely benign sense, incurably speculative. The problem, in other words, is exhibiting once and for all the universality of whatever cognitive conditions are said to be "transcendentally deduced."

What is important here is to note that Kant's constructivism involves formal intellectual structuring and the pure intuitions of space and time, not the contribution of substantive content.[30] Before looking at content providing constructivism, I will only mention, again, the prospect of determining neural or, to use Margolis's term, incarnate constraints on conceptualization. The enterprise that would establish such determination is necessarily

empirical and at present we are very far from anything approaching the direct empirical confirmation of, say, the biological ground of Chomsky's human language universals[31] or Fodor's innate concepts.[32] In chapter five I will take up what strikes me as a more manageable issue in this regard: a neuropsychological model of gestaltic objectivity.

The sort of constructivism about which there is a good deal of contemporary confidence is more nearly a content providing constructivism. That there is in fact this kind of conditioning is virtually consensual in contemporary philosophy as well as in a variety of other disciplines. Kuhnian interpretation of the history of science is constructivistic in this sense, and nearly all of Katz's discussion is the instancing of this sort of constructivism as well. I say nearly all, because he at least suggests the importance (even necessity) of providing an account of "transcendentally" determined conditions (and nativistic conditions generally) of mystical experience.[33]

Katz's global contention is that all mystical experience (hence religious experience) is contextual--arising out the pervasive conditioning of a particular tradition. That is to say, both the character of the experience itself as well as the post-experiential interpretation of the experience are conditioned--constructed, to whatever degree--by the belief system, practices, and expectations of the community

involved. This in itself does not require skepticism about religious claims cognitively construed, although the friends of mysticism in Forman's anthology criticize Katz's constructivist assumption on the grounds that it must systematically devalue any mystical tradition it is used to evaluate.[34] The charge is not excessive as applied to Katz's actual deployment of his principles. For one thing, he rules out the attainment of pure consciousness on the basis of the constructivist assumption alone;[35] the assumption notwithstanding, it seems to me that he owes those with Forman's concerns an empirically grounded argument that pure consciousness is psychologically impossible. For another thing, he speaks of the experiences of God, nirvana, and Brahman as though they had equal "cognitive" standing even though, as grounding basic claims, these experiences are logically exclusive of one another.[36] Consider, then, what Katz has to say about the objectivity of mystical experience given his commitment to contentful mediation of such experience. The issue is important because my own view would be regarded as mystical on Katz's reckoning.

Katz begins his essay with some brief comments on interpretation, verification, and validity of mystical and religious claims. The last three pages of his forty-five page discussion take up the issue of objectivity. I will quote him in extenso on the relationship he sees between verifiability and validity:

> There are major, perhaps insuperable, problems involved in the issue of trying to verify mystical claims, if by verification we mean the strong thesis that independent grounds for the claimed event/experience can be publicly demonstrated. Indeed, it seems to me, though I will not try to justify this position here, that it is not possible to provide 'verification' of this sort. As a corollary of this view it also seems correct to argue that no veridical proposition can be generated on the basis of mystical experience. As a consequence it appears certain that mystical experience is not and logically cannot be the grounds for <u>any</u> final assertions about the nature or truth of any religious or philosophical position nor, more particularly, for any specific dogmatic or theological belief. Whatever validity mystical experience has, it does <u>not</u> translate itself into 'reasons' which can be taken as evidence for a given religious proposition. Thus, in the final analysis, mystical or more generally religious experience is irrelevant in establishing the truth or falsity of religion in general or any specific religion in particular.
>
> Despite the strict limitation being placed on the justificatory value of mystical experience, it is <u>not</u> being argued either that mystical experiences do not happen, or that what they claim may not be true, only that there can be no grounds for deciding this question, i.e. of showing that they are true <u>even</u> if they are, in fact, true. . . . Nor does it seem reasonable to reduce [the even unprovable mystical] claims to mere projected 'psychological states' which are solely the product of interior states of consciousness.[37]

Katz's aim is quite limited here. The length of the quotation is to give a solid indication of what Katz takes to be the possibilities of truth and validity that are <u>consistent</u> with his overall position. Specifically, Katz does not intend to show that the contentful mediation of mystical experiences <u>logically entails</u> either that they do not happen, or that their claims are not true. Moreover, even if mystical claims are unprovable, the mediation thesis should not be taken as license for a psychological reduction.

What I should like to observe--and what is the expressed complaint of, for example, Donald Rothberg[38]--is that Katz's comments here provide at least the sketch of a theoretical or systematic agnosticism with regard to mystical and religious claims. A principled, rather than personal, agnosticism is a very strong claim. It is worth stating that the mediation thesis does not entail it. Katz's agnosticism is entailed, rather, by the "corollary" link he sees between the strong verification thesis and the correctness "to argue that no veridical propositions can be generated on the basis of mystical experience." I think that Katz shows caution, perhaps even hedging, in the logical force of his wording here, but his intent seems clear enough. Mystical claims (1) cannot be generated <u>as veridical</u> from mystical experience, and (2) <u>even if true</u>, such claims cannot become public knowledge--cannot serve to ground religious positions. I am construing (1) a bit generously, otherwise (2) becomes contradictory, or at least disingenuous. In terms of the traditional three conditions for S to know that p, perhaps what Katz's comments amount to is that he allows that the mystic might satisfy the belief and truth conditions but be fundamentally unable to satisfy a reasonable justification condition--hence does not know that p. For if we allow the mystic to <u>know</u> what he is talking about, it is paradoxical to say that <u>he</u> cannot build from that.

Although Katz is clear enough about what he intends as "the strict limitation on the justificatory value of mystical experience," it is not easy to tell how he regards the mystic's epistemic status *if* the mystic has had a genuine mystical experience and his claims are true. Katz allows the possibility of both. In this latter case, has not Katz allowed for exclusively *private* knowledge; and if he has, is he not faced with a problem of private verification which is inconsistent with the strong verification thesis he has affirmed? The truth, I think, is that Katz is far from clear on the epistemic status of the "knowledgeable" mystic. Indeed, a strict reading of "no veridical propositions can be generated [*by the mystic or anyone else*] on the basis of mystical experience" must exclude mystical knowledge. This position is radically skeptical, not merely agnostic. A slack reading of Katz's statement (i.e., the mystic can generate veridical propositions from his own mystical experience, while no others can), allows public agnosticism but generates anomalies for Katz's verificationism.

It is only at the end of his essay that Katz explicitly deals with the objectivity of mystical experience. Here we are rewarded with clarity though very little development. Katz does not want to give the impression that what he has had to say about "the active role of the knowing self" precludes there being an objective

reality that might be known. His primary concern, however, is to stress that the object of experience itself, while mind-independent, is partially "conditioned" or "constituted" by mental prepossessions. To illustrate:

> 'Smith experiences God' entails, given the strong sense of experience the mystics intend, both (a) 'Smith consciously constitutes "God"' as well as (b) '"God" makes himself known to Smith'--recognizing that here too, 'God' has also been, at least partially, conditioned for Smith. For Smith, as for all of us, only knows things as they 'appear' to him.[39]

Katz's point is that not only does the conditioning of Smith's mind prior to his mystical experience (consisting in beliefs, expectations, values, affective dispositions, etc.) contribute determinatively to the experience, the mind also (at least partially) determines the character of the object itself as experienced. What does this amount to? Does the object somehow finally lose its character as an independent object through a kind of attrition to mediational conditioning?

I think that the spirit, though not any logical entailments, of Katz's account of "layered on" conditioning does contribute to this impression. Given that "x" is the objective entity that is said to impinge on Smith's awareness, Katz says that "what (emphasis my own) 'x is' is itself, at least partly, determined by a contextual consciousness."[40] But Katz's phrasing is puzzling--or at the least it is not clear how he is using his inverted commas. We use "x" precisely because we want to refer, in

the abstract, to the mind-independent component of experience, logically to refer to x without prejudging any of x's actual properties in its separate existence, whether or not some or many of those properties are beyond human competence to represent.

Katz certainly seems to introduce his notation to acknowledge just that state of affairs as a part of the logic of experience. Katz would certainly be within the bounds of his logical point if his statement said, instead, "our concept of what x is, is itself, at least partly, determined by a contextual consciousness." But it is not clear to me that Katz is saying this. At any rate, what the mind-independent individual x is, is not determined, not even partly, by a contextual consciousness (unless we embrace idealism). I think that Katz has made it reasonably clear that the admission of pervasively mediated experience does not lead to idealism (radical constructivism); that is the reassurance and primary point of Katz's concluding remarks about objectivity, as I understand him. But Katz's remark about "what 'x is'" seems to me to put this whole matter in question, especially since the objectivity which Katz affirms (an objectivity which is consistent with what he has already said about mediation) is, for him, as a matter of epistemological principle, systematically unconfirmable for any given experience. It is clearly important for Katz to allow the prospect of objectivity in

mystical experience (though it could never be determined), but what, beyond a kind of logical courtesy, would tempt Katz to pursue the objectivity question among the only relevant phenomena? There could no reason at all.

Let us return to our original query. With regard to the awareness of God, what follows about epistemic objectivity if we concede with Katz that the percipient's experience is "shaped," "mediated," or "conditioned" by his or her full-blown cultural context? The somewhat disappointing answer is that it all depends. It of course depends on the extent of the conditioning, but more fundamentally, it depends on the nature and particular dynamic of this or that conditioning factor. This latter vitally important line of inquiry immediately immerses one in issues that are largely empirical. My limited concern here is for the strategic and logical import of Katz's general position. I will conclude here by indicating an adjustment to Katz's general epistemological thesis which is in keeping with the model I have been developing so far, and indicate the sort of conditioning and human learning that I think most directly affects the prospect of theaesthetic awareness.

Assuming that the scope of experiences taken into account by Katz's view includes theaesthetic awareness, let us briefly review what his view attempts to accommodate: (1) mystical experiences may be in fact genuine;

(2) mystical claims may be in fact true; (3) it is not reasonable to think that the philosophical unprovability of a mystical experience entails that such experience arises solely from a subjective state of consciousness; and (4) there may be in fact mind-independent, objective phenomena or states of affairs that, though in mediated ways, impinge upon the mystic's mind, in virtue of which the mystic experiences what his or her claim identifies. However, (5) no veridical proposition can be generated on the basis of a mystical experience; (6) there can be no compelling justificatory value in the claims of mystics either for themselves or in the interests of public knowledge; and (7) while objectivity is hypothetically possible, it is systematically impossible epistemically to appreciate such objectivity in any given case. This is not a happy collection of propositions.

In keeping with our previous discussion, we can allow propositions (1)-(4) by shifting epistemological concern, first of all, from justificatory proof to epistemic competence. This is not to say that justificatory concerns have no place, but it needs to be recognized that justification itself may proceed only by means of fundamental competences. Katz, we need to notice, tacitly assumes the possibility of mystical competence, but then his verificationist instincts get the better of him. He cannot have it both ways. It seems to me that it is not the

mediation thesis that is the problem; the mediation thesis calls for the investigation of both nativistic and cultural ways our perceptions of the world are facilitated and conditioned. The problem, I think, is the failure to ground the objectivity of experience in cognitive competence.

I have sidestepped a discussion of linguistic mediation per se because I think there is a more fundamental root to theaesthetic competence. It seems to me that affective development--affective learning and conditioning--is what is most basic to both the capacity and disposition for theaesthetic awareness. Although language may be vital to affective development, the way in which it is important for affective socialization is quite different from its role in the development of ideology and belief systems in general. The latter was Katz's exclusive focus. Theaesthetic awareness, as I conceive of it, does not depend upon the learning of any particular didactic system. All the mystical traditions canvassed by Katz are precisely that: learned responses to a highly developed (often intensive) mystical practice and regimen. Theaesthetic awareness, on the other hand, on the general condition of affective maturation, may eventuate in a diversity of personal reflective styles (about God) or even in social practice and codification. I will take up the particulars in chapter five.

Summary

The main intent of chapter four has been to fix the nature and some of the complexity of the knowledge concept that concerns theaesthetic awareness. We have seen, however, that the epistemological issues that concern our thesis have more of an affinity to current philosophy of mind than to analytic epistemology. The latter was taken up primarily to exhibit the contrast between the logically formal and rigorous determination of the definition of our knowledge concept and the inherently informal and largely empirical investigation of specific cognitive competences.

In so doing, it became clear that the formal analysis has a strategic importance--especially in theoretically fixing an objectivity condition (contra Gill and "interpretive" schools of thought generally). Mediational complexity by itself does not imply a systematic or principled agnosticism with respect to objectivity. But the question of verification or justification intrudes nevertheless. The basic verificationist concern, simply stated, is the problem of exhibiting to others personal (i.e., private) knowledge when such knowledge is genuinely the case. Is the embodied human mind the sort of thing that may engage in (at least some kinds of) knowing activity even though it is impossible to exhibit to others the object of such knowing along strong verificationist lines? I think so. Katz may not think so, but he seems logically to allow

such knowing even though his allowance muddies his own epistemological water.

While granting Wittgenstein's quite powerful reflections about the pervasive linguistic shaping of even our epistemological efforts (substantively and even logically), both Gill's and Phillips's adaptation of his approach were declined. That is because relevant empirical investigation is a shaper as well, and that kind of shaping cannot be conceived as radically hostage to linguistic practice. We "block the road to inquiry" if Wittgenstein's fundamental premises are taken to preclude theorizing about the natural evolution and reproduction of "forms of life." Also, while granting importance to the contribution of Plantinga and his colleagues, the "basic belief" approach was declined as philosophically isolating and inherently defensive. The sheerly analytic pursuit of the "basic belief" strategy needs to be widened to accommodate the relevance of determining the cognitive competence for acquiring basic beliefs.

Theaesthetic awareness, on our considerations so far, is an objective awareness rooted in a competence whose mediational structure is predominately affective rather than discursive. My approach, then, is not exactly an epistemological approach; although hard epistemological questioning is welcome, I think the development of the thesis so far does establish some clear limits to ways in which theaeathetic awareness may be fairly challenged.

Notes

1. Quinean themes about the relationship between explanatory theories and the "reality" such theories are putatively about include ontological indeterminacy, the underdetermination of theory by observation, and the indeterminacy of translation. Broadly speaking, these themes are relativistic. Cf. his Word and Object (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1969) and Ontological Relativity and Other Essays (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969).

2. Cf. Richard Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature (Princeton, N. J.: University of Princeton Press, 1979).

3. Cf. Richard J. Bernstein, Beyond Objectivism and Realism (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983).

4. A comprehensive statement of Margolis's relativism is given in his Pragmatism without Foundations: Reconciling Realism and Relativism (New York: Basil Blackwell Inc., 1986).

5. Cf. Nelson Goodman, Ways of Worldmaking (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1978).

6. As good a general caveat as I have encountered on the so-called theory ladenness of data is provided in this comment by Dennett, in The Intentional Stance, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989), 19n. Dennett considers whether most of our beliefs are true, and how humdrum beliefs might be infected with bad theory:

> Consider Democritus, who had a systematic, all-embracing, but (let us say, for the sake of argument) entirely false physics. He had things all wrong, though his views held together and had a sort of systematic utility. But even if every claim that scholarship permits us to attribute to Democritus (either explicit or implicit in his writings) is false, these represent a vanishly small fraction of his beliefs, which include both the vast numbers of humdrum standing beliefs he must have had (about which house he lived in, what to look for in a good pair of sandals, and so forth) and also those occasional beliefs that came and went by the millions as his perceptual experience changed.

> But, it may be urged, this isolation of his humdrum beliefs from his science relies on an insupportable distinction between truths of observation and truths of theory; all Democritus's beliefs are theory-laden, and since his theory is false, they are false. The reply is as follows: Granted that all observation beliefs are theory laden, why should we choose Democritus's explicit, sophisticated theory (couched in his opinions) as the theory with which to burden his quotidian observations? Note that the least theorteical compatriot of Democritus also had myriads of theory-laden observation beliefs--and was, in one sense, none the wiser for it. Why should we not suppose Democritus's observations are laden with the same (presumably innocuous) theory? If Democritus forgot his theory, or changed his mind, his observational beliefs would be largely untouched. To the extent that his sophisticated theory played a discernible role in his routine behavior and expectations and so forth, it would be quite appropriate to couch his humdrum beliefs in terms of the sophisticated theory, but this will not yield a mainly false catalogue of beliefs, since so few of his beliefs will be affected.

For balance, Dennett then points us to P. M. Churchland, Scientific Realism and the Plasticity of Mind (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

7. Joseph Margolis, "Problems Regarding the Ascription of Knowledge," The Personalist, 67 (1974), 6.

8. I have in mind the investigation of both sentience and ratiocination in terms of ongoing research programs. To what extent can we provide infrapsychological and biological accounts of language acquisition and concept learning? Can innate modular cognitive structures be empirically confirmed which, because of their genetically fixed relationship with environmental stimuli, ensure a considerable measure of objectivity for at least our quotidian beliefs? These questions do not have a priori answers. My general point, to quote Margolis, is that there is a strong sense "in which the theory of knowledge cannot be convincingly separated from a more comprehensive philosophy of mind; or alternatively, . . . the analysis of

knowledge and belief cannot be convincingly separated from an account of the nature of sentient creatures and persons" (Margolis, "Problems Regarding the Ascription of Knowledge," 10.).

9. I think that even this vague way of indicating the satisfaction of a "justification" condition stays with propositional knowledge. The knowing that most concerns the overall thesis--"knowing whom"--is more nearly an engaged attention of a certain affective sort: the sense of personal presence.

10. Cf. Margolis, "Problems Regarding the Ascription of Knowledge," 12.

11. The analogy between a real life linguistic world, a Wittgensteinian language game, let us say, and the "world" of a computer program like Terry Winograd's SHRDLU, may sound a bit fetched, but I intend the analogy quantitatively, not qualitatively. How can any proposition about a state of affairs be even probable if neither all relevant data nor relevant hermeneutic saliences may be fixed in the face of a possibly infinite domain of qualification? For a discussion of the significance of micro-worlds for progress in AI see Hubert L. Dreyfus, "From Micro-Worlds to Knowledge Representation" in Mind Design, John Haugeland, ed. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981), 161-204.

12. Blocks world is a programmed domain in which SHRDLU manipulates imaginary blocks and then answers questions about what it is doing and why. SHRDLU, we might say, enjoys a kind of omniscience within his domain, but is otherwise surpassingly stupid. Cf. Terry Winograd, Understanding Natural Language (New York: Academic Press, 1972).

13. Jerry Gill, "Knowledge as Justified Belief, Period." Paper presented at the University of Western Kentucky, 1985.

14. Ibid., 2.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., 6.

17. Ibid. From Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, #241, 242 (New York: Macmillan, 1953).

18. Margolis, Pragmatism without Foundations, 150.

19. Gill, "Knowledge as Justified Belief, Period," 6.

20. Margolis, Pragmatism without Foundations, 150.

21. The best discussion of Plantinga's approach to religious epistemology is "Reason and Belief in God," in Faith and Rationality: Reason and Belief in God, Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff editors (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 16-93. Technically speaking, "basic belief" strategy strikes me as logically independent of the question of foundationalism.

22. George I. Mavrodes, "Jerusalem and Athens Revisited," in Faith and Rationality: Reason and Belief in God, Plantinga and Wolterstorff ed., 192-218.

23. That is to say, e.g., Hindu beliefs may be properly basic to Hindus, Buddhist beliefs may be properly basic to Buhdists, and Christian beliefs may be properly basic to Christians. Proper basicality by itself offers no criteria for assessing religious claims taken distributively.

24. D. Z. Phillips, Death and Immortality (London: Macmillan, 1971), passim; and his article "Religious Beliefs and Language-Games," in The Philosophy of Religion, Basil Mitchell ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 122-142.

25. Phillips, "Religious Beliefs and Language-Games," 129.

26. Ibid., 130.

27. Steven T. Katz, "Language, Epistemology, and Mysticism," in Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis, Steven T. Katz ed., 26.

Notes

28. For a quick survey of differing constructivist developments over the past twenty-five years, see Donald Rothberg's essay, "Contemporary Epistemology and the Study of Mysticism," in The Problem of Pure Consciousness, Robert K. C. Forman ed., 163-210.

29. Exactly what Katz's logical allowance of objective awareness amounts to is very puzzling, however. I look at this at the end of the chapter.

30. I suspect that there is no such thing as purely formal structuring of a sheerly extensional nature. If the intentional is not reducible to the extensional, if intentional data are primitive with regard to mental phenomena, and if the ontological link between the extensional and the intentional is indeed embodiment (in the sense provided), then pertinent analysis will face a fundamental intentionality which will always affect the attempt independently to identify extensional structuring of cognition. In view of these considerations, it is interesting to read Fodor's "Methodological Solipsism Considered as a Research Strategy in Cognitive Psychology" (in Representations: Philosophical Essays in the Foundations of Cognitive Science (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1981), 225-253.) Fodor is not a reductionist but defends psychological science as exclusively infrapsychological whose empirical access to mental representations (a programmatic hope) is restricted, in principle, to extensionalist (i.e., formal) properties. Meanings are somehow in the head--nativistically so--but he seems to have no clear idea of the form/matter problem his view poses for his overall strategy. In what appears as a concession to an ultimate reductionism, he makes this puzzling remark:

> . . . it may be that mental states are distinct in content only if they are relations to formally distinct mental representations; in effect, that aspects of content can be reconstructed as aspects of form (emphasis my own), at least insofar as appeals to content figure in accounts of the mental causation of behavior. (p.240)

Fodor's paper ("Methodological Solipsism") is about the proper domain of scientific psychological inquiry, and it concerns what he calls a "formality condition." Constrained by the formality condition, scientific psychology, according

36. As we will see, since, for Katz, there are no verificatory procedures that could lead to confirmation of either the objectivity of a mystical experience or the truth of a mystical claim, the cognitive status he allows is trivialized.

37. Katz, "Language, Epistemology, and Mysticism," 22-23.

38. Rothberg, "Contemporary Epistemology and the Study of Mysticism," 169.

39. Katz, 64.

40. Ibid.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE OBJECTIVITY OF THE INTENTIONAL AND NATIVISM

Chapter one provided an ontological premise to characterize the human being's fundamental relatedness to God. There is no "proof" here except an adequacy of the model I am advocating over the adequacy of competing models. This, again, is the heart of my proposal: rather than to characterize the religiousness of human beings in terms of a phenomenologically accessible dimension of life or (with the aid of technique) a phenomenologically accessible neighboring realm to the natural world, I urged that we construe religiousness more nearly as a structural characteristic which grounds the human disposition to identify and respond to God.

On this reckoning, to say that the structure of personal existence is religious is to say that the human being is created with the fundamental disposition to find existential completion in God--God, that is, as the foundational social complement to human existence. While certainly consistent with Augustine's poignant remark that the soul is restless until it finds rest in God, the position I wish to clarify centers on the predisposition to

identify and relate to God. I take the phenomenology of such response to be variable along the range of natural human emotion. To look for a religious phenomenology which is qualitatively distinct from ordinary affectively qualified sentient and cognitive states is mistaken on the view I have been arguing. The philosophical point is that the religious reality I have sought to clarify cannot itself be felt since it is a determinant and condition of experience, not one of its phenomenological aspects. What distinguishes theaesthetic awareness from other cognitive experiences is its intentional content, not its affective tone--whether that tone be dramatic or subtle.

There are two issues that I have left undeveloped that will be taken up in this and the next chapter. First, it is important on my account that there be a nativistic, infrapsychological make-up that facilitates theaesthetic awareness at the individual level. Talking about this, however, can only be in very broad strokes, only suggestive, but surely interesting in terms of research which takes up gestaltic cognition and its relation to verbal cognition. Second, I submit that a primarily affective socialization plays an equally fundamental role in theaesthetic capacity. Affective learning that can only take place within relational (interpersonal) structures is a prerequisite to the experience my thesis is about.

Without wishing to minimize the impact that ideology,

explicit belief systems, and indoctrination may have on shaping experience, it seems to me that (affective) relational learning is far more basic. The learning I have in mind concerns the attainment of fundamental affective responses to others and self: nurture, love, shame, anger, self-esteem, et cetera. In short, the key condition of theaesthetic experience is to be a person, and persons are constitutionally social.

If this position can be sustained, we are afforded considerable theoretical economy in view of the great variety of verbal and behavioral responses that might be associated with theaesthetic experience. A closer look at the social aspects and social context of theaesthetic awareness will be delayed until chapter six. In this chapter we take up infrapsychological and nativistic concerns; but also, to set the stage for our final considerations, we concentrate once more on the objectivity of intentional phenomena generally--with an eye to the kind of immediate intersubjectivity exhibited, for example, in Sartre's "look". To do this, it will be instructive to take up Dennett's "intentional stance."

The Intentional Stance vis-à-vis Intentional Life

At the end of chapter three I stressed the environmental character of social relations and of culture

generally. By "environment" is meant a real habitat that impinges incessantly upon its inhabitants both in terms of their development and interactions. To develop within such an environment is, in part, to be inducted into culture--to become socially human--and the forces at work include a highly regularized informational medium. It is, thus, an inertial system of sorts, and may be studied by the human (or social) sciences. As I conceive of this informational medium, its currency of exchange, so to speak, is both affective and linguistic, neither form of currency existing without the other.

I made the comment that the culture/nature problem is the mind/body problem writ large. While acknowledging the public opacity of the internal phenomenological qualities of mood, emotion, and thought (there is no direct access to these qualities in another), affective states and thought processes are regularly outered--rendered socially transparent--by the very fact of one's functioning as a social participant. This is because human cultural existence (human existence as, inter alia, informational existence) is socially constituted. There is a very important corollary to this. Human psychology cannot be pursued exclusively infrapsychologically (contra Fodor). That is to say, whatever the human nativistic (neural) endowment for the attainment of concepts[1] and language happens to be, there are distinctively social determinants

on humans as informational systems.[2] It is important to stress that infrapsychological concerns and social psychological concerns are not mutually exclusive.

If this is so, then there is something peculiar about Dennett's "intentional stance"[3] construed exclusively as a pragmatic or heuristic stance (the assuming of a certain hypothetical posture) toward other people for explanatory and predictive purposes. Social reality is an intentional reality, and this is true whatever its extensionally describable aspects may be. I find Dennett's most recent offerings regarding intentional realism difficult to interpret on this score. Although he acknowledges intentional systems as exhibiting patterns as objectively there,[4] the psychological importance of these patterns individually and socially seems to be zero in view of his strenuously held homuncular cognitivism. He summarizes the strategy of homuncular "decomposition" of submolar intelligent systems this way:

> One starts . . . with a specification of a whole person or cognitive organism--what I call, more neutrally, an intentional system . . . or some artificial segment of that person's abilities (e.g., chessplaying, answering questions about baseball) and then breaks that largest intentional system into an organization of sub-systems, each of which could be viewed as an intentional system (with its own specialized beliefs and desires) and hence as formally a homunculus. . . . If one can get a team or committee of relatively ignorant, narrow-minded, blind homunculi to produce the intelligent behavior of the whole, this is progress. . . . Eventually this . . . lands you with homunculi so stupid (all they have to do is remember to say yes or no when asked) that they can be, as one says, "replaced by a machine." One

> discharges fancy homunculi from one's scheme by organizing armies of such idiots to do the work.[5]

The ascription of (intentional) homuncular activity is merely a heuristic for an essentially reductive program. In the final analysis, the cognitively lowest grade homuncular idiot is discharged by material mechanism. The motive for this drastic decomposition is that Dennett sees no explanatory psychological value in the intentional idiom at all:

> Every cognitivist theory currently defended or envisaged, functionalist or not, is a theory of the sub-personal level [i.e., the level at which only the extensional and descriptive language of science is used]. It is not at all clear to me, indeed, how a psychological theory--as distinct from a philosophical theory--could fail to be a sub-personal theory. . . . the personal level "theory" of persons [i.e., theory that involves intentional characterization] is not a psychological theory.[6]

My reference again to Dennett is not so much for the purpose of criticism--at least not yet; it is to better exhibit my own view by way of contrast. Whatever measure of realism Dennett accords intentional systems (persons) and their collective patterns of activity (culture), he introduces the "intentional stance" as a heuristic only:

> The first point to make about intentional systems as I have just defined them is that a particular thing is an intentional system only in relation to the strategies of someone who is trying to explain and predict its behavior (emphasis my own).[7]

Are then beliefs, desires, fears, hopes, and the like real? Are putatively information-bearing personal saliencies (expressivenesses-of) real? Are agents real?

Their reality would seem completely relative to the usefulness an observer finds (for the purposes of explanation and prediction of behavior) in attributing intentional properties and intentional agency to another.

Dennett is sensitive to the ontological murkiness that seems to attend the above pronouncement and writes that his view is "a sort of realism."[8] If I understand him, he is saying this: intentional construal (regarding persons, animals, machines) is the utilization of an actual pattern of a system which, relative to the interests of the observer, has value in organizing one's expectations about that system. Thus he writes,

> the intentional stance provides a vantage point for discerning . . . useful patterns [as, e.g., the quite different patterns that can be noticed in John Horton Conway's "Game of Life," an extremely simple, but surprisingly interesting mathematical game]. These patterns are objective--they are there to be detected--but from our point of view they are not out there entirely independent of us, since they are patterns composed partly of our own "subjective" reactions to what is out there; they are the patterns made to order for our narcissistic concerns . . .[9]

In the abstract, there may be any number of patterns discernibly "there" in a particular constellation of phenomena, some of which (patterns) may have utility in one's relating to those phenomena and in anticipating future phenomena. But the reality enjoyed by the events or entities which are organized by the adopted pattern may be quite ephemeral--sustained, in effect, only by the interests of the observer. An utterly innocuous instance of the

latter might be seeing a familiar animal in a cloud configuration. A more productive pattern might be the Ptolemaic astronomical system vis-à-vis the empirical heavens accessible in Ptolemy's day, and so on.

Aside from the dubious ontological clarity afforded by Dennett's remarks, there seems to be an underlying incoherence. No one--or hardly anyone--would deny the utility of the intentional stance, but does it really make sense to say that the ontological status of intentional states and processes (their reality or lack thereof) is, in part, relative to observer interest in explaining and predicting behavior? Is this not tantamount to saying that the ontological status of intentional phenomena is relative, in part, to our inescapably intentional regard for that particular pattern of (or in the) phenomena? Is not any conceivable behavior of selecting or adopting any stance whatsoever an inherently intentional behavior?

This is not to lose sight of Dennett's valid and useful distinctions of physical stance, design stance, and intentional stance. But the point we are pressing here concerns his own reflection on the reality of the intentional itself as though inquiry about this could be conducted from an intentionality-neutral vantage point. He is, after all, talking about adopting heuristic strategies for ongoing human interests in explaining and predicting behavior.

It seems inescapable that intentionality is of the warp and woof of human existence. Scientific endeavor--and that includes the cognitivist enterprise--is itself a paradigm of intentional behavior. Even so, my general way of talking of the intentional may seem to yield only a cheap point against Dennett. Does not my tack show an insensitivity to Dennett's legitimate interest in analyzing intentional construal (per se) in its role as the operating assumption that the system whose behavior we want to explain or predict possesses rationality and can therefore be expected to behave, more or less, according to the logic of its own ordered beliefs? Dennett, for example, criticizes Donald MacKay for conflating two distinguishable stances--the intentional and the personal (or moral).[10] Dennett "corrects" MacKay by insisting that the intentional stance takes up the interpretation of a(nother) system exclusively on the assumption that the system in question is rational. The intentional stance, according to Dennett, is logically independent of judgments or assumptions of personhood; adopting the intentional stance is not, even provisionally, the attribution of personhood. It is, rather, treating a behaving system as though it had systematically interrelated beliefs and that it would behave in logical consequence of those beliefs given its perceptions.

But what, for Dennett, does it mean to assume a

system's rationality? Consistent with machine functionalism, Dennett seems to model rationality, as such, on brute discursive processing--computation. So even while admitting that the processing is, roughly, the traffic of beliefs or other propositional attitudes (heuristically assigned), the beliefs are considered only logically. The intentional content (meaning) of beliefs is only philosophically tolerated until a suitable extensional analysis of such content becomes available; and needless to say, the attitude in propositional attitude has to go. According to Dennett, rationality itself is to be explained, not assumed in theory of mind; and intentionality is a fundamental impediment to the theoretical understanding we seek. In a particularly lucid passage, Dennett characterizes the appropriate theoretical project this way:

> Any time a theory builder proposes to call any event, state, structure, etc., in any system (say the brain of an organism) a signal or message or command or otherwise endows it with content, he takes out a loan of intelligence. He implicitly posits along with his signals, messages, or commands, something that can serve as a signal-reader, message-understander, or commander, else his "signals" will be for naught, will decay unreceived, uncomprehended. This loan must be repaid eventually by finding and analyzing away these readers or comprehenders; for, failing this, the theory will have among its elements unanalyzed man-analogues endowed with enough intelligence to read the signals, etc., and thus the theory will postpone answering the major question: what makes for intelligence? The intentionality of all such talk of signals and commands reminds us that rationality is being taken for granted, and in this way shows us where a theory is incomplete. It is this feature that . . . puts a premium on the yet unfinished task of devising a rigorous definition of intentionality, for if we can lay claim to a purely

> formal criterion of intentional discourse (emphasis my own), we will have what amounts to a medium of exchange for assessing theories of behavior. Intentionality abstracts from the inessential details of the various forms intelligence-loans can take (e.g., signal-readers, volition-emitters, librarians in the corridors of memory, egos and superegos) and serves as a reliable means of detecting exactly where a theory is in the red relative to the task of explaining intelligence; wherever a theory relies on a formulation bearing the logical marks of intentionality, there a little man is concealed.[11]

For reasons I have already given, I do not think Dennett's program is conceptually viable. First, if intentionality is not extensionally reducible, then it logically cannot have a purely formal criterion except in the case where a "purely formal criterion" is merely assigned by (arbitrary) correlation, thus trivially begging all the questions at issue. Also, referring to a remark of Fodor's, if extensional reduction is impossible, aspects of content logically cannot be "reconstructed as aspects of form"[12] as Fodor enigmatically suggests.

Second, it is far from clear that human rationality, as opposed to the "rational" functioning of a computer, is separable from a value orientation according to which rational self-interest, evidential salience, goals, and the like are determined. As I have already indicated, what it is that machines may be thought to simulate (computationally) is not agent-level thinking, but formal aspects of a discursive process. Human rationality shows every evidence of being irreducibly intentional in very

complex valuational and emotive ways in addition to its discursive character. By contrast, there is no plausible way to assign rational self-interest to the "information processing" of a computer except in a highly metaphorical sense.

Third, even if something like the machine-functional model triumphed and rationality could be exhaustively rendered in "Turing-normal-form," the system would still be, for the purposes of psychological explanation, a system whose processes are formal operations on symbols.[13] In essence, that is what "Turing-normal-form" is. As Fodor has observed, we do not eliminate intensional[14] contexts by supplying a mechanistic account of intelligent processes. Responding to Dennett, he says,

> . . . [computer] programs are sets of semantically interpreted formulae and their typical operations consist in the transformation of sets of semantically interpreted formulae. Only because the first is true can we think of the machine's operations as rule-governed (uninterpreted strings of formulae aren't rules), and only because the second is true can we think of the machine's operations as eventuating in proofs. . . . It is, in short, because they are in this sense semantic engines that descriptions of what computers do and how they do it are characteristically shot full of intensional idiom. Turing machine functionalism dispenses with appeals to intelligence without dispensing with this intensionality, viz. by providing a class of formalisms for which mechanical realizations are trivially available. But insofar as we view the operations of such machines as computations (a fortiori, models), we are taking these very mechanical processes to be "endowed with content." So the moral is: either taking out "intelligence loans" isn't inherent in intensional ascription or, if it is, then mechanical reduction does not pay back the loans.[15]

Fodor also makes his point by stressing that intensionality affects all psychologically pertinent data "from top to bottom."[16] So if a mechanical process has psychological pertinence, the intensional idiom cannot be avoided. In terms of the ontology of embodiment discussed in chapter two, the inextricability of the psychological from the mechanistic is accommodated by a primitive relation. In this regard, it is interesting to note this observation of Fodor's: "Whereas the theory of intelligence needs an account of mechanisms, the theory of intensionality needs an account of symbols."[17] Here, it seems to me, that with regard to the brain and brain function, the account of symbols must take up emergent and embodied phenomena. There, ontologically at least, the matter stops; there can be no reductive account, regarding the primitive and asymmetrical embodiment relation, of embodied states and processes to embodying states and processes. There can be no reduction of symbols to encoding media, no reduction of discursive linguistic processes to incarnating neural processes, and so on.

We have labored Dennett's reductive position on intentional systems for the light it may shed on the contemporary problem of other minds--to wit, the problem of the epistemic accessibility of the intentionality of others. We have already considered this problem from the standpoint of its more or less classical formulation--that

is, from the standpoint of Cartesian isolation; we are now considering such "inaccessibility" as more nearly a corollary of Dennett's approach to intentional systems. The question may be posed this way: Do we discover one another's intentional states? Do we find one another, in a strong realist sense, to be sad, angry, delighted, or to be thinking, wishing, hoping, or believing that p? Dennett's thought on such "discoverability" is brought to an interesting focus as he appreciates a certain convergence of his view and that of Donald MacKay. He quotes MacKay approvingly when the latter states that the choice of a stance toward human beings is "a matter of decision, not discovery."[18]

I think the best way to make sense of Dennett's (MacKay's) remark is first to make a distinction between investigatory or theoretical stances on the one hand, and real life participatory stances on the other. The two distinctions of occupying a stance do not treat "stance" in the same way. I do not know whether this distinction can be made in a satisfactorily rigorous way, but intuitively the idea is this. A theoretical stance always involves meta-order reflection about phenomena at a certain abstract level of consideration by which a system's behavior may be selectively organized for whatever explanatory or predictive gain. Dennett's physical and design stances are unquestionably theoretical in that sense. The intentional

stance is perhaps problematic in this regard, but I think it too is a theoretical stance in Dennett's writings because he treats it as a meta-order option (among other options) that may be considered for its heuristic promise in explaining and predicting human behavior. Taking up the intentional stance, given what we have already noted, is attending to actual patterns in human behavior, but paradoxically those very "objective" patterns are in some sense sustained by the subjective interests of the one assuming the stance. The same cannot be said for either of the other stances distinguished by Dennett.

What I think Dennett really means is that the choice of the intentional stance (though not the choice of the physical or design stance) cannot be a matter of discovery in the realist sense. There is confusion here, however, if the very idea of adopting heuristic stances as a human practice is to be found intelligible. Any adopted theoretical stance in the interest of understanding human beings involves a certain "viewing distance" from full-orbed human life in order to pay selective and systematic attention to certain aspects of that life. In this regard the intentional stance is peculiar. We can only make sense of adopting the intentional stance by tacitly acknowledging that the stance itself springs from the intentional life of the inquiring agent. Can we choose or adopt a stance for any purpose at all which is independent of the intrinsic

intentionality of choosing, adopting, and purposefulness? The question is rhetorical, but not question-begging. Frustratingly enough, Dennett seems to embrace this logic too. The intentional stance is unavoidable, he says,

> with regard to oneself and one's fellow intelligent beings. [But] this unavoidability is itself interest relative; it is perfectly possible to adopt a physical stance, for instance, with regard to an intelligent being, oneself included, but not to the exclusion of maintaining at the same time an intentional stance with regard to oneself at a minimum, and one's fellows if one intends, for instance, to learn how they know . . .[19]

Have I misinterpreted Dennett? I do not think so. For the sake of his fine honed distinctions of stance, Dennett has isolated the intentional stance as an interpretive and practical strategy which, as with any stance, may be said to be "adopted," "taken up," or "maintained." Stances are that sort of thing. Taking them up is interest relative. But note the latter part of the quotation: Dennett says that we cannot exclude "maintaining at the same time an intentional stance with regard to oneself at a minimum." This is misleading because it is not the maintenance of a heuristic intentional stance that is unavoidable; what is unavoidable has nothing to do with choosing an investigative stance. What is unavoidable is the intentional life of human beings which necessarily characterizes intelligent activity. Intentional life (as opposed to adopting a stance) is not the sort of thing that could be interest relative in Dennett's sense (viz., how

best to investigate a matter). Intentional life, rather, grounds the capacity to have and pursue such interests.

For specific purposes, Dennett's intentional stance might afford profitable predictive strategy--say, for playing chess with a computer, studying large brain mammals (dolphins, chimpanzees, elephants), interpreting toddler behavior, or for clinical psychological therapy, but it is confused to speak of maintaining an intentional stance toward oneself as though unless one did so one would fail to be an intentionally characterized individual. Even if we conceded that one always maintained the intentional stance toward oneself, one could never deliberately leave that stance (operate apart from it) for the sake of examining or understanding or even enjoying anything, and this again underscores the non-stancelike, non-strategic character of living as an intentional being. Though I cannot here discuss it, intentionality for Dennett is, in the final analysis, a property of only linguistic phenomena; it does not have to do with a fundamental relationship between a singular agent and his or her linguistic expression.[20] Having said this, however, we see again how destructive of agency Dennett's position on intentionality actually is.

My view, in contrast to Dennett's, should be fully apparent. Epistemic access to the intentionality--the subjectivity--of others is a fundamental condition of social life. The fact that we engage in such a life is proof of

the general adequacy of that epistemic access. Moreover, to use Russell's distinctions (though not necessarily freighted with his distinctive theory), we may know the "outered" mind of others by acquaintance, not merely by description. Let "the look" serve as my paradigm regarding this point. Further, let us consider the adoption of the intentional stance, the moral stance, or any other stance--insofar as such adoption is, pace Dennett, a decision and not a matter of discovery--as an intellectually meta-order way to regard a system. My point is that neither the voyeur's nor the onlooker's involvement in "the look" is stance-like on this reckoning. The involvement of both is first-order, not meta-order.

In addition, there is no question of an epistemologically disturbing distance between two minds in this case. There could be, of course; the situation might have been one in which there are facts which lead us to wonder whether the "voyeur" might really be just repairing a lock, or whether the "onlooker" might really be sleepwalking. But our example is a good one for the situation it stipulates--a situation that is familiar to human experience. No worthwhile epistemological resistance is offered to what I am arguing by suggesting that the onlooker and voyeur need (themselves) to overcome Cartesian-like doubt with respect to each other. The unit of analysis, so to speak, is the complex shaming episode,

not the private verificationist status of what each participant believes. Conceivably, all kinds of things might go wrong which distort the perception of each. The virtue of my example is that nothing has gone wrong. We have a shame episode paradigm if ever there was one, and it has epistemological implications. Let us now sketch an account of the infrapsychological capacity involved.

Nativistic Considerations

One might settle the issue of a direct personal knowledge of God with blinding speed by stipulating that knowing God is strictly propositional coupled with the provision of a knockdown version of the Ontological Argument for his existence. That, in fact, might even be one way to argue innate knowledge of God,[21] a knowledge that is, on a universal scale, logically tacit in the human mind. Whatever merit this approach may be thought to have, it has little in common with the present enterprise.

One might also contend that humans have an innate concept of God, and that simple awareness of this concept constitutes knowing God. If we leave the matter there, this approach has less philosophically to be said for it than the first. The first has to do with the prospect of a logically unavoidable proposition, while the second has to do with the prospect of a psychologically unavoidable concept. A concept qua innate concept, however, cannot logically secure

reference; and in neither case is acquaintance with God himself involved. My thesis is about such acquaintance, or short of that, the apprehension of theistic personal saliencies. Theaesthetic experience may be of either sort. If such experience involves acquaintance it would involve sensing personal presence. Epistemologically, such a sensing would be ultimate, whether or not the "sensing" is veridical. This calls for some clarification.

I need to indicate that "the sense of personal presence" is simply a designating expression, in the optimal case, for the epistemological category of knowing-whom. As such, this "sensing" does not guarantee reference either (as has already been admitted); perceptual states of <u>any</u> kind, after all, may be hallucinated; but it labels this kind of affectively engaged attention whenever such reference <u>does</u> obtain. A good example of such a case is the paradigmatic "look," and if "the look" may serve in this way, then the sense of personal presence is an existential commonplace. All my account requires is a clear paradigm of this kind. There is no hint here of a recipe for the having of theaesthetic experience, although (as I will discuss in chapter seven) there may be circumstances that may be said to favor its occurrence. The strength of my position does not reside within a verificationist account of the veridicality of this sensing; it resides, rather, in the description of a holistic, indissoluble, and subjectively bi-polar epistemic event.

It will be profitable at this point to sketch a functional neuropsychological model of the capacity which our account requires. Obviously, a neuropsychology for theaesthetic experience can only be suggested. Indeed, a neuropsychology for aesthetic and affective experience can only be suggested. The reason why I introduce a neuropsychological consideration is all-important here. While there may be such things as innate concepts (Fodor), I take it as given that there is no neuropsychologically independent way to identify them--that is, identify their content.[22] So I will take it that there is no question of sleuthing for an innate concept of God or for innate religious dispositions by neuropsychological methods. Nor is there any point, for our purposes, in taking up neuropsychological considerations merely to exhibit a neural account of gestaltic cognition, although such cognition is vital to the thesis. Manifestly, humans exhibit gestaltic awareness: they perceive wholes, recognize faces, places, and objects, and engage in all kinds of affectively qualified attention with others. We do not need a neuropsychological account to know that we <u>can</u> be thus engaged, but a neuropsychological account might be quite valuable for understanding the relationship between gestaltic apprehension and verbal understanding. That is our present concern.

In the past twenty years (and particularly in the

late 1970s) there have appeared numerous articles and books which discuss the implications of cerebral lateralization. A brain surgery (commissurotomy), performed to alleviate certain cases of severe epilepsy, made it possible for the first time to study the healthy function of each cerebral hemisphere in isolation from the other in the same individual. What emerged is the now familiar account that the left hemisphere (in the right handed individual) specializes in speech, analytic tasks, and in general, the discursive processing of information. The right hemisphere (again, in the right handed individual) was found to specialize in spatial, aesthetic, and intuitive cognition.[23] While there is an exciting research literature that has grown up around experimentation with commissurotomized patients, I shall not attempt to canvass it. My chief concern is with a consensus that seems clearly to have emerged: with regard to the cerebral processing of information, the human brain is (at least) bi-modal.[24] Moreover, the respective modalities of information processing (whether gestaltic or discursive) give rise to correspondingly distinct and non-intertranslatable modes of conscious awareness.[25] This may be due to the operation of distinct neural architectures (e.g., computational, connectionist, or even holographic architectures), but empirical determination of neural architectures is a long way off, if indeed it is even possible.

Two experimental series that focus our interest in the brain were conducted by Gazzaniga and LeDoux (1978),[26] and Sperry et al. (1979).[27] Michael Stephan, who attempts a neuropsychological theory of aesthetic experience (confined to the representational image in art),[28] gives a somewhat detailed discussion of these. I will highlight the important aspects of the experiments, but I can do little better than to summarize Stephan's philosophical construal of them.

The experiments were conducted on commissurotomy patients and were designed to determine the consciousness level in the disconnected right hemisphere. In the first experimental series the subject P.S. received a simultaneous tachistoscopical[29] presentation of visual stimuli to the respective hemispheres. What the left hemisphere saw was a chicken claw, and what the right hemisphere saw was a snow scene (an image of a house and car surrounded by snow). Immediately after the tachistoscopic presentation, P.S. was presented with an array of pictures (registering in both hemispheres), and was then asked to point to the picture that best went with the tachistoscopically presented material. The array of pictures shown both hemispheres included a chicken head, lawnmower, hammer, toaster, shovel, apple, rake, and pick.

The left hand, informed by the right hemisphere (which saw the snow scene), pointed to the shovel, while the

right hand, informed by the left hemisphere (which saw the claw), pointed to the chicken head. This much was predictable since the hemispheres govern bodily behavior contralaterally. What is of particular interest is P.S.'s verbal interpretation of his dualistic response. When asked what he saw, P.S. responded: "I saw a claw and I picked the chicken [head] and you have to clean out the chicken shed with a shovel."[30]

The response of P.S.'s "verbal self" was based on three items of information: the claw, the chicken head, and the (visual) behavioral response of his left hand pointing to the shovel. His "gestaltic self" (let us call it) knew the appropriateness of the shovel to the snow scene, and of course the researchers knew why the shovel was selected; the reason was "not <u>imagined</u> chicken sheds and shovels."[31] P.S.'s verbal self has confabulated--guessed without realizing it--but in so doing, presented his claim <u>as a statement of fact</u>. The right hand did not know why the left hand did what it did, so to speak, but the rationalization was confident nonetheless. From their work with P.S., Gazzaniga and LeDoux think that similar confabulatory responses might well be universal for cerebrally intact individuals as well:

> We feel that the conscious verbal self is not always privy to the origins of our actions, and when it observes the person behaving for unknown reasons it attributes cause to the action as if it knows but it in fact does not. It is as if the verbal self looks out

> and sees what the person is doing, and from that knowledge interprets a reality.[32]

Gazzaniga and LeDoux did not, however, infer right hemispheric consciousness from P.S.'s performance. From the above experiment and others (with P.S.) they concluded that P.S. has atypical language ability in the right hemisphere. It remained their view that it is the human "ability to verbalize" which "create[s] a personal sense of conscious reality out of the multiple mental systems output."[33]

This was soon challenged by the results of a second series of experiments conducted by Sperry et al. A subject L.B. participated in tests using the recently developed Z lens. Involving only right hemisphere registration, L.B. was shown an array of four pictures. Three of them were of unknowns and the fourth included a picture of Hitler in uniform standing with some of his men. The examiner then asked a series of questions, providing "categorizing clues." Here is an excerpt:

> L.B. Examined the card for approximately 14 seconds and then pointed to Hitler.
> Ex. 'Do you recognize that one? Is that the only one?'
> L.B. Again inspected the full array but did not point to any others.
> Ex. 'Well, on this: is this one a "thumbs-up" or a "thumbs-down" item for you?'
> L.B. Signalled 'thumbs-down'. 'Guess I'm antisocial.' (Because this was the third consecutive 'thumbs-down'.)
> Ex. 'Who is it?'
> L.B. 'GI came to mind. I mean . . .' Subject at this point was seen to be tracing letters with the first finger of the left hand on the back of his right hand.

Ex. 'You're writing with your left hand; let's keep the cues out.'
L.B. 'Sorry about that.'
Ex. 'Is it someone you know personally . . . or from entertainment . . . or historical, or . . .?'
L.B. Interrupted and said 'Historical'.
Ex. 'Recent or . . .?'
L.B. 'Past.'
Ex. 'This country or another country?'
L.B. 'Another country, I think.'
Ex. 'Prime minister, king, president . . . any of them?'
L.B. 'Gee,' and then pondered with accompanying lip movements for several seconds.
Ex. Giving further cues: 'Great Britain? . . . Germany . . .?'
L.B. Interrupted and said definitively 'Germany' and then after a slight pause added--'Hitler'.[34]

L.B.'s right hemisphere readily identified Hitler, and his verbal self responded, haltingly, to a mix of true and false category cues from the examiner. The researchers interpreted L.B.'s left hemisphere responses as "cued by the mental aura generated by the picture [of Hitler] and by the response of the right hemisphere to the examiner's questions."[35] "Thumbs-down" indicated an emotional and valuational response by the right hemisphere, as well as the tapping of long-term memory. It is especially fascinating that the right hemisphere attempted verbally to cue the left hemisphere by tracing letters, using the left hand on the back of the right hand to do so. On the basis of this experiment and others conducted on L.B. (and on another subject N.B.), the researchers concluded that "the right hemisphere possesses a well-developed sense of self and social awareness."[36]

Stephan urges that we construe these experiments in terms of Fodor's modularity of mind--in particular, that we construe them in terms of Fodor's thesis about the "fixation of perceptual belief."[37] It will be recalled that Fodor's view shows a progression, in the processing of information, from sensory transducers to encapsulated input systems to more general intelligence processing of central systems (chapter three). A crucial feature of this progression is what Fodor calls an amodal control mechanism, or ACM. To understand what an ACM's function is, it is important to review the character of the modular (isolated and autonomous) input systems which process sensory information at speed. Since the work of each input system (visual, auditory, tactual, etc.) is rapid and hard-wired, Fodor reasons that there must be a non-modular interpretive mechanism for adjusting informational gaps and dissonances relative to memory. Because each is modular, the processing of modules is not open to introspection; their informational output is what it is, therefore, and cannot be intramodularly corrected or adjusted so as to fit with the deliverances of other modules.

ACMs are thus hypothesized as interpretive fixating systems which immediately review the intersensory situation and interpretively fix the overall perception. An ACM instantaneously establishes the "believed situation"; readies it, so to speak, for rational attention. It is

important to stress here that an instance of ACM functioning is not itself reasoning or conscious thinking; it is fixating, or to use a term I will introduce shortly, such functioning is a formatting of data for conscious cognitive experience.

I think Fodor's notion of an ACM is quite plausible. If our survival depends on the reliable, extremely complex, and automatic functioning of encapsulated input systems which work with immediacy, then the postulation of ACMs seems necessary and their postulation beautifully explains the "normal" occurrence of confabulation, but this is getting ahead. Our present concern is the parallel processing of information in two distinct modalities with the implication that humans are bi-modally conscious. The responses of P.S. and L.B. are strong evidence that the right hemisphere is capable of higher cognitive processing without recourse to the classic language centers. That does not mean there was no linguistic character to their right hemispheric processing; the capacity for naming and experiencing a culturally rich affective import of words was certainly in evidence. But the mode of cognizance certainly seems not to have been discursive. What is strongly suggested is that right hemisphere representation of its sophisticated cultural knowledge is not discursively conceptual at all. Lacking a crisp and analytic way to express this, we might say that right brain knowing is the

knowing of saliencies wherein the linguistic element, if present, functions in rich connotative ways--affectively and metaphorically.

The distinguishing feature of Stephan's theoretical deployment of ACMs is that both hemispheres have them; ACMs too are lateralized. If so, it is a reasonable hypothesis that a given gestaltic perception (full-blown in all its sensory, affective, and cultural import) is "fixed," if only temporarily, prior to and independently of linguistic construal. The non-intertranslatability issue is very important at this point and it is difficult precisely to see where the experimental data lead. Stephan's overall thesis stresses the non-intertranslatability of the two hemispheric modes of cognition. If this contention means that, say, the gestaltic mode is not reducible to the discursive, it is easy to agree. What cannot be meant is the impossibility of communication between right and left brain cognition. Although Stephan obviously does believe there is mutual cognitive influence from one side to the other, he never suggests how this might be conceived.

The distinctive ACM of the verbal hemisphere is an amodal causal linguistic mechanism, or ACLM. ACLMs, accordingly, rationalize modular output, whereas right hemisphere ACMs gestaltically organize or intuit modular output. Both systems exhibit an intelligent process: ACMs intuit to the best gestaltic construal of data as determined

by memory, while ACLMs rationalize to the best verbal construal of the data as determined by memory. P.S.'s confabulated chicken shed is a good example of the latter.

The foregoing has been merely a highlighting and I have left out a good deal of detail that would contribute to the plausibility of Stephan's utilization of Fodor's model. My objective, however, has not been to argue the correctness of this theory of mental organization. For that, one may refer to Fodor's writings. I think it is compelling nonetheless, and has the virtue of showing scrupulous attention to the relevant experimental data. There is also a not inconsiderable constraint on relativistic epistemology if Fodor's modularity hypothesis can be empirically sustained. The relativistic import of the so-called theory-ladenness of data is mitigated significantly--at least with respect to our more quotidian perceptions and beliefs. Less so, of course, for scientific theorizing. As Kim Sterelny has observed, even if "perception is preadapted to certain very general structural features of the world . . . these are very general features, not at issue in the disputes between rival scientific theories."[38] It is important, however, not to devalue "quotidian" perception and belief for their role in theory construction, for without them there could be no useful theories by which to organize and understand our experience of the world.

As was indicated in chapter four, constructivist

factors are to be taken seriously on condition that their identification be empirically prompted and that they be structured within theory. ACMs and ACLMs are such constructivist factors and I want to conclude this section by discussing how an ACM in particular might be involved in theaesthetic perception. The role I think it has is in the "fixation" of gestaltic perception in the form of personal saliencies. In terms of information processing on a modular account of mind, I want to draw attention to the interfacing between gestaltic memory and the outputs of the sensory modular systems. One way to conceive this is to use a computer metaphor: the ACM brings its memory resources to bear upon its incoming data by means of a relatively stable format. The ACM formats (structures) the sentient data of the modular systems thus "presenting" them, in a full-blown way, to consciousness, hence also rendering them available for reflective awareness.[39]

From what has already been sketched, right brain formatting is non-discursive (which is not to deny symbolic elements). What is especially important is that the key feature of this formatting for theaesthetic awareness is its affective set. ACM formatting should be thought of as involving a notion of format that is flexible, formatting that can be modified by experience. With regard to affective set, its contribution is relatively fixed in psychosocial developmental ways. So barring feral children,

brain pathologies, and the like, the affective/social contribution of ACM formatting will approach universality. I say this with the caveat that there will be lots of subtle, idiosyncratic variables which will also contribute to the determinate character of affective ACM formatting depending on genetics and the particular social environment.

The data to be affectively formatted are (predominately) personal saliencies. Of course, one might perceive a stone as angry, kindly, lethargic, et cetera, but that kind of weird possibility can itself only arise within the paradigm of human cultural existence. As I am using the expression, personal saliencies are a vital informational medium of relational existence. Affective formatting does not create them, however; I use the expression "affective formatting" as a way to conceive of their functionally coming into awareness in this or that determinate way. On the other hand, I should make it clear that personal saliencies are holistic properties of the human organism in the quite radical sense required by the embodiment thesis outlined in chapter two. They are holistic properties, nevertheless, only within a fundamentally social order of such organisms.[40]

It should be borne in mind that we are still speaking of the fixation of perception and perceptual belief, not a conscious reasoning process. We are not speaking of the

conscious attempt to make sense of a given perceptual manifold. We are speaking, in the abstract, of a neurological function which immediately organizes the deliverances of the encapsulated sensory systems for intelligent use, even though the idea of such neat and task-like functions is probably highly idealized.

The percept that is structured for use may be very complex. It is not just the intersensorial and spatial Gestalt of a physical object; in cases where personal, affective nuances are formatted, the affective attitude of the other (person) is the very thing established in consciousness for central processing. It is easy to acknowledge that our construals of overt displays of anger, sadness, and fear in those we know are instantaneous, but thanks to ACM functioning, our construals of quite subtle and complex affective saliencies are often instantaneous as well for precisely the same neuro-functional reason. The features of perception fixation that directly involve our thesis are (1) its character as a relatively automatic response to stimuli, (2) its independence of linguistic processing, (3) its affective/evaluative character, and (4) its irreducibility to discursive form.

Psychosocial disorders, on this account, illustrate how affective formatting may be skewed and hence perpetuate socially counterproductive behavior. While the paranoid individual, for example, is typically very verbal--given to

invent or confabulate conspiracy (neurally facilitated, we might suppose, in part at least by ACLMs)--his experience of personal saliencies are fixated as systematically threatening, as portents of malevolent design. It is reasonable to think that it is the paranoid's affective formatting (i.e., higher cognitive, but automatic perceptual assessment) which energizes his elaborate verbal overlay. In another example, the co-dependent might be said to "automatically" perceive relational communication from a formatting whose chief characteristic is a devaluation of self, thus setting up systematically solicitous behavior (by caretaking, obsequiousness, self-deprecation, and the like). Although the idiosyncratic character of each case is quite variable, the affective fixation phenomenon is readily apparent. My general point is that certainly a core of psychosocial dispositions enter the cognitive structuring of personal saliencies <u>at the stage of belief fixation</u> prior to reflective general processing.

To sum up, fixating systems (ACMs and ACLMs) are postulated because of the encapsulated, parallel, non-introspectable character of sensory processing, but also because of the welter of incoming stimuli that have to have <u>semantic</u> organization at speed for the good of the system. It is the fixated (i.e., formatted) deliverances of the modular systems that become available to Fodor's central processing system. We noted in chapter three that Fodor

conceded that central processes are pretty mysterious: "practically nothing is known about what happens after the information gets there." It seems to me, however, that we must at least affirm this much: generalized intelligence, vis-à-vis specialized modular processing, cannot be sheerly algorithmic. I do not mean to say that the neural architecture involved cannot be computational (although perhaps it cannot be);[41] I mean, rather, that we have no model of a mechanical rational process which pursues rational self-interest in the necessarily affectively qualified way that humans pursue it (cf. pp.230-1 of the present work). Whatever central processing may be, it has to be shot through with higher cognitive affective and evaluative dispositions. Extensional models of mind are inherently blind to this dimension of human rationality. Indeed, any adequate model of human rationality needs to account for systematic irrationality where valuational sets and formatting frustrate socially adaptive behavior in predictable ways.

The elements of our neuropsychological sketch for processing personal saliencies (predominately non-verbal expressivenesses of personal attitude) might be seen to work this way in the case of L.B. The modular visual system processes the stimuli from the array of the four pictures. Perceptual awareness is then ACM-fixated as awareness of four photographs of people, three of whom are unfamiliar.

Hitler is readily recognized by virtue of long-term memory, but within a negative affective/evaluative set. Precisely here we need to be reminded that L.B.'s negative response to Hitler is not explained in terms of simple specific memories (the kind of recall often exhibited in playing "Trivial Pursuit"); it seems to me that we have to invoke affective formatting of a general psychosocial nature. Although L.B. might just be remembering that he heard somewhere that Hitler was a bad man--hence the "thumbs-down" response, it is far more likely that a familiarity with Hitler's deeds elicited the negative reaction--a response evidencing an internalized socialization and produced by affective formatting.

L.B.'s recognition of Hitler had four important characteristics: it was more or less immediate (was not deliberated); it was evaluative and affectively qualified; but most importantly, it emerged cognitively full-blown independently of L.B.'s language centers. Because right brain, gestaltic knowing does show a limited facility with words (naming and affective import), L.B.'s "gestaltic self" attempted to cue his "verbal self" by writing with the left hand on the right hand. There is no assumption here of two selves in one skull,[42] however. No bifurcation of the self is intended by using expressions like "verbal self" and "gestaltic self." Of primary importance is whether or not the processing and conscious awareness of data is <u>bi-modal</u>.

The evidence is very compelling that this is the case. In the normal (non-disconnected) brain there is of course this same bi-modality, but with the nerve bridge between the hemispheres intact, there is no need of cuing by way of external visual means. It is important to note too that both hemispheres are sentiently informed by the modular systems, but they process their information in ways distinctive to either a discursive or a gestaltic mode.

What our neuropsycholcgical reflections contribute to our model of theaesthetic awareness is modest, but important for what they tell us of the "onset" and nature of the objectivity involved. Neither is verbal. Theaesthetic awareness involves a God who discloses himself in the creation aesthetically. It further involves an epistemically competent agent whose acquaintance with this disclosure is gestaltically processed and registered for conscious attention. The subjective requirement of the epistemic agent is principally internalized psychosocial affective development, not a systematic ideological orientation. If the characteristics of gestaltic ACM fixation of perceptual belief ((1)-(4) listed above) hold for theaesthetic awareness, what is perceived is not, in the first instance, verbally processed or verbally salient and may easily be verbally enigmatic.

That holds true generally of verbal attempts to elucidate the character of particular aesthetic experiences,

and of theoretical attempts to elucidate aesthetic experience as such.[43] The point of comparison is not between two distinct phenomenologies--the aesthetic and the religious; that was ruled out some time ago, ex hypothesi. Rather, the very circumstances which underlie verbal enigma regarding aesthetic experience do so for theaesthetic experience as well; the validity of neither kind of experience is invalidated by this characteristic. We have encountered the reasons for verbal enigma a number of times already: the gestaltic nature of the cognition involved, its initial full-blown fixation in isolation from linguistic awareness, and its resistance to discursive translation.

Might not all this lead to an epistemological impasse of my own making? Have I perhaps painted myself into a corner? A corollary of the foregoing might seem to be this: the more linguistically fine grained a theaesthetic description is, the more confabulatory it is likely to be. Is there a provision in my theory which specifies criteria for telling observation from guessing or mere verbal effusion? No there is not, but why, exactly, is that a prcblem? My starting assumption, which I can no more prove now than earlier, is that the human being, as a psychosocially developed individual, has both a disposition and a competence to be aware of God. The question of disposition, as opposed tc a competence that may or may not be exercised, cannct be philosophically argued except to

point to the virtual universality of religious practice and sentiment across cultures. Other hypotheses account for these phenomena differently (as, e.g., in the writings of Feuerbach, Marx, and Freud), but mine is a realist position whereas theirs is not.

The question of competence, on the other hand, may be taken up in terms of the epistemological structure of gestaltic objectivity. Much of our discussion so far has contributed to the latter. To provide closure on what I am driving at, consider once more the subject L.B. who identified the picture of Hitler. Without the benefit of linguistic awareness, he nonetheless recognized the historical man at a sophisticated social level. L.B.'s perception of Hitler, verbally inchoate at best, was gestaltically objective. It is far from clear what can be meant by a cuing of L.B.'s "verbal self" by "the mental aura generated by the picture." It obviously cannot mean that something called a mental aura traveled from the right hemisphere to the left by means of the severed corpus callosum. Since the left hemisphere did not "see" the picture, any inter-cerebral communication must be thought to be accomplished by the indirect connection of the hemispheres through a variety of mid-brain structures (the limbic system, e.g.). Whatever the "verbal self's" indirect access might have amounted to, the perceptual salience of that data for the language centers was meager in the extreme.

What the experimental situation with L.B. does not illustrate, of course, is a similar problem of verbal access to formatted gestaltic cognition in the cerebrally intact individual. What is illustrated is a very high degree of autonomy in the fixating of perceptual belief independently of linguistic processing. In the intact brain we are still presented with bi-modal processing and bi-modal ways of being cognitively alert to data. The objectivity of gestaltic perception is not compromised if one's verbal construal involves metaphors or descriptive elements that miss their mark by a few degrees--or if one's attempt to verbalize is vague.

Verificationist concerns with regard to particular descriptions would certainly be affected by fuzzy reporting, but the fuzzy reporting itself does not logically imply that the subject himself or herself did not enjoy gestaltic objectivity of a higher cognitive sort. I certainly do not want to minimize the importance of verbal understanding in any particular case, but the all-important gestaltic objectivity of theaesthetic awareness is not established by high linguistic resolution of the experience itself. The case I am making here focuses on the nature of a certain epistemic competence. Objectivity enjoyed by the exercise of that competence cannot be discredited by using a measure of assessment that is in crucial respects blind to its (that competence's) style of processing data.

Summary

This chapter has been primarily concerned with the objectivity of intentional saliencies as the full-blown consequence of distinctively gestaltic cognition. Dennett's enterprise was seen to be a less than consistent extensionalist attempt to accommodate intentionality. While he stressed the conspicuous heuristic value of the "intentional stance," Dennett was found to conflate the ideas of the existentially inescapable intentionality of human cultural life with a logically optional heuristic stance. The former is unavoidable because it is, in part, constitutive of mental activity and ultimately grounds all stances of inquiry. Confusion enters because one can, as a matter of decision, take up the intentional stance toward a given system--treat it as behaviorally governed by a belief system--for explanatory and predictive purposes.

The neuropsychological model which was sketched has its primary value in providing a functional account of the fixation of gestaltic perception. For present concerns, this means the evaluative and affective formatting of personal saliencies which occurs prior to, and independently of, linguistic reflection. In this regard, the verificationist concerns that we have noticed so far--Katz's, for example--have intruded in a question-begging way. While legitimate verificationist issues are involved in every step of an empirically testable

hypothesis, where our thesis is concerned one cannot fairly challenge the experience of God until after the basis for its cognitive access is clarified. It will not do, therefore, to engage in a kind of Cartesian or verificationist sulk about private knowledge which ignores the case being made for the competence for a gestaltic objectivity which is not amenable to proof in the tradition of strong verificationism.

The social psychological prerequisite of theaesthetic awareness will now be taken up. Theaesthetic awareness is affectively engaged attention; the most important external constructivist consideration regarding its occurrence is therefore affective relational development, not indoctrination or ideational grooming. I am not suggesting a sharp separation between affective and ideational learning and development; the two shape each other--holistically. But on the view which I am advancing, factors of affective socialization are primary for theaesthetic experience and these by themselves provide the universality--the egalitarian character of theaesthetic competence--required. Theaesthetic awareness, therefore, may occur despite contradictory ideational currents or personal skepticism of a verbally explicit sort.

Notes

1. Fodor uses the expressions "concept acquisition" and "concept attainment" as opposed to "concept learning" as a neutral way of speaking of concepts becoming available to the organism--neutral between a particular concept's being innate or not innate. See Fodor's "The Present Status of the Innateness Controversy," in Representations, 266.

2. Later in the chapter I will introduce the notion of formatting--a term which I intend as a shorthand for the relatively immediate and automatic structuring of one's perception of affective saliences in others. Formatting is a functional notion by which I want to emphasize the immediacy with which the learning of socialization as well as native affective dispositions are brought to bear in fixating one's perception of the affective and personal dispositions of others.

3. See Dennett, The Intentional Stance, 13-35.

4. Ibid., 37-42.

5. D. C. Dennett, "Artificial Intelligence as Philosophy and as Psychology," in M. Ringle ed., Philosophical Perspectives in Artificial Intelligence (Atlantic Highlands, N. J.: Humanities Press, 1978).

6. D. C. Dennett, "Toward a Cognitive Theory of Consciousness," in C. W. Savage ed., Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science (Vol. 9) (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1978).

7. Daniel C. Dennett, Brainstorms: Philosophical Essays on Mind and Psychology (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1981), 3-4.

8. Dennett, The Intentional Stance, 37.

9. Ibid., 39.

10. Dennett, Brainstorms, 240.

11. Ibid., 12.

12. Fodor, Representations, 240.

13. Ibid., 22.

14. Fodor speaks of the intensional idiom--intensional, spelled with an 's'. Intensional contexts are contexts of meaning; they are semantically qualified. I have treated intentional, spelled with a 't', in roughly the sense Brentano intended--that is, directedness upon an object.

15. Fodor, Representations, 23.

16. Ibid., 22.

17. Ibid., 23.

18. Dennett, Brainstorms, 239. See also D. M. MacKay, "The Use of Behavioral Language to Refer to Mechanical Processes," The British Journal of the Philosophy of Science, XIII (1962):89-103.

19. Dennett, The Intentional Stance, 27.

20. In Content and Consciousness (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), Dennett seems to hold that intentionality is primarily a feature of linguistic phenomena:

> Intentional objects are not any kind of objects at all. This characteristic is the dependence of Intentional objects on particular descriptions. . . . To change the description is to change the object. What sort of thing is a different thing under different descriptions? Not any object. Can we not do without the objects altogether and just talk of descriptions? (pp.28-29)

21. See, e.g., John Edward Carnell, An Introduction to Christian Apologetics (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948), 159ff.

22. See Fodor's "Methodological Solipsism," in Representations, 225-253.

23. The best down-to-earth and non-speculative treatment of the whole split brain story which I have encountered is S. Springer and G. Deutsch, Left Brain, Right Brain (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1981).

24. See, e.g., D. Galin and R. Ornstein, "Lateral Specialization of Cognitive Mode: An EEG Study," Psychophysiology (1972) 9:412-418.

25. Non-intertranslatability may be a controversial issue. I will comment on it later, but suffice it to say that whatever it amounts to, it cannot be construed so as to preclude the mutual influence of gestaltic and verbal modes of consciousness.

26. M. Gazzaniga and J. LeDoux, The Integrated Mind (New York: Plenum Press, 1978).

27. R. Sperry, E. Zaidel, and D. Zaidel, "Self Recognition and Social Awareness in the Disconnected Hemisphere," Neuropsychologia (1979) 17:153-166.

28. Michael Stephan, A Transformational Theory of Aesthetics (New York: Routledge, 1990).

29. Tachistoscopic visual presentation secures registration in one hemisphere only. Since each eye conveys information to both hemispheres, a display device (the tachistoscope) is required to ensure unilateral registration of stimuli by flashing the display to only one visual field at a time interval (whatever number of milliseconds) short enough so that eye movement will not achieve bi-lateral registration.

30. Gazzaniga and LeDoux, The Integrated Mind, 148.

31. Stephan, A Transformational Theory of Aesthetics, 41.

32. Gazzaniga and LeDoux, The Integrated Mind, 149-150.

33. Ibid., 151.

34. Sperry et al., "Self Recognition and Social Awareness in the Disconnected Hemisphere," 159-160.

35. To speak of the communication of a "mental aura" at this point in the experimental situation seems to introduce the very kind of mystery we would like to avoid. In the informational vocabulary these experiments are

designed to clarify and exhibit, what is a mental aura and what structures facilitate its communication?

36. Sperry et al., 160.

37. For extensive development of this notion, see Fodor's Modularity of Mind (1983).

38. Sterelny, The Representational Theory of Mind, 78.

39. This idea came out of discussions with a former student of mine, William Finley (1981). His concept was that of an updateable memory format which stabilized perception for intelligent use. Neither of us had any acquaintance with works on modularity at the time.

40. To say that personal saliences are holistic properties of social organisms may sound a bit circular. It needs to be kept in mind that the embodiment relation is not a species of causal relation; if it were, extensional reducibility would be implicit. What is intended by the social character of personal saliences is that they are communications of selfhood to/for others. There cannot be personal saliences within a social vacuum.

41. For an enormously complex attempt to refute, or at least humble, thoroughgoing computationalism (i.e., all mental processes are somehow algorithmic) see Roger Penrose's The Emperor's New Mind (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989). See also Daniel Dennett's review of Penrose, "Murmurs in the Cathedral," New York Times Literary Supplement, Sept. 29-Oct. 5 1989, 1055-1057.

42. For the most philosophically extravagant construal of the experimental data, see Roland Pucetti's "Brain Bisection and Personal Identity," British Journal for the Philosophy of Science (1973) 24:339-355, and "The Mute Self: A Reaction to De Witt's Alternative Account of the Split-Brain Data," British Journal for the Philosophy of Science (1976) 27:65-73. See Dennett, Consciousness Explained, 423-426, for a construal which wholly neglects significance of bi-modal information processing. It seems to me that the philosophical significance of the split-brain phenomena resides in their implications for discrete styles of conceptualization.

43. Stephan summarizes this as follows:

> Because the language centres possess no direct knowledge of the causes of [aesthetic experience] due to its association with right-hemisphere modes of cognitive processing, . . . this has typically resulted in a consensus by aestheticians that it is an elusive and enigmatic phenomenon. Nonetheless, by and large, the enigma is not accepted but, on the contrary, prompts a variety of contemporary investigations into the nature of aesthetic experience and, when appropriate, its associated object, the representational visual image itself. (A Transformational Theory of Aesthetics, 131.)

CHAPTER SIX

AFFECTIVE LIFE: THE SOCIAL PREREQUISITE OF THEAESTHETIC EXPERIENCE

On the account so far given, the competence and disposition to become aware of God are innate. The universality of this competence and disposition, however, involves more than infrapsychological complexity. Insofar as psychosocial development is essential for the formatting of personal saliencies, it is likewise essential for the formatting of theistic personal saliencies. The capacity for the perception in others of love, gentleness, acceptance, displeasure, anger, sadness, humor, and a great many other affectively qualified attitudes seems to me to provide an essential basis for the receptivity which theaesthetic awareness requires. There is no implication here that it is only an idealized "well-integrated personality" that may serve in this way. I mean only to draw a sharp contrast between two foundational possibilities: (1) holding that affective capacity and development are basic to theaesthetic readiness, and (2) holding that ideational development and indoctrination are basic to theaesthetic readiness. This leg of our journey will be the attempt to clarify the idea of affective life which is foundational to theaesthetic perception.

Affective Life, Rationality, and Qualia

David Hume once seriously advanced the claim that "reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them."[1] Given the intellectual climate in which Hume seeks to develop this claim, it seems to me that he exhibits an extraordinary insight. His claim also betrays a seriously counterproductive understanding of the nature of both engaged rationality and "the passions." It will repay us to identify both the insight and the mistake.

We may begin by noting the curious wording in Hume's statement. He seems to be making both a factual claim (one's reason, as a matter of correct observation, is a slave of the passions, and so cannot pretend to be otherwise), and a normative claim (one's reason ought only to be governed by one's passions). Baldly stated in this way, Hume's famous dictum seems paradoxical. If one's reason cannot help but be governed by passion, then it hardly makes sense that one should be exhorted to allow passion to have this role. My guess is that the philosopher who first alerted us to the logical problem of extracting an "ought" from an "is" does not intend the "ought" in the above remark to behave normatively. It is hard to say. Let us read him as saying, "reason is, and so ought only to be regarded as the slave of the passions." Further, "while reason may attempt to pretend otherwise, the attempt should not be made and is anyhow doomed to failure." Now we can move on.

The insight which I see in Hume's statement resides in fact that the preponderance of human thought and action is in some fashion motivated, rooted in concern (i.e., emotional disposition), and hence passionate--thoroughly qualified by complex affective states and dispositions. The mistake involves the absolute dichotomy which Hume sees between rationality and passion, between thought and emotion. For Hume, reason is radically dispassionate--a computer-like faculty whose exclusive function is to identify ideas and logically to order sequences of ideas. Passion (or emotion),[2] on the other hand, has no rationality to it at all but nevertheless has the all-important role of motivating behavior and thought itself. Thus reason cannot motivate and passion is rationally blind. Putting passion exclusively in charge, therefore, amounts to a most unhappy role assignment given the strategic importance of rationality in human affairs.

Today it is consensual that Hume's dichotomy cannot be drawn. There has been a great deal of discussion about a number of aspects which are thought to be relevant to the definition of emotion: physiological disturbances, behavior, feelings, cognition, valuation, and appetition. These have been variously weighted; and, depending on theory, some may be deemed irrelevant. The essential concern with each is whether it is constitutive of emotion (in whole or in part), causal in the production of emotion, or merely a concomitant

of emotion. There is a thicket of issues involved here, and my present concern is not to offer a detailed theory of emotion. That is too vast an undertaking for present purposes. A sketch of emotionality is nevertheless important if I am to get my concept of theaesthetic awareness properly on the table.

Theaesthetic awareness, when it occurs, is first and foremost affectively engaged attention. It is essentially an emotional awareness. But what is emotion? What is affect? Thus far I have been using "emotion," "affect," and "passion," adjectivally at any rate, somewhat interchangeably. It will be useful, for my purposes, to speak of affect as the <u>affective life</u> of the individual. That is because I want a way of referring, in an all-encompassing way, to the phenomenological and attitudinal side of culturally significant, first-person experience. There can be little by way of precision here except to indicate what is central. "Affective life" is a concept by which I want to collect more than the range of individual emotions and moods identified in ordinary language. Emotions and moods are prominent features of affective life, but by "affective life" I intend a good deal more--and less. By it I want to include <u>any</u> discriminable state of emotion or intentionally qualified mood,[3] but also the quite varied <u>feeling</u> aspect of thought life in general. I intend, that is, that "affective life" serve as a

superordinate term[4] which ranges over a number of more or less distinct phenomena of consciousness.

That is the more. The less is that "affective life" is here intended as a simple demarcation concept. The only work I want this concept to do is to serve in the abstract to name the phenomenological aspect of intentional life insofar as some form of concern is salient to that phenomenology. It is perhaps true that only a rough gesture can be made, on current understanding, to nail this concept down, but its core meaning can be made clear, and is defensible, I believe, vis-à-vis eliminativist and reductionist views of phenomenological life. The general intuition that governs the approach I want to take is that agent concern is the pervasive phenomenological characteristic of affective states. Affective states, thus, are intentionally qualified states in which experienced concern is ingredient (though not necessarily monitored by a meta-awareness of that experience). Such concern may range from an intensity of near zero, as with one's occurrently entertaining the humdrum belief that one's coat is hanging on a hook in the hall, to great intensity, as with the fear that the grizzly bear in one's path is about to attack.

Consider Hume's dictum again. From the standpoint of Hume's "science of human nature" (the introduction of the experimental method of reasoning into moral subjects),[5] there can be no reasoning independent of passion; for Hume,

reason, despite its dispassionate nature, is the slave of the passions. We can recover Hume's insight, and alleviate the dictum of paradox, by the recognition that the practice of human rationality is, in general, driven by concern; the practice of human rationality is, in its very essence, structured concern, actively engaged with everyday life. This is in contrast to the operation of machine-functional rationality which, by its very nature, does not instance concern about anything, regardless of the computational "achievement" that might be attributed to it. I do not intend this comment to exclude the theoretical possibility that a device might be conceived or even constructed which could reason in its own behalf, but if that were to happen, the device would have to possess an affective life at least weakly analogous to the only paradigm we have--the human paradigm.

Does this mean that all cases of thinking or reasoning are affectively charged? To the extent that thinking and reasoning are intrinsically concerned activities, the answer is yes. Hume, I believe, has indeed identified a profound insight. Reasoning is inextricably bound up in affect. Rational self-interest--the capacity to feel and so the capacity to represent to one's self goals as mattering--would be unintelligible otherwise. It would be a mistake, however, to test this hypothesis by scrutinizing cases of cogitation to which we can ascribe concern of only

marginal intensity (e.g., occurrent "trivial pursuit" ratiocination). The basic idea is that even in the most humdrum of thought processes, praxical rationality is always goal-directed; such rationality occurs only in behalf of something that matters to the individual whose rationality it is. I do not wish to deny the conceivability that an occurrence of brain activity might instance a bit of computation simpliciter,[6] like the computer whose switch is in the "on" position. It must be borne in mind that our reflections are about rational practice and the importance of affective sets and affective intensities in accounting for that practice. My contention is that rational production cannot be analyzed in terms of the structure of machine-functional discursion.

What I have said so far about affective life and rationality has been quite general--a roughing in of the superordinate concept "affective life" in order to become more particular about the subordinate concepts of emotion, mood, and passion. Before isolating these latter, I would like to pay some brief attention to the importance of the phenomenological character of affect and of affectively qualified thought. In the current literature, this phenomenological character is discussed as the problem of qualia--the felt qualities of experience.[7] If there are no such things as qualia--"the way things seem," as Dennett has aptly put it[8]--then there are no felt phenomena at all, and

certainly no affective life as I conceive it to be. That outcome would be too sad for words.

I will here skirt the detailed debate about qualia,[9] except to indicate what I take to be a defensible position that qualia are real. Given the current state of scientific knowledge about consciousness, awareness, and subjective states generally, taxonomizing affective life must proceed cautiously and tentatively. I nonetheless think we can proceed with a good measure of confidence--confidence, for example, that there exists a structured phenomenal life to be taxonomized. With respect to a scientifically respectable classification of affective kinds (kinds whose very existence is in part constituted by their felt quality), a great deal depends on deep lying assumptions. If, for example, scientific taxonomizing must obey a thoroughgoing extensionalist constraint, both in the description of putative affective phenomena and in the description of their precise link with functional and neural structures (and processes), then affective phenomena must be judged incapable of scientific study if indeed they have any sort of existence at all. This is because affective phenomena not only have intrinsic intentional properties (so far irreducible to extensional properties), they typically exist as being felt.[10]

This is certainly not to say that taxanomic inquiry into affective kinds can proceed independently of

extensionalist constraint altogether. To obey such a constraint is precisely the attempt to determine the character of affective life in terms of law-like regularity, to determine testable connections between specific reports of ostensibly affective kinds with neural structures and neural processes. If it is decided, a priori, that scientific inquiry is off the mark to the extent that it countenances intentional phenomena, or to the extent that it countenances qualia, then affective phenomena are put beyond the pale of science. Patricia Churchland sums up scientific worries about taxonomizing consciousness--including affect--this way:

> The theoretical problem that emerges from a study of the work on . . . higher functions, such as consciousness, is this: if the psychological (functional) (emphasis my own) taxonomy is ill defined, then the search for neural substrates for those functions will be correspondingly ill defined. There are, certainly, remarkable data, found at all levels in psychology and neuroscience, but precisely how to interpret the data in terms of a theory of neurobiological capacities, representations, and processes is yet to be discovered.
>
> Standing back from the details of individual experiments, what we want to know is how humans and other animals learn, what makes them smart, how they plan and problem solve, how they recollect and forget, how their brains differ when their personalities differ, how they can be self-aware, what consciousness is. The treacherous difficulty here is that we cannot be sure when we are asking the right questions. We do not know whether such categories as "emotion," "declarative memory," "procedural memory," "learning," and "consciousness" pick out a unified, single, natural kind, or whether these categories herd together quite motley collections of disparate phenomena . . .[11]

The whole matter, however, trades on the underlying

assumptions which govern the kind of questions we ask. In this regard, notice the regulative assumption that occurs early in the quotation. Progress in determining whether, say, "emotion" names a natural kind category is determined by asking experiment-directing questions which arise within psychology only as functionally construed; but functionalist theory, we have already seen, is blind to first-person phenomenology. If experimental questions are confined to linking or correlating psychological functions with neural processes, then the taxonomizing of ostensible kinds whose empirical indentification is necessarily phenomenological is threatened with systematic elimination. Churchland's idea of a scientific quest to determine the natural kinds of mental life (if there are any) is a quest for functional kinds empirically linked with neurobiology. The problem is that functional kinds which might be said to have affective import cannot be individuated, identified, or linked with extensional (neural) phenomena without phenomenological criteria. Moreover, if, pace Churchland, we concede that natural mental kinds are established by exhibiting a law-like connection between the psychologically functional and the neural, then, on strict functionalism, there cannot be affective kinds of a natural sort. The reason, again, is that a natural kind has been aprioristically defined as a kind whose description cannot include essential characteristics which go beyond functionalist construal;

natural kinds, accordingly, could not then include qualia regardless of their predictability and invariant phenomenological structure.

Nothing I have said should be taken to imply that I am defending a view that holds that affective life is sheerly phenomenological. What I do hold is that human affective life is an important part of the phenomenological life of the human organism. Phenomenological life (felt life) is systematically, indissolubly, and holistically related to physical structures and physical processes. Thus, affective kinds must be appreciated as having relational properties in addition to their qualitative properties. The ontological character of their relatedness to physical processes, as might be anticipated from chapter two, is bound up in the meaning of the embodiment relation. In this regard, we need to note a fundamental limitation of scientific inquiry, conceived as strictly extensionalist inquiry: such inquiry is limited to establishing systematic correlations between distinctive, recurrent, and structured qualia, on the one hand, and neural structures and processes on the other. What scientific inquiry cannot do, confined as it must be to a methodological extensionalist constraint, is to exhibit how an intentionally characterized particular is embodied in an extensionally characterized particular. While the embodiment relation can be coherently described and ostensively exhibited, it cannot be extensionally explicated.

Before leaving the question of the reality of first-person phenomenological experience, I want to offer some brief resistance to Dennett's position. Dennett has offered strenuous, though I do not think profound, opposition to the existence of qualia.[12] While the particulars of his case merit a good deal of discussion--particularly in view of the fascinating psychological data he cites--I can here only indicate the core of his concern. It is summed up nicely by Owen Flanagan:

> Dennett's exasperation with the concept of qualia comes not so much from doubts that things seem in certain ways, that is, that we go into multifarious kinds of "internal discriminative states." His belief that it is time to discard the concept of qualia comes from the idea that qualia have further alleged features: they are atomic, nonrelational, ineffable, incomparable, and incorrigibly accessible from the first-person point of view. It is this extended list that makes the concept of qualia problematic, for its effect is to put qualia in the class of things about which nothing can be said from the third-person point of view.[13]

It is perhaps not apparent from Flanagan's remarks how radical Dennett's position really is. The admission of "internal discriminative states" neither entails the internal phenomenal awareness of anything, nor the awareness of anything phenomenal. Dennett genuinely means to deny that phenomenal properties exist.[14]

With regard to the list of the alleged features of qualia, Flanagan captures Dennett's essentially verificationist complaint about qualia. What makes qualia

deserving of disqualification is whatever makes them radically inaccessible from the third-person point of view. Indeed, if qualia must satisfy the above list, one might well wonder (even aside from Wittgensteinian scruples about privacy) whether it makes sense to say that qualia are even accessible from the first-person point of view. Given that qualia are atomic, nonrelational, ineffable, and incomparable, then even if they are incorrigibly accessible only to one's self, there could be no basis for the private judgment that one is experiencing the same quale as the quale experienced moments previously, or that one has been experiencing recurrent similar qualia. Taxonomy, of course, would be out of the question.

What appears on the actual list, however, is relatively unimportant (for the qualophobe) so long as what does appear jointly entails that qualia have only qualitative properties and that they can be accessed only from the first-person standpoint. Here I need to make a long story very short. The line of defense for the friends of qualia (qualophiles) strikes me as having at least three conceptual fronts--all interrelated: (1) qualia that are ingredient to affective kinds are certainly not nonrelational; they are not disconnected brute simples, for they are inseparable from the complex attitudes--often propositional attitudes--they help to constitute. They are, moreover, physically embodied; they cannot get more

relational than that. (2) As Flanagan points out, our ordinary qualia vocabulary (language that identifies sensations, moods, emotion, etc.) reliably and profitably picks out types of subjective experience where only qualitative experience can serve as an objective guide to behavior. Phenomenological discrimination is required, for example, wherever color coding is deployed.[15] (3), most importantly, qualia provide the essential medium for the self-representation of one's concerned intentional bearing on the world. Felt life is self-represented life as (one's) faring or existing in a certain qualitative way (e.g., in thoughtful deliberation as well as in sadness, grief, anger, joy, hope, fear, contentment, etc.).

As has just been indicated, the scope of this felt life is not restricted to the qualia of sensation or to the qualia of affective states; thought too is represented in consciousness in one's "mind's ear," as it were. When one consciously thinks, one can "hear" oneself think; and this "hearing," just is the phenomenological representation of one's silent thought. Conscious thinking, that is, exists only in its character as qualia. There is no implication here that conscious thinking is a constant occurrence in one's mental life; serially entertaining a sequence of unspoken (and non-sublingually articulated) propositions for their logical efficacy in solving a problem is surely a relatively infrequent occurrence.[16] This kind of talent,

nevertheless, serves important functions. In social contexts, pre-spoken composition may be invaluable if the cost of misspeaking is great; in routine life, pre-spoken composition is an efficient means of organizing or revising a day's agenda; and pre-spoken composition is even vital for generating hypotheses and scenarios in scientific endeavor. The point, however, is that humans <u>can</u> perform verbal trial-and-error "in their heads," and such performance requires phenomenological representation.

It seems to me that Dennett's position entails that representations of <u>qualitative</u> states do not occur. My response is that a functionalist theory of mind must have a plausible replacement account of the <u>discernment</u> of qualitative types within subjective experience. Qualia are the multifarious ways we are aware <u>of</u> our representations of the world. The "of" is more important than it looks. Recall the playful but illuminating catch-phrase that does much to sum up Dennett's notion of agency: "You are what speaks you." If radically taken, the only "you" that exists is narrative production, speech production, word production, but literally no speaker. Dennett's intriguing metaphor, "the center of narrative gravity," sounds suspiciously like Hume's "association of ideas," only it is narrative fragments and competing words and word sequences that somehow clump by virtue of the association principle. At any rate, narrative cohesion is not accomplished, on

Dennett's reckoning, by agent intent, but by an at least equally mysterious gravity. That leaves the problem of the unity of the self where Hume left it. More importantly, the problem of unity is left problematic within a basically Humean statement of the problem (sans the embodiment relation, the conceptual legitimacy of emergent phenomena, etc.). Dennett eschews the classical notion of agency, of course, because speakers, narrators, and meaners are ontologically spooky, and anyhow sin against extensionalist economy. To return to the main point, "awarenesses of" are in the same boat with "speakings," for they imply the same unifying notion of agency from which Dennett seeks to deliver us.

Supposing that we have a rough idea of the self as narrative production without a real narrator, what happens to "awareness of" within this model? It seems to me that the only way to speak of the internal discriminative activity conceded by Dennett--to speak of it, that is, from the third- person standpoint--is to speak of it in terms of mechanistic interaction, feedback, and control. The latter involve no phenomenology; and for want of a better way to put it, intentional discrimination is transmuted into mechanistic detection. Strictly speaking, the intentional idiom (i.e., "internal discriminative states") is not conceptually available on Dennett's radically extensionalist model. Of course whenever Dennett uses the intentional

idiom, he uses it heuristically. It is nevertheless fair of the qualophile to want to keep Dennett honest about the nature of the discrimination of an internal discriminative state. The consistent qualophobic answer cannot smuggle in undischarged homunculi or avert to what amounts to phenomenal awareness.

The matter is complicated because there is a strong conceptual link between qualia-qualified perception and intentionality. Even thcugh the bare existence of some qualia (pain, e.g.) may not be thought to entail the intentionality thesis, for a great range of qualia, their very discrimination does entail intentionality. It gets us nowhere to say that we have qualia unless we can be aware of them (i.e., be mentally directed upon them) and unless they qualify our very modes of being aware.

To put the question we should like to ask of Dennett in perhaps its most telling form, What is it that his de-qualiafied model quantifies over? Well, it does not quantify over intending agents. What do seem to get quantified are words, syntactically well-formed word sequences, memes, and narrative fragments that "gravitationally" clump into more or less cohesive "autobiography." What else? Rather than qualia, it seems to quantify over internal detectings which are enmeshed within complex feedback loops and which regulate the organism's environmental interactions. So what there are,

inter alia, are speakings, narratives and detectings. Continuing in the spirit of playful abuse, we might then re-word the above catch-phrase, possibly at the expense of its charm, as follows: "You are what speaks and detects you." It is not an easy translation, and I will leave my solecistic addition for the reader to ponder without further comment. The general point, however, is clear: Dennett is at least tacitly inviting us to quantify over the products of intentionality while denying the existence of intentional agency. That cannot work even as a heuristic because the provisional use of the intentionality concept recommended thereby is incoherent.

It is vital to press all of this because there is absolutely no conceptual middle ground between the phenomenological first-person standpoint and Dennett's (heterophenomenological) third-person standpoint.[17] Qualia are all or nothing; one cannot sort of have them; they cannot be gotten rid of by degree. So if there are no qualia, then there are no quasi-qualia, no virtual qualia, et cetera; and if there are no seemings (qualia), then there cannot seem to be seemings, as Dennett enigmatically admits that there are.[18] Such verbal play merely reintroduces seemings just as phenomenologically robust as before. Dennett's model for understanding the character of the "presentations" of internal discriminative states is the environmentally "sensitive" machine (as sophisticated as you

like); but without phenomenological awareness, the first-person point of view simply disappears.

From the standpoint of the present thesis, however, first-person, phenomenological awareness performs essential work in human life--from the role it plays in sentience to the role it plays in the rational re-presentation of past, present, and the generation of future scenarios. Qualophobes must theoretically specify how that work gets done while discounting the actuality of subjective phenomenological attention--the capacity to entertain phenomenally qualified states. It is important to note, in this regard, that functionalism cannot provide the conceptual resources for understanding how the human being can discriminate its representations of the world in a radically non-sentient way. If representations cannot be attended to (the very idea of "attending to" requires qualia), then the very notion of mental representation for higher cognitive processes is superfluous; but the capacity to represent to oneself one's construal of the world is not a dispensable idea for an adequate theory of mind. My argument is that the existence of qualia is a necessary condition of that capacity; to discard qualia, therefore, is to discard the capacity for reflective awareness and for self-awareness of the construals which are essential for rationally governing one's behavior.

Passion, Concern, and Emotion

If the idea of affective life is at least not problematic, we may proceed with what might be called a model of the dynamic of affective life. That is likely to sound like a far more ambitious project than it is. My aim is not primarily to define the concepts of "passion," "concern," and "emotion." Working definitions are of course needed, but beyond the definitions, a sense is needed for how normal affective functioning may be thought to structure persons as inhabiting the cultural (informational) environment. On the thesis I have sought to develop, it is as such inhabitants that persons may be said to have theaesthetic experience.

In my consideration of passion and emotion I claim no canonical finality, but I do think that the following is at least a likely story about the fundamental dynamic of affective life. We begin with passion. Following the development of this term in Robert C. Robert's Spirituality and Human Emotion,[19] passion is a basic concern or overriding commitment. Passions are emotion determining concerns that take up life goals, causes, the welfare of others, and even hobbies. By contrast to occurrent emotional states, they are especially long-lived, perhaps lasting a lifetime. To illustrate, Roberts calls love a hybrid between passion and emotion.[20] Love is a passion because it is an ultimate concern for the well-being of a

loved one. It prompts in the lover both short- and long-term strategy to secure that well-being. On the other hand, love on many occasions is clearly episodic, hence emotional. The lover takes delight in the loved one in a variety of ways and on specific occasions.

Passions are many and varied. One's passion might be the pursuit of certain ideals: political activity to achieve civil rights, the fight against AIDS, the dissemination of religious teaching, the quest for the logical exhibition of the mind as nothing but material processes, or the financial security of one's family. Less exalted passions might include playing golf, gardening, patterning one's life on the characters played by Clint Eastwood, or keeping up with the Joneses. There are doubtless many downright frivolous passions as well. Attaining virtuosity at whistling compositions by Debussy would surely count as among the latter. The point is, concerns that have the character of passion are dynamically involved in the determination of emotional episodes. Take, for example, love for one's family. Given the passionate character of love and that Smith loves his family, then if his son scores well on his college entrance exam, Smith is proud; if his daughter's hiking expedition in the Rockies is threatened with a blizzard, Smith becomes fearful--perhaps panick-stricken; and if the reputation of his wife is attacked, Smith is filled with indignation and anger. The list goes on indefinitely.

Unlike passions, emotions are typically short-lived; and unlike moods which typically exist as diffuse feeling with no particular thing or person as object, emotions tend to have a sharp focus by virtue of their cognitive and evaluative structure (I will return to this in a moment). We do, however, regard some emotions as long-lived or as having that potential. Resentment, for example, is clearly emotional and sharply focused but may last indefinitely. Beyond these basic contrasts among emotions, passions, and moods, defining emotion as such becomes very complicated. Earlier I stated that the literature on emotion (especially in the last twenty years) has striven for a definition that weights or eliminates such factors as physiological disturbance, feeling, behavior, cognition, evaluation, and appetition. However, if one approaches this task with the question, "What do all emotions have in common?" one will soon find that emotions make up a very mixed bag.[21]

It is by now fairly obvious that emotion cannot be defined in terms of identifying specific emotions with specific physiological disturbances, overt behaviors, or qualitatively distinct raw feels. Studies on emotion are full of experimentally confirmed observations such as these: quite different emotional states are found to be attended by the same general physiological disturbances (e.g., anger and fear); emotional states may be discriminable (e.g., sadness or nostalgia) in the absence of any well-defined

physiological disturbance; well-defined emotional states may exist in the absence of tell-tale behavior; and the raw feel produced, for example, by caffeine may be indistinguishable from that of fear (depending on the experimental suggestion given to the subject by the experimenter).[22]

Such considerations have led philosophers to concentrate on the cognitive, evaluative, and appetitive features of emotion. The contemporary approach has become the identification and individuation of specific emotions in terms of their logical and intentional structure. A good example of this is Robert Solomon's development of emotionality in his book, The Passions.[23] He develops the idea of human emotionality as one's individual surreality--the genuine "reality-plus" within which, and by means of which, one views the world. The primary feature of this surreality is its set of constitutive judgments, the emotions:

> As constitutive judgments, our emotions . . . are worthy of a "logical" study, the identification and examination of those fundamental . . . subjective concepts and judgments that provide the structure of the world we live in. As such, their reason is never abstracted from action and concern. Their "logic" is never the cold and bloodless calculations that usually deserve that title, but they have a logic all the same, a logic of living.[24]

For reasons I will present shortly, I do not think that emotions are judgments, but I am in essential agreement about identifying and individuating emotions by the conceptual and intentional structures which Solomon details

in his canvass of particular emotions.[25] Of special importance for understanding theaesthetic awareness is to see emotionality as residing within, and to a large degree activated within, a moral order. I am thus sympathetic with this preamble which Solomon offers to his chapter on the logic of emotion:

> Many emotions have a distinctly moral edge to their judgments--notably anger, shame, indignation, and guilt. My anger, for example, includes an indictment, an accusation. Some emotions, and most moods, project all-encompassing systems of metaphysics; guilt, joy, despair, and depression recast my world in purely philosophical terms of sin and redemption, hope and hopelessness. Our emotions carve out our place in the world; shame "puts us down"; resentment is virtually a confession of inferiority, but an inferiority that has been constituted by the emotion itself. There are the accounting emotions, keeping a ledger on our gains and losses--sadness as an inventory of loss, gratitude and vanity as estimates of gain, jealousy and envy as competitive losses to another's (perhaps deserved) gain. Most emotions are concerned, directly or indirectly, with our relations with other people, the distances we enforce between us and the intimacies we seek, the trust with which we share our experiences and the defensiveness with which we wall ourselves off. At the heart of every emotion is a set of fundamental ontological and evaluative commitments, defining the mythologies within which we live and the ideologies we live with. Every emotion, even the pettiest fit of jealousy or embarrassment or the shortest fling of infatuation or indignation, is a micro-metaphysical and ethical system, a bit of philosophy, which it is appropriate for us, as philosophers, to make clear.[26]

Putting the matter more prosaicly, we may distill from Solomon's words that human life is ethically and ideologically vectored. In keeping with the thesis as developed so far, my concern is with the dynamic that this implies. Particular, or concretely specified, ethical

systems and ideologies are not the focus of attention here. The fccus, rather, is on the nature of the model of emotional life that is implicit: it is teleological and dynamic. In general, situations in which passions are appreciated as gratified, thwarted, furthered, et cetera, occasion emotional episodes.

The immediate issue, however, is the character of emotion. Are emotions judgments, as Solomon contends? An exclusive focus upon the cognitive and evaluative features of many emotions might tempt us to think that they are. Consider a few examples. Suppose that Smith is angry with Jones. In that case, Smith judges that Jones has offended him; that relative to the judgment, all the data are in; and that Jones should suffer consequences. In a case where Smith envies Jones, Smith recognizes that Jones possesses some personal trait, talent, property, or social advantage which Smith lacks; Smith wishes that Jones's possession were his instead; and possibly Smith judges Jones to be unworthy of his good fortune. A case of spite might be construed this way: Smith recognizes a relatively just criticism coming from Jones; but although just, the criticism is costly to Smith's self-esteem. Angry at this internal imposition most assuredly caused by Jones, Smith in some way punishes himself in order to punish Jones. Smith thereby, in a thoroughly ineffectual way, kills two birds with one stone: Smith alleviates his own guilt by punishing himself

(for Jones's "offensive" remark was justified), and (if only Jones knew it) Smith's self-inflicted suffering "serves Jones right," for without the latter's insensitivity, there would have been no suffering.

Without a doubt there is a good deal that is cognitive about the above cases. Even in the case of nostalgia (perhaps a hybrid between mood and emotion), there is cognitivity--a wistfulness about a remembered past. But judgments do not come in intensities, whereas emotions do. Roberts improves on Solomon's emotion-as-judgment thesis with emotion-as-construal.[27] Space limitations prevent me from discussing why I think that "construal" is a more apt way to characterize the intellectual dimension of emotion, but my complaint about the identification of emotion with construal is the same as the identification of emotion with judgment. Emotions come in phenomenological intensities. It does not follow from this that we ought to be able to "color-chart" emotional awareness in terms of raw feels, labeling distinctive raw feels according to emotional type (e.g., the "feel" of spite, anger, love, fear, etc.) One reason a raw feel taxonomy cannot work is because the felt aspect of emotion is holistically related to the rational structure of emotion. Moreover, emotional raw feels are accessible only from the first-person point of view, and even from that point of view it is not plausible that they can be isolated from other aspects of their structure in order to serve criterially for typing emotions.

Another reason is that there is good reason to believe that even if the feeling aspect could be isolated, we would not be afforded with an array of distinctive criteria for differentiating emotions. The evidence suggests (experiments with caffeine, e.g.) that the sheer feeling aspect of emotion is not sufficiently differentiated to serve criterially. However, it would be a blunder to conclude from this that feeling is not essential to the experience of emotional states. Feeling is essential because it is the felt aspect of emotion which constitutes an emotion as a concrete episode of concern.

Emotions of noticeable intensity, it seems to me, are particularly pronounced occasions of concern and indicative of how one is faring with respect to one's passions. An exclusively intellectualist, non-qualitative approach to them leaves their role in the dynamic of personal realization inexplicable. Persons are defined, within social intercourse, by a moral order in temporal progression. Human emotionality resides within a teleological system of aspirations that define and measure the satisfactoriness of the status quo. The experiences of nostalgia, sadness, remorse, and grief (backward-looking emotions) are measures of the importance of the past to a sense of who we are, how far we have come, and where we hope to go; the experiences of dread, despair, and hope (forward-looking emotions) are measures of the importance

which we attach to our goals (both short- and long-term), and ultimately, I believe, to personal fulfillment. This may appear to leave out "humdrum emotionality," the routine cares, joys, irritations, excitements, and anxieties that color everyday life. But these too are indices of the more cosmic vectoring alluded to by Solomon.

Of strategic importance for both becoming and being the sort of agent that may have a dynamic yet stable affective life are what I shall dub the two character regulators of shame and pride. My notion of theaesthetic awareness is tied to these as constitutional emotions, both with regard to the conditions of the possibility of theaesthetic awareness, and with regard to the character of theaesthetic awareness as a disposition to identify and relate to God.

Affect and Dynamically Stable Agency

The fundamental condition for theaesthetic awareness is being a person. Persons are individuals who, by virtue of their induction into human culture, have dynamically stable affective lives. A contrast with Rom Harre's social constructionist view of mind and human agency will be instructive here.[28] If I understand Harre, his view "ontologizes"[29] systems of conversational practice and conversational convention, rather than minded conversational participants. Harre attributes to Hume the discovery that

the self as the "'unity' of which all a person's thoughts, feelings, memories, decisions, actions and so on are predicated" is "systematically elusive."[30] Individual selves, or minds, are "Cartesian residue," and theorizing about psychological phenomena is better served by a "metaphysics of conversation."[31] In Harre's view,

> the concept of 'self' as the bearer of 'inner unity' should . . . be studied as an analogue of the social concept of 'person', since persons are the public loci of clusters of publicly accountable actions and speeches.[32]

What I find to agree with in Harre's proposal is the metaphysical seriousness with which he takes the informational environment--the social medium of persons; but on his view, there are no persons with internal affective lives. Agency disappears and features of mind are analyzed as features of conversational practice. Persons are "ontologized" as points in a (local) "people-space,"[33] which is advanced as an ontological analogue of Newtonian space and time. Persons as such are "conversationalists" which occupy social roles defined by the prevailing moral and social order, the latter being defined as a particular distribution of social roles with their attendant rights, duties, obligations, and routines.

Harre's ideas can doubtless be presented with a far greater air of plausibility. My limited aim, however, is to draw attention to what certainly appears to be his view that persons are simply functions of culture-wide conversational

practice. This strikes me as Dennett's view writ large--the view that society itself, so to speak, is "what speaks it," a system of antiphonal speech acts. If persons are autobiographical fictions, society is a historical novel. Neither, of course, have authors. What get quantified are speakings, actions, and conveyances of public information generally. What do not get quantified are speakers, actors, minds, and agents. We are back to countenancing intentional products in the absence of intentional agency.

Harre's concept of a moral order, however, is fundamentally incomplete--and ontologically inverted. His concept is restricted to the idea of a given set of conventions which define the emissions of behavior and speech acts as in or out of conformity with the obligations, rights, and duties associated with a certain distribution of social roles. The problem is that neither behaviors nor speech acts, nor any sets thereof, are conceivable as the loci of moral accountability and responsibility. The conversational and behavioral flow to which Harre assigns ontological priority can indeed be assessed by the complex linguistically mediated conventions which facilitate it, but that flow can be <u>morally</u> assessed only as exhibiting <u>accountability</u> to those conventions. It is here that there is manifest absurdity on Harre's model. Morality itself is conceptually rooted in an ontology in which agents are independent particulars while behaviors and speech acts are

indissolubly linked as subaltern particulars.[34] What Harre cannot do is jettison an ontologically robust notion of accountable agency, and at the same time retain a language of moral assessment that has cultural efficacy only on the assumption of such agency. The upshot is that even if Harre could coherently formulate a speech act ontology, infractions of speech act conventions could not be moral infractions.

There is, thankfully, a simplicity to all of this. Just as the existence of qualia is an "all-or-nothing" affair, so it is with agency. For this reason, taking up the offerings of Dennett and Harre is philosophical time well-spent. There is no conceptual middle ground between first- and third-person points of departure for the resolution of the problems we have been considering. One cannot proffer fundamental solutions from an exclusively third-person ontology by means of conceptual categories whose meaning derives from a first-person ontology.

On my view, persons are affectively qualified and affectively apt agents. Only as such can they be considered moral agents. While I think that the ontological status of autonomous agency is a legitimate philosophical problem vis-à-vis the social determination of personhood within the informational environment, it is nevertheless only as agents that persons may be said to have social reality. Of vital importance in shaping and regulating affective aptitude is

the emotion pair of shame and pride. These, it seems to me, constitute the native emotional basis for the efficacy of social modeling. Modeling as the law-like process of becoming an affectively qualified and dynamically stable agent is worthy of book-length treatment. Here I can only sketch the idea. To become "socialized" is to become like one's parents, one's peers, and one's heroes. The point of likeness that is crucial for moral agency is the likeness of affective dispositions. Through a quite variegated informational medium of interaction, and within recurrent contexts of communication (involving facial expression, gesture, speech, displays of affection, punishments, rewards, etc.), particular affective sets are developed.

Needless to say, infants, toddlers, and children do not make a private and deliberate project of becoming like their socially significant others. In later years rational deliberation might perform a minor role in abetting the modeling phenomenon, but even that is surely a negligible contribution. Rather, the human being seems innately disposed to become affectively like those in its social environment. With some trepidation, I submit that a sense of shame and a sense of pride regulate the process involved. The acquisition of a separate sense of self is accomplished, in part, by the natural pain that comes in transgressing one's developing self-image (shame), and by the natural pleasure in one's being able to accredit one's

exemplification of that self-image (pride). It must be borne in mind that I am concerned only with the development of persons, and persons are necessarily socialized human beings. I am not concerned with so-called feral children nor with asocial development due to a brutally dysfunctional background. My claim is the modest one that the process of modeling produces affectively apt social agents across human cultures.

We have already seen that occurrences of shame episodes exhibit epistemic events in which there is a considerable measure of intersubjective transparency. The sense of shame cannot otherwise develop. It begins functionally within the catalyst of "other-regard" and matures to "self-regard," but always within at least a tacit view to "other-regard." My claim needs to be understood as counter to the idea that the development of a sense of <u>personal</u> shame and <u>personal</u> pride are socially constructed only by a society that may happen to "value" them. Shame and pride, on my view, are mechanisms which are innately essential to the development of <u>social</u> character. Roughly speaking, shame performs the same function with regard to sociopathology as physical pain performs with regard to bodily pathology. To be sure, one can be taught--through sociopathological modeling--to be ashamed of aspects of oneself that ill-suits one for social life--to be ashamed of one's body, one's intellect, one's race, etc. The point is,

however, that induction into culture requires that one be modeled, groomed, shaped into a dynamically and relatively stable social participant--a participant who is, by the very nature of that participation, always vulnerable to the regard of others. The infrapsychological component necessary for this participation is simply unintelligible on Harre's proposal.

Summary

In this chapter we have met again with the conceptual inadequacy of a purely extensionalist account of individual subjective life. The motive that drives the extensionalist program, of course, is the quest for scientific understanding and theoretical economy; both the unity of science and theoretical economy are thought to be threatened, intolerably, by the admission of irreducible intentional particulars. This only serves to underscore the radical nature of the embodiment relation discussed in chapter two. The language of embodiment was not introduced as a heuristic or as a colorful way of talking until such time as the scientific program discloses what is <u>really</u> going on. As a relation, embodiment is ontologically primitive; it deserves philosophical scrutiny because it strongly appears to be the only candidate relation which may capture the intimate relatedness of extensionally characterized and intentionally characterized particulars.

That is the big picture in review. The specific issues which were addressed concerned the integral rational component of affective life (contra Hume) and the importance of qualia as the phenomenological index and basis of one's own participation in social life (contra Dennett and Harre). The offerings of both Dennett and Harre trade on what might be called derivative or residual intentionality which shows absolutely no promise of later extensionalist reduction or of being conceptually harmonized with the third-person point of view. (It might even be asked, From what point of view does one take up the third-person point of view?)

We saw that establishing the importance of qualia to affective life does not consist in somehow exhibiting them as qualitatively distinct raw feels. There can be no public differentiation of affective states by raw feels, nor is it likely that anything approaching a precise first-person differentiation is possible. Affective states are differentiated holistically in terms of an amalgam of their cognitive, evaluative, sentient, and often appetitive character. The necessity of the felt quality of affective states resides, rather, in the role felt quality plays in marking the intensity of concern within the dynamic of pursuing one's passions.

The issue of affective life is the issue of a dynamically vectored emotional life within a moral order.

For that, a local cultural environment is needed. Growing into a person within such an environment, it seems to me, requires, inter alia, the emotional dispositions of shame and pride. I implied, but did not state, that both of these should be construed as having a long-term appetitive aspect. While I do not think that appetition is salient during episodes of felt shame or pride, I did link their social function to the development of the affective sets modeled in the cultural environment. Pronounced episodes of shame and pride, however, are quite often self-measures of more or less immediate conformity with self-image aspirations. Even though one can be ashamed or proud of others and the accomplishments of others, shame and pride are always self-referential in the sense that oneself is implicated in the social well-being of significant others. Shame and pride are responses to the occurrent social-image as well as to the occurrent self-image. It is time now to take up the "cosmic" social context of personal agency, the context of theaesthetic perception.

Notes

1. Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature, 415.

2. For Hume, the archaic term "passions" includes affective states generally.

3. Perhaps there are no intentionally qualified moods, but if there are, nostalgia and certain depressive states may be among them. Nostalgia may be a mood-emotion hybrid (wistfulness for a remembered past), and depression often has the character of dissatisfaction with self.

4. "Affective life" is superordinate over the specific phenomena of felt intentional life (including emotion), while, e.g., "emotion" is superordinate over the discrete emotions of fear, anger, shame, joy, and the like.

5. This is the subtitle for Hume's opus, A Treatise of Human Nature. In general, Hume's project was to accomplish in the area of human nature (moral subjects) what Sir Isaac Newton had accomplished in the area of physical nature:

> For to me it seems evident, that the essence of the mind being equally unknown to us with that of external bodies, it must be equally impossible to form any notion of its powers and qualities otherwise than from careful and exact experiments, and the observation of those particular effects, which result from its different circumstances and situations. (xxi)

6. It is not clear to me what an instance of computation simpliciter amounts to except to say that it is not qualified by interest or affect, and that the "computation" metaphor is apt because the event that is realized models structural aspects of a discursive process. The mere fact that the discursive process is coded linguistically, however, has no tendency to constitute that process as an instance of thinking.

7. See Dennett's Consciousness Explained, chapters 11 and 12; and Owen Flanagan's Consciousness Reconsidered (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1992), chapter 4.

8. Dennett, Consciousness Explained, chapter 4, passim.

9. See Dennett and Flanagan. Sidney Shoemaker argues a compatibilist account of qualia and functionalism in "Qualia and Consciousness," in Mind, Vol. C (October 1991).

10. This raises the question whether one can be angry, carry resentment, etc. without knowing it. I think that cases of "not being aware of the emotional state one is in" have important differences. These are some possibilities: the phenomenological aspect of the emotion may be so subtle that it goes unnoticed, even strongly felt emotions may not be identified for what they are given their bearing on self-esteem, or the emotion may not be salient in an episodic way as may often be the case with resentment. What I want to say is that the felt character of the emotion in each case nevertheless constitutes its behavior-guiding function.

11. Patricia Smith Churchland, Neurophilosophy: Toward a Unified Science of the Mind-Brain (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1986), 152.

12. Dennett himself is careful to qualify his own considerations as amounting to less than proof. Perhaps his most instructive example is the case of blindsight, the case of blindness in one's right or left visual field caused by vascular accident to the right or left visual cortex, but not affecting the visual receptive system. On questioning, the blindsighted individual can guess at significantly better than chance that objects of certain shapes are present in the blind field, or that they are moving, etc. To make a long story short, Dennett suggests a scenario in which the blindsighted person learns to guess when to guess about what is going on in the blind field. In the scenario, the victim of blindsight achieves an auto-enclosed feedback loop and "sees" in the absence of visual qualia. Since there would be no functional difference between a sighted and a non-sighted individual in this regard, both the "sighted" and the "blindsighted" can see in all relevant respects. Hence there are no visual qualia.

13. Owen Flanagan, Consciousness Reconsidered, 61.

14. Dennett, Consciousness Explained, 365.

15. See Consciousness Explained (375-383) for Dennett's account of de-qualiafied color-coding.

16. It seems to me that cases of textbook reasoning are quite infrequent in ordinary life. Everyday episodes of reasoning strike me as often gappy, disjointed, and verbally fragmentary.

17. Dennett, Consciousness Explained, 70-98.

18. Ibid., 321-411, passim.

19. Robert C. Roberts, Spirituality and Human Emotion (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982).

20. Ibid., 55.

21. Some emotions are forward-looking with a strong appetitive element (e.g., hope and love), and some are backward-looking with no appetitive element (sadness, grief). Some emotions prompt strategies of satisfaction (e.g., jealousy, spite, and anger), while others are immediate without any bearing on future action (e.g., joy and gratitude). Others promote and regulate self-esteem (shame and pride). In addition, emotions differ greatly according to their felt intensities, the physiological disturbances correlated with them (if any), and typical behaviors (if any). What is generally agreed upon, however, is that their is a great deal more rationality to emotional states than was previously thought.

22. William Lyons, Emotion (London: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 130-143.

23. Robert C. Solomon, The Passions (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1976).

24. Ibid., 253.

25. Ibid., 283-365.

26. Ibid., 254.

27. Roberts, Spirituality and Human Emotion, 19-24.

28. Rom Harre, "Social Sources of Mental Content and Order," in Psychology: Designing the Discipline, Joseph Margolis, Peter T. Manicas, Rom Harre, and Paul F. Secord, Eds. (New York: Basil Blackwell Inc., 1986), 91-127.

29. Harre introduces a metaphysics of conversation as an alternative ontology--i.e., an alternative to a Cartesian ontology. However, he speaks of his alternative ontology as providing a "useful fiction" and an alternative "mythology." That is why I have put scare-quotes around "ontologized" in the text.

30. Harre, "Social Sources of Mental Content and Order," 104.

31. Ibid., 103.

32. Ibid., 105-06.

33. Ibid., 99-101.

34. One might try to develop a concept of agency upon an ontology of action (whether mental or behavioral). I think, however, that this tack is fundamentally confused. In my master's thesis, "Making Sense of Survival After Death and Disembodied Existence," (pp.63-4) I summarized the issue this way:

> We seem constrained, at least predicatively, to regard events as befalling or occurring to or through particulars. We say of Caesar, e.g., that 'Caesar died,' of a book, that 'it fell,' or of Sebastian, that 'he strolled.' We also find it grammatically legitimate, for the sake of stylistic conveniences and economies, to nominalize or 'particularize' the events 'Caesar's death,' 'the book's fall,' or 'Sebastian's stroll' so that these may serve as grammatical subjects for further predication. For example: 'Caesar's death was violent,' 'The book's fall was broken by the protrusion from the shelf,' or 'Sebastian's stroll proved tiring.'
>
> In so speaking, however, an ostensible anomaly can be generated over the status and relationship of the (grammatically possible) paired particulars: 'Caesar' and 'Caesar's death' or 'Sebastian' and 'Sebastian's stroll.'

> To paraphrase Margolis, the anomaly arises when the predicated event (e.g., 'died') is thought of as somehow expropriated from the complex event itself ('Caesar died'), then to serve as one of the paired particulars (viz., as the event-particular 'Caesar's death'), when in fact, the grammatically expropriated event can only serve as what indissolubly befalls or occurs to a particular which is not (grammatically, at any rate) an event. In fine, there is a conceptual asymmetry between such a pair of particulars that seems to foreclose upon an event-particular having the same sort of independent status as the particular which the event befalls.

The point is that events are subaltern (dependent) particulars; they are particulars of particulars where the "of" signals an indissoluble relationship, unanalyzable and internal to the event itself. The fact that we may nominalize subaltern particulars for further predication is not an adequate philosophical warrant for ontologizing those particulars. In the same spirit, there are no independent "speakings," "sentient discriminatings," or the like.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THEAESTHETIC AWARENESS AND THE DIVINE LOOK

Establishing the Social Context of Theaesthetic Awareness

We may now bring the threads of the thesis together. In chapter one I pinned the success of the thesis to a view of religion in which relatedness to God is a fundamental ontological structure which qualifies human existence. I discouraged a view of religion which construes "being religious" with the cultivation of a distinctive phenomenology--especially a phenomenology which may only be discerned or savored by means of extraordinary disciplines or techniques. The distinctiveness of religious experience does not reside in a class of subjective qualia that transcend the range of normal human emotion. The intentional objects of religious affective states are of course different than those of ordinary interpersonal affective states; nevertheless, the love, joy, peace, pride and shame that may characterize religious affect are phenomenologically the same human emotions as characterize ordinary experience.

I did not mean thereby to discount religious practices which foster the service, worship, or enjoyment of God. Nor did I mean to question the intelligibility of extraordinary spiritual experiences initiated by God. My concern has been with what may be called the human being's constitutional relatedness to God--a relatedness whose structural dynamic is manifested in a social disposition of humans to identify and relate to God. I conceive of that relatedness to be filial, and in its character as a disposition, to pre-exist and dynamically ground any determinate religious relationship.

Some analogies may help. I will proceed from the crude to the not-so-crude. Imprinting is the exceedingly rapid learning whereby a baby chick, let us say, identifies and adopts a proximate object as mother--hopefully a hen. The chick, however, may easily get it wrong depending on what objects are suitably placed within the narrow time-frame in which imprinting occurs. Except by anthropomorphic courtesy, perhaps, we are not tempted to call imprinting a case of learning or discovery, certainly not conceptual learning. What takes place seems too wired-in and too chemical. There is hardly reason to suppose that within its bird brain the chick chirps, "Mother!" in some kind of chicken mentalese. We are surely safe in ruling out the possibility that the distal stimulus has triggered the chick's "mother" concept. Moreover, the

"adoption" of a cardboard box (a chick is no genius) certainly appears less than filial. Even though crude, I think the analogy has merit in that it exhibits an invariant structural dynamic leading to relationship. Here are some analogies in the not-so-crude category.

Men and women are relationally suited to one another (by nativistic structures, we might say), and it is that nativistic suitability which often results in quite predictable social complementation. Likewise with the parent-child connection; a relational dynamic is set in motion by pre-existent dispositions. It is true that a person may never share intimacy with the opposite sex, and that a parent may fail to share intimacy of the ordinary sort with his or her child; but that serves only to accentuate the point of analogy that I want to exploit in the case of the potential bond between humans and God. Quite independently of social manifestation, humans are nativistically predisposed to relationships of different kinds. My claim is that among these kinds is a Creator-creature relationship in which humans have both a native competence and disposition to relate to God as, so to speak, supreme parent.

Also in chapter one, mention was made of Paul's comment that in God we live, move, and have our being. Our physical being is of course included, but the comment hardly makes sense unless it is taken to include our social being

as well. The Judeo-Christian belief that the human being was created in the image of God is closely related to this. Willy-nilly, humans "image" their parents, peers, and heroes via the modeling process; humans "image" God, it seems to me, by virtue of the innate structures and dispositions which facilitate the modeling by which persons are shaped and in virtue of which they socially flourish. The concept of imaging God, accordingly, may be appreciated along two complementary lines: (1) structurally and dispositionally, human beings are designed with the potential to develop into social agents whose affective character contributes to the stability of society; and (2) normatively, it is God's own affective nature that perfectly exemplifies the affective character that may serve in this way. The latter includes dispositions for compassion, love, justice, as well as negative emotions which help to safeguard the social implementation of the positive (e.g., fear, jealousy, indignation, and shame, but not, e.g., resentment, envy, spite, or malice).

The foregoing reflection in "theological anthropology" is important because theaesthetic awareness is an ultimately <u>social</u> awareness, or short of that, the discernment of <u>social</u> otherness. The first sort of awareness is exemplified in the sense of personal presence; the second is simply the discernment of personal saliencies minus the element of intersubjectivity. In the biblical

literature, God is presented as a thoroughly affective being: he experiences anger at evil and injustice,[1] grief over his children's lapses of faith,[2] jealousy in the face of their idolatry,[3] and compassion in view of their weaknesses.[4] It is philosophically undiscerning to treat the ascription of emotion predicates to God as anthropomorphizing, for the very condition of humans relating to God requires that they image him affectively. To put this another way, it is the affective competence and disposition in humankind which images God in our species; affective competence and disposition are not properly thought of as the projection of exclusively human attributes onto an essentially dispassionate being.

This is in stark contrast to classical theological dicta such as are to be found in The Westminster Confession of Faith and in the writings of Anselm. In the former's definition of God, God is said to be "without passions";[5] and in Anselm's Proslogium we are given the classical rationale for all such dicta:

> But how art thou compassionate, and, at the same time, passionless? For, if thou art passionless, thou dost not feel sympathy; and if thou dost not feel sympathy, thy heart is not wretched from sympathy for the wretched; but this it is to be compassionate. But if thou art not compassionate, whence cometh so great consolation to the wretched? How, then, art thou compassionate and not compassionate, O Lord, unless because thou art compassionate in terms of our experience, and not compassionate in terms of thy being.
>
> Truly, thou art so in terms of our experience, but thou art not so in terms of thine own. For, when thou beholdest us in our wretchedness, we experience the

> effect of compassion, but thou dost not experience the feeling. Therefore, thou art both compassionate, because thou dost save the wretched, and spare those who sin against thee; and not compassionate, because thou art affected by no sympathy for wretchedness (emphasis my own).[6]

It is remarkable that God's affective character (hence his moral character) should receive this kind of logical explaining-away in order to preserve a logically perfectionistic conception of his immutability. The matter has been a subject of perennial debate, but space does not permit entering into it. Suffice it to say that an absolutist doctrine of impassivity is not rightly regarded merely as the denial that God has, and may be affected by, human affective qualia; it is the absolute denial that God is emotionally vulnerable to the sufferings, waywardness, and fortunes of the creatures he is said to love. The doctrine stikes me as especially preposterous in view of the extent to which emotion exhibits cognitive and intentional structure. At any rate, apart from such "classical" attributes as omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience, what is also truly godlike in God's nature are affective strengths: patience, forbearance in love, compassion, and a passion for justice.

God, on my proposal, is the affective and moral exemplar of an order of life which he himself initiated and sustains, and of which he himself is a member. He is also its sovereign. There are intriguing philosophical issues

this raises that cannot be explored within the scope of our current concerns. There is one such issue, however, that is especially tangent to affective interaction, and so I will address it briefly. It is this: how can God sustain the physical dimension of his creation--determine its vicissitudes down to its quantum behavior--without thereby radically determining its social dimension as well? On the sovereignty doctrine, he must surely do this; but then how does one make sense of the divine vulnerability implied by his love for humankind?

The problem can be cast in terms of the problem of free will, for what alone is satisfying to a lover is freely reciprocated love. (Love relationships cannot exist without the inherent possibility that one's love for another may go unrequited.) My whole model of religious relationship (of God to his human children) collapses instantly if what is really going on at the religious human level is a kind of automated servility, for what meaning can be assigned to a divine vulnerability to that? While intuitively I have made peace with a compatibilist position on free will among humans (i.e., that "free" human volition functions within thoroughgoing quantum, neural, and social constraints), a problem of a different order is posed when it is said that one is free with respect to responding to a God who radically determines any response one might make. It will be recalled that mind is brain in the embodiment sense of

"is." While the embodiment relation is not a species of causal relation, the intimacy of an embodied particular to an embodying particular is such that, in principle, a thoroughgoing predictability of the latter entails a thoroughgoing predictability of the former, hence a complete control of the embodying particular entails a complete control of the embodied particular. God completely controls the former, so he completely controls the latter. Problems.

Lots of solutions have been tendered for the problem of human free will on the premise of the absolute sovereignty of God. Perhaps all such solutions are variations of envisaging the social vicissitudes within space-time as like an instantly written novel whose characters do as they please in a robust story-relative way. Within the story, they are of course free to choose their daily routines; to love, hate, kick up their heels--whatever. Human history (and astrophysical history, for that matter) is of course not quite like a book on the shelf in God's library. Donald MacKay, for example, has invoked Relativity Theory to provide a sense of God's relationship to this "novel." God sustains a relationship of simultaneity to the entire stretch of space-time, and so also, of course, to the human history within it. The upshot is that God cannot properly be said to control the thoughts and actions of humans in their daily affairs, but that he has projected space-time (and so our human histories) such

that they eventuate this way or that.[7] If we are still worried about being exhaustively controlled step-by-step, twitch-by-twitch, we can reassure ourselves of the integrity of our freedom by a brief reminder that on this model, God does not manage us moment by moment, for he enjoys a relation of simultaneity with the entire fabric of space-time.

This reckoning of divine sovereignty and free will does not work, and it does no good to change the metaphor of novel to, say, stage-play, or cinematic production. As soon as God is said to interact with human agency within human history, Relativity Theory ceases to provide a way of conceptualizing the simultaneity relationship which the model requires; and without simultaneity we certainly seem to be back to a micro- or quantum-management of human affairs. God may be said to enjoy a relationship of simultaneity with all of space-time only if he does not interact with events that take place therein. If he so much as hears a prayer when it is prayed, then his hearing of the prayer is instantly plotted in relations of before and after along the time-line of the prayer-event. If I should sense his very presence to me within a theaesthetic-event, then he enters into relations of before and after along my time-line, and so on.

The conceptual way around this, thus presumably saving the model, is that although the human saga is

instantaneously "authored" with God savoring its entire story from a vantage point of simultaneous intuition, he has written into the story his own ostensible interactions. Thus within the story, for example, he parts the Red Sea in response to the plight of the fleeing Hebrews; he answers prayer, discloses his presence, and the like; and on a Christian reckoning, he intervenes in human flesh to redeem mankind. This will not work either, for on the proposed model, the only actual relatedness of God to the lives of humans is qualified by simultaneity. That entails that God cannot be a participant within the story in which those lives unfold. Strictly speaking, he cannot even be an observer of events as they unfold, for that would make him a noetic contemporary of any event he notices, thus violating simultaneity. Whatever sense might be attributed to such a God's enjoying his story "at a glance," the simultaneity condition precludes the intelligibility of his spending real space-time amidst his creatures.

There is on top of these general problems a specific worry that directly touches the affective existence of both God and humankind within a single society. Affective existence is unintelligible in the absence of temporal progression. Passion is essentially future-oriented; nostalgia, sadness, and grief are backward-looking; hope and dread are forward-looking; joy is the realization that what one most wanted is one's current possession; and so on.

There is, moreover, an absurdity about loving, being angry with, being grieved at, being jealous over, or being delighted with a being that happens all at once. It must be borne in mind that the model requires that God's temporal relation to the human saga of creation, fall, and redemption be that of simultaneity--he in his "eternal now" and we ensconced within relations of before and after. (The expression "eternal now," while colorful and popular, is actually inappropriate to the inherently temporal character of the simultaneity relation.) Logically speaking, an agent--even a divine agent--cannot affectively relate to another agent if the former is simultaneous with the entire range of eventfulness in the life of the latter.

Nevertheless, divine affective interaction--hence divine vulnerability--is crucial for theaesthetic awareness. At the same time, I remain convinced that God exhaustively sustains the materiality of space-time. A solution to this problem within a Christian reckoning of God strikes me as one that would involve a conceptual exploration of the doctrine of the Trinity. I also suspect that human inquiry into the Trinty doctrine--inquiry, that is, which seeks logical closure on the immanence/transcendence difficulty our discussion has encountered--might be blocked due to the dimensional constraints within which the human mind must, perforce, think the problem through. Intelligibility, it may be

recalled from chapter two, is fundamentally relativized to the dimensions which determine the availability of concepts. That was the moral of Abbott's Flatland. God, whose reality we may suppose is dimensionally richer than the creation, may simply not be comprehensible in ways that logically affect our problem.

It seems that within the Christian tradition at any rate, a compatibilist position on strict sovereignty and vulnerability must surely invoke, at some point, the personal manifoldness of God; but it cannot do so in terms of the roles performed by Father, Son, and Spirit. That is because, on Trinitarian doctrine, each is a person. The Father, let us say, cannot be conceived of as sustaining all things while the Son and Spirit have affective relations with human beings for the simple reason that the Father himself must be conceived of in terms of a sovereignty/vulnerability problematic. I am out of my depth here, but it seems to me that what Christian theologians have discussed as the kenosis of Christ might offer a conceptual point of departure.

Kenoo is the Greek verb which means "to empty." It is used by Paul of Christ to state that the Second Person of the triune God gave up a number of his divine attributes to become a man. His claim is that even though Christ

> existed in the form of God, [he] did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied [ekenosen] himself, taking the form of a [human] servant . . .[8]

My focus here is conceptual. Paul implies two claims about what is within a personal deity's power to do: (1) the relinquishing of certain divine attributes, and (2) the taking on of a metaphysically altered and diminished form (morphe). One interesting question is whether (1) could be accomplished without accomplishing (2). Could God simply drop a few attributes without entering into a new set of relations and self-structures, or without entering a new set of external relations or self-structures? Before he created anything, for example, or without a view to creation, could God have dropped the attribute of omnipotence--become a little less powerful? Could he have dropped some of his know-how? Could he have dropped any of his affective dispositions? More drastically for the Trinitarian conception, could one or two persons of that internal community be either dropped or diminished by the non-affected person(s)? I do not think so, for that would violate what is essential in the immutability conception of deity. (It must be borne in mind that on the Incarnation doctrine, Christ's becoming a man was entirely voluntary and that the divestiture of attributes was, for the most part, temporary. Even if Christ be conceived as, say, now perpetually embodied, whatever diminishment this may entail is also voluntary and reversible. The eventuality that it is never reversed does not affect its metaphysical reversibility.)

My suggestion is that while (1) is possible in conjunction with (2), (1) is not possible in the absence of (2). But the conjunction of (1) and (2) make little sense without a third vital constraint. A condition like (3) is necessary: there is something like a conservation of energy principle at work in the divine economy--a conservation of essential attributes. So while there may be redistributions of energy or attributes in the context of alternative structures, the overall state of energy and essential attributes remains constant. Hence a voluntary divine projection into the fabric of created structures does not violate the conservation principle. Thus the doctrine of the Incarnation need not be conceived as violating divine immutability.

The moral of kenosis theory for divine vulnerability is the suggestion that the very creation of other persons is an essentially kenotic activity. God may pay selective attention to humans within the structure of their affective medium (hence becoming subject to the affective dynamic of that medium), while pervasively sustaining all the conditions of that structure. I conceive of the attention that is paid out as gestaltically either/or, much as seeing either the duck or the rabbit in the famous duck-rabbit figure is gestaltically either/or. On a given occasion, seeing the duck or seeing the rabbit requires all one's visual resources so that one cannot see both duck and rabbit

simultaneously. To make my analogy more convincing, let us embellish it as follows: suppose that God creates a duck-rabbit figure out of thin air and holds it before his gaze. It seems to me that it is consistent with the omnipotence attribute to say that God cannot behold both duck and rabbit simultaneously even though he holds in being every phenomenal characteristic of the figure's existence moment by moment.

Graduating from the visual to the personal dimension, my claim is that the unity of personal attention is likewise gestaltically holistic and is also affected by the same gestaltic exclusivity. Accordingly, affectively engaged attention of the intersubjective sort excludes simultaneous modes of attention which would introduce conflict with it. At the level of human affectively engaged attention, therefore, it is impossible for one to be experientially engaged with another human individual as both a person and as an object at the same time. Gestalten are that sort of thing; as perceptual modes of "attending to," they are necessarily holistic, requiring a totality of perceptual resources; thus a specific gestaltic attention mode either mediates the entirety of the character of one's attention or not at all.

Humans, of course, do not hold their social counterparts in being as they pay out attention to one another. On the strict sovereignty view, God does do this.

My claim, as might be anticipated, is that there is no inconsistency in holding that God sovereignly sustains persons in their being while selectively attending to them as affective agents. For God to attend to them in this way, however, is rightly considered kenotic because such attention amounts to becoming personally vulnerable to the constraints of affective interaction within his creation. To repeat, my central claim is that God cannot consciously experience (within the unity of personal attention) both the personal stance and, say, the quantum stance simultaneously. The passion that sustains God in this stance is love; to take it up however, is to enter the experience of vulnerability to agents who may be affectively responsive or not. God is not Anselmian in this regard, for the experience he enters into is real.

This may appear sleight of hand. After all, the determinism with which we began remains unmitigated; but there is no trick. First, determinism itself is not the problem.[9] The problem is making sense of the vulnerability of love and of freely reciprocated love when one lover radically determines the material conditions of reciprocation in the other. It must be kept in mind as we proceed that the societal unit for which the human being is structured is, inter alia, ontologically religious; it is indissolubly human and divine. Thus the human affective community cannot exist without its ontological complement of

divine social interagency. The model requires that humans image God socially in terms of nativistic structures and predispositions quite apart from any actual affective acknowledgment of the divine by humans. Otherwise put, without God's affective involvement with humans, there can be no social reality even at the human-to-human level, for the societal unit we are attempting to model is indissolubly a divine-human society. This, I think, is at least part of the solution. While granting that the attitude of divine affective vulnerability is psychological in nature, it is nonetheless a psychological reality. The (kenotic) assumption of an attitiude of love by God creates an experiential dynamic that is not interpretable from within as interagent manipulation. That is to say, God cannot so experience it. If not, the internal social reality does not have manipulation as a characteristic.

Are all my duck-rabbits in a row on this matter? Probably not, but I do think we are further along in conceiving the character of the divine-human social environment. It remains now to place theaesthetic awareness within this environment.

Theaesthetic Awareness

There are a number of undischarged debts to the reader that I shall now endeavor to pay off at speed. Here is a final pan of the epistemological situation. For

reasons that I trust are obvious by now, I have been developing an account of perceiving God more from the standpoint of philosophy of mind than from the standpoint of classical or analytic epistemology. My concern has been with an account of the conditions of objectivity rather than with discursive provability or verification. There are several reasons for this. First, all prospects of proof or verification must be regarded as arising in tandem with fundamental cognitive competences, and the determination of those competences is a largely empirical enterprise. Second, with respect to existential truth-claims, discursive provability is demonstrably limited by hermeneutic finitude and the finitude of partial perspective. What always present themselves for proof are first-order knowledge-claims, claims whose noetic integrity is grounded in basic competences; verification itself, therefore, whose resources may never transcend first-order knowledge, may achieve the vindication of first-order claims but not logically guarantee them once and for all. Third, there is the problem touched upon in chapter five that discursively precise verification by its very nature may prove prejudicial to the certification of gestaltic phenomena--especially gestaltic phenomena of a non-public nature.

The idea of theaesthetic experience, as I conceive of it, is a return to the idea of knowing God as a

"knowing-whom," the noetic basis for "knowing-about" God. John Hick has captured this concern as well as is to be found in contemporary philosophy of religion:

> The modes of cognition [with regard to human knowledge of God] have been classified in various ways. But the distinction that is most relevant to our present purpose is that between what I shall call cognition in presence and cognition in absence; or acquaintance using this term less restrictedly than it was used by Russell and holding beliefs-about. We cognise things that are present before us, this being called perception; and we also cognise things in their absence, this being a matter of holding beliefs about them. And the astonishing fact is that while our religious literature--the Bible, and prayers, hymns, sermons, devotional meditations, and so on--confidently presuppose a cognition of God by acquaintance, our theological literature in contrast recognises for the most part only cognition in absence. That is to say, whereas the Bible itself, and other writings directly expressing the life of faith, are full of men's encounters with God and men's personal dealings with the divine Thou, the dominant systems of christian theology nevertheless treat faith as belief, as propositional attitude.[10]

Hick then goes on to develop the cognition of God "in presence" in terms of a Wittgensteinian "seeing-as." He does this by expanding Wittgenstein's reflections on visually alternating from one "aspect" of an ambiguous figure to the other, to include all cognitive experience. According to Hick, <u>all</u> cognitive experience is to be construed as experiencing-as.[11] While I see a good deal of value in Hick's discussion of supplemental or higher orders of categorizing (conceptualizing) situations and events as having religious significance, he seems to me to have inflated Wittgenstein's "seeing-as" beyond epistemological

value. Indeed, Wittgenstein's scrutiny of the phenomenon of "noticing an aspect" has whatever point it has insofar as the ordinary language distinction between "seeing" and "seeing-as" is retained.[12] We must have a sense of non-problematic interpretation before problematic interpretation can occupy us.

My own approach to perceiving God may have much to gain from Hick's line of inquiry, but my primary concern has been with a model of mind and society which form necessary structures for knowing God "in presence." Such a model is essential, it seems to me, for even plotting religious interpretations along a problematic/non-problematic axis.

To pick up our main thread, theaesthetic perception may be regarded as evolving over time or may be sudden and episodic. With regard to the first, think of getting to know one's mother (or father) from the time of infancy on. A history of affective interaction is built up involving personal saliencies of various kinds and in a fairly steady stream. While not wanting to minimize the importance of language in this process, there is certainly much about this flow of saliencies that is inarticulate. Is there a specific informational occasion on which one's "mother" concept is triggered? It is at times tempting to read Fodor's account of concept attainment that way.[13] It is very implausible, however, to regard an infant's developing notion of "mother" as residing in the brain as a

grammatically distinct entity of mentalese awaiting its stimulus trigger. If we are to speak of concepts here, room must be made for concepts as dynamically developing Gestalten. "Mother" or "ma-ma" may serve as the linguistic form of address by which the child indicates recognition, but the notion the child actually possesses is surely more like a kaleidoscopically developing montage of personal saliencies uniquely assignable to that particular person. That is to say, the child knows its mother personally rather than by a simple linguistically distinguished role-differentiation, although that too is in the offing.

While I think it is reasonable to suppose that theaesthetic awareness may gradually mature in an analogous fashion, it is probably easier to think of awareness of God as occasional or episodic. It is the latter to which most of our discussion has been leading. The elements of that awareness have already been canvassed so there is little additional material to consider.

Minimally, theaesthetic awareness is the awareness of divine personal saliencies, the discernment of divine social otherness. This may be likened to the discernment that a particular object is artifactual or of human origin. Since we as humans virtually indwell artifactuality, some imagination is required here. Unless one lives as a hermit in the wilds or a like condition, the artifactual environment is too "noisy" to leave its impression upon us

as such--that is, to impress us as artifactual, as of human origin. Imagine, however, that on a trek in an uninhabited region of Alaska one encounters an abandoned campsite with a recently extinguished campfire. That would certainly count as evidence that other people or another person had been there; but more than that, it would likely elicit in the discoverer a sense of social otherness that is not merely to be identified as cognitively noting what the data imply. Or imagine accompanying Richard Leakey on an expedition to Olduvai Gorge. After spending months of isolation, digging, scraping, and brushing, in a God-forsaken (or at least human-forsaken) desolation, one unearths the skeletal remains of an entire hominid family with what appear to be a number of stone implements. Here too there is likely to occur the poignant sense of human social otherness.

Anthroaesthetic awareness, as we might call it, occurs in high contrast situations. It is reasonable to suppose that it is contrast situations of some sort which favor theaesthetic awareness as well. Although environmentally pervasive, I conceive of theaesthetic phenomena as subtle. They are perhaps most easily conceived as becoming salient in contexts of the absence of everyday or mundane background noise--within the grandeur of nature, for example. Equally, I think, they become salient for individuals within any context of personal extremity: a divorce, a debilitating illness, a moral trauma, a death in

the family, or an unexpected end to one's career. What is common among the latter is an often sudden eclipsing of common and relatively non-reflective concerns by more cosmic and existential concerns. Finally, there are innumerable less auspicious, less cataclysmic occasions that may afford the requisite break with background noise. Delighting in one's child, enjoying one's back yard, participation in religious ceremony, and private meditation may all be theaesthetically arresting as well.

Minimally, theaesthetic awareness is the sense of divine social otherness. At its most poignant, theaesthetic awareness is a sense of the presence of God. It is the convergence of God's look and ours. Its affective character arises from the natural range of human emotions. Because the informational coin of this awareness is personal salience, it is not a fundamentally discursive experience. It comes in affective tone, degrees of intensity, and "feelings" (intuitions) of personal attribute, rather than linguistic clarity. This is not to deny that it may be rendered with a good deal of linguistic clarity, but grounds for philosophically doubting this experience should not center on its relative vagueness, inarticulateness, or its often penumbral character.

Theaesthetic awareness, moreover, belongs essentially to an embodied noetic agent; embodying material, structures, and processes are not transcended in such awareness, but

must be conceived rather as facilitating it. Further, given the sketch of the neuropsychological fixation of gestaltic perception provided in chapter five, it is likely that theaesthetic personal saliencies are cognized (rendered available for reflection) prior to and independently of verbal processing. Theaesthetic perception is cognitively full-blown as a gestaltic, rather than as a discursive, experience. That does not mean that relatively immediate verbal processing or verbal construal may not further "shape" the experience; what it does mean is that theaesthetic experience may be complete without such construal or re-construal.

Knowing-Whom: The Look Revisited

I have spoken of a certain unity of personal attention. The kind of personal attention I have in mind is the affectively engaged attention of knowing-whom. Such knowing differs from knowing-how and knowing-that in that its paradigm instance is the immediacy of an intersubjective exchange of information, person-to-person. That information may have a good deal of present linguistic structure to it, but it may have little or no such structure. The "look" of Sartre's shame episode is a case of the latter.

What primarily distinguishes the informational character of an active instance of knowing-whom are personal saliencies. This is certainly different from occurrently

knowing or believing <u>that</u> something is the case; it is different from logically following a train of thought in writing or speech; and it is also quite different from simple sense perception. Although the latter is both gestaltic and immediate, there is no affective exposure, or affective outering, of two engaged percipients. It is not important that two percipients in a knowing-whom relationship enjoy a mutuality of respect, authority, or other kinds of parity, except that there be a mutuality of status as persons. What is important is agent intersubjectivity. It is vital for knowing-whom that there be affective (hence intentional) exposure; knowing-whom cannot otherwise exist. Even in the case where one individual holds another as contemptible or morally despicable, actively to exhibit that contempt toward the other satisfies the sense of knowing-whom under discussion. The other may be exhorted, reviled, or rebuked only <u>as</u> another subjectivity accountable to a moral order. One cannot exhort, revile, or rebuke a mere object. Such moral displeasure can of course be communicated verbally, but body language, gesture, or a look might serve as well.

In this regard we found that "the look" described by Sartre was especially instructive. The voyeur's shame is a response to what appears to be an anonymous onlooker's knowing gaze, and no words pass between the two. By stipulation, the onlooker's regard is knowledgeable. His

appraisal of the situation is correct and the voyeur's shame amounts to a confession of guilt. Because we are describing a shame episode paradigm, there is no epistemological question of whether the look is discerning. The knowledge modality--a knowing-whom--is gestaltic in its character as an intersubjective epistemic event, not merely by virtue of the sensory manifolds (visual Gestalten) which help to facilitate it. The voyeur's psychological pain is a consequence of occupying the moral order he occupies (along with the onlooker).

A look may also serve a variety of other socially important functions. One may communicate love, concern, delight, approval, sympathy, tentativeness, and a great many other attitudes by facial expression alone. To keep matters simple, a look may have the opposite communicative power of occasioning a shame episode. It may instead occasion pride. A mother beams at her daughter on graduation day. A father's look acknowledges the moral worth of a tough decision his son has made. What I suggest is that the personal, as opposed to the theological, perception of God be construed as having a like potential. That is because the ontological communicative structure of theaesthetic awareness is a divine-human society. God, that is, is an essential member of a social fabric that includes the human being. The divine-to-human or human-to-divine "look" cannot be dissociated from the moral and affective order that necessarily goes with any personal society.

This is of course a religious construal of the personal society to which humans belong. It is, moreover, a religious construal. Others are certainly possible. What it has to recommend it is the seriousness with which it takes a personal God who is affectively and morally imaged by the humans he is said to have created and to love. If he is this society's sovereign and ultimate benefactor, his own affective and moral nature cannot be conceived as radically dissimilar from those he loves. He cannot be conceived in his love, for example, as morally indifferent, doting, or surpassingly indulgent. That is inconsistent with his wanting only our good and moral perfection. Nor is a deistic conception of God compatible with a divine-human affective and moral order. While the latter sort of deity might conceivably leave factual traces that he generated the circumstances of our existence, there could be no question of personal relationship with him.

My model is also recommended empirically, I believe, by a great deal of cross-cultural religious practice. A ubiquitous feature of religious practice is establishing relationship with God, and the dynamic of shame and pride seems to be very much in evidence. This dynamic shapes the religious comminicant's construal of self and God in highly specific ways within religious ideologies and practices. One need only note the distribution among world religions of doctrines and rites of propitiation, atonement, penance, and

grace. The specifics, however, are not my concern here. What is important is that awareness of God is not plausibly separated from the affective lives of either humans or God. Accordingly, a moral dimension is inescapable in theaesthetic awareness, and the range of its emotional response is as wide as the range of ordinary human emotion.

Theaesthetic Cognition and Affective Impoverishment

There is a number of questions that have gone unanswered in our overall discussion. Indeed, the most pressing questions seem to remain: (1) Even if it is conceded that knowing-whom is a genuine sui generis knowing of other persons which is mediated by the sensory discrimination of embodied others, how are we to conceive of a like knowing-whom of God which is not mediated by an embodied other? (2) What sort of cognitive specificity may be involved in a theaesthetic knowing-whom? This has been touched upon by way of analogy with the determinate apprehended personal saliencies of other human persons, but what about God? In what way may God's mind be known--his will, for example, as that will might be thought to affect our daily affairs? (3) In the final analysis, how might any putative theaesthetic experience be distinguished from mere psychological projection (cf. the theses of Feuerbach and Freud)?

The answers to these questions which emerge from the model of religion I have advocated might at first seem disappointing, but I think that on close inspection they are not. It must be borne in mind that I have written from the standpoint of General Revelation. However, in identifying my point of departure by the use of a term of theology, it is possible to be distracted from the concept which I take General Revelation to name. In my experience, it is common for the theological term to range over anything that might be thought to be evidence for the existence of God. That is too broad a concept for my purposes. One way to draw attention to my more restricted notion of General Revelation might be to draw a distinction between "general revelation" and "general evidence," or better, "natural revelation" and "natural evidence." "Natural revelation (of God)" is the most suitable term so long as its distinctiveness from "natural evidence (for God's existence)" is kept in mind. What is of importance here is not terminology, but the character of the disclosure which theaesthetic awareness involves.

Proceeding then, there are three considerations that affect how our model addresses the above questions: (1) a conceptual distinction between evidence and revelation especially as this involves personal saliencies, (2) the content or character of what is revealed, and (3) the import of both of these considerations within the context of a

divine/human personal society whose intersubjective epistemic prospects are determined socially as well as individually.

We often take ourselves to know facts on the strength of evidence. I say that I know that western Oregon is bounded by the Pacific Ocean. My evidence for this, though surely overwhelming, is not logically conclusive. I take the word of others for it from grade school geography classes, current maps which are presumably based on satellite photos, occasional televised newscasts of, for example, a Coast Guard operation off the coast of Oregon, coupled with the fact that, so far as I know, no one has ever spoken against it. For practical purposes there is nothing quarrelsome about holding that the evidence for the Pacific Ocean bounding the western border of Oregon is sufficient evidence for that belief. By contrast, the evidence for the existence of the Sasquatch is quite a bit less compelling.

My concern here is with the concept "evidence for p," where "p" stands for a proposition which alleges a matter of fact. We may say that the evidence for p is overwhelming, conclusive, sufficient, adequate, or, to run it the other way, insufficient, inadequate, inconclusive, or non-existent. If we say that p is evident, of course, we mean that the truth of p is apparent to any qualified observer; but "p is evident" is not the concept that is of

concern here. Evidence for p may indeed render p evident to qualified observers, but the bare notion that there is evidence for p does not entail that p is evident. The existence of evidence for p is quite consistent with that evidence's insufficiency and with p's being false. On the other hand, it seems a conceptual confusion to affirm both that p is evident and that there is insufficient evidence to confirm p (or that p is false, the evidence notwithstanding). (But consider, e.g., "It is evident that Smith murdered Jones, but the evidence is inconclusive." If this statement makes sense, it is because the <u>way</u> in which one finds it evident that Smith murdered Jones cannot be formulated as admissible court evidence.)

In contrast to "evidence for p," usage of the predicate "reveals" is tightly linked with epistemic perspicuity. Whatever is revealed is itself disclosed, manifested, evident. Too much, perhaps, can be made of usage, and I do not take myself as laying down rules of logic regarding, respectively, an invariant logical behavior of "evidence for p" and "revelation of p." Roughly speaking, however, "evidence for" is apropos of contexts in which knowing-that is a possible outcome, whereas "revelation of" is apropos of knowing-whom. Of course "revelation of" is apropos of <u>any</u> factual disclosure. Perhaps it would be clearer to say that although any factual matter may be revealed (and thus be a matter of

knowing-that), occurrent cases of knowing-whom are exclusively cases of revelation--cases, that is, in which one person is revealed to another person by immediate acquaintance.

Despite the tediousness of these details, the point that emerges, it seems to me, makes their consideration well worth the effort. If knowing-that is definitionally knowing about something-or-other (either on the strength of evidence or on the basis of revelation), then occasions of knowing-whom are not occasions of knowing about anything; the latter are intersubjective epistemic events in which the distance of "aboutness" is closed off. This is bound to be too pure an account of knowing-whom, for one typically notices things about another person as one is personally engaged with him or her. There is, nevertheless, a characteristic reduction or elimination of "aboutness" within the dynamic of such engagement. It is the gestaltic structure of this epistemic event--one in which "aboutness" is either marginal or excluded--that calls for a concept other than "knowing-that."

Non-verbal personal saliencies may of course be noticed. My concern is with such saliencies that are not, in the first instance, noticed or observed, but experienced within the context of intersubjective encounter (experienced in roughly the sense brought out by Walton's "perceiving a Gestalt quality" (p. 95)). Retrospection with regard to

such encounter may instance knowing-that, but here it is important to keep in mind that the epistemological problem of ascribing descriptive predicates to one's experience of another individual's non-verbal personal saliencies bears a fairly strong analogy with the epistemological problem of ascribing apt descriptive predicates to visual works of art. In both cases the predicates are intentional. Also, in both cases the properties identified by these predicates are gestaltically distributed in Kohler's sense (p. 99). There can be no straightforward extensional criteriology for correct (or even apt) predicate ascription. We do not, however, think that this jeopardizes our institution of art criticism; and especially with regard to our significant others (those we know well), we are not tempted to think that personal saliencies cannot communicate, or that we cannot reliably interpret one another's looks of chagrin, surprise, pleasure, joy, worry, approval and the like.

Even if these epistemological refinements are conceded, what about personal saliencies of God within a theaesthetic event? What about personal saliencies that are not mediated bodily? Am I not advocating something like the discernment of the Cheshire cat's grin in the absence of the cat's body? (In Lewis Carroll's fantasy, of course, the grin was at least visible!) In the case of the (non-verbal) communication of human personal saliencies, expressivenesses are mediated by the human body. In the case of theaesthetic

expressivenesses, on the other hand, there is no body in any analogous sense. What there are are natural phenomena, human events, and complex situations. These, on my view, are what mediate theaesthetic awareness. On the characterization of that mediation, I do not have anything to add to what such writers as John Hick,[14] Jerry Gill,[15] and George Mavrodes[16] have had to say. In my opinion they do not say very much; and perhaps we cannot say very much, for with regard to the structure or character of the mediation of God's mind to us we are pressed against fundamental epistemic limits. There is one matter, however, that has received little or no notice, and concerns Calvin's claim for the ubiquity and clarity of God's "general" revelation. It concerns the social and moral dimensions of our problem.

It will be recalled from chapter two that I strongly implied that the revelation extolled by Calvin was, to say the least, obscure for the black street-fighter from the ghetto and for the woman with MPD owing to her history of childhood sexual abuse. Taking this up again will be a somewhat oblique way of addressing the specificity problem mentioned earlier. At the same time it will invoke the divine/human personal society which grounds my account. What I want to say is oblique relative to the question before us because it addresses two particular constructivist considerations which might be thought to thwart or blunt

theaesthetic sensitivity. It is not obvious to me that the first does so to any significant degree, while the second--germane to the street-fighter and MPD individual--is far more important in this regard.

When I first became interested in problems concerning the perception of God, it was shortly after Robert Ornstein's The Psychology of Consciousness[17] appeared and the discussion of right brain versus left brain competences and abilities was at its height. Ornstein and others encouraged their readers to consider Western education, with its nearly exclusive rational character, as stultifying to the proper development of the right brain's intuitive skills. This suggested to me that perhaps "religious" sensitivity might have become, to whatever degree, a casualty to Western education. With the development of print and institutionalized mass education, the medieval liberal arts ideal of trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and logic) and quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music) was supposedly responsible for the atrophy of our intuitive souls. Accordingly, the Western educational product might be a "rational" virtuoso, but notwithstanding a brief exposure (on average) to "the arts," he or she risked being a philistine in matters aesthetic. I overstate this somewhat, but that is the general idea.

To very briefly respond, it now seems to me that one's rational/intuitive induction into culture is quite a

bit more complex than Ornstein's speculations allow. One might want to pursue the hypothesis that bookishness simultaneously enhances intuitive skills, rather than leaving right brain potential undeveloped. In the West it has been the educated (bookish?) elite who have cultivated, patronized, and in many ways sustained the "fine arts" (although I cannot vouch for their religiosity). On the other hand, one might want to fault the "mystical" virtuoso (a product, say, of Far Eastern educational development) for having an uncritical imagination. What strikes me as a far more intriguing question along these lines is whether the massive move in the West to technological education will be correlated with diminished aesthetic and intuitive sensibility. The latter is not classical liberal arts education--not bookish in the trivium/quadrivium sense.[18]

To restate the key issue, what is involved is not merely the affect upon future learning by the content which is learned (whether that content be ideological or technological); it is the impact of a predominantly discursive style of educational communication upon our capacity to perceive or profit from information conveyed in communication modalities which are not dominant. Does a "classical" Western education establish an information consumption set in the learner which renders the learner impervious to important intuitive information? Will a video information consumption set (induction into culture through

television) ruin one for the kind of cognitive attention that books require? Questions such as these remind one of Marshal McCluhan's foray into so-called "altered sense-ratios" as new and historically successive media alter a given generation's basic "sense" of its informational environment (e.g., going from an auditory culture to a print culture, then to a video and electronic culture).[19] If I understand McLuhan, fundamental shifts in informational media bring about fundamental gestalt shifts in informational perception. The difficulty with McLuhan's thesis is how to cast it as an empirically testable hypothesis.

This line of inquiry now strikes me as having far less importance for innate religious sensibility than I had once thought. The importance it does have bears on our concerns only insofar as it may illuminate the social impoverishment of affective and moral development--the effect of exclusive information consumption sets upon socialization. On that, the jury may be out indefinitely. This leads us back to our unfortunate examples.

The street-fighter and MPD individual, I believe, illustrate a crucial social dimension of our problem. In effect, to consider examples like these is to consider theaesthetic cognition from the standpoint of social and principally moral determinants of such cognition. It is also to work backwards from the prospect of lesser to

greater theaesthetic receptivity. The paradox we may seem to encounter by introducing powerful social/moral determinants on theaesthetic receptivity is that it may seem to threaten the egalitarian principle I announced in chapter one. I do not think that this is true and will return to it briefly at the end of this section. Nevertheless, our two examples are very likely to be deficient in theaesthetic receptivity (though not necessarily so, in my opinion). Why is this?

In taking up this question I put to one side the question of the <u>structure</u> of the mediation of divine personal saliencies as a private occurrence--as a personal instance of "mediated transcendence," to use Gill's expression.[20] That is, if only very briefly, I want to consider theaesthetic receptivity socially, not individually; culturally, but not infrapsychologically.

I have already made much of the concept of the informational (i.e., cultural) environment as a "law-like" and relatively inertial system. If the cultural environment did not have this character, there would be no prospect of such disciplines as sociology or social psychology, for in that case there would be no social invariances (patterns) to study. It is the overall informational medium indwelt by a given human society (given the human being's native competences and dispositions) which <u>grounds</u> "invariances" of affective and social responses among human persons and between human persons and God. I intend "informational

medium" in the broadest sense possible--to include the nonlinguistic communicational coin of personal saliencies, and hence the informational structures by which love, approval, disapproval, acceptance and the like are communicated. In a manner of speaking, therefore, there is a culturally perpetuated "language" of affective interaction without which culture would be impossible.

I stated earlier that whatever else the human person may be, he or she (individually) is an informational system, hence a communicant member of a social informational system. There are no acultural persons; as informational systems, persons are <u>essentially</u> social. Of the warp and woof of any social informational system is moral order. Thus norms of honesty and trust, for example, are vital if the system is not to break down <u>as an informational system</u>. I would add that given the lengthy period of affective development of human beings from birth through adolescence, norms of filial love and respect are vital if the system is not to break down as a <u>social</u> informational system.

With these somewhat sketchy and marginal observations in place, my contention is that it is only as a comminicant member of a moral order that an individual may be theaesthetically receptive. On my construal of affective life, the latter includes one's "location" within a moral order. To put the matter in a perhaps clinically misleading way, to be "dislocated" relative to that order (and our two

examples are surely dislocated in this sense) is to be informationally impaired to whatever degree (e.g., with regard to perceiving and giving love, acknowledging authority, trusting others, etc.).

There is a paradox of responsibility here with regard to our two examples, for despite their informational impairments we may still hold them responsible for their asocial behavior and communication (the more so, no doubt, for the street-fighter). I do not want to take up the question of therapy versus moral education (as though these could be separated!); the only issue before us is a certain consequence of this kind of informational impairment (affective deficit). It affects responsiveness both to human personal saliencies and to divine personal saliencies.

What is instructive about this is what it suggests about the sort of specificity that is blocked or filtered out. What suffers at the human-to-human level is a principally morally qualified awareness of others; and that is the point I wish to make about the content of theaesthetic awareness. The awareness which constitutes theaesthetic perception, as I conceive of it, is a morally qualified awareness of the affectively wholesome being who presides as moral sovereign over humankind. What blocks his "voice" and his communion is basically what blocks fellowship among humans themselves.

There is a thesis that emerges from these reflections

that may run against the grain of both Western individualism and the individualistic (privatized) soteriology of Western evangelical Christiandom. I do not mean to minimize the intrinsic worth of "bare" persons--of stark individuals, so to speak. Nor am I implying that the Church misreads its scriptures about the redemption of individuals as individuals. I mean only to factor into our understanding of the human condition its social character. This idea has certainly been around for a long time. It is present in Marx's "mit-Mensch," and theoretically elaborated in Heidegger's "mit-Sein," and in Sartre's "être-pour-autri." It is tacit in the very meaning of Wittgenstein's "forms of life." It has been far less noticed by the intellectual guardians of evangelical (biblical) religion.

A comment on the social psychology of biblical religion is in order here. Biblical soteriology, though certainly individual, is always for the sake of others in community (whether that community be earthly or heavenly). An instructive example from the Old Testament occurs in Exodus 33 and 34. At a time of crisis Moses asks Yahweh to show him his (Yahweh's) "ways" and his "glory."[21] Yahweh's response, though mysterious, helps to define what is meant by "ways" and "glory" in this passage: Moses is requesting to know Yahweh's "motivational ways,"[22] his active character. In the Hebrew sense, Moses wanted to know God "by name" as he himself was known "by name" to God. Moses,

as I read this passage, wanted intimacy with God for his own sake of course, but also for the sake of the people who were to be intimately associated with Yahweh. Moses wanted more explicitly to understand what he had heretofore only inchoately experienced. It is Yahweh's response that indicates the dynamic of his social connection to Israel--that is, to Israel as a people, not merely to isolated individuals.

The text giving Yahweh's response reads as follows:

> Then Yahweh came down in the cloud and stood there with him [Moses] and proclaimed his name, "Yahweh." And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "Yahweh, Yahweh, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation." (Ex. 34:5-7)

Many readers may be repulsed, or at least puzzled, by the final statement. How can a loving God hold children responsible for the sins of their ancestors three or four generations removed? I think first of all that we misread this text if we read it in detachment from the social psychology implicit in it--if we read it, that is, from the standpoint of the completely isolated individual before God. We also misread it if we take punishment to imply reprobation or final alienation from God. The earlier lines of this text rule this out as a necessary consequence, for God is forgiving. What then, does this passage mean?

R. Ward Wilson has summed it up this way. God's motivational ways operate within a social dynamic in which love, grace, and forgiveness are socially invested in individuals who may then reinvest those same qualities in others by loving, gracious, and forgiving behavior.[23] In this and perhaps other ways God "maintains love to thousands." The social "mechanism" is modeling, and it is simply the modeling of affective life consistent with God's character.

The problem arises when humans choose to invest evil instead, for it too will be modeled and, given time, generate its own social momentum. That is what I believe the "punishment" to involve. Children of the third and fourth generation--those of the above text--inhabit an affective and moral milieu whose informational currency puts them at considerable risk. While true that these "children" have not chosen the informational environment that, ceteris paribus, degrades their affective and moral development, both love and evil are socially reproduced by modeling. Given the social nature of persons, both affectively wholesome and affectively unwholesome behavior toward others have the character of investment.

Where are we with regard to our original questions? I have left alone the question how nature, events, and situations mediate God's presence. I have instead addressed the theaesthetic content question, indirectly, by

considering what is perhaps the primary cause of its opacity or obscurity should either of these be the case. Theaesthetic awareness is the apprehension of one's moral exemplar and sovereign, whatever else it may be. Granting that the human being belongs to a divine/human social and moral order, "dislocation" (for whatever reasons) with regard to that order accounts for the fact that God's presence may not be informationally salient, or may be less so to whatever degree. It is also possible that "dislocation," while not diminishing saliency, will render the experience disagreeable--perhaps alarming. The reason this does not disturb the egalitarian principle (i.e., the principle of general competence for theaesthetic awareness) is because societies as such are morally accountable for investment in the affective health of their members and their posterity.

The character of theaesthetic communication, falling as it does under General Revelation, is accordingly "general," not verbally specific. It will not, for example, involve the audition, "Sell all your belongings, move to Fairbanks, Alaska, and await further instructions." God could surely produce such an audition in one, but that would not be the sort of experience my thesis has been about. Theaesthetic awareness is a morally qualified awareness of God in which intuitive awareness of personal saliencies provides either a sense of moral closure with him or moral

estrangement. In this regard, the content bears a close analogy with human-to-human relationship (recall "the look"). Could an ostensible theaesthetic experience be really just psychological projection? I suppose that it could be, but I trust that enough has been said about verificationism vis-à-vis epistemic competence to show that strong verificationism cannot, in principle, be decisive on this.

Postscript

Is there such a thing as theaesthetic awareness? My own personal assurance of this would of course be only my word for it, and I can no more prove the reality of my own experiences of God than I can prove the existence of any of my qualia. What I think I have shown, however, is that there is a great deal worth talking about with regard to perceiving God. Given many recent developments this discussion will proceed differently than in the past. No future philosophy of religious experience, it seems to me, can be worth its salt without engaging the developing literature in philosophy of mind in its response to neuropsychology, psycholinguistics, and related disciplines.

I will conclude my discussion with what strikes me as an ironically and strangely convergent "contrary" opinion: Nietzsche's "Madman" who suffers an acute sense of the utter absence of God--atheaesthetic awareness:

> Have you not heard of that madman who lit a lantern in the bright morning hours, ran to the market place, and cried incessantly, "I seek God!" I seek God!" As many of those who did not believe in God were standing around just then, he provoked much laughter. Has he got lost? asked one. Did he lose his way like a child? asked another. Or is he hiding? Is he afraid of us? Has he gone on a voyage? or emigrated? Thus they yelled and laughed.
>
> The madman jumped into their midst and pierced them with his eyes. "Whither is God?" he cried. "I shall tell you. We have killed him--you and I. All of us are his murderers. But how did we do this? How could we drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the entire horizon? What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun? Whither is it moving now? Whither are we moving? Away from all suns? Are we not plunging continually? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there any up or down left? Are we not straying as through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder? Is not night continually closing in on us? . . . God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him. . . .
>
> Here the madman fell silent and looked again at his listeners; and they, too, were silent and stared at him in astonishment. At last he threw his lantern on the ground, and it broke and went out. "I come too early," he said then; "my time is not yet. This tremendous event is still on its way . . . --it has not yet reached the ears of man. Lightning and thunder require time, the light of the stars requires time, deeds, though done, still require time to be seen and heard. This deed is still more distant from them than the most distant stars--and yet they have done it themselves."[24]

It is perhaps unfair to enlist Nietzsche in this way, but there could hardly be a more powerful expression of the cosmic absence of God. If I may co-opt the madman for my purposes, however, I shall read him to convey that the "discovery" that there is no God is both socially and psychologically traumatic if it is allowed to sink in. The "news" of God's demise, if one can come to grips with it, carries the implication that "social space" has been

catastrophically impoverished, and the "social space" of the madman's contemporaries required that God exist (be yet alive). The middle paragraph is an exceedingly apt expression of atheaesthetic awareness--the setting in of a chronic sense, perhaps, of oneself as orphaned in the universe. That fits my model very nicely, for the trauma at the prospect of God's non-existence is compelling evidence of his social necessity.

Notes

1. Exodus 22:24.

2. Ephesians 4:30.

3. Exodus 20:5.

4. Psalm 103:13.

5. The Westminster Confession of Faith, Ch. I, 1.

6. Saint Anselm: Basic Writings, S. N. Deane, trans. (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court Publishing Co., 1962), 13-14.

7. Lectures and discussion at Covenant College, 1983.

8. Philippians 2:6-7, NASV.

9. See Daniel Dennett's Elbow Room: The Varieties of Free Will Worth Wanting (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1984).

10. John Hick, God and the Universe of Faiths: Essays in the Philosophy of Religion (London: Macmillan, 1973), 37-38.

11. Ibid., 41.

12. There is a good discussion of Wittgenstein on "seeing-as" in Robert J. Fogelin, Wittgenstein (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976).

13. Fodor, Representations, 257-316.

14. Hick, God and the Universe of Faiths: Essays in the Philosophy of Religion.

15. Cf. Jerry H. Gill, Mediated Transcendence: A Postmodern Reflection (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1989).

16. Cf. George I. Mavrodes, Revelation in Religious Belief (Philadelphia: Temple University Press,1988), chapter 3, "The Manifestation Model."

17. Robert Ornstein, The Psychology of Consciousness (New York: Viking, 1972).

18. Cf. Jacques Ellul, The Technological Society, John Wilkinson, trans. (New York: Random House/Vintage Books, 1964).

19. Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964).

20. Gill, Mediated Transcendence.

21. Exodus 33:13 & 18.

22. The expression is R. Ward Wilson's. "God's Image in Mankind: the Essence of Human Nature," unpublished manuscript, 1981.

23. Ibid.

24. In Walter Kaufmann, Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974), 96-97.

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VITA

David Hoover was born in Vallejo, California in 1943. He attended primary and secondary schools in Tacoma, Washington. Leaving an early interest in forestry, he graduated with a B.A. in Hebrew and Hellenistics from Shelton College in 1966. In 1970 he received the M.Div. at Faith Theological Seminary and then an M.A. in philosophy at Temple University (1975). After teaching philosophy at Covenant College for ten years and doing brief graduate work at the University of Georgia, he returned to graduate studies at the University of Tennessee where he finished his doctorate in philosophy in May 1994.

David's philosophical orientation was largely shaped by the analytic philosophers he studied under at Temple, but has gradually become tempered by concerns in social and developmental psychology. David's particular passion is to bring this kind of scholarship and learning into the classroom in a way that builds his students for a life of learning and spiritual growth.