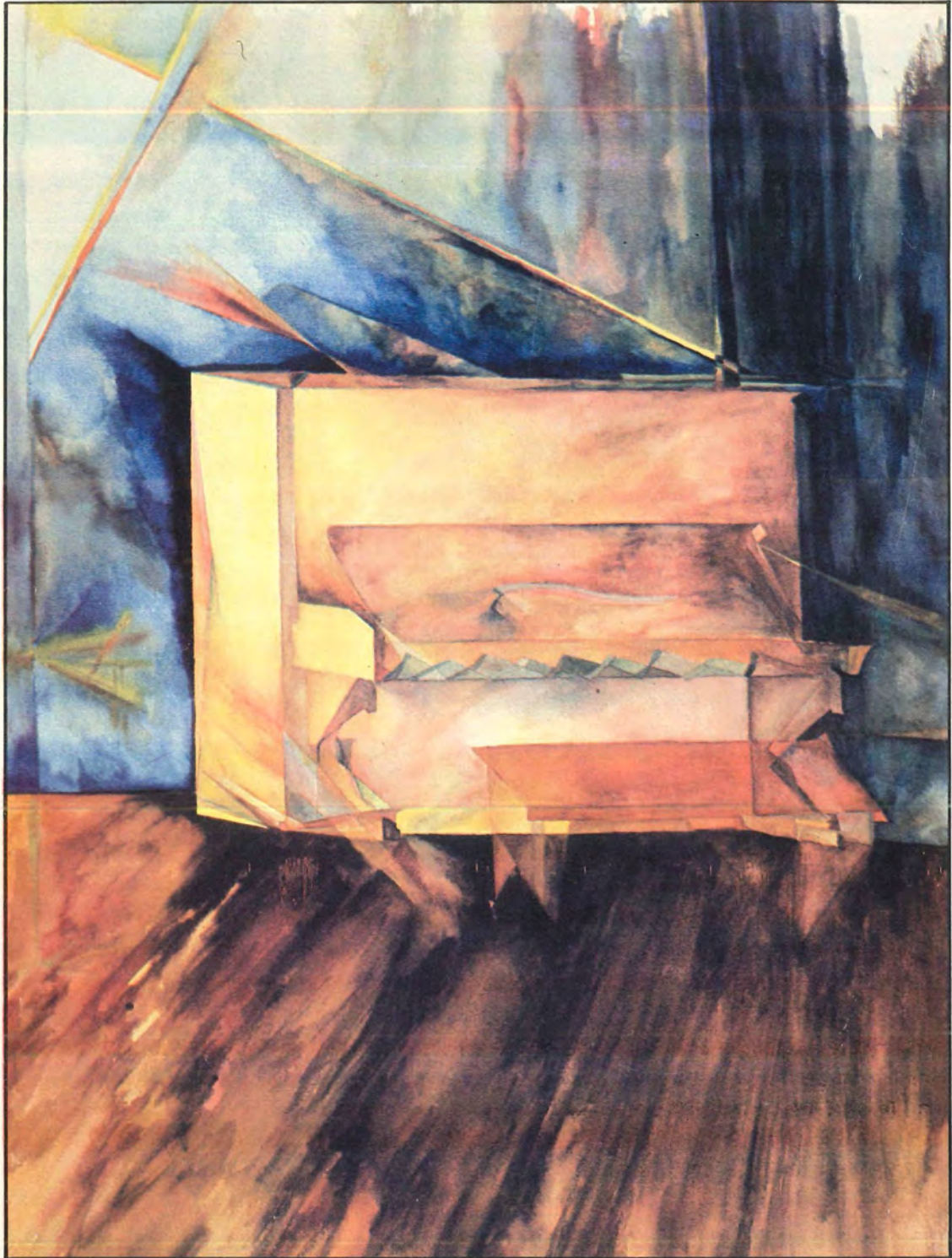


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Kevin Tracy, '83, submitted  
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ENERGEIA: The activity in which anything is fully itself.

ἡ...νοῦ ἐνέργεια ζωή... (Aristotle's Metaphysics, 1072b)

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# All Work and No Play Makes Jack a Dull Boy: Reflections on Beauty in Plato, Kant, Schiller, and Heidegger

Barbara Cooper

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### Introduction

If we gather together the various notions that Socrates has about beauty we find that, although in the Republic he holds art at arm's length, he also respects beauty highly: in the Phaedrus and in the Symposium Socrates describes beauty as a sort of catalyst or ladder in the search for the Good. In the Republic we see art as dangerous for three reasons: it is not real; it can induce imitation of ways of being in the world which are not the highest and best ways; and finally because, if a poet can move us powerfully towards what he sees as good and true, can he not with equal power compel us in the opposite direction either deliberately or through poor judgment? It is this third objection, I think, which colors much of Socrates' thought about the poet, for he thinks of the poet as the archetype for the craftsman who founds a state, and the unjust man is "like the clever craftsman."<sup>1</sup>

Socrates' reservations about poetry indicate his immense respect for its power. In the Symposium Diotima hints that poetry is like love of the beautiful, which acts as a spiritual intermediary between the realm of what is most fully and the realm of human being: spirits "weld both sides together and merge them into one great whole."<sup>2</sup> Diotima characterizes love as "at once desirous and full of wisdom, a lifetime seeker after truth, an adept in sorcery, enchantment, and seduction."<sup>3</sup> In Plato, love and poetry are not themselves Truth, but are rather the means to attain it.

Wisdom, for Plato, seems not to be a noun synonymous with "knowledge of what is," but a verb indicating how to attain that knowledge. For Plato our experience of beauty is erotic; we desire it and move towards it to possess it. Diotima suggests that love (and poetry as well) comes from a desire to be immortal and to beget what is "one's own." If begetting "one's own" means coming fully into one's own, then love of beauty results finally in a kind of possession of self, the kind of possession which, in the Phaedrus, one attains by seeing oneself mirrored in one's beloved.

In the Phaedrus Socrates says that, of all the imitations of what is (in the fullest sense) that appear in the world for humans, beauty alone comes through vision. Vision is the sharpest of our senses; for Plato and the Greeks, to have seen is to know and all knowing is in some sense "insight." Therefore beauty is ekphanestaton kai erasmiōtaton.<sup>4</sup> Beauty shows itself and shines forth most, and of all things is the most lovely and lovable. By appearing for us in this world Beauty leads us back to that higher world beyond the sensible realm. Socrates seems primarily to be speaking of human beauty here; however, in the end of the dialogue Socrates makes several suggestions about how a piece of writing must be constructed to be pleasing. It must be constructed "like a living creature" and, like a lover, it must be appropriate to the type of soul which it will move.<sup>5</sup>

Thus Socrates' discussion of how the love of a beautiful individual can lead us

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to love of the Beautiful and the Good applies equally to the love of beautiful poetry or of art in general. The dialogue itself is an example of the power of beautiful art to lead one to the Good, for this speech is lovingly constructed for Phaedrus so that he will not, by following Lysias, neglect one of the most important aspects of life: love of an individual. Although beauty is not the Good itself, it in some ways resembles the Good. In the Republic Socrates uses the sun as an image of the Good. Beauty likewise shines and brings to light the being of things; however, we can behold beauty without being blinded. In the Republic it is not clear how it is humanly possible to stare directly into the sun, or the Good, in its full radiance. In the Phaedrus we discover that beauty is astraptousan: the brilliance of beauty is fleeting like a flash of lightening or the reflection of sunlight on metal.<sup>6</sup> Beauty seems to allow us to experience the Good momentarily and to give us a sense of the direction of its source without blinding us in the meantime. In some sense Beauty is closer and more approachable to us as humans than the Good.

Thus although in the Republic Socrates seems to relegate art to a position of minor importance, in the Symposium and Phaedrus he seems to suggest that art and beauty can have the highest possible role in human experience. To accord to art the role which he gives it in the Republic, Socrates must believe two things: first, that as imitation of the real, it must be less than the real; and second, that because it is neither real in this world nor true in the full sense in which the Good is True, it can have no truth or reality at all.

On the question of beauty, as with so many questions, Plato's dialogues serve as a starting point to which later authors respond. In this paper I shall offer three subsequent discussions of beauty and I shall examine how they differ from Socratic thought. In doing so I shall gather together some notions which I feel describe some aspect of my own experience of beauty. Although it is in response to Plato, this paper is not intended as a

refutation of Plato, for often he is the deeper and more responsible thinker. As I discuss these various approaches to beauty in art, I shall keep in mind the problems involved in any discussion of aesthetics.

I begin with a discussion of Kant, for whom beauty does not reside somewhere far beyond us, but rather in ourselves. His subjective description of beauty accounts for our sense that in experiencing beauty we are learning about ourselves as humans. I then consider Schiller; while Plato believes that poetry, as mere appearance, can be a danger to society, Schiller believes that precisely because it is appearance poetry leads us to our full humanity. I conclude my discussion with Heidegger, for whom we not only learn about the true because of beauty and art, but Beauty in art is itself a manifestation of the True. Truth resides in the same realm as we do.

I shall close this paper with my own understanding of the role of beauty in our own everyday lives, and with a discussion of the difficulties involved in trying to describe what beautiful art is.

#### I.

An alternative to thinking of Beauty as residing in the supersensible realm is to claim that beauty is nothing else than sensation. In "Of the Standard of Taste," Hume points out that a judgment about beauty in art must depend on the condition of the "organs" of the man perceiving the work of art. If a man lacks delicacy, practice, experience in comparison, or impartiality, he will not judge well and we will say that he lacks taste. In order to have good taste a man must have good sense. We praise a man of good taste, and his own good sense becomes our standard of taste. Thus the standard by which we judge a judgment of taste lies not in the object, but in the faculties of the man judging. Taste is a kind of health. Our sense of beauty is literally bound up with our faculties of sensation and our reaction to a piece of art is "sentiment."

Although I may not be able to judge well about a piece of art myself, someone whose faculties are in better order and

more practiced may be able to point out to me what is good or bad in the art work, and I can come to see what he has seen. Hume responds to the question of whether there can be some objective standard of taste that we must trust the judgment of those men whose good sense distinguishes them.

For Kant the consequence of Hume's notion that beauty is not a quality of things, but rather exists in the mind which contemplates them, is that a judgment of beauty must be universal. Kant follows Hume in presupposing that all men must have the same faculties, and that therefore, if I perceive an object to be beautiful, I will expect others to judge it to be so as well.

Whereas Hume's essay addresses a dilemma in aesthetics, Kant's Critique of Judgment addresses the workings of the human mind. The Critique describes the nature of the judging faculty rather than the nature of works of art. For Kant the word "aesthetic" does not initially mean "pertaining to the beautiful" or "the science of the beautiful." It is used according to the ancient distinction of aisthēta kai noēta. The "aesthetic" pertains to how we perceive the world and to how living in the world feels to us. However, to feel does not mean, for example, "I perceive that this is red" (as it did in the Critique of Pure Reason), but rather "I sense or feel within my faculties that this is beautiful." Kant uses the word "subjective" in the Critique of Judgment to describe anything which has to do with the subject's sense of himself and of his feelings. Beauty does not reside in the object.

In the Critique of Pure Reason, Kant accounts for how we make judgments about the state of being of objects of perception. We make what he calls "determinant judgments": we receive perceptions in the medium of space and time and our imagination spontaneously acts on them to synthesize or "determine" them according to the rules set down by the categories. Understanding, as the faculty which contains the law-giving categories, gives the laws to which imagination adheres in giving unity to our perceptions. Productive

imagination presents before the mind's eye an object of perception synthesized into a unified thing, or a "presentation." The categories of the understanding are not (as for Aristotle) predicates but are rather functions of the mind by which imagination synthesizes perceptions.

In a judgment imagination unifies a particular and places it under a universal (a category), e.g. this vase is red. However in the Critique of Judgment, we discover that not all judgments are determined according to the rules set out in the categories. "Beauty," for example is not a concept or category. This is an astounding notion: we do not think beauty, we feel it. Some of the perceptions we receive cannot be conveniently categorized according to the rules set out by the categories. In order to unify these perceptions, the mind makes a rule for itself. If my perception isn't unified into a universal of the sort provided by the categories, what sort of universal will account for it? If I must make the rule up anew for each particular instance, there will be only one member of my universal. In synthesizing this particular I make a universal, so that in a judgment of beauty the particular and the universal are the same. I perceive in the object some unity which gives it a universal character.

Kant calls this universal character of the artwork an aesthetical idea. An aesthetical idea arises from the presentation of a form which gives occasion to the imagination "to spread itself over a number of kindred representations that arouse more thought than can be expressed in a concept determined by words."<sup>7</sup> For example Jupiter's eagle with the lightning in its claws is an attribute of Jupiter which tells us more about his power and majesty than ordinary words can express.

How can I call several different things beautiful if each of them occasions a new aesthetical idea formed by the imagination according to a self-made law? My judgment that a thing is beautiful accompanies the feeling that I have upon synthesizing the perceptions. If my feeling is one of "free play," I call the object beautiful. If, on the other hand, I

feel awe, I call the object sublime. Thus aesthetic judgments are not strictly speaking attributable to the thing, but to my own feeling upon perceiving it. Beauty is not a category but a reflection of the mind on its own feeling. Hence aesthetic judgments are reflective rather than determinant.

The feeling the mind experiences arises from the interplay of the imagination and the understanding. If the understanding along with the imagination were simply to categorize, they would be "working," as when I make the judgment that the vase is red. But when imagination makes a judgment according to no set law, it makes a law for itself in playful imitation of the categorical laws. The understanding and imagination are "in play." It might seem that in describing beauty as free play Kant trivializes the importance of beauty in our lives. We play when we find the time, and we are not serious when we play. However Kant's choice of the word play points in another direction as well, for when we work we are under the constraint of necessity. We work because we have to work; we do not enjoy it and in some sense we are enslaved by it. If our perception of beauty is play, then when we perceive beauty, we are, for a time at least, entirely autonomous. We are our own masters. In making a judgment of beauty we are acting freely.

Although the imagination in free play generates a rule for itself, Kant conceives the synthesis involved in a judgment of beauty to be "formal." Imagination's autonomy is not wholly arbitrary and capricious, for the understanding sets down the example which imagination will follow. The rule imagination makes for itself will be by analogy to those of determinant judgments. Determinant judgments synthesize perceptions formed by space and time. Since all my presentations will be of things in space and time (including my "I") which can only be represented by imagination through inner sense (time) as linear, everything represented by imagination must be formal. For Kant, beauty must always lie in the "form" of the thing, and he offers as examples flowers, shells, "deli-

neations à la grecque, foliage for borders or wall papers."<sup>8</sup>

The mystery of the Critique of Judgment is: how does imagination synthesize formally something whose content is not space or time? That is, how does it synthesize something which cannot be schematized as ordinary perceptions are? The object has some unity beyond that which we synthesize when we synthesize what we have received in space and time. Of course the judgment itself pertains to the harmony of the faculties of the subject when they are in free play. However the activity of the mind is incited by something in the object. For me the mystery behind Kant's terminology redeems it, for it is an admission that beauty is not at bottom analyzable. Some objects have a unity beyond anything we can describe in speech bound by the concepts of the understanding. As Valéry comments:

The seducer beguiles us with the hope that everything will reduce itself to categorical terms and so achieve completion, that everything will culminate in the Word. But we must answer the demon with this simple observation: the effect of the Beautiful upon a man is to make him mute.<sup>9</sup>

Although we began by supposing that beauty does not dwell in the object, but in the subject, it seems that our feeling is called forth by something in the object. Insofar as beauty happens in the subject, it is not an attribute of an object, but a state of mind. Mind in itself is not subject to the formal intuitions, for my awareness of myself has to do only indirectly with space and time. Self awareness arises from my attention to the spontaneity of my imagination. My mind is immediately mine and I cannot help but feel how it is working. The feeling that my mind is at play is called forth by the freedom of objects of nature and art, for while they conform in many ways to conceptual syntheses, they occasion more thought than can be accounted for by the categories.

Let us consider two examples of how

free play might work. If I look at Cézanne's "The Basket of Apples" (plate 48, The Visual Arts as Human Experience)<sup>10</sup> my determinant judgment will give me colors in positions, certain shapes, and these shapes as relatively large and small. But how are these presentations unified for me into one image? For example, I immediately recognize the dish of cookies as just that, but the shape of the dish is not strictly geometric (cf. p. 250). The table edges do not match up, and the bottle is not symmetrical. Nonetheless my imagination immediately and effortlessly offers these elements to my mind's eye as a whole image whose parts make sense. To enjoy the real forms in the painting my mind must toy with the image to recognize how it thwarts the laws of perspective.

The real beauty of the painting lies not only in the shapes but in the dynamic quality Cézanne achieves by shifting the dish one way and the table another, and by presenting the fruit as both on the tabletop and levitating above it. Perhaps free play comes not simply with form, but also with the activity to which a piece of art invites us through the interplay of its elements. To appreciate this painting we cannot simply imprint the forms upon our retina; we must allow it to set us at play on a teeter-totter of perspective and weight. The upper right-hand corner of the table wants to rise, but is balanced by the sheer bulk of the basket of fruit.

An example of free play closer to what Kant has in mind is Claesz's "Still Life" (plate 40, The Visual Arts as Human Experience). This painting is far more conventional and each of the images within it is beautiful in a way that the elements of the Cézanne, taken individually, cannot be since their beauty arises from their balance. In this painting the various curves of the objects are lovely in themselves. We enjoy the shape of the glass because it has just this curve, and the ellipse of the chalice lip because it has just that shape. We run our eyes over the forms just as we run our hands over the pleasing curves of a piece of sculpture.

The particular arrangement of the elements on the table is also beautiful.

We sense that if one part were missing or if something were moved the unity of the painting would be destroyed. We cannot pin down why just this arrangement so pleases us. The mind seems to be able to perceive and enjoy the appropriateness of this particular curve being given to this particular object, where it might not have been found since nothing required it to be there.

Free play, then, might be interpreted in several ways. I can sense the appropriateness of this curve to this vase; or I can sense the seemingly deliberate near-adherence to law in something which plays with forms so that, for example, they are not quite perfectly geometrical. In both cases imagination obeys no given law. The vase did not have to have that curve simply to be a vase, yet I made that curve an essential part of my experience of the vase. The laws of synthesis of an object do not give me the Cézanne still life as a dynamic unity of objects.

Kant calls this recognition of the appropriateness or deliberateness of form "purposiveness." Ordinarily we call the cause of an object, in the sense of formal or final cause, its "purpose." It is the formal end which the object will attain when it is unified and which will be perceived by us as a form through the concepts. However, beautiful things do not have purpose in the sense of form through the concepts. Nonetheless, they do seem to have form, and the form looks as if it were prescribed for them in the same way that a formal cause is. We call such objects "purposive." A judgment of beauty then "has nothing at its basis but the form of the purposiveness of an object (or of its mode of representation)."<sup>11</sup> Kant's parenthetical remark reminds us of the question of the location of beauty. Does purposiveness arise from the object, or from our perception of it? The work suggests that the object is purposive for me, yet not every object can elicit this feeling.

Judgments of beauty arise from my internal sense that the thing has non-conceptual form, and this sense only arises for the relation of my imagination

to my understanding. My imagination finds in the object something like a purpose and reflects on it in comparison with the strict formality of the concepts. In order to give me the object as an object of thought my imagination must supply for itself some rule similar to those of the understanding in order to capture this purposiveness. My pleasure arises from the playful agreement of my imagination's own law, and the laws of the understanding.

If my enjoyment stems from the autonomous imagination's flirtation with the law of the understanding, it depends upon my sense that the understanding is law for everyone. I will be pleased with the play of my faculties only if, in contrast with the norm, they are acting freely. What sort of norm is this? It must be the normal activity of mind, not simply my mind but any human mind. Kant claims that a judgment of beauty precedes the feeling of pleasure. Contrary to what might have been expected, the judgment of beauty is not universal because it is universally pleasant; rather, it is pleasant for everyone because it is universal.

"Hence," concludes Kant, "it is the universal capability of communication of the mental state in the given representation which . . . must be fundamental and must have the pleasure in the object as its consequent."<sup>12</sup> Taste is then "the faculty of judging a priori of the communicability of feelings that are bound up with a given representation."<sup>13</sup> This remarkable notion requires that we think beauty as first and foremost something which produces the same feeling in everyone. We ordinarily think of beauty as something which moves us personally and which may take on greater appeal when we find our judgment reinforced by someone else. I am not sure that Kant's description rings true for me; it is very important to me that my enjoyment of beauty is finally couched in my sense of myself as a human, but I am not at all sure that communicability is the condition of my enjoyment.

Universal communicability can only arise in an object if all men have the same faculties in common. Taste, then, is

a kind of common sense which accounts for our ability to compare our own judgment with that of the collective reason of humanity. It requires unprejudiced, consistent, and "enlarged thought." We say that a man has enlarged thought if he "disregards the subjective private conditions of his own judgment,"<sup>14</sup> and in so doing puts himself in thought in the place of everyone else.

We see now why Kant claims that a judgment of beauty must be universal. We will expect everyone to agree with it; for, since we all have the same faculties, we will have the same experience when faced with a painting. The communicability of the feeling to all with the same faculties makes the experience universal. How would Hume respond? It seems obvious that everyone does not agree about what is beautiful. Hume would say that I cannot experience beauty unless my faculties are in order. Someone with good taste has "strong sense, united to delicate sentiment, improved by practice, perfected by comparison, and cleared of all prejudice."<sup>15</sup> Furthermore some things will appeal to some people because of their characters; an old man may love Tacitus and a young man may love Ovid. No blame attaches itself to such preferences, for "it is almost impossible not to feel a predilection for that which suits our particular turn and disposition."<sup>16</sup>

Kant is more terse in his explanation of how judgments may vary. I sense that his explanation arises more from philosophical necessity than from the tolerant observation of actual human feeling: "everyone must admit that a judgment about beauty, in which the least interest mingles, is very partial and is not a pure judgment of taste."<sup>17</sup> A judgment of beauty must be "disinterested."

It is here, and not so much in his claim that beauty is subjective rather than objective, that Kant's real argument with Plato shows itself. A judgment of beauty is not erotic; I must be speaking very loosely to speak of "love of the beautiful" at all. Kant claims, counter to Plato and our own simplest notions of beauty, that it is not the "object of desire." We do not, strictly speaking, even

desire to look at beautiful things, although Aristotle claims that we desire to look at and to know all things. Ordinarily, we think of beauty as a source of motion, as something which, like the beloved in the *Phaedrus*, draws us with its radiance. For Dante, to fail to be moved by beauty is sin, and he is scolded by Beatrice for forgetting her divine beauty and following earthly things. Kant, however, wants to claim that I must not be moved by beauty; my enjoyment of it must be entirely free and unconstrained. In other words, an experience of the beautiful cannot be an "emotional" experience. It turns out that the consequence of claiming that beauty is no object outside of me is that I have nothing to move towards. For Plato an experience of beauty is bound to be an important experience, for it will move us towards something. For Kant the experience is merely internal and solely of symbolic interest.

One could try to temper the revolutionary quality of Kant's claim by remarking that my enjoyment of art must not come from anything private or peculiar to me, but from those things which I share with all humanity. I must not like the painting because I like fruit, or because it is something I would like to own for its investment value or its color scheme (should it happen to match my living room). In other words, I cannot take a simply private interest in the painting, and I cannot use it as a means to some end.

Perhaps, then, because my enjoyment follows upon a judgment that results from the universal nature of human faculties, I am permitted to take an interest in the painting because in looking at it I am joining in with all humanity to discover something we all share in common. However, Kant does not even allow for this enticing possibility. I personally am at a loss to imagine why anyone would devote so much time, energy and thought to beautiful art if he is not to take an interest in it. Perhaps Kant imagines that we somehow run into beauty and are preoccupied with it for a time, as a child is amused when placed in a sandbox.

It seems to me that Plato's account of our experience of beauty is far truer

to the experience. We do love beautiful things, and although we may not desire to possess them (I am perfectly happy to leave my favorite paintings in museums) we do take an interest in their existence. The world would seem a far poorer place if the Louvre were destroyed. We take delight in the thought that such wonderful things could share the world with us. In other words, we love them in much the same way that we love people; we can never possess them, we feel a desire to be in their presence, and we feel a deep loss when they disappear. We do not love them for their usefulness, but simply for what they are. Although we may be aware that their presence is beneficial to us, we do not pursue them for our own benefit: love is never a means to an end. It seems to me that Plato is very wise, in the *Phaedrus*, when he places a discussion of love of an individual next to the discussion of a pleasing work of art.

Kant, however, has a philosophical rather than an aesthetic reason for describing beauty as he does. For Kant, the whole power of beauty lies not in the beautiful object but in the subject's free response to the object. Art should not be compelling and the experience of the beautiful in art cannot be pathetic. Kant is willing to make such radical claims because he sees beauty as the symbol of our own free will. Free play gives testimony to the ability of man to make a universal of a particular. If Kant were to allow even an interest in universal humanity to enter into a judgment of beauty, the judgment would include a kind of desire; we would no longer have in beauty a symbol of morality because the motive behind the judgment would no longer be the judgment itself, but rather some other end such as knowledge. The judgment of beauty would then be a means rather than an end. As the symbol of morality, the judgment must be entirely autonomous, and must treat beauty never as a means but always as an end.

Thus for Kant the consequence of claiming that a feeling of beauty results from its universal communicability is that we find things beautiful because they call forth in us an awareness of the freedom of

our own faculties. Kant buries the beauty of this notion in his terminology: "the subjective condition of all judgments is the faculty of judgment itself."<sup>18</sup> We subject our own faculties to inspection by themselves. The imagination itself subsumes itself under the understanding itself, such that the freedom of the former harmonizes with the law of the latter. Kant is proposing that in making a judgment of beauty we are in fact playing with our faculties themselves in a self-conscious exercise of our own freedom to conform to law. The ultimate freedom for Kant is the freedom to conform to one's own law. Full freedom means complete self-consistency.

In making a judgment of beauty (by making a particular into a universal) I am providing myself and others with an image of moral freedom, in which I act only "in such a way that I can also will that my maxim should become a universal law."<sup>19</sup> Then beauty is only meaningful in society and in culture, for it rests on communicability and it hints at morality. Beauty, through "common sense," yields the self-conscious sense of oneself as a social being.

Kant's suggestive notion of free play accords with certain aspects of my experience of art, although it by no means exhaustively describes art. However it seems to me that he limits the notion unnecessarily by thinking of form exclusively in terms of delineation, rather than thinking of it as the whole form or "look" of a work of art. The whole of a painting, for example, arises from the interplay of many elements, only one of which is delineation. What Kant takes to be bare delineation or outline, I prefer to think of as the shape emerging from the complex interrelations of many parts.

Kant hesitates to accept music and the art of color as beautiful rather than merely pleasant sensations. He offers a somewhat obscure argument for why they might be admitted; however, his argument depends upon their being essentially mathematical. If music and color can only be accepted into Kant's account of free play because they are mathematical, I must reject the notion because it disagrees with

my own experience of art. Nothing important to my experience of painting and music will be accounted for by describing oscillations and wavelengths, much as I enjoy the *Timaeus*. Even if my experience could be reduced to mathematics, I would know nothing more about why colors in a Monet strike me; Heidegger will later claim that it is precisely such analyses which make it so difficult for moderns to reach real being and beauty.

Kant limits his notion because he is strongly rooted to the idea that because all our experience must be spatial and temporal, it can only be represented (conceptually or through free play) by something linear and mathematical. One might argue with Kant about his point in two ways: one could argue on Kant's own terms, or one could abandon Kant's vocabulary and invent a manner of speaking of one's own. I shall do both. First, if my feeling of beauty belongs essentially to my sense of myself, then it arises in some way akin to the way in which I am conscious of myself. Every presentation which my imagination offers to my mind's eye must also be able to be accompanied by my thought, "I experience this sensation." In other words, prior to my synthesis of an object I must have a synthesis of the self experiencing that object. I experience the object in time (which was linear), however I experience myself in my awareness of my own spontaneous synthesis in imagination. This spontaneity occurs in some sense beyond time, for it subjects itself to a synthesis of itself in time. Consequently my experience of myself and of my feelings is temporal, yet beyond time.

However, to argue without being limited by Kant's vocabulary: the time by which we measure our work may be subject to measurement as if it were a time-line, but the time which we have to ourselves in play seems to stretch or become concentrated depending on our involvement in what we are doing. Time seems sometimes to be more than one-dimensional. When I become absorbed in something, time seems thicker, or to stand still. At other times, it can perform magical leaps, and can pass by before I have had time to

grasp its passage. To think of our experience of art in time as merely linear when we experience leaps and bounds in our memories, and stretches and intensifications when we contemplate, seems entirely too limited.

Allow me, then, to offer my own elaboration on Kant's notion of free play so that it can describe more of the depth of my experience of art. Since it is clear to me that a black and white reproduction cannot always capture the essence of a colorful work of art, I will submit that color is just as much an element of beauty as size, position, shape and line. Compare, for example, the color with the black and white reproduction of Albers' "Study for an Early Diary" (plate 52, page 271, *The Visual Arts as Human Experience*). Much of the exercise which this painting invites is lost in black and white, for part of the play consists in the intensity of the blue box fighting with the size and position of the yellow. The shapes themselves become interesting because of their positions as well as because of their forms.

Or compare Monet's "Rouen Cathedral, Early Morning" (plate 44, *Visual Arts*) with the black and white reproduction (p. 234). The black and white picture looks like an unfocused photograph taken from an interesting angle. The color picture draws us into a damp, light-bathed atmosphere. We strain our eyes upwards to where the warm colors of the sunlight balance the cool colors engulfing the ground on which we stand. Texture and density play with color to give the effect of morning light. Something happens in the color picture.

There is something purposive in the particular yellow-green which Monet uses to balance the purple-blue, but there is nothing strictly law-abiding about his use of these colors. Similarly a certain melody in a Dvorak string quartet belongs to the cello at just that moment, although we couldn't say why. A jazz trumpet solo would become something altogether different if it were played on the piano. It seems to me that we experience purposiveness in the interplay of many elements in art, and that to consider free

play purely formally limits it.

Kant's notion (when expanded) captures the sense of restful motion which some works cause and which we enjoy in the awareness that anyone would enjoy it. In appreciating that work we are joining in with all of our cultures in an activity which exercises our own spontaneous creation of lawful form.

Let us see what else we can learn about beauty from Kant. He chooses to distinguish between the beautiful and the sublime, claiming that while beauty "brings with it a feeling of the furtherance of life,"<sup>20</sup> the sublime is:

a mere appendix to the  
aesthetical judging of  
purposiveness, because by means  
of it no particular form is  
represented in nature, but there  
is only developed a purposive use  
which the imagination makes of  
its representation.<sup>21</sup>

Beauty results in restful contemplation while the sublime results in an emotional exercise of the imagination. In a judgment of beauty, imagination approximates itself to the understanding by spontaneously making a universal law for a particular. In a judgment of the sublime, imagination stretches itself beyond its limits to try to encompass in experience the boundlessness of the ideas of reason. In both cases my imagination is active. Although Kant gives precedence to the feeling of beauty, I myself believe that the sublime can be of equal importance in our experience of beautiful art. Free play may begin to describe my experience of Monet's painting of a cathedral, but it cannot describe my feeling when I enter the Rouen cathedral. Whereas Kant intends to describe beauty exhaustively with his notion of free play, I think of free play as only a part of beauty, another part of which is the sublime.

If we think of beauty as a source of self-discovery for man (both as an individual and as a race) then, while playful beauty gives man an image of his own freedom, the sublime gives him an image of his own reason. Reason is the aspect of the mind which strives to encompass and to know everything, as in Aristotle's claim

that all men desire to know. In sublime judgments the imagination reaches out in an attempt to perform the function of reason.

Consequently a judgment that something is sublime, like a judgment of beauty, refers not to the object but the judging subject. The judgment refers to the mind's feeling when faced with an object such as the sea or a cathedral: "the mind feels itself raised in its own judgment if ...it... finds the whole power of imagination inadequate to its ideas."<sup>22</sup> While a judgment of beauty rests on objective purposiveness, a judgment of the sublime rests on subjective purposiveness. In a judgment of beauty some unity belonging to the object occasions my judgment, while in a judgment of the sublime my own relative smallness occasions my judgment. Consequently the sublime "is not to be sought in the things of nature, but only in our ideas."<sup>23</sup>

Kant's discussion of how this feeling works on us characterizes my own feeling in the face of some few very moving works of art. I am torn two ways: I feel torn because the whole of my imagination can never equal the enormity I face and at the same time I feel warmed and excited by the attempt to capture the whole of the work, as if I were reaching for something beyond the everyday. The cathedrals, which were built for the greater glory of God, do succeed both in uplifting us and in giving us a pained sense of our own limitations. A very great symphony can produce the same effect, when we swim in the sounds and can never hope to grasp them all. To come away from a cathedral having simply admired its lines would be never to have faced it at all.

Our mind enters into a disturbed conflict in which we are drawn forward by our imagination's attempts to grasp the whole, yet we are discouraged by the futility of our attempt. Nonetheless, in attempting to equal the ideas of reason in imagination we demonstrate to ourselves that we indeed have such ideas. One can conceive of someone entering into a cathedral and remarking only that it is large. To be awed by the cathedral, Kant very plausibly argues, is to involve one-

self in a search to grasp the idea which one already has within oneself, an idea of an absolute whole. Kant's sublime describes for me the feeling that one sometimes has that the only appropriate response to a work of art is joyful tears. Kant offers as examples of this kind of sublime beauty St. Peter's in Rome and the Pyramids.

Because our judgment of the sublime and the beautiful rests upon our sense of ourselves as rational members of humankind, our judgments are produced only in the context of culture and of our common faculties. Kant claims that the sublime has its roots in human nature, "in that which, alike with common understanding, we can impute to and expect of everyone, viz. in the tendency to the feeling for (practical) ideas, i.e. to what is moral."<sup>24</sup> We presuppose taste and feeling in any man of culture. Since the moral ideas arise from reason, and the sublime is a sort of image of our reason, we ascribe a feeling for sublime beauty to any moral man.

Kant claims that both beauty and the sublime are purposive in reference to moral feeling; the beautiful prepares us to reverse something, not for the sake of some private end, but for the sake of its form, while the sublime leads us to respect something beyond our own sensible interests. Kant makes the limited claim that an

interest in the beauty of nature ...is always a mark of a good soul; and...when this interest is habitual, it at least indicates a frame of mind favorable to the moral feeling.<sup>25</sup>

One is startled, however, to discover at the conclusion of the Aesthetic that Kant has made a reversal, for the final sentence of the first part of the Critique of Judgment reads: "the true propaedeutic for the foundation of taste is the development of moral ideas and the culture of the moral feeling..."<sup>26</sup> It seems clear that culture and an appreciation of beauty are bound to one another, but it is not clear whether a taste for beauty leads to morality, or whether morality leads to taste. Kant very sensibly leaves the relationship ambiguous.

## II

Schiller, however, borrows Kant's ideas and boldly claims that artistic beauty will be man's means to reach a moral condition. For him the question of how man can attain political freedom and his full humanity is answered by Beauty, "since it is through Beauty that we arrive at Freedom."<sup>27</sup> Ideal Beauty will lead us to our ideal nature in which the harmony of our faculties renders us free. It is the task of culture to realize this ideal man in all of us. As the title of his book, The Aesthetic Education of Man, indicates, Schiller is concerned to educate mankind aesthetically so that mankind can become moral. One must admire Schiller for the nobility of his interest.

Schiller reinterprets Kant's analysis of the faculties (understanding, judgment and reason) so that it can describe the present division of humanity as a whole. Kant's faculties become impulses or drives towards the rational, the sensual, and the beautiful. Just as judgment mediates between the understanding and reason, so for Schiller the impulse towards the beautiful mediates between the sensual and the rational. In the ideal man the impulses towards reason and sensation are balanced. Modern man, however, has become fragmented. The harmony of the ancients has been lost in the name of Progress and Utility. In order to further the technical arts man has specialized. Some neglect reason in favor of the sensual (like the man who works solely with his hands), while others neglect their senses in favor of reason (like those who theorize and invent). Schiller is conscious of the dual nature of art: like anything powerful it can be dangerous as well as beneficial. Through the specialization of the arts, Reason and the Ideal have become removed from sensation and reality: we his readers feel the truth of his claim in our own imbalance between the speculative and the intuitive. Schiller's striking description of modern man anticipates the thought of Hegel and Marx:

Eternally chained to only one single little fragment of the

whole, Man himself grew to be only a fragment; with the monotonous noise of the wheel he drives everlastingly in his ears, he never develops the harmony of his being, and instead of imprinting humanity upon his nature he becomes merely the imprint of his occupation, of his science.<sup>28</sup>

In a dialectic process akin to Hegel's, Schiller describes the progress of history as being resolved by a Higher Act. This Higher Act is Culture; through it the third impulse (the play impulse towards the beautiful) develops. This impulse corresponds to Kant's faculties in free play. For Schiller, Nature and sensation always combine, while the progress of the understanding demands division and separation. The power of reason performs a second synthesis yielding a new whole. This recombining synthesis manifests itself in history. Our new harmony will not simply be a return to the original harmonized state of the ancients, for the Higher Act will unite the simplicity of the ancients with the historical self-consciousness of the moderns.<sup>29</sup> The antagonism between the sensual and formal impulses will be instrumental in this move towards Culture; however, as long as the conflict persists we are only on the way towards culture. Culture will be a state in which our rational and sensual impulses are harmonized by our impulse towards the beautiful.

For Schiller the conflict of sense and form in humanity as a whole manifests itself in the individual as a conflict between condition and person. The condition corresponds to the changing particular who is bound to the sensual sequence of time; it is the verbal aspect of my being. The person is the enduring "I" which is an unchanging universal ideal outside of and encompassing all time. Man exists both in the immediacy of the sensual and as an "I" in some way unaltered by time. Schiller sees modern man as caught up in the fragmentation of his own duality: particular versus universal, sense versus form, finite versus infinite,



reality versus ideality.

Culture must bring about a harmony between man's dual impulses. Art preserves the ideal humanity embodied in the Greeks: "truth lives on in illusion, and from the copy the original will once again be restored."<sup>30</sup> For Schiller appearance or illusion does not fall short of the real, as for Plato, but rather it opens up towards the ideal. Schiller exalts the power of appearance. The artist, like Orestes, cleanses the present age by using material from his own age and the form from a nobler time, "from beyond all time, [borrowed] from the absolute unchangeable unity of his being."<sup>31</sup> The artist must give the world the direction towards the good by surrounding it with "noble, great and ingenious forms . . . until actuality is overpowered by appearance and Nature by Art."<sup>32</sup>

Art brings about the Ideal by reconciling the warring impulses of reason and sensation. The sensuality of beauty will soften the restraint of the overly rational man, while art's formality will tighten the slack sensual man. The ideal condition will be "sternness with oneself combined with tenderness towards others."<sup>33</sup> The inharmonious man is either unsympathetic or self-indulgent. The impulse towards beauty balances the sensual and rational impulses because it makes use of both of them.

This play impulse aims at "the extinction of time in time," for it attempts to reconcile the rational (atemporal) with the sensual (in time).<sup>34</sup> Because the rational is associated with the universal, and the sensual with the particular, the play impulse echoes Kant's moral imperative, whereby one's own particular act must be treated as if it were to become a universal law. Kant simply points to the similarity between an aesthetic judgment and a moral judgment by calling beauty the symbol of morality. Schiller, however, in a display of his own poetic freedom, equates the synthesis of the material and formal with that of the universal and particular, so that the play impulse results in yet a third synthesis of physical with moral necessity in man's

aesthetic freedom. Whereas for Kant freedom means autonomous self-consistency, for Schiller freedom means that we are not bound to a mere physical necessity, but can unite obedience to physical law with obedience to moral law. The freedom exhibited in a judgment of beauty, by uniting the sensual-particular with the rational-universal, makes manifest man's moral freedom.

Thus "living shape," the realization of free play, suggests both the vitality of a beautiful form and the moral shape a life will take on if it follows the harmony of beauty. The aesthetic art for Schiller becomes the art of living, and the fulfillment of this life is play: "man plays only when he is in the full sense of the word a man, and he is only wholly Man when he is playing."<sup>35</sup> I am reminded of Aristotle's conviction that to be fully alive and at work is one's fullest pleasure. We see here the glimmerings of the notion that what it is for man to be is to be at play: to be creatively at work on his life. Play takes on the sense of *ergon*, a being at work in the sense of fulfilling what is most necessary for man to be a man. For Heidegger as well beauty is a way of being at work in the world.

Thus freedom from necessity in Schiller means play, a play involving the whole shape of one's life among men. Schiller has learned from Kant that beauty is not simply an attribute of things, but a state of mind as well:

it is certainly form, because we contemplate it; but it is at the same time life, because we feel it. In a word it is at once our state and our act.<sup>36</sup>

Schiller finds his notion of "living shape" on several Kantian notions. First, a judgment of beauty is a reflection on the harmony of our faculties. Second, in viewing beauty we must reconcile the universal and the particular. Finally, our concept of the ideal of Beauty amounts to an awareness of our own boundless powers of rational thought. Schiller, like me, is inclined to combine Kant's notions of the sublime and the beautiful. Kant would

never posit a "rational concept of beauty," for beauty is not a concept but an idea of the imagination, a reflection on the state of our own faculties.

Schiller considers the recognition of beauty to be proof of our ability to pass beyond the finite just as for Kant the imagination's attempts to encompass the sublime are an image of our boundless rationality. For Schiller, free play affords a triumphant proof that passivity by no means excludes activity, any more than matter does form, or limitation infinity -- that consequently Man's moral freedom is by no means abolished by his necessary physical dependence.<sup>37</sup>

This union of disparities in our experience of beauty proves the compatibility of the finite with the infinite, and consequently proves that an individual act can become a universal act. It proves the possibility of a sublime ideal humanity.

Schiller means far more by "beauty," "living shape," and "culture" than is implied in our fine arts. When he claims that culture will lead us to ideal humanity, I think that he is aware that no mere intellectual revolution, no blood-bath, and no mere conviction in human free will can lead us to the realization of a peaceful, free world and of our ideal humanity. By culture Schiller means something like what the Latin root suggests: man is nurtured and cultivated into the organic whole which is his ideal condition only through the attentions of his culture. He must grow up out of the earth of nature, but he will only grow freely and well if some artificial attention is given to his form.

The illusion and artificiality of human custom makes man conscious of his own power over the nature whose sensual law he cannot escape. Art is only beautiful if we are conscious of it as man-made. Our imposition of form on our world yields our sense of moral freedom. Beautiful illusion is the exercise and manifestation of our freedom. Thus the art of living entails making every moment of one's life a poetic act, a deliberate exercise of

action, not for the sake of some necessary of self-interested end, but purely for the sake of freedom. Freedom cannot be imposed by revolution, it must grow up out of the fabric of everyday life. Schiller elevates Kant's "disinterestedness" to the stature of the source of our humanity.

Schiller's description of fragmented man yearning to become reunited portrays convincingly the modern world and much of modern art. Man's desire to find a home in the universe and to become one with it may be founded on Schiller's distinction of person and condition. We are often painfully conscious of ourselves as fragmented infinitesimals existing in time yet groping to find a way to equal the world we live in. We sense that the whole of what is exceeds us in importance and being, and would like to feel one with the whole rather than separate. Baudelaire's poem, "Les Phares," describes the same yearning:

Ces mas malédiction, ces blasphèmes,  
ces plaintes,  
Ces extases, ces cris, ces pleurs,  
ces Te Deum,  
Sont un écho redit par mille  
labyrinthes;  
C'est pour les coeurs mortels un  
divin opium!

C'est un cri répété par mille  
sentinelles,  
Un ordre renvoyé par mille porte-  
voix;  
C'est un phare allumé sur mille  
citadelles,  
Un appel de chasseurs perdus dans les  
grands bois!

Ces c'est vraiment, Seigneur, le  
meilleur témoignage  
Que nous puissions donner de notre  
dignité  
Que cet ardent sanglot qui roule  
d'âge  
Et vient mourir au bord de votre  
éternité!<sup>38</sup>

In this poem artists from Michelangelo and da Vinci to Goya and Delacroix all join in one cry lamenting

man's loss of classical innocence. It is the cry itself, the yearning to become one with God's eternity, which gives testimony to man's dignity. This cry repeats itself throughout different worlds and ages, always reaching for the eternal and timeless as waves reach for the shore. The preceding poem ("J'aime le souvenir de ces époques nus . . .") suggests that we are no longer all that we could be, because we lost our youthful innocence to the God of Utility. Baudelaire captures the ache we have to return to that innocent, unified state.

Often we do experience beauty as an attempt to escape from the limitations of time, or to capture time in a moment. This sense of being freed from time accords with Kant's description of beauty as a concept which is not a schematization of time through the categories. Although our experience of beauty is temporal we are no longer enslaved by time; our experience is the extinction of time in time. We are not limited by the spatial and temporal quality of art, for we become immersed in the entire world the work of art depicts. Each of the painters in "Les Phares" creates a world, yet when I experience those worlds I am not subject to their time or space; rather, I sense for a moment those worlds as a whole. Our consciousness that our experience is not, for once, subject to time gives us a sense of freedom and wholeness which Schiller calls "universal" and "infinite." I think of Socrates gazing in timeless contemplation at the beginning of the Symposium, or of myself when I am "lost in thought." Insofar as we have not yet attained to the reintegration of our faculties or impulses, I think that Schiller's description of modern man hits the mark, and, in comparison with Kant's reduction of the significance of beauty to a symbol, I respect his sense that Beauty can be extremely powerful. I also admire his wisdom in recognizing that full humanity and freedom cannot be imposed, but must, just as the word "ethics" implies, come from custom and habituation.

Nonetheless his conception of beauty and Culture as the road to morality disturbs me deeply. Schiller himself admits

that one could argue that precisely because taste pays heed only to form and never to content, it finally gives a soul a dangerous tendency to neglect all reality entirely and to sacrifice truth and mortality to an attractive facade.<sup>39</sup>

Schiller dismisses this enormous problem, the problem of the Republic, and all the examples that history has to offer of its likelihood, in two paragraphs. He responds by positing a pure rational concept of Beauty, and "by this conception we are to discover whether what experience calls beautiful is entitled to the name."<sup>40</sup> This Beauty cannot be discovered through experience;

it must be sought along the path of abstraction, and it can be inferred simply from the possibility of a nature that is both sensuous and rational; in a word, Beauty must be exhibited as a necessary condition of humanity.<sup>41</sup>

We must pursue Beauty because "those who do not venture out beyond actuality will never capture Truth."<sup>42</sup> Beauty is thus an ideal towards which we strive.

This argument is, for me, mere poetic rhetoric. Why should we strive for an ideal that Schiller cannot prove we even have, and which we do not know to be identical with the Good or truth? At the foundation of this argument lies Schiller's certainty that we, like Socrates, will in some way associate the beautiful with the Good, and the Good with truth. I do believe that art brings out a certain truth, but I am not sure that that truth is always moral truth. Schiller perhaps argues from his own conception of what higher art must be and has in mind his own politically oriented writings. However it would be dangerous, to say the least, to assume that the reader will take Schiller and Goethe as his examples rather than some less scrupulous poet.

For me, much of Schiller's writing gains its force from its poetic formulation and not from its argumentation. I have frequently resorted to quoting

Schiller rather than paraphrasing him, for he is at heart not a philosopher but a poet. He would like to give his arguments the force of necessary reasoning, as if they were logically deduced. However, his arguments often make use of poetic license. Because of their generality and ambiguity (for example, what precisely are Higher Art, Culture, and Beauty?) his letters are a perfect example of how art can be dangerous. Schiller gives the impression of having logically presented a necessary truth when he has, in fact, employed poetic persuasion.

For Schiller's argument to work, art must act on particular men to make them more harmonized. It is not clear how art is to perform its function, since the arts cannot move men:

an impassioned fine art is a contradiction in terms; for the inevitable effect of the Beautiful is freedom from passions. No less self-contradictory is the notion of a fine instructive (didactic) or improving (moral) art, for nothing is more at variance with the concept of Beauty than that it should have a tendentious effect upon the character.<sup>43</sup>

Beauty, apparently, does not teach us or compel us. How then do we become more moral? The move towards Culture can only happen in individuals, yet it is not clear how the harmonization is to take place unless Culture in Schiller's sense has already been achieved. Once a whole culture becomes involved in beautiful appearance, it might plausibly be argued that anyone growing up under its influence will be moral. But how are we to reach Culture? If the transformation is to take place in individuals through culture (in the sense of fine arts as we think of them) I am tempted to laugh cynically with Alex, the hero-villain of A Clockwork Orange:

Civilized my syphilized yarbles.  
Music always sort of sharpened me up,  
O my brothers and made me feel like old Bog himself, ready to make with the old donner and

blitzen and have vecks and ptitsas creeching away in my ha ha ha power.<sup>44</sup>

For Alex the form and "lawfulness" of art express dominance, seduction and violence. Because Culture in Schiller's sense has not yet been attained, the art around Alex does not mold him towards moral freedom but towards lawless violence. Schiller claims that through art the sensual and rational impulses will be harmonized; however, in Alex the rational impulse imposes itself violently on the sensual and the sensual overwhelms the rational. The artificial world Burgess portrays may be full of illusion, yet it is not an expression of free choice made manifest in free play. The strict conformity to appearance drives Alex to desire to break free from lawful imprisonment to exercise his freedom in lawless violence. His violence, at least, is not illusory.

I have serious doubts about Schiller's claim that beauty leads to morality. Hitler and Stalin appointed ministers of culture, but that did not make them Cultured. Art, beauty and culture do not imply humanitarianism. Schiller has not adequately explained how Culture is to come about through the instrument of the conflict of sense and reason, yet his writing persuades us that it will. My fear is that Schiller's Aesthetic Education, for all its optimism and beauty, will distract us from our attention to morality itself. I would like to believe what Schiller claims but I have not yet seen justification.

When Socrates condemns art as imitation in the Republic he fears the political consequences of illusion. Not all art is illusory, for not all that is artfully made aims to deceive. But Socrates is aware that, because beauty is powerful, it can lead us astray. Schiller's description of the sensual and rational impulses in some ways resembles Socrates' tripartite soul in the Phaedrus. Schiller seems to ignore Socrates' image and its implications on his own theory. Certainly the sensual element and the rational element must work together when they perceive and pursue Beauty; however, in

the Phaedrus one is always conscious of the danger that Beauty will provoke one of the elements to thoughtless and destructive action. The experience of beauty may in fact unbalance us. It would be foolish to avoid beauty altogether on that account, but it must be approached with great caution.

What I miss in Schiller is a sense of reserve in the face of beauty. There are many kinds of illusion we can be drawn to and caught up in; we must be very sure what we mean by beautiful illusion if we are to pursue it. Having noted that the danger of art disharmonized mankind in the first place, Schiller would have done well to bear this danger more in mind when he sang the praise of "Higher Art."

### III

Nevertheless there is something deeply true in Schiller's assertion that "we are citizens of an age, as well as of a State."<sup>45</sup> The needs and tastes of our century cannot help but form our sense of the world, and we owe allegiance to our own time; it would be wrong to ignore its concerns whether they please us or not. Schiller's awareness of the historical nature of humanity gives him an understanding of beauty which will account for the history of art. Nothing in Kant's aesthetics can describe why each of the painters in "Les Phares" so emphatically creates a world of his own, governed by the age from which he emerges. Only with the advent of a sense of history and of the development of human consciousness within it can we account for changes in style, subject and emphasis.

Art seems to have the power to draw us into a world or age; we do not simply stand back and observe the form, or even simply feel the play of our faculties. We find ourselves faced with a new way of being in the world. Heidegger, upon being moved by a Van Gogh painting, comments that "in the vicinity of the work we [are] suddenly somewhere else than we usually tend to be."<sup>46</sup>

Let us consider for a moment several different works of art: Copland's

"Appalachian Spring," Munch's "The Cry," and Homer's Iliad. When we encounter each of these works, we experience the world in wholly different ways, all of which may seem true or real to us. The world of "Appalachian Spring" is hopeful, young, decidedly American and highly conscious of the natural world. Munch's "The Cry" (p. 1000, Key Monuments of the History of Art) calls forth an age-old despair, a sense of alienation from oneself and from the world. In Homer's Iliad a living, teeming, colorful picture of the world embraces the unity and blessedness of everything, in spite of the toil and pain without which that unity would not be possible.

Although each of these worlds becomes real for us, each corresponds to a particular time or age, and each comes out of the sense of the world and the concerns that pervaded that age. Copland was an American in a time when the American dream seemed possible; Munch was a product of European malaise brought on by industrialization and the shadow of the world wars. In Homer's time the gods seemed active in the world, forming and ordering it. None of this means that I must know the history behind the work to be drawn into a world, but it does determine how those worlds are historical.

How is it possible for a work of art to draw us into a world? Heidegger speaks of art as drawing us into a world, and although he means by "world" something more ontological than I have in mind in this discussion of aesthetics, we can learn much from his thoughts on the matter. Heidegger has his own interpretation of Kantian "disinterestedness." While for Kant disinterestedness allows for a purely free judgment about an object, Heidegger takes it to be the most pathetic experience we can have of an object: "precisely by means of the 'devoid of interest' the essential relation to the object itself comes into play."<sup>47</sup> We see that while in Kant the beauty in a work of art happens within the free play of the subject, for Heidegger it occurs in the relationship of the receptive subject to the work of art.

An experience of beauty requires that

I approach the work without imposing any of my own needs, desires or expectations upon it. Only then will it present itself to me fully. Heidegger quite literally intends to say that my manner of approaching the beings of the world alters their manner of being present in the world for me. The work has an integrity of its own which I must not violate if I wish to experience it. For Kant the importance of disinterestedness arises not from a need to experience the work honestly, but from the necessity that our judgment be free. Heidegger emphasizes that disinterestedness is not apathy or indifference, but a bearing towards things. When I face works of art I must take an interest in them for what they are in themselves; I must allow them to move me.

Heidegger follows Plato in believing that the beautiful is that which shines forth most and which is most lovable. He too believes that beauty can lead the observer to truth as in the Phaedrus; or rather, Heidegger believes that beauty, in its shining, is a manifestation of truth and is not simply an appearance: "Beauty is one way in which truth occurs as unconcealedness."<sup>48</sup> While for Plato the realm of what truly is keeps its distance from the realm in which beauty appears in art, Heidegger believes that art tells the truth. Plato is unwilling to claim that beauty can give birth to anything but "wisdom". Yet when I am faced with a work of art I sometimes want to claim that it tells a kind of truth about the world, even though the characters may not be real. No one ever spoke as Phèdre speaks, and few people would ever be faced with the conflicts she faces, yet there is something true about how we see the world through the work. Her raw emotion is true to life, whether or not we will ever experience it in such an undiluted manner. Socrates does not permit this kind of interpretation of art, for if a thing is not a real table or an ideal table, it is less than either of them. Heidegger claims that art is not less than reality, but more. Art brings out the reality of real things by telling a kind of truth about them.

Philosophy, in the course of its history, has obscured the reality of things by imposing various interpretations upon them. Things have been thought of as made up of subject and accident, of the unity of the manifold of sensation, and as matter and form. Heidegger claims that none of these ways of speaking about a thing allows it to be what it is in itself. He calls these theories "thing concepts," and points out that our relationship to things may more properly belong to the realm of feeling than ratiocination:

Perhaps however what we call feeling or mood . . . is more reasonable . . . that is, more intelligently perceptive... because it was more open to Being than all that reason which, having meanwhile become ratio, was misinterpreted as being rational.<sup>49</sup>

Because Kant arose out of and continued the tradition of thinking of things through conceptual machinery rather than allowing them to move us, Kant is in a sense responsible for the rarity of our experience of beauty. Heidegger claims that the prevailing thing-concept of informed matter arises from our sense that all things either have a use for us or seem to have one. Matter is always formed by the end or telos we find for it. Heidegger would claim that all Kant's talk of purposiveness indicates Kant's inability to think of things of the world without simultaneously referring to their use (whether actual or apparent). Even in admitting to the non-conceptual element in a judgment of beauty, Kant must resort to conceptualization: beauty becomes an "indeterminant concept."

Thus we most often approach things as use-objects or equipment. To experience a thing as it really is we must prevent ourselves from imposing anything on it, we must allow what is in the thing to show itself. Here is how Heidegger describes what we perceive when we allow a Van Gogh painting of peasant shoes to "speak":

From the dark opening of the worn insides of the shoes the toilsome tread of the worker stares forth

... In the shoes vibrates the silent call of the earth, its quiet gift of the ripening grain and its unexplained selfrefusal in the fallow desolation of the wintry field... This equipment belongs to the earth and is protected in the world of the peasant woman.<sup>50</sup>

Heidegger's feeling description of an experience of the Van Gogh painting captures more of our sense of the world of the painting than Kant's free play does. The painting makes us more conscious of the life behind the shoes than of the forms involved in their portrayal. The shoes seemed at first to be mere equipment, but, because of their reliable usefulness, they give the peasant woman a secure world in which she can reap the mysterious benefits of the earth. Heidegger sees the being of things as a conflict of earth and world rather than of form and matter or sensation and reason. The shoes are part of the peasant woman's world and they bring her into contact with the earth. The work of art has its quality as a work because in it the conflict of the earth and world is at work. This conflict works on us, the viewers, in our own world. Art is, for Heidegger, "the truth of beings setting itself to work."<sup>51</sup> Art does not testify to our freedom or lead us to morality, it sets up a world through the work it performs on us.

In depicting a world the work gives birth to a world. Heidegger does not mean that it creates an atmosphere but that it literally creates a new world. The beings of the world take on a new being because of the power of art. In our ordinary transaction with things, we use them and use them up. We use bricks to make a house, leather to make shoes. We live in a world of useful things. However in the creation of a work of art, the material does not disappear in usefulness, but rather becomes more noticeable. When we see a stone sculpture, the stone suddenly becomes remarkable and beautiful, unlike the brick of the house. In a poem words are not simply useful for getting something done; we dwell on them and enjoy

them for their sound and new meaning. After reading "Les Phares" a beacon is something new for us.

While Schiller claims that "the real artistic secret of the master consists in his annihilating the material by means of the form,"<sup>52</sup> Heidegger insists that in the work of art the material first ceases to be an object to be worked on and becomes something which acts on its own. I think Heidegger is quite right about this; in the tubes, Monet's paints are merely red and green; once they are brought into conflict with one another in the painting, they come into their own and come alive. We often speak of a lyric melody, as if the very tones could sing, and we are first conscious of the beauty of wood or metal when they have become part of an icon or statue rather than of a table or car.<sup>53</sup> A good artist does not impose anything upon the material but rather works with the material to find the form within it. As Aristotle or Michelangelo would agree, the sculptor finds the statue in the stone.

Art does not allow us to take its subject matter or material for granted. The stone is no longer mere stone, and the form of the man is not simply "some man." Things which seem familiar and ordinary are revealed by art to be extra-ordinary. Heidegger describes our sense that when we look at a work of art we are seeing what it depicts for the very first time. Rodin's sculpture of "La Belle Héaulmière" (p. 146, The Visual Arts as Human Experience) makes us see the degradation and despair of an old woman as if we had never seen it before. Josef Albers' "Study for an Early Diary" (plate 52) gives us the sense that that particular blue is for the first time remarkable and lovely. Things in the world are no longer mere things, but entities with a being that has nothing to do with their usefulness or purpose for us.

This sense that the work of art gives us that things have an integrity and being of their own Heidegger calls "self-subsistence." The unity we find in a work of art arises from the conflict of world and earth enacted in it. Thus our sense

of the thing as an entity in itself arises from the conflict of world and earth. In the work of art "that which is as a whole--world and earth in their counterplay--attains to unconcealedness."<sup>54</sup> The interplay which for Kant resided in the play of the faculties, for Heidegger arises in our consciousness of the primal conflict of world and earth. When Heidegger speaks of "unconcealedness," he is thinking of the Greek word for truth, aletheia. The etymology of the word (a-lanthano) hints that truth is the un-hidden and un-forgotten. However, just as for Heraclitus Nature likes to hide, so for Heidegger the unhidden truth about things is that they protect their being by hiding it:

Truth is un-truth, insofar as there belongs to it the reservoir of the not-yet-uncovered... In unconcealedness, as truth, there occurs also the other "un-" of a double restraint or refusal. Truth occurs as such in the opposition of clearing and double concealing.<sup>55</sup>

We see this opposition of clearing and concealing in the conflict of world and earth, so that Truth happens in the conflict between the reticent nature of things and their manner of appearing in the world. The hidden character of things in part arises from our habit of imposing use and intellectual constructs upon them; it is not as though we could impose our will and thought on things forever without causing them in some way to turn their backs on us. The unconcealed character of things is the being they have in spite of or because of our approach to them. These two aspects, earth and world, are different, but are never separated and cannot be resolved.

Heidegger's account of art and our world may sound esoteric, but I think he is describing something common to our experience. I will offer several simple examples of what he means. In the picture of David Smith's three abstract sculptures (p. 697, Janson, History of Art), the conflict of world and earth appears in the stark contrast between the bold, worldly

forms in steel, and the secretive, ancient and earthly forms of the branching tree and the mountains in the distance. A sculpture is always influenced by its setting, which is why a traveling exhibition of sculpture is a contradiction in terms: the same sculpture becomes a new sculpture in every new setting. The setting is part of the sculpture. In the same way a piece of architecture is altered by the city-scape which grows up around it. When Santa Fe was no more than a settlement, the Sanctuario stood out for miles as a work looming towards heaven. Now it huddles privately amid the buildings towering above it. In some way it is a different building now, for while it once proclaimed man's desire to pray to God, it now reproaches us for our pride and forgetfulness. These examples show how the conflict Heidegger describes can arise in the world into which the work of art enters.

However this tension arises within the work itself as well. Smith's sculptures deny gravity and our expectations. They are nothing like natural forms, or the forms we are used to seeing in useful steel structures. They seem top-heavy and unlikely; they do not look like they should balance. The world the sculpture sets up counters the earthly setting in which we find it. Smith plays with our expectations of heavy metal and gravity and thus sets our world on edge. Buckminster Fuller often plays with this tension between the "stuff" he works with and the natural laws to which it must adhere. The metal of his architecture pulls and pushes into a particular configuration. The result is a structure which bears itself up because of the conflict. Fuller calls this conflict "tensegrity," for the tension brings about the integrity or unity of the form (see p. 486, History of Modern Art).

If we return to Monet's "Rouen Cathedral" we find this tension in the difference between the atmosphere Monet creates with his play on light and color, and what we know to be the solid, touchable "stuff" of the cathedral and paints. In the Rodin the conflict arises between the openly sagging dejection of

the woman's world and the smooth, sheltered beauty of the reserved bronze from which she emerges. Although we can sometimes point out the worldly and earthly aspects of the work, the two aspects are not like parts which can be separated and scrutinized one at a time. One arises out of or in the presence of the other.

This interplay illuminates everything which the art work touches on: the material, the form, the subject of the work, and the things in the world which the work depicts. The work sheds light on the things of the world: "this shining, joined in the work, is the beautiful."<sup>56</sup> Like Plato, Heidegger thinks of beauty as a brief illumination of truth. For Plato, beauty is like the sun and the Good except that we receive only brilliant flashes of it in a kind of flashback or insight. Heidegger also thinks of our experience of beauty as a kind of insight except that, for him, the true is not simply reflected in the beautiful; it actually comes into being and manifests itself in the beautiful.

Thus the making of art is "determined and pervaded by the nature of creation."<sup>57</sup> The poet's action is called "creative" not by analogy with God's act, but as synonymous with it. Art does not imitate, or invite free play; it evokes: "to create is to cause something to emerge as a thing that has been brought forth."<sup>58</sup> Truth does not exist somewhere removed from the conflict of world and earth; it occurs in that conflict. The appearance of truth is for Heidegger, as for Hegel, historical. For Plato, it would make no sense to think of the artist as creative, for everything which "is" in the fullest sense has always been, beyond time and human life. Once truth is seen as historical and the being which is most fully being resides in the world of knowing men, human creativity makes sense.

In his commentary on Plato's *Republic*, Heidegger points out that for Plato art stands far removed from truth. Art can only capture a single angle or "look" of a thing. In response Heidegger offers Erasmus' characterization of Albrecht Durer:

By showing a particular thing from any given angle, he, Durer the painter, brings to the fore not only one single isolated view which offers itself to the eye...

Heidegger then elaborates on this thought:

By showing any given individual thing as this particular thing, in its singularity, he makes Being itself visible: in a particular hare, the Being of the hare; in a particular animal, the animality.<sup>59</sup>

Heidegger quite literally thinks of art as a "drawing" out from nature of the truth of objects. The act of drawing creates exactly the sort of conflict he has in mind between world and earth. The outline of the form along with the shadings which give it depth, fight with the negative space, the blankness of the paper which conceals the being of the thing the artist draws out. The artist captures the essential conflict between the form of a thing in the world and the earth from which it takes its context. The form is defined by everything which it is not (see, for example, Durer's self-portrait, p. 747, *Key Monuments of the History of Art*). The drawing-out which the artist performs "does not let the opponents break apart; it brings the opposition of measure and boundary into their common outline."<sup>60</sup> Heidegger gives form as much or more emphasis than Kant does, for the look of the thing, its figure, shape, or Gestalt is the manifestation of the strife between world and earth.

Because the conflict of world and earth arises both in the work of art and in our perception of it, it is essential to the work of art that we, as viewers, be conscious of it as a work and not as a use-object. When we see the art as art, we are drawn into the world of the work. At the same time, our response to the work draws the world depicted into our own world. We no longer see an old woman as an old woman once we have been drawn into the world of "La Belle Héaulmière." However we do not find the woman extraordinary until we have seen her as extraordinary in a work of art. Part of

the beauty of an object of art lies in our awareness that it is meant to be artificial. Plastic flowers are meant to deceive us; their purpose is a pleasant atmosphere. When we discover that they are plastic, they become repulsive. Japanese silk flowers, on the other hand, are even more remarkable and lovely once we discover that they are man-made, for they are not meant to trick us but to delight us with their delicate perfection.

Art transports us from the realm of the ordinary because "the work casts before itself the eventful fact that the work is as this work."<sup>61</sup> The work of art does not allow us to ignore its being, as we usually do with the things in the world: "... and what is more commonplace than this, that a being is? In a work, by contrast, this fact, that it is as a work, is just what is unusual."<sup>62</sup>

Our response to each work of art will be different, and the appropriate response to a work preserves it. For example, for a religious work of art to maintain its being as religious, I must let it enter into my devotional life. Heidegger claims that if I cannot pray in a temple, it is no longer the work of art which it was for the Greeks. Once I impose some other response upon the work I am depriving it of its work-being, for it no longer works on me in its full integrity. The work transports us into a world newly opened up to us; we are displaced, or transported out of the realm of the ordinary:

To submit to this displacement means: to transform our accustomed ties to the world and earth and henceforth to restrain all usual doing and prizing, knowing and looking, in order to stay within the truth that is happening in the work... This letting the work be a work we call the preserving of the work.<sup>63</sup>

Thus the being of the work as work depends as much upon my preserving it as it does on the original creation of the work. A Michelangelo tomb is only a tomb if it has bones in it; a Vermeer ought properly to adorn the wall of a house.

The viewer creates the work by responding appropriately to it so that the world opened up by the work becomes part of the world of the viewer. The artwork works on the viewer and his world, while the viewer sets the work at work in the world.

The distinction between creator, artwork and observer is lost in Heidegger, for all merge in the worlding of the world which the art creates. When a work of art comes into the world, it offers the possibility of a new and different world. Because human being is historical, art acts as a sort of prophetic projection or announcement to man of his own possibilities. Man's response to the work creates a new world which itself draws man into a new state of being, just as the statue becomes a new work when placed in a new setting.

Art is an *arche*; it is a source and beginning of worlds and ways of being in the world. The source of the work of art is the art already at work in the world; seeing the David Smith statues set against the New England hillside may set me to work to recreate the world I see when David Smith's world conflicts with his earth. Each work evokes a new world, which in turn enters into the conflict of earth and world to produce a new work, from which another world emerges. Art throws man into a new state of being; Heidegger sees in art the power to draw a thing forward into its full actuality, somewhat as Aristotle's final or formal cause moves the things of the world. Yet Heidegger's history seems not to have a final end (as Hegel's does), for every world consists in a conflict which can never be resolved, and which causes a new world. It will always produce new art works, new drawings. We will never be trapped, like Kant or Hegel, in a world of our own making:

Modern subjectivism... immediately interprets creation, taking it as the self-sovereign subject's performance of genius... But [poetic projection] never comes from Nothing in that what is projected by it is only the withheld vocation of the

historical being of man itself.<sup>64</sup>

Although man is creative for Heidegger, it is equally true to say that art itself is creative. Heidegger, like Schiller, recognizes that man both creates and is created by his culture. An artist can only draw upon the world before him to create his art; history consists of his successive responses to the worlds created by art. For Kant, the power of genius is far more mysterious and subjective than Heidegger's creativity, for we do not know its source. The artist

tries, by means of imagination, which emulates the play of reason in its quest after a maximum, to go beyond the limits of experience and to present [rational ideas] to sense with a completeness of which there is no example in nature.<sup>65</sup>

Whereas Kant's genius spontaneously attempts internally to go beyond what the world offers to him, Heidegger's poet manifests externally, in his work and being, an attempt to join in with the being of what appears through the agency of art.

Because Heidegger's poet has a source outside himself, one cannot escape the question: whence comes the eternally generative power of this source? Aristotle's answer to this question is "God," the prime mover and eternal nous. Heidegger evades the question by emphasizing the historical nature of the being of things and of art. There will always be things and art to elicit a response in the poet (much as there will always be fathers to generate sons in Aristotle). Yet Heidegger claims that "language speaks" and that somehow the poet listens to the silence of being. At the risk of sounding Socratic I must ask, if "language" always speaks to the poet throughout the changeable ages, must it not be one thing? Heidegger must believe that there is a sense in which the fullest being of things rests in language. Heidegger's poet listens to this language in the same way that Plato's demiurge looks to the shining of the forms. Heidegger cannot escape the implication that there exists something divine which calls upon the poet as the

prophet who can lead the world towards Being. This thing, Art itself perhaps, brings us full circle, for we are once again claiming with Plato that Being (or Beauty, Truth, Art) is not in the subject but in something towards which the poet looks. Heidegger must presuppose something of a religious inclination in his reader to be convincing.

The religious tenor of his writing provokes an objection similar to the one I raised against Schiller. Heidegger has his own peculiar language and style, and the greatest difficulty in writing about him is avoiding falling into his own language. Heidegger wants to avoid using ordinary speech, for ordinary speech cannot draw us out of the world of use-objects in which we are immersed. His work cannot be convincing dialectically because to use logic and argumentation would be to rely upon the sort of conceptual framework Heidegger wants us to abandon. Heidegger must let the language he has created persuade us. However Heidegger's position is difficult, for he is not a poet himself, but the prophet pointing to the saving power of poetry. His writing is not poetry, and it cannot be philosophy in the sense of post-Kantian conceptualization. Heidegger's difficult style, which is so self-conscious as to become at times strained and artificial, results from his attempt to write in a language which cannot be treated as mere equipment. It must be reflected upon because it is extraordinary.

Consequently Heidegger cannot prove to me that Truth is historical and that reality happens in the art work. He must rely on wordplay, etymologies and apt expressions. If I am convinced by the essay, it is because it "seems right to me" and describes well my sense that art draws me into a world, a notion which Kant neglects. I am not sure whether his claim that the only true mode of speech left to us is poetry is right, but I am sometimes inclined to think that the images in Plato and Aristotle will move me in the world long after I have forgotten the arguments. For me the greatest appeal in Heidegger lies not in a powerful argument but in the

very honest complexity and confusion in his notion of Art. I imagine that he is aware of the circularity of his argument. Beauty is not something which can be analyzed, conceptualized and packed away. With beauty, as with life, the questioning is all. Art has some power over the viewer and the creator which, by its very nature, cannot be fully understood, but which can create new worlds for us. Heidegger's thought seems essentially optimistic to me: the truth can be right before us if we only open ourselves to it. It is in some ways a return to the stance of pre-Cartesian thinkers, for whom epistemology was not an issue because there was no unbridgeable gap between us and the thing-in-itself. We can know as much of the truth as we allow ourselves to perceive.

Heidegger is far more sensitive to the power and mystery of beauty than Kant is. However, there is at least one glaring problem in Heidegger's account of the beauty in art. If we think of art historically as contextual form (such that the being of things depends on their surroundings), we are forced to say that once the surroundings change the art work is no longer at work as a piece of art. Heidegger claims that once the world of a work of art has passed we can no longer experience that work; it has become an art object.

Certainly it is true that the world of the temple is gone. I cannot pray in it, I cannot see it as the appearance of the gods. Nonetheless I would claim that it is still at work in the world. It stands against the new world and works on me in a new way. When I look up at the vault of a cathedral, that experience conflicts with the experience I recall of how the world appears when I look up in the streets of New York and see skyscrapers reaching for the sky. My experience of the cathedral consists in a different conflict of world and earth than that which medieval man experienced. For him the cathedral stood against the boundless horizon and the fields worked by the peasants. For me it stands as the earth against which the world of modern activity

finds its context. When I walk in Paris and see the towers of Notre Dame set against the straight bold lines of Montparnasse, a conflict comes alive for me and I see each of the buildings anew. The past world is the stuff out of which modern man is formed. We are as much made of our heritage as we are of flesh and bone, and in some ways that past is as unresponsive and unyielding as the hills of New England.

It seems to me that Heidegger does not take our confrontation with works of art which are not contemporary seriously enough. A work may in fact come into full play long after it was created, as with Bach, Baudelaire, and Heidegger's own favorite poet, Holderlin. If anything is peculiarly true of us moderns, it is that we cannot appreciate the art of our own time.

Perhaps it is this observation which prompted Heidegger to suppose that works of art can become mere art objects. Because the art work consists in conflict, perhaps conflict must enter into our preservation of it. To preserve a Vermeer as a Vermeer, the middle-class Dutchman lived with the painting in his house. It was not a museum piece. Perhaps to preserve a piece of modern art I must reject it. The projective power of modern art may lie in the sense that I have that it conflicts with my understanding of the world. Once the work of Schönberg or Pollock has become merely palatable it is no longer projecting us beyond what we are. The modern aesthete who can complacently claim to enjoy and understand the music of his time may in fact be simply enjoying his cultural achievement ("broadening one's mind") rather than being provoked by a radical, extraordinary work which originates a new world.

Certainly we often call modern works "ahead of their time," which suggests that we can only enjoy them later, once they no longer conflict with the world in which we live. However, for Heidegger, the work consists in that conflict, and only pretentiousness leads us to claim that we appreciate art which is dead, because the primal conflict in which it consists no

longer exists. Part of me agrees that Notre Dame may be lost to a busload of camera-clicking tourists (me included), but another part of me knows that the cathedral still shapes the world of Paris for those who live there.

Heidegger's concern for conflict explains why we have so much difficulty experiencing the art of the recent past. It has been digested and accepted and has lost much of its original sheen. Once it is older we can once again face it as something venerable and extraordinary. When it was first made, it was startling and remarkable. But ten or twenty years after it was made it stands little chance of exciting much interest. However, none of these observations are universal, for Shakespeare has always been appreciated while Bach was only tepidly received in his own time, and Andy Warhol, I suspect, will go down in art history as a mere novelty.

The question we are now left with is: in what sense was and is the art work "created" if it continues working even after the "original" conflict which the poet drew out has been left behind? The work has some power not invested in it by its creator. If the cathedral is as much the context for my experience of Paris as the hills are for my experience of Smith's sculptures, what sort of thing is "earth"? It has both a created and an elemental being. Not only can we not distinguish between the work, artist and viewer, we cannot finally distinguish the created from the natural. World and earth, although they are wonderfully apt preliminary distinctions, prove finally to blend somewhat. Art seems to be more complex than even Heidegger had imagined.

#### Conclusion

Thus, in the presence of that mysterious pleasure of which I am speaking, the philosopher, justly concerned with giving it a categorical place, a universal meaning, and intelligible function; fascinated by, yet curious about the combination here of sensuality,

fecundity, and an energy quite comparable to that which springs from love; unable, in this new object of his attention, to separate necessity from the arbitrary, contemplation from action, matter from mind--the philosopher, I say, kept trying to apply his usual methods of reduction by exhaustion and progressive division to this monster of the Fable of Intellect, this sphinx or griffin, siren or centaur, in which sensation, dream, instinct, reflection, rhythm, and excess are as closely intermingled as chemical elements in living bodies; this strange thing which nature sometimes offers us, but as though by chance, and which at other times is formed, at the cost of immense efforts, by man, who puts into it every bit of his mind, time, determination, in short, his life. Paul Valéry, "Aesthetics"<sup>66</sup>

It seems appropriate to end this paper with the words of the poet Valéry reflecting on the whole aesthetic question. With his precisely aimed barbs of humor and irony, he laughs at us for the absurdity of our efforts. Kant, Schiller and Heidegger all attempt to describe beauty as a monster with a dual nature, but Valéry suggests that art is too protean and complex for our natural process of intellectual division to conquer. The elements entering into our experience of beauty are many and are intangible: they join together into complex crystalline structures which dissolve or recombine the moment we scrutinize them. Although our whole investigation is somewhat ludicrous, nevertheless it did bear some fruit.

Beauty seems to teach us something about ourselves as humans. No other animals indulge in free play, none discover their own freedom from necessity or the boundless character of their thought. None grope beyond their individuality to find a sense of themselves in the universal whole of things. Certainly none create a world for themselves. If some of the details of our studies have jangled, if some have conflicted and cancelled, we

must not dismiss our search as useless but acknowledge the complexity of our subject. For Valéry suggests, art is probably more organic than we would like to admit. We would like to pin art and beauty down, to measure them and move on to other things, but like the electron, our own words, and life itself it eludes us.

Valéry claims that man puts every bit of himself into art; we might recall Schiller's conviction that the greatest piece of art is the art of living. For Kant as well, beauty, as the symbol of morality, seems instrumental in the very living of life. Certainly, if art and our sense of life are intimately bound, man ought to take an interest in aesthetics. Why should the very seed of life elude us?

Heidegger, Valéry and Kant all suggest that art is essentially poetic, since they place poetry and language above the other arts. Art seems in some way linked to language, or at least to our attempts to symbolize, communicate and transform our internal private sense of being into something more external and public, so that we and our fellow men can examine and enjoy it more readily. Yet the language we ordinarily use (the language of grammar and dialectic) proves ironically to be a clumsy instrument for describing what beauty is. Is it a noun, removed and far away from us, or is it a verb depicting our own subjective activity? Perhaps it is an adjective, but to what shall we attach it? To my faculties, or to some object outside of me, or to the relationship of subject to object? Or is it an adverb describing the nature of the motion of my faculties? Does the adverb perhaps describe the work of the object on me, or of me on the object?

The answer to these questions is probably that all have some truth. Poetry does not demand logical exclusion, for as Valéry points out, "when poets repair to the enchanted forest of Language it is with the express purpose of getting lost."<sup>67</sup> I am reminded of the Baudelaire poem "Correspondances:"

La Nature est un temple où de vivants  
piliers  
Laissent parfois sortir de confuses

paroles;

L'homme y passe à travers des forêts  
de symboles  
Qui l'observent avec des regards  
familiers.<sup>68</sup>

The poetic is so difficult to analyse or describe precisely because what art itself attempts to capture is so complex: the very forest of life and nature itself. If we have had trouble defining artistic beauty, neither can we define life: "some men have tried to define life; their efforts have always been rather futile, but life is there just the same."<sup>69</sup> Each artist attempts in his way to re-evolve the world as it seems to him; art does not talk about things, it presents them before us as experience. To talk about art is in some way beside the point. Art does not happen in analysis, but in experience, in feeling and sensation. Most artists would rather let their works speak for themselves, as if the works had a kind of vitality separate from that of their authors, and a language of their own.

We humans live in a historical world that changes constantly; the artist finds new aspects of life to respond to, or he responds to those which have troubled or inspired man as a human for centuries. There will always be love poems, but only in our own century can an artist address the insanity of a race to self-annihilation. The word "life" takes on a new meaning at every moment, and yet the faculties with which we feel it we share with all humankind. In general, art seems to have the character that we as moderns can look back to appreciate and experience the art of our predecessors, but one cannot imagine Homer appreciating Camus. Art is as alive and changing as the human condition.

Being alive means feeling, and as Wallace Stevens comments, "it is quite possible to have a feeling about the world which creates a need that nothing satisfies except poetry."<sup>70</sup> Stevens is not alone in this sentiment; Valéry too felt that some things we experience ask to be depicted in art. Art does not simply express, for ordinary words can express things. It is a way of making sense of

living. The artist does not always begin a work with a clear end in view, a message to be expressed. Often the very making of the thing is a way of coming to an understanding of the world, or at least of sensing the world more fully. The poet's concern may be to communicate with himself. If it happens that we, his human audience, can experience in his art something of what he felt in making it, so much the better. Rilke advises the young poet to search within himself, within his own feelings, memories and desires. The test of the worth of a poet's verse must be his own experience of life, not the opinion of others.

In the Republic, Plato says that the Good is the source of all things right and beautiful, universally for all beings.<sup>71</sup> Many things can be measured, analyzed and discussed, but at least part of the Good in the life of all beings is not simply orthos. This other part may not always be perfect, correct or right, but it is beautiful. Ordinary speech cannot describe this aspect of life, for it does not belong to the realm of the philosopher, but to that of the poet. To ignore the kalon would be to be only half alive.

To claim that what the poet depicts in his beautiful art has its source in the good may seem perverse. Baudelaire's poems are flowers arising from evil. Munch's "The Cry" wrenches us with the agony of isolation. How can these beautiful depictions be children of the Good? Perhaps what art depicts is not the Good itself, but the route to the Good. The world Munch depicts is not beautiful, but his art is; when we feel that ugly world vividly through the painting, we pronounce the artwork to be beautiful. The beauty in the painting arises from its ability to make us feel. Baudelaire attempts to shock his audience out of the "ennui" which gnaws at life and dulls its brilliance. Munch's painting prevents us from becoming numb to the world and from ceasing to live because we can no longer feel. The alienation we sense in "The Cry" seems an expression of the despair Munch feels in a world where humans turn their backs on one another's feeling.

If we turn our backs on feeling, if we deny our sensual nature, we are not fully human. Sensuality may lead to excess, ugliness and pain, but it also brings with it wonder, delight and pleasure. The good beauty can lead us to seem to be an enlivened sense of being, a more alert perception of the world and a greater sensitivity to the feeling of those who surround us. The heavens proclaim the glory of God; each moment of existence must be savored even in its ugliness, for unless we feel this world we are not fully alive. The poet might respond to Socrates, you are blasphemous, for you belittle the grace that God gave you in simply letting you live in this world in this form, whatever its limitations.

It seems to me that the task of the modern artist is enormous. We have so alienated ourselves from our world that we doubt our very kinship with it. The knower (with whom we most identify ourselves) can no longer reach the sensual world; our souls are not made of the same stuff as the cosmos. How can we feel at home? Where is our place? Is my soul, like Baudelaire's, a tomb?:

--Mon âme est un tombeau que,  
mauvais cénobite;  
Depuis l'éternité je parcours et  
j'habite;  
Rien n'embellit les murs de ce  
cloître odieux.<sup>72</sup>

Are we trapped in a mausoleum of life, no longer able to live and feel?

If feeling means feeling the agony of Cézanne, Van Gogh, Munch, do we want this feeling? They were more vulnerable to life than most of us; it is the burden of the genius to have his senses heightened at the expense of his protective skin. I often think that in this, at least, Heidegger was right: without conflict, struggle, and probably pain, there would be no art, no beauty, and no truth about life in this world. How can we bear to be in such a world? But how can we dare to claim that it should be otherwise? Life is what we are given. We may choose to try to change its quality, to annihilate what is ugly or evil in it, or simply to

come to terms with it, but there will always remain the astounding fact that it is ours for no other reason than that we should live.

It seems to me that beautiful art moves us because it struggles with the irrational fact that we exist, which fact is not a mere object of knowledge but life itself. We do not know life, we live it; art helps us work through this mystery, play with it, delight, despair and puzzle over it. Art is above all else an invitation to live and make an art of living. Although beauty may overwhelm us, daze us with its genius or estrange us with its power, it will always awaken in us a sense that, at least for the moment we experienced it, we were facing life. Beautiful art enhances our sense of life.

Life turns out not to be subjective or objective, rational or irrational, beautiful or ugly, but all of these things in a kaleidoscope of forms of which we are only a member. Seeing the beauty in life arise out of its contradictory and confusing nature is the end of art. Auden's tribute to Yeats ends with a summons to the poet:

Follow, poet, follow right  
To the bottom of the night,  
With your unconstraining voice  
Still persuade us to rejoice;

With the farming of a verse  
Make a vineyard of a curse,  
Sing of human unsuccess  
In a rapture of distress;

Stop this day and night with me and you shall possess the origin of all poems,  
You shall possess the good of the earth and sun . . . there are millions of suns left,  
You shall no longer take things at second or third hand . . . nor look through the  
eyes of the dead . . . nor feed on the spectres in books,  
You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take things from me,  
You shall listen to all sides and filter them from yourself.<sup>74</sup>

In the deserts of the heart  
Let the healing fountain start,  
In the prison of his days  
Teach the free man how to praise.<sup>73</sup>

Each poet inhabits a different world, yet we all share the world in common. The poet must teach us how to praise life, and the source of life, even in the face of its incomprehensibility. Like Adam and Eve exiled from the Garden we must sweat over the soil of evil to reap the fruit of suffering. Only the free man can praise, the man who has risen above the inclination to numb his pain, who rather works upon it so that, by freely embracing and cultivating it, he is no longer imprisoned in life, but living. No animal other than man can remark upon his being in the world and rejoice in it.

Art, like man's very being in the world, is extraordinary. It is essential to art that we know it to be gratuitous, because life itself is a gift of grace. Art jolts us from our complacency and ennui and gives us a sense that if art can be a conscious blending of chance and necessity, whim and choice, so also can life be. The poet invites us to make our lives into a poem, or at least to join into life, like a Greek chorus which is conscious of the play as a play, yet which joins in and reflects on its action.

However, I may be drawing upon myself my own criticism of Schiller and Heidegger. Allow me to let a poet speak as a poet:



Footnotes

1. Plato, Republic, trans. by A. Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1968), 360e.
2. This and all quotations from the Symposium and Phaedrus are taken from Plato: The Collected Dialogues, ed. by E. Hamilton (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973). The passage cited is 202e. See also 205c.
3. Symposium, 203d.
4. Phaedrus, 250d.
5. See Phaedrus, 264c and 271b.
6. Ibid., 254b.
7. Kant, Immanuel, Critique of Judgment, trans. by J.H. Bernard (New York: Macmillan, 1951), p.158.
8. Ibid., p.66.
9. Valéry, Paul, "Aesthetics," trans. by R. Manheim in Aesthetics, ed. by R. Manheim (New York: Random House, 1956), p.58.
10. Weismann, Donald, The Visual Arts as Human Experience, (Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1975).
11. Judgment, p.56.
12. Ibid., p.51
13. Ibid., p.138.
14. Ibid., p.137.
15. Hume, David, "Of the Standard of Taste," in Of the Standard of Taste, ed. by J. Lenz, (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1980), p.17.
16. Ibid., p.20.
17. Judgment, p.39.
18. Ibid., p.129.
19. Kant, Immanuel, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, trans. by H.J. Paton (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 70.
20. Judgment, p.83.
21. Ibid., p.85.
22. Ibid., p.95.
23. Ibid., p.88.
24. Ibid., p.105.
25. Ibid., p.141.
26. Ibid., p.202.
27. Schiller, Friedrich, On the Aesthetic Education of Man, trans. by R. Snell (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1980), p.27.
28. Ibid., p.40.
29. I learned this from Gisela Bern's essay "Schiller's Drama--Fulfillment of History and Philosophy in Poetry," in The St. John's Review, Summer 1982. See p.23.
30. Aesthetic Education, p.52. I have altered Snell's translation to read "in illusion" since Schiller uses "Tauschung" consistently to mean "illusion or appearance."
31. Ibid., pp.51-52.
32. Ibid., p.55.
33. Ibid., p.71.
34. Ibid., p.74.
35. Ibid., p.80.
36. Ibid., p.122.
37. Ibid.
38. Baudelaire, Charles, Les Fleurs du Mal et Autres Poems (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1964), p.42.
39. Aesthetic Education, p.57.
40. Ibid., p.59.
41. Ibid., p.60.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid., pp.106-107.
44. Burgess, Anthony, A Clockwork Orange (New York: Random House, 1981), p.45.
45. Aesthetic Education, p.25.
46. Heidegger, Martin, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in Poetry, Language, Thought, trans. by A. Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p.35.
47. Heidegger, Martin, Nietzsche (Volume I: The Will to Power as Art), trans. D.F. Krell (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979), p.110.
48. "Origin," p.56.
49. Ibid., p.25.
50. Ibid., pp.33-34.
51. Ibid., p.36.
52. Aesthetic Education, p.106.
53. I would, however, claim that the wood can come to life in a lovingly crafted table which is so well made that it not only functions, but draws attention to its being a table because it so perfectly performs as a table.
54. "Origin," p.56.
55. Ibid., p.60.

56. Ibid., p.56.
57. Ibid., p.60.
58. Ibid.
59. Nietzsche, pp.186-187
60. "Origin," p.63.
61. Ibid., p.65.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid., p.76.
65. Ibid., p.158.
66. "Aesthetics," p.48.
67. Ibid.
68. Les Fleurs du Mal, p.39.
69. "Aesthetics," p.60.

70. Stevens, Wallace, Poems by Wallace Stevens, selected by S.F. Morse, (New York: Random House, 1959), pp.v-vi.
71. Republic, 517c.
72. Les Fleurs du Mal, p. 44.
73. Auden, W.H., Selected Poetry of W.H. Auden (New York: Random House, 1971), p.54.
74. Whitman, Walt, Leaves of Grass, ed. by M. Cowley (New York: Viking Press, 1969), p.26.

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## From Plato's *Phaedrus*

δικαιοσύνης μὲν οὖν  
καὶ σωφροσύνης καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα τίμια ψυχαῖς οὐκ ἔνεστι  
φέγγος οὐδὲν ἐν τοῖς τῆδε ὁμοιώμασιν, ἀλλὰ δι' ἀμυδρῶν  
ὀργάνων μόγισ αὐτῶν καὶ ὀλίγοι ἐπὶ τὰς εἰκόνας ἰόντες  
θεῶνται τὸ τοῦ εἰκασθέντος γένος· κάλλος δὲ τότε ἦν ἰδεῖν  
λαμπρόν, ὅτε σὺν εὐδαίμονι χορῷ μακαρίαν ὄψιν τε καὶ  
θέαν, ἐπόμμενοι μετὰ μὲν Διὸς ἡμεῖς, ἄλλοι δὲ μετ' ἄλλου  
θεῶν, εἰδόν τε καὶ ἐτελοῦντο τῶν τελετῶν ἢν θέμις λέγειν  
μακαριωτάτην, ἣν ὀργιάζομεν ὀλόκληροι μὲν αὐτοὶ ὄντες καὶ  
ἀπαθείς κακῶν ὅσα ἡμᾶς ἐν ὑστέρω χρόνῳ ὑπέμενευ, ὀλό-  
κληρα δὲ καὶ ἀπλᾶ καὶ ἀτρεμῆ καὶ εὐδαίμονα φάσματα  
μυούμενοί τε καὶ ἐποπτεύοντες ἐν ἀγῆ καθαρά, καθαροὶ  
ὄντες καὶ ἀσήμαντοι τούτου ὃ νῦν δὴ σῶμα περιφέροντες  
ὀνομάζομεν, ὁστρέου τρόπον δεδεσμευμένοι.

Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν μνήμη κεχαρίσθω, δι' ἣν πόθῳ τῶν τότε  
νῦν μακρότερα εἶρηται· περὶ δὲ κάλλους, ὥσπερ εἵπομεν,  
μετ' ἐκείνων τε ἔλαμπεν ὄν, δευρό τ' ἐλθόντες κατειλήφαμεν  
αὐτὸ διὰ τῆς ἐναργεστάτης αἰσθήσεως τῶν ἡμετέρων στίλβον  
ἐναργέστατα. ὄψις γὰρ ἡμῖν ὕψις τῶν διὰ τοῦ σώματος  
ἔρχεται αἰσθήσεων, ἣ φρόνησις οὐχ ὀραταί—δεινὸς γὰρ ἂν  
παρεῖχεν ἔρωτας, εἴ τι τοιοῦτον ἐαυτῆς ἐναργὲς εἰδῶλον  
παρεῖχeto εἰς ὄψιν ἰόν—καὶ τᾶλλα ὅσα ἐραστά· νῦν δὲ  
κάλλος μόνον ταύτην ἔσχε μοῖραν, ὥστ' ἐκφανέστατον εἶναι  
καὶ ἐρασμώτατον.

## Translation George McDowell

In our present state there is no splendor in the likenesses of justice and moderation and whatever else to souls is precious, although by means of imperfect organs and with difficulty, a few are able to discern in these likenesses some semblance of the originals. Beauty however, was radiant to behold when, in company with that fortunate choir, we followed Zeus and others followed other gods, and looked on a blessed sight and spectacle, and were initiated into that which is properly called the most divine of the mysteries. Fulfilled, we celebrated unaffected by the evils that awaited us in later days, and witnessed in brilliant light perfect, innocent, peaceful and sacred visions. We were as yet undefiled: free of the bodies in which we are now confined as are oysters in their shells.

Let these things then serve as a tribute to memory, on account of which I have spoken overlong in yearning for a distant past. Beauty, as we observed, did indeed shine brightly amidst those visions, and coming hither, we were again able to perceive her glistening splendor through the most distinct of our senses. But even though sight is the keenest of the body's senses, from it wisdom remains hidden; for how powerful would be the love inspired in us for wisdom, as well as for those other equally lovely ideas, if we but had clear images of them within our view. As it is, however, to beauty alone falls the ordination to be both the most visible and the most beloved.

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## Racine's *Phaedra*: Remembering Who We Are

Lisa Eckstrom

1092 Examinez ma vie, et songez  
qui je suis.

Misfortune in Racine's *Phaedra* comes not from inability to know who we are, but from inability to be who we are. *Phaedra* is a play full of myths and genealogies. We are told the stories of our forefathers, and apprehend our coming destruction, all the while clinging to the majesty of our history, for we are descended from the Gods. We are the Children of the Earth, and we are the Children of the Sun, the Children of Light and Purity.

We depend on our stories to know who we are, and to know what it is to be a man or a woman. If we are told false stories, we will see the world as it is not, and we may become lost. The glorious stories of the exploits of his father convince Hippolytus that he lives in a world in which men kill monsters: Hippolytus is destroyed. Oenone, the woman who has raised *Phaedra*, offers her stories of the gods:

1304 Les Dieux même, les Dieux, de  
l'Olympe habitants,  
Qui d'un bruit si terrible  
épouvantent les crimes,  
Ont brûlé quelquefois de feux  
illégitimes.

Oenone's interpretation is clear: Mortal, submit to a mortal fate. Oenone's role as story-teller will not end here: she will tell Theseus the deceptive stories that lead to Hippolytus' death.

All stories need not be deceptive, though stories that come from within are complex. In order to achieve a non-contradictory account of who we are, we often tell one story and ignore another. We concentrate on the story of

le sang fatale and ignore the story of Helios our grandsire; we refuse to admit both as co-existent. We must not forget that there are true stories as well as false even though the true stories may tell us conflicting things. The stories may be of things within us, true things, which are in conflict. *Phaedra* reminds Hippolytus:

598 Dans le fond de mon coeur vous ne  
pouviez pas lire.

Hippolytus, the lover of Purity, does not recognize *Phaedra* as a daughter of Purity. It is the other story that he remembers,

1151 Phèdre est d'un sang, Seigneur,  
vous le savez trop bien,  
De toutes ces horreurs plus rempli  
que le mien.

The story of *Phaedra* is not complete unless the story of le sang fatale is told as a part of her lineage from the Sun. This paper will trace the stories of the two major families in the play, the Children of the Sun, and the Children of the Earth. Since a Monster is portrayed as a member of one of these families, and since Monsters play significant roles in their histories, Monsters will be discussed as well. It will be necessary to explore the relationship of Oenone (and of *Théramène* briefly) to those whom they serve as false interpreters. Racine's account of who men and women are will be found not only in the stories he has the characters tell, but in their interpretations as well.

\* \* \* \* \*

### CHILDREN OF THE SUN

We first view *Phaedra* when she has rallied her strength in order to see and show herself before the Sun her

grandfather for the last time. The unrelenting brightness of the Sun, a symbol of life and purity, is exceedingly difficult to bear. As a child of the light, she has been instilled with a remarkable sense of innocence and guilt. She sees unhesitatingly: There is only black and white. Crime is crime; innocence is innocence. There are no ambiguities in her distinctions. Just as the light of the day allows nothing within its reach to remain hidden, so too the inherited light within *Phaedra* exposes the darkness of her incestuous love. She may have fallen; there may be no turning back; but she remembers the difference between innocence and sin. She sees no consolation in the fact that she has sinned in her heart only, and not in deed. She has sinned. She has blackened what once was all of light. She must exercise the only control she has: she must die.

Her first words

153 N'allons point plus avant.  
Demeurons, chère Oenone:  
Je ne me soutiens plus,  
ma force m'abandonne.  
Mes yeux sont éblouis du  
jour que je revoi,  
Et mes genoux tremblants  
se déroberent sous moi.  
Hélas!

re-echo *Théramène*'s description of *Phaedra* as a woman searching for death. *Phaedra* seeks rest. She seeks to be released from her torment, yet she places herself before the Sun. Why would Racine choose to introduce *Phaedra* imploring Helios rather than Death? The precedent of addressing Helios is set neither by Euripides, nor by Seneca. Placing herself before the Sun is the final act of exposure for *Phaedra*. By doing so, she acknowledges all that was once pure and majestic within her. She does so for the last time. She can no longer claim purity and majesty. The journey is difficult, for *Phaedra* will not be able to rest under the Sun's gaze as she would be able to rest in the oblivion of death. The Sun's rays compel her to acknowledge that she has betrayed the nobility that she claimed as a descendant of the Sun.

Hence, before the Sun, the trappings of earthly nobility seem especially ludicrous:

Que ces vains ornements, que ces  
voiles me pèsent!  
Quelle importune main, en formant  
tous ces noeuds,  
160 A pris soir sur mon front  
d'assembler mes cheveux?  
Tout m'afflige et me nuit, et  
conspire à me nuire.

The cares taken for her appearance are meager provisions against the horror that the Sun exposes.

Oenone mistakes her reaction:

165 Vous-même, rappelant votre force  
première;  
Vous vouliez vous montrer et  
revoir la lumière;  
Vous la voyez, Madame; et prête à  
vous cacher,  
Vous laissez le jour que vous  
veniez chercher?

*Phaedra* does not hate the day; she hates the blackness which the light of the Sun exposes. The horror of constantly having to confront herself as sinner, of never having some small clause or condition with which to excuse and hide herself, ravages and tortures a soul whose ancestry has imbued it with a signal sense of purity.

She calls out:

Noble et brillant auteur d'une  
triste famille,  
170 Toi, dont ma mère osait se vanter  
d'être fille;  
Qui peut-être rougis du trouble où  
tu me vois,  
Soleil, je te viens voir pour la  
dernière fois.

Racine thus reminds us of *Phaedra*'s glorious ancestry. He introduces us to *Phaedra*, not as the child of Pasiphae, the woman who lusted after the bull, but as the child of Helios. As the Child of Helios, *Phaedra* is noble and brilliant, possessing dignity and purity. The stress is Racine's: Euripides does not mention Helios in this context, and Seneca does so only briefly. In Seneca's *Hippolytus*, Oenone mentions Helios as *Phaedra*'s grandfather while trying to dissuade *Phaedra* from her love for Hippolytus.<sup>1</sup>

From Phaedra's first words, Racine reminds us that we are descendend from purity and that we have it within us.

"Soleil, je te viens voir pour la dernière fois" is taken from a line in Euripides' *Hippolytus*. Aphrodite reveals that today is the last day that Hippolytus will see the Sun. By attributing the line to Phaedra, Racine shifts the focus from Hippolytus to Phaedra. There is something eerie in a mortal's knowing it is her last day. It is as if all that Aphrodite knew in the ancient play is now contained within the characters.

Though Phaedra gathered her strength to show herself before the Sun, the humiliation is too great. She needs to hide, and cannot hide behind any outward trappings. It is her own imagination that provides the release; escape comes from within.

176 Dieux! Que ne suis-je assise à  
l'ombre des forêts!  
Quand pourrai-je au travers d'une  
noble poussière  
Suivre de l'oeil un char fuyant  
dans la carrière?

From despair her imagination has taken her to a place beyond the Sun's reach, where the distinctions she cannot avoid would disappear. She cannot see clearly; the image is only murky; fine details are obscured by the dust and shade. The power of Phaedra's imagination is that it can carry her beyond the desire to be out of the Sun's glare and in the comforting shade of the forest associated with Hippolytus, to a definite, though conjured, time. "Quand pourrai-je..." places Phaedra in a future world where she will be able to gaze at Hippolytus unashamed. The reality of such a world may now compete with the demands of the real world (of the Sun's gaze) placed on her. There can be no such world: Light, when it enters darkness, does not lose itself in the darkness, but illumines the darkness. Though Phaedra may at times free herself from the strictness with which she judges herself, she will always return to it; she carries it within her and cannot ignore it. Phaedra's imagination implants the seed of a false

and therefore cruel hope that there may be such a time of oblivion, a time in which she need not regard her incestuous and adulterous love with horror.

She catches hold of herself almost immediately; but it is already too late:  
Insensée où suis-je? et qu'ai  
180 je dit?  
Où laissé-je égarer mes vœux,  
et mon esprit?

She struggles to place herself before the sun again, to leave the realm of the imaginary shade. *Esprit*, properly functioning, must be a quality of the day, of clarity and distinctions. Once she places herself in the world of the imagination, it can no longer be relied on; its power is cut short:

181 Je l'ai perdu: Les Dieux m'en ont  
ravi l'usage.

The boundaries of Phaedra's shame are expanding. Even earthly dignity is becoming impossible.

Oenone, la rougeur me couvre le  
visage,  
Je te laisse trop vois mes  
honteuses douleurs,  
185 Et mes yeux, malgré moi, se  
remplissent de pleurs.

Though Oenone urges her to cling to life,  
Réparez promptement votre force  
abattue,

215 Tandis que de vos jours prêts à  
se consumer  
La flambeau dure encore, et peut  
se rallumer.

Phaedra's path must be to death. When she sees clearly, she knows that there can be no repair. She has made a journey to say goodbye to the Sun, to acknowledge the purity she could once claim as her own, and she realizes that if she were to continue to live, she would have to compromise her sense of purity and impurity:

217 J'en ai trop prolongé la coupable  
durée

Grâces au Ciel, mes mains ne sont  
point criminelles:  
Plût aux Dieux que mon coeur fût  
innocent comme elles!

.....  
Je t'en ai dit assez. Epargne-moi  
le reste.

Je meurs, pour ne point faire un  
aveu si funeste.

Oenone does break Phaedra's silence; she will not spare her. When Oenone assumed the position of the suppliant, Phaedra had to choose between two forms of piety. It would be impious for Phaedra to turn away Oenone, and it would be impious for Phaedra to break her silence. Phaedra has been presented with an escape: she has been presented with a pious means of telling her secret. She takes it.

As Phaedra considers where to begin the story she must tell Oenone, her other history comes to mind. She reminds Oenone of her other ancestors, her mother Pasiphae (and thus indirectly her half-brother the Minotaur) and her sister Ariadne. As a member of such a family, Phaedra knows the horror of the impending disaster, not from prior experience, but from her genealogical history.

Racine reminds us in this recitation of ancestors that Phaedra has a unique viewpoint. Not only has she inherited a sense of purity from Helios, but she has inherited something else which is just as essential, le sang fatale. As her resolve (to keep her shame concealed) crumbles, she recalls this other knowledge that her bizarre genealogy gives her. She recalls the mother and sister who were destroyed. She knows passion, though she was never before its prey. She knows the disaster of its false oblivion:

O haine de Vénus! O fatale  
colère!

250 Dans quels égarements l'amour  
jeta ma mère!

253 Ariane, ma soeur! De quel amour  
blessée,  
Vous mourûtes aux bords où vous  
fûtes laissée!

257 Puisque Vénus le veut, de ce sang  
déplorable  
Je péris la dernière, et la plus  
misérable.

Phaedra's attention has turned from the Sun to the blood she shares with her mother and sister. They too became lost. It must be remembered that they shared Phaedra's royal descent from the sun, that they too were once of purity and light. Phaedra has no illusions that the grasp of eros on her is anything other than fatale. She knows that if she lives, she is lost. She does not have the strength to turn back. She has tried. She has banished Hippolytus; she has offered sacrifices to Venus. She knows that she has lost her ability to see her world clearly, unobscured by imagination, and thus knows that she has lost mastery of herself.

Phaedra then begins her story for Oenone. She no longer lists her ancestors, but tells her own history. Having remembered Helios' purity and ability to expose impurity, and having remembered the sufferings of her mother and sister, Phaedra recognizes her condition and the horror of it:

305 Ce n'est plus une ardeur dans mes  
veines cachée;  
C'est Vénus toute entière à sa  
proie attachée:  
J'ai concu pour mon crime une  
juste terreur.  
J'ai pris la vie en haine, et ma  
flamme en horreur.  
Je voulais en mourant prendre soin  
de ma gloire,  
Et dérober au jour une flamme-si  
noire.

She resolves to die. She understands her helplessness. "C'est Vénus toute entière à sa proie attachée." Phaedra sees: she is small and she will never overcome her predator. Every moment she lives is only a brief postponement of her inevitable destruction and a prolongation of her torture and terror. She has been caught. Venus has her within her grasp. Phaedra will be destroyed. Under such conditions, one desires that the destruction be swift and therefore merciful.

As before, however, her resolve to die cannot be sustained. A messenger interrupts her thoughts and brings news of Theseus' death. Phaedra says nothing. It is Oenone who paints a picture as deadly

as that of any imagination:

350 Vivez, vous n'avez plus de  
reproche à vous faire.  
Votre flamme devient une flamme  
ordinaire.  
Thésée en expirant vient de rompre  
les noeuds,  
Qui faisaient tout le crime et  
l'horreur de vos feux.

Knowing her ancestry, how could love ever become ordinaire? Within her family love has never been ordinary. It has been monstrous and destructive. Moreover, Oenone's words are false legally and morally.<sup>2</sup>

The world Oenone presents is a false world, but it is a world in which Venus' curse no longer exists, a world in which Phaedra could live. She releases herself into a false world which may only be imagined.

With the stories told and the ancestry delineated, Racine properly begins his play. We will learn more of Phaedra's ancestry as the play develops, but we may not begin until properly instructed in the myths that run concurrent throughout the play. At almost every turning point, there is a history that will guide Phaedra or will explain her behavior. Phaedra the grand-daughter of the Sun has postponed dying, though to live she must make morally compromising decisions. As the descendant of Helios, such decisions will go against her nature. We are reminded of our Christian ancestry in Adam and Eve. Through Adam we are the fallen descendants of God. Remembering Phaedra's ancestry, we see ourselves as descended from purity (God) that has fallen (Adam). We see ourselves as the unwilling and helpless prey of sin. We have moments of clarity, in which we see sin as sin and innocence as innocence; yet we constantly lose our way. We believe we may hide behind extenuating circumstances. But in reality we learn that nothing is hidden from the All-Seeing Sun, though we sometimes take flight in our imagination from the Sun within. This Christian perspective will be discussed further later, but should be noted here. Part of the power of the play is that it tells us not only who we are as

Christians, but where we are hiding as Christians as well, and exposes the lies that encourage us.

Like the strong undertow that pulls Hippolytus further and further from himself, so Hippolytus' presence draws out all that Phaedra would wish hidden. She cannot restrain herself from seeing him. She reasons that she must plead for her child. She then loses her way in his presence. The conflict had become intolerable for Phaedra; her strength was not sufficient to keep her feelings hidden, though she demanded of herself that she do so. Caught between opposing desires, Phaedra's imagination gave release. In Act One, Phaedra's imagination created a future; in Act Two, it creates a past that never was.

Phaedra struggles to retain clarity and is unable. A longing to disclose her love finds its way into her speech:

598 Dans le fond de mon coeur vous ne  
pouviez pas lire.

615 Ah, Seigneur! que le Ciel, j'ose  
ici l'attester,  
De cette loi commune a voulu  
m'excepter!  
Qu'un soin bien différent me  
trouble, et me dévore!

629 ....Je m'égare,  
Seigneur, ma folle ardeur malgré  
moi se déclare.

In these lines, Phaedra catches herself before she discloses too much to be misunderstood.

As Phaedra begins to paint the picture of Theseus, and to imagine his past exploits, she becomes hopelessly lost in an unreal world and thus becomes unaware of Hippolytus' presence before her, though indeed it is that which made this flight of the imagination necessary. The artist is free to change particulars, and in this flight she does so. Her imagination becomes overtly creative:

640 Tel qu'on dépeint nos Dieux, ou  
tel que je vous voi.

Her imagination then moves beyond the picture to a story, rearranging details in

such a way that Phaedra lives in a past where it is honorable and even virtuous to love Hippolytus. In this imaginary past, she is his rescuer, his heroine, and his lover. She begins:

645 Que faisiez-vous alors: Pourquoi  
sans Hippolyte  
Des héros de la Grèce assembla-t-  
il l'élite?  
Pourquoi, trop jeune encore, ne  
pûtes-vous alors  
Entrer dans le vaisseau qui le mit  
sur nos bords?

"If only things had been different" is Phaedra's tone in this quatrain. The tone then changes.

Phaedra begins to alter the details of Theseus' famous descent into the labyrinth. Her description is strikingly sexual.

The descent into the labyrinth will be discussed in depth in the section of this essay on Monsters. It is significant here that it is Phaedra's imagination which betrays her, not Oenone and not Phaedra herself -- that is, not Phaedra as the descendant of Purity. Phaedra's imagination mediates between the desires inflamed by the curse which Venus has put on her family, and the purity that Phaedra demands of herself as a Child of the Sun, and which, to the degree that she is a Child of the Sun, Phaedra possesses. The power of this imagination is such that when Phaedra discloses all, she is blind to the shocked Hippolytus before her. Her question:

665 Et sur quoi jugez-vous que j'en  
perds la mémoire,  
Prince? Aurais-je perdu tout le  
soin de ma gloire?

is genuine. It is only after a moment has elapsed in which she collects herself that Phaedra realizes what she has done. She knows that Hippolytus has understood her meaning, "Ah, cruel, tu m'as trop entendue." Her shame has greatly expanded; she must now prepare to die.

Preparing for death, Phaedra again recalls her ancestors and the history of their destruction:

677 Objet infortuné des vengeances  
célestes,

Je m'abhorre encor plus que tu ne  
me détestes.  
Les Dieux m'en sont témoins, ces  
Dieux qui dans mon flanc  
Ont allumé le feu fatal à tout mon  
sang,  
Ces Dieux qui se sont fait une  
gloire cruelle  
De séduire le coeur d'une faible  
mortelle.

Remembering her ancestors, Phaedra is able to understand what has happened. She understands what she has done. She understands the horror of it; and she knows herself as helpless and guilty at the same time. She begs Hippolytus to kill her, and when he hesitates, she grabs his sword to kill herself.

It is then that Oenone takes the role of Phaedra's baser inclination to live at all cost. Human beings cling stubbornly to life; self-destruction eludes Phaedra again and again. "Faibles projets d'un coeur trop plein de ce qu'il aime!" Mortals cannot bear extended exposure of self-examination, which are kinds of deaths or humiliations. Phaedra could not have continued demeaning herself--

674 J'aime. Ne pense pas qu'au moment  
que je t'aime,  
Innocente à mes yeux je m'approuve  
moi-même,  
Ni que du fol amour qui trouble  
ma raison  
Ma lâche complaisance ait nourri  
le poison.

--without her imagination or Oenone hastening to offer some escape.

Having exposed an unrequited and shameful love, Phaedra desires to be hidden as Act Three begins.

740 Cache moi bien plutôt, je n'ai  
que trop parlé  
Mes fureurs au dehors ont osé se  
répandre.  
J'ai dit ce que jamais on ne  
devait entendre.

And Oenone does try to hide Phaedra from herself as well as others. Pascal's ideas of diversion immediately come to mind. Oenone acts as Phaedra's imagination,

proposing diversions to prevent Phaedra from dwelling on the shame and horror of her condition. Oenone proposed that Phaedra involve herself in the governing of Athens, since Phaedra is a descendant of Minos. Minos, however, does not play a determining role in what kind of human being Phaedra is. We know Phaedra primarily as the daughter of Helios. The descendant of Helios cannot replace lost Virtue by embracing worldly Honor. She answers Oenone, not as the daughter of a great King, but as the descendant of purity and clarity:

760   Moi, régner! Moi, ranger un Etat  
      sous ma loi!  
      Quand ma faible raison ne règne  
      plus sur moi,  
      Lorsque j'ai de mes sens abandonné  
      l'empire,  
      Quand sous un joug honteux à peine  
      je respire,  
      Quand je me meurs.

Oenone cannot let Phaedra die. She easily discards one diversion for the next, and advises a more desperate action, "Fuyez." Phaedra cannot.

Phaedra has crossed a boundary, which, once crossed cannot be re-crossed. There is no turning back nor escaping. She can move only if she moves forward, into the madness:

791   Enfin, tous tes conseils ne sont  
      plus de saison.  
      Sers ma fureur, Oenone, et non  
      point ma raison.

Phaedra's character is such that it does not admit of a middle course; her passion takes on the proportion of greatness that her purity possesses. Her command renders Phaedra as the grand-daughter of Helios passive. As she concluded the labyrinth speech, Phaedra imagined that she could find herself again in love. Salvation through love is no longer possible; Phaedra acquiesces in despair and then begins to imagine a different Hippolytus. (781)

Three times Phaedra has prepared to die, and three times she has lost her resolve. Alone, without hope of delivering herself from Venus, she abandons herself to Venus, hoping for another kind of

deliverance. Remembering the last line of the labyrinth speech, it is as if Phaedra now wishes that she and Hippolytus would be lost forever:

O toi! qui vois la honte où je  
      suis descendue,  
Implacable Vénus, suis-je assez  
      confondue?  
Tu ne saurais plus loin pousser ta  
      cruauté.  
Ton triomphe est parfait, tous tes  
      traits ont porté.  
Cruelle, si tu veux une gloire  
      nouvelle,  
Attaque un ennemi qui te soit plus  
      rebelle.  
Hippolyte te fuit, et bravant ton  
      courroux,  
Jamais à tes autels n'a fléchi  
      les genoux.

820   Phaedra has begun a descent which is gaining speed; she has lost control. She has lost her ability to act as a Child of the Sun with the advent of all the worlds her imagination has imposed: she no longer sees clearly, knowing innocence as innocence and sin as sin. She has entered the murky worlds of her imagination in which she must depend on her own blurred perceptions and the perceptions of her nurse to guide her. She has entered into the oblivion of eros. The restraints with which the play began can call to her only faintly. She has no rest. Her sin has grown.

Oenone's advice under such conditions

825   Il faut d'un vain amour étouffer  
      la pensée,  
      Madame. Rappelez votre vertu  
      passée.

seems wildly optimistic. It is as if Phaedra had abandoned herself to the tides that Hippolytus mentioned earlier. She could no longer reach the shore, the undertow being too great, so she allowed herself to be swept out to sea. Now, far from shore, Oenone does not understand that there is no returning to it.

Phaedra hears that Theseus is alive. She again realizes that she must die. The story of the world in which Theseus was dead, and in which she and Hippolytus might have come to love each other has

been shown false. She sees clearly:

853   Je connais mes fureurs, je les  
      rappelle toutes.

857   Mourons. Setant d'horreurs qu'un  
      trépas me délivre.  
      Est-ce un malheur si grand que de  
      cesser de vivre?

Phaedra's only fear is for her children. As the daughter of an infamous mother, Phaedra realizes the shame that they will carry with them.

Oenone grows bold:

885   Pourquoi donc lui céder une  
      victoire entière?  
      Vous le craignez. Osez l'accuser  
      la première  
      Du crime dont il peut vous charger  
      aujourd'hui.  
      Qui vous démentira? Tout parle  
      contre lui.

Yet Phaedra still clings to her respect for light and purity:

893   Moi, que j'ose opprimer et noircir  
      l'innocence!

Oenone refuses to be dissuaded. The escape from death involves the substitution of one world for another as before. The world of the Sun, where Virtue alone is important, is replaced by the world of Earth, in which Honor is important. Phaedra will never regain Virtue, but she may retain Honor, if she will only sacrifice the standards with which Virtue has imbued her. Oenone assures her:

907   ... pour sauver notre Honneur  
      combattu,  
      Il faut immoler tout, et même la  
      Vertu.

Phaedra again relinquishes control, as she did before to Venus (815). She believes she may release herself into another's hands, so that her own may no longer be held accountable; it is a substitute for the death for which she has been searching, a relinquishment of self, to a woman whose only desire is to keep her alive, blindly disregarding all else:

911   Fais ce que tu voudras, je  
      m'abandonne à toi.  
      Dans le trouble où je suis je ne  
      puis rien pour moi.

Phaedra cannot escape so easily. Such a death is not a real one.

Act Four begins after Oenone's lies to Theseus have been successful. Hippolytus has been banished. While begging Theseus to spare his son, Phaedra learns of Hippolytus' love for Aricie. Suddenly, a second story has proved false. Hippolytus is not unable to love. Perhaps he feels reserve for Phaedra alone of all women:

1203   Hippolyte est sensible et ne sent  
      rien pour moi!

Phaedra must acknowledge a real Hippolytus. She can no longer freely imagine a time when she will be the woman to break his cold reserve.

Though her own imagination has deceived her, Phaedra attributes the deception first to Hippolytus and Aricie:

1231   Ils s'aiment! Par quel charme  
      ont-ils trompé mes yeux  
      Comment se sont-ils vus? Depuis  
      quand? Dans quel lieu?

She then ascribes the deception to Oenone:

1233   Tu le savais. Pourquoi me  
      lassais-tu séduire?

De leur furtive ardeur ne  
      pouvais-tu m'instruire?  
Les a-t-on vu souvent se parler,  
      se chercher?  
Dans le fond des forêts  
      allaient-ils se cacher?

Phaedra has known only what it is to love guiltily; she tries to imagine what it is to love innocently:

1237   Hélas! Ils se voyaient avec pleine  
      licence.

Le ciel de leurs soupirs  
      approuvait l'innocence.  
Ils suivaient sans remords leur  
      penchant amoureux.

Though Hippolytus and Aricie have been together on stage only briefly, we realize that such is not their love. Phaedra has once again imagined falsely. She then compares her own plight in a world without illusions to the plight of the lovers in this false world of her own making:

1241   Et moi, trist rebut de la Nature  
      entière,  
      Je me cachais au jour, je fuyais  
      la lumière.

La Mort est le seul Dieu que  
      j'osais implorer.

J'attendais le moment où j'allais expirer.

Phaedra is filled with an enormous jealousy and hatred, the magnitude of which she is conscious of only later:

1271 Mes homicides mains promptes à me venger  
Dans le sang innocent brûlent de se plonger.

The false world angers her and she sees herself as victim only.

At line 1264, Phaedra sees who she has become. It startles her:

1264 Que fais-je? Où ma raison se va-t-elle égarer?  
Moi jalouse!

At one time, she relinquished herself to Oenone, but she realizes now that she can never escape herself. "Je respire à la fois l'inceste et l'imposture." (1270) She will meet herself everywhere in the eyes of those who know her:

1273 Misérable! Et je vis? Et je soutiens la vue  
De ce sacré Soleil dont je suis descendue?  
J'ai pour aieul le Père et le Maître des Dieux:  
Le Ciel; tout l'Univers est plein de mes aieux.  
Où me cacher? Fuyons dans la nuit infernale.  
Mais que dis-je? Mon père y tient l'urne fatale.

.....  
Que diras-tu, mon père, à ce spectacle horrible?

Remembering the harshness of the sun's gaze, Phaedra longs again for darkness, for escape. "Let us fly into the night of Hell." The lines express a desperation that is necessarily Phaedra's. There is no escape. In Hell she will be judged by her father, as the sun judges her on earth. There is no forgetfulness offered in death. What she had imagined before was false. There is no such escape for Racine's Phaedra, though there was for the Phaedra of Euripides.

Oenone once again attempts to calm

her. Phaedra, however, strong with the remembrance of her ancestors, will not be calmed:

1310 Au jour que je fuyais c'est toi qui m'as rendue.  
Tes prières m'ont fait oublier mon devoir.

The day has come when Phaedra's hands can no longer be considered innocent: she has spoken to Hippolytus who alone prevented their love from being consummated. Her hands long to become yet guiltier. She longs to plunge them into the innocent blood of Aricie. She knows that her lies are responsible for Hippolytus' departure, and will soon discover that she has caused his death.

When Phaedra speaks in Act Five, she has already taken the poison that Medea, another grand-daughter of Helios brought to Athens. Phaedra no longer desires anything hidden:

1633 Le fer aurait déjà tranché ma destinée  
Mais je laissais gémir la Vertu soupçonnée  
J'ai voulu, devant vous exposant mes remords,  
Par un chemin plus lent descendre chez les morts.

Slowly, and paradoxically, a greatness returns to Phaedra in this speech. It is the old paradox of the gospels, "Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted." As Phaedra exposes her crimes before her husband, we see a woman humbling herself, and we the audience exalt her. She takes on moral dignity. Part of the distaste when Phaedra savagely blames Oenone is that we wish to see Phaedra continue to humble herself. We cannot exalt her for the way she treats Oenone. Phaedra turns on a woman who has been faithful to her. Oenone has served and loved Phaedra. We do not want people to be treated in this way.

It is only in the context of reviling herself through Oenone that such treatment of her nurse can be made palatable to us. With the death of Oenone and Phaedra comes

the death of the imagination which deceives. Dying, Phaedra again turns to the Sun:

1641 Déjà je ne vois plus qu'à travers un nuage  
Et le ciel, et l'époux que ma présence outrage;  
Et la mort à mes yeux déroband la clarté  
Rend au jour, qu'ils souillaient toute sa pureté.

There is a strange diurnal motion talking place at the close of the play. As Phaedra dies and renders herself to the darkness of death, her last word is pureté. The Sun has been rendered its purity, its full brightness. The confusion between day and night in which the play began has been overcome.

#### THE CHILDREN OF THE EARTH

421 Reste du sang d'un Roi, noble fils de la Terre,  
Je suis seule échappée aux fureurs de la guerre,  
J'ai perdu dans la fleur de leur jeune saison  
Six frères quel espoir d'une illustre maison!  
Le fer moissonna tout, et la Terre humectée  
But à regret le sang des neveux d'Erechtée

494 Je vous cède, ou plutôt je vous rends une place,  
Un sceptre que jadis vos aieux ont reçu  
De ce fameux mortel que la Terre a conçu.

From the Preface, we know that Racine claims that Aricie "n'est point un personnage de mon invention," and he cites references in Virgil. Aricie's genealogy is however Racine's invention. Racine has made her a descendant of the Pallantides, not history or mythology. Aricie's two principal functions in the play are as a love-interest for Hippolytus, and as a further complication in the political struggle between Hippolytus and Phaedra.

Why Racine thought it advantageous to have Aricie descended from the Earth, may be related to both these functions.

As a love interest, the symmetrical contrast to Phaedra is perfect. Phaedra is the grand-daughter of the Sun, Aricie is the grand-daughter of the Earth. Phaedra is not a virgin, she is a mother; Aricie is a virgin. Phaedra is in power; Aricie is not. Though Aricie is nowhere near as magnificent and developed as Phaedra, she does possess qualities which are easily contrasted with those of Phaedra.

The political struggle seems contrived, perhaps because it is not stressed in Euripides' Hippolytus. One wonders why Racine developed it. This section will offer no solutions, but can only point in the general directions where the solutions may lie.

#### I. The Rightful Heirs

Aricie is the rightful heir to the throne of Athens according to young Hippolytus. Aegeus and his son Theseus have placed themselves in the succession to the throne by adoption and murder. Though Hippolytus is genuine in his belief that Aricie deserves the throne, are we to take his belief as that of Racine?

Hippolytus displays an amazing amount of innocence and ignorance to the ways of court when he is astonished that Phaedra wins the confidence of the chiefs of Athens to rule.

He objects:

728 .....Dieux, qui la connaissez,  
Est-ce donc sa vertu que vous récompensez?

Perhaps his acknowledgement of Aricie as the rightful ruler stems from the same innocence. He does not realize that both possession of power and a rightful claim to the throne are necessary to establish oneself as ruler. Or perhaps his acknowledgement of Aricie as the rightful ruler stems from the love he has for her.

If Hippolytus is correct, and Aricie is the rightful ruler of Athens, what could this signify for Racine? Athens is set apart from other Greek cities by its belief that its people sprang from the

local Attic soil. This myth was often used to promote its democracy, for if everyone had the common ancestor, the Earth, everyone was a prince or princess. The very multiplicity of the Pallantides (often portrayed as being fifty brothers) suggests that the proper power to rule is not located in a single individual.

## II. The French King

Those in the audience would have been struck by the similarity of Phaedra's claim of the Sun as an ancestor, and the French Monarch's claim to be a direct descendant of the Sun. They may have recognized Thérémène and Oenone as the servile ministers of the King. Racine's intentions now become unclear: One reading of Aricie's lineage would suggest that Racine is endorsing the rule of the children of the Earth, and is making some criticism, however weak, of the existing monarch. Yet one assumes that Aricie's desire to tyrannically master Hippolytus is some criticism of her ability to rule as well.

## III. Theseus

The impressions left by the political maneuverings in the play suggest that one's political fate has nothing to do with one's virtue or worthiness. Racine is unusual in his treatment of Theseus. Theseus is represented, not as the tremendous hero of other myths, but as one who tampers with the natural order of things in his treatment of Aricie and her brothers. He murders the Pallantides and forces their mother Earth to unwillingly drink their blood. He is an adventurer. In a play where adultery is held up in horror, Theseus' descent into hell is anything but glorious. What was he doing trying to help his friend steal another man's wife? Theseus' friend seems to merit being thrown to the monster. The act of feeding the King to his own monster is presented in such a way as would rob all greatness from it. Theseus' treatment of Hippolytus, and Racine's with-holding of the final reconciliation scene between father and son, render Theseus singularly unworthy of our sympathy in this play.

The mighty King has been exposed for what he is now, apart from what he may have been in the past: he is blind when it is most necessary to see; he is away when his wife and son need him most; and though he accepts Aricie at the close of the play, he is still unchanged. He honors Hippolytus' request only to appease his ghost. Theseus has not regained the sight needed to re-establish himself as a hero.

Some of Phaedra's speeches suggest that Theseus was once like Hippolytus-- young and innocent. Hippolytus, the bastard son of Theseus, is ungainly, inept at the ways of court, and lacking in proper manners. Honor and honesty give him dignity. He is killed by a father who cannot see Hippolytus as anything other than a projection of himself. Thus Theseus believes that Hippolytus is cunning, though Hippolytus is never cunning in this play. Theseus is cunning. The play suggests that Hippolytus' lack of such cunning is a consequence of the time spent in the forest, away from the corrupting influence of the court.

## IV. Oenone and Theramene

Oenone and Thérémène are the only characters in the play not descended from nobility. Yet they cannot be made to represent the common people. Oenone and Theramene are members of the court, as ministers and courtiers are. There are no common people in this play; we see no alternative society proposed to that of the court.

### MONSTERS

Hippolytus sees a monster:

700 Digne fils du héros qui t'a donné  
le jour,  
Délivre l'univers d'un Monstre qui  
t'irrite.  
La veuve de Thésée ose aimer  
Hippolyte?  
Crois-moi, ce Monstre affreux ne  
doit point t'échapper.

Phaedra sees a monster:

882 Mais ne me trompez point, vous

est-il cher encore?

De quel oeil voyez-vous ce Prince  
audacieux?

Je le vois comme un Monstre  
effroyable à mes yeux.

Theseus sees a monster:

Perfide, oses-tu bien te montrer  
devant moi?

Monstre, qu'a trop longtemps  
épargné le tonnerre,

Reste impur des Brigands dont j'ai  
purgé la terre.

One wonders at the vast number of monsters found in Phaedra. They are everywhere in the play. As the play begins, Thérémène and Hippolytus are recalling Hippolytus' youth and the stories he was told about the exploits of Theseus, the great monster-slayer. As the play proceeds, we realize that there are not only mythological monsters, but moral ones as well. We see the two kinds of monsters blended in the Minotaur: the monstrous love gives birth to a mythological monster.

The two principal scenes in the play, the scene in which Phaedra declares her love for Hippolytus, and the scene in which we are given a description of Hippolytus' death, both involve monsters. To know who we are in Racine's Phaedra, we must explore our kinship with these strange creations who live in our stories and in our sight.

## I. Eyes and Monsters

The monstrous is contained within our sight. It is from something within, something emanated from our eyes, that beings who exist outside ourselves are transfigured into monsters. The identification of something as monstrous is always dependent on the one who sees. We remember Oenone's question and Phaedra's reply:

882 Mais ne me trompez point, vous  
est-il cher encore?  
De quel oeil voyez ce Prince  
audacieux?  
Je le vois comme un Monstre  
effroyable à mes yeux.

We also must remind ourselves of Phaedra's

last words:

1641 Déjà je ne vois plus qu'à travers  
un nuage  
Et le ciel et l'époux que ma  
présence outrage;  
Et la mort, à mes yeux dérobant la  
clarté  
Rend au jour, qu'ils souillaient  
toute sa pureté.

Phaedra's eyes sullied the day. It is a strange image. The monstrous in some sense comes out of one's self, and affixes itself to that which one sees.

## II. Sexuality and Monsters

What then are mythological monsters? The monster in the labyrinth and the monster which rises out of the sea in the fifth act both fit Aristotle's definition of what is monstrous. They are the unnatural combination of natural parts. What do the half-man/half-bull and the bull-serpent represent? We know them in the play through the stories told about them. They are used primarily to tell stories of conflicts between foes who wish to destroy each other.

In Monsters we meet that which in reality exists within us. By creating Monsters outside ourselves, we separate ourselves from the desires or inclinations which they represent. (To understand this separation, we remember the relationship between Oenone and Phaedra. Oenone is an embodiment of the baser motives of Phaedra. Through the creation of Oenone, we become aware that the true Phaedra exists outside these inclinations, that Phaedra as a descendant of Helios interacts with these desires but has an existence apart from them. So too with our monsters.) We confront our monsters, and fight mythical battles in our stories, and sometimes we win and sometimes we lose. In doing so, we have a clearer account of the struggle within and the forces which guide us. Monsters represent all that we fear or hate within ourselves.

The Minotaur represents a blind sexuality, sexuality without human vision. The monster does not have human sight: He is a man whose head has been replaced by a bull's.



Racine's description of the descent into the labyrinth beginning at line 649 is clearly sexual. Phaedra offers to guide the virgin Hippolytus through the many detours of the vast retreat of the monster:

659 Compagne du péril qu'il vous  
fallait chercher,  
Moi-même devant vous j'aurais  
voulu marcher,  
Et Phèdre au Labyrinthe avec vous  
descendue,  
Se serait avec vous retrouvée, ou  
perdue.

As Phaedra guides Hippolytus, they will meet the Monster, a monster molded out of the sexuality within Phaedra. The last line, "Se serait avec vous retrouvée, ou perdue." suggests that through the confrontation with sexuality she will either find herself again, though in some sense annihilated in the sexual encounter, or will become simply lost, forever annihilated. The line contains a self-absorption which is particularly striking considering the sexual initiation of the youth. That Hippolytus may find himself or be lost forever is not considered. The world in which she leads him is made dangerous by Racine: Hippolytus is totally dependent on Phaedra as guide, and may be destroyed at any moment.

The suspicion that Phaedra is confronting a monster which lies within her is confirmed a few lines later:

700 Digne fils du héros qui t'a donné  
le jour,  
Délivre l'univers d'un Monstre qui  
t'irrite.  
La veuve de Thésée ose aimer  
Hippolyte?  
Crois-moi, ce Monstre affreux ne  
doit point t'—échapper.

Things become confused; the monster does escape. Phaedra takes Hippolytus' sword and he is un-manned. Before Phaedra can thrust the sword into her own breast, she is interrupted by Oenone. Phaedra and Hippolytus have become lost within the labyrinth without fully confronting the monster; they are neither found nor lost.

By addressing Hippolytus as the "digne fils du héros," we are reminded, and so is

he, of the stories which Thérémène told him about his father killing monsters. Hippolytus has been raised on a tradition that human beings can conquer and vanquish monsters.

It is Thérémène, the teller of tales about Theseus, who describes the bull-serpent in Act V. The bull of the labyrinth has reappeared. Hippolytus, firmly believing in the legends that human beings kill monsters, believes himself capable of killing the monster:

1530 Hippolyte lui seul digne fils d'un  
héros,  
Arrête ses coursiers, saisit ses  
javelots,  
Pousse au Monster et d'un dard  
lancé d'une main sûre  
Il lui fait dans le flanc une  
large blessure.

Hippolytus, however, has been lied to. Monsters, when struck with human lances do not die, they grow angrier:

1531 De rage et de douleur le Monstre  
bondissant  
Vient aux pieds des chevaux tomber  
en mugissant,  
Se roule, et leur présente une  
gueule enflammée,  
Qui les couvre de feu, de sang, et  
de fumée.

Hippolytus cannot slay the monster. Nor does the Monster directly slay Hippolytus. The reins with which Hippolytus curbs and controls his horses become tangled, and they drag him to his death. The horses, associated with Hippolytus' masculinity throughout the play, become so frightened that he can no longer master them—they flee in horror.

Thérémène's deception, i.e. that human beings may kill monsters, has pushed Hippolytus into a situation in which, deceived about what is real, he must battle something real. In this regard, Thérémène's role takes on similarities to that of Oenone. Thérémène has told the boy Hippolytus stories which inspire a mortal greatness which is false, and which leave him vulnerable, with no true account of the world. Oenone has told Phaedra stories which would release her from the greatness which she would impose on her-

self. Such stories, if believed, would render Phaedra vulnerable, thinking she was safe when she was not.

### III. Sin and Monsters

The role of the reappearing Monster is the role of Sin. Thérémène has lied to Hippolytus about the nature of Sin and its destructiveness. He has taught that sin could be overcome by mortals without any divine intervention. When we ask who we are, we answer with stories that tell us that monsters are originally foreign to us, and separate from us, and at the same time, stories that tell us that we will always have to fight with our monsters, since they come from within.

Racine's comparison of sin and sexuality is not based on a prudish way of seeing the world. Rather, he bases the analogy on the anarchy they produce within the body of the lover or the sinner:

"We know that the law is spiritual; but I am not: I am unspiritual, the purchased slave of sin. I do not even acknowledge my own actions as mine, for what I do is not what I want to do, but what I detest."  
(Romans, 7.14-15)

Within the play, both love and sin are described as things against which we struggle unsuccessfully; and which, though coming from within ourselves as things we inherit whether it be le sang fatale or our fallen natures, are portrayed as separate from our very selves. Lust is separate in Phaedra's nature, something added on as a curse to that nature which cannot shake it off. We are the prey of Venus as well as Sin. By separating out our fallen-ness (sin) and putting it into a monster, we are ourselves pure, hopelessly battling against that which must conquer us.

Two lessons are explicit: As human beings we are the descendants both of Purity and of fallen Purity. Our pure nature, however, battles our fallen-ness, which though in our bloodline, is extrinsic to us. Secondly, we realize that human beings unless some special di-

vine intervention occurs cannot conquer the monster sin. Both such precepts would agree with the Jansenists views Racine was espousing.

Jansenists refused to accept a lax morality for men: men as descendants of God, should be held accountable for their sins. They further objected to the idea that men could conquer sin without divine grace. Such views are propounded in the Fifth Provincial Letter especially:

Go and see some of these worthy fathers, I beseech you, and I am confident that you will soon discover, in the laxity of their moral system, the explanation of their doctrine about grace. You will then see the Christian virtues exhibited in such a strange aspect, so completely stripped of the charity which is the life and soul of them—you will see so many crimes palliated and irregularities tolerated, that you will no longer be surprised at their maintaining that 'all men have always enough of grace' to lead a pious life, in the sense in which they understand piety. Their morality being entirely Pagan, nature is quite competent to its observance. (Pascal, Provincial Letters Modern Library edition, p. 376.)

### OENONE

Oenone is the confidante to Phaedra, a familiar dramatic device that rescues a play from having too many soliloquies. Yet this role is complicated in Phaedra in that, as Racine tells us, Oenone is also the embodiment of Phaedra's baser intentions. Throughout the play, she is that within Phaedra which would keep Phaedra alive at all cost. Therefore, she often functions like the imagination. She provides interpretations which ameliorate intolerable situations by manipulating the

particulars of certain stories. She creates new worlds in which we may live more comfortably. This further complicates Oenone's role: Creating morally comfortable worlds is a Jesuit function (according to Jansenists.) Oenone appears to be so much of a Jesuit at times that her speeches and Phaedra's accusations against her seem to be taken directly out of Pascal's Provincial Letter. Oenone, like the Jesuits, will deceive us as to who we are and what is expected of us.

As Phaedra first seeks purification before the Sun, the Sun's rays become unbearable, and her imagination paints a picture of shade, of forest, and of a time when all will be well. Oenone will also offer escapes for Phaedra. She will paint reality in such a way that what properly should drive Phaedra to suicide does not. Her only concern is to keep Phaedra alive:

229    Quoiqu'il vous reste à peine une  
faible lumière,  
Mon âme chez les morts descendra  
la première.

When Panope gives the news that Theseus is dead, Phaedra is silent. It is Oenone who interprets the news; in the news, she sees a world in which Phaedra need not kill herself:

349    Vivez, vous n'avez plus de  
reproche à vous faire.  
Votre flamme devient une flamme  
ordinaire.

The ever-pragmatic Oenone proposes that Phaedra suggest an alliance with Hippolytus against Aricie.

In Act II, when Phaedra grabs Hippolytus' sword after giving herself away before him, Oenone rushes in and stops her:

712    Que faites-vous, Madame?  
Justes Dieux!  
Mais on vient. Evitez des témoins  
odieux,  
Venez, rentrez, fuyez une honte  
certaine.

After that disaster, Oenone must propose another diversion. She proposes power:

753    Ainsi, dans vos malheurs ne  
songeant qu'à vous plaindre,

Vous nourrissez un feu, qu'il vous  
faudrait éteindre.  
Ne vaudrait-il pas mieux, digne  
sang de Minos,  
Dans de plus nobles soins chercher  
votre repos,  
Contre un ingrat qui plaît  
recourir à la fuite,  
Régner, et de l'Etat embasser la  
conduite?

When Phaedra objects that she cannot possibly rule, Oenone, undaunted comes up with another alternative: "Fuyez." When Phaedra objects:

Je ne le puis quitter  
Oenone replies  
Vous l'osâtes bannir, nous n'osez  
l'éviter.

Oenone will not despair.

Despair is the appropriate response. Phaedra accuses Oenone of planting false hope in Phaedra's heart. Oenone sees no shame in planting hope, whether it be false or true:

Hélas! de vos malheurs innocent  
ou coupable,  
De quoi pour vous sauver  
n'étais-je point capable?  
Mais si jamais l'offense irrita  
vos esprits,  
Pouvez-vous d'un superbe oublier  
les mépris?  
Avec quels yeux cruels sa rigueur  
obstinée  
Vous laissait à ses pieds peu s'en  
faut prosternée!  
Que son farouche orgueil le  
rendait odieux!

780    Que Phèdre en ce moment  
n'avait-elle mes yeux!

Oenone's eyes filter out all that would render Phaedra dishonorable or unworthy of life. She will see no shame in being a mortal subject to nature.

When Hippolytus begins to seem too dangerous for her mistress' happiness, Oenone tries to dissuade Phaedra from seeing Hippolytus as someone who could ever return her love. Oenone is quick to recognize that Hippolytus is now the enemy and poses a threat to Phaedra. Thus she reasons:

787    Songez qu'une barbare en son sein

and l'a formé.

789    Il a pour tout le sexe une haine  
fatale.

Phaedra then issues the famous command in response:

790    Enfin, tous tes conseils ne sont  
plus de saison.  
Sers ma fureur, Oenone, et non  
point ma raison.

Oenone has been working under the illusion that she could protect Phaedra in Act One by convincing her that her love was only ordinaire. She believes there is something safe in being "only human". Rather than combat that which comes from within, Oenone proposes that we submit and not think about the horror of our condition. Yet we see in the play that once abandoned, Virtue can never again be recovered. In abandoning Virtue, we abandon who we are as descendants of the Sun. Oenone claims that we may rest in some murky middle ground where distinctions are not altogether forgotten, but are put so sufficiently far from mind that we need no longer feel guilty. If it is proper to submit to a mortal fate, we need no absolution: all we do is in harmony with our natures. Racine claims there is no middle ground: Once we move out of the Sun's realm, our motion gathers impetus and we move far beyond the reach of the Sun's distinctions. We cannot move in and out of the two regions with ease: we cannot recall lost Virtue.

With the advent of Theseus, Oenone advises:

826    Madame. Rappelez votre vertu  
passée.

How does one go about recalling Virtue after trying to seduce one's stepson? If one sees the crime with the horror with which Phaedra sees it no such recalling is possible. She knows herself as a sinner. There is not getting around it. Phaedra knows she must die. Oenone's response "Vous mourez?" is an expression of surprise. Oenone cannot imagine a situation which would merit Phaedra's death.

Oenone refuses to regret or to repent the past:

873    C'en est fait..  
885    Pourquoi donc lui céder une  
victoire entière?  
Vous le craignez. Osez l'accuser  
la première  
Du crime dont il peut vous charger  
aujourd'hui.  
Qui vous démentira? Tout parle  
contre lui.

She is quite willing to sacrifice Virtue. Virtue, if kept alive, would cause an earthly death. Virtue must be sacrificed to Honor, which keeps one alive on the earth:

907    . . . pour sauver notre  
Honneur combattu,  
Il faut immoler tout, et même la  
Vertu.

Phaedra submits to the force which keeps her alive: In the face of destruction, she yields to Oenone. She cannot face annihilation without trying to escape. No human being in the play can. It is part of what Racine considers hidden within us.

Oenone then tells the false story to Theseus. Phaedra discovers in turn that Theseus has implored Neptune to kill Hippolytus, and that Hippolytus loved Aricie. Phaedra, after a considerable struggle with herself, realizes that she has sinned. Yet, instead of urging confession or some other means of purification, Oenone who would continue Phaedra's earthly existence at all costs, puts Phaedra's Christian soul in jeopardy:

1295   Hé! repoussez, Madame, une  
injuste terreur.  
Regardez d'un autre oeil une  
excusable erreur.

One must not make repentance into nothing; one must not excuse sins as simply errors. Pascal complained of the Jesuits:

But, father, do you suppose that a man is worthy of receiving absolution, when he will submit to nothing painful to expiate his offences? And, in these circumstances, ought you not to retain rather than remit their sins? Are you not aware of the extent of your ministry, and that you have

the power of binding and loosing? Do you imagine that you are at liberty to give absolution indifferently to all who ask it, and without ascertaining beforehand if Jesus Christ looses in heaven those whom you loose in earth?

(Provincial Letters, p. 453)

Oenone then explains why no painful expiation is necessary:

1297 Vous aimez. On ne peut vaincre sa destinée.

Par un charme fatal vous fûtes entraînée.

Est-ce donc un prodige inoui parmi nous?

L'amou n'a-t-il encore triomphé que de vous?

La faiblesse aux humains n'est que trop naturelle.

Mortelle, subissez le sort d'une mortelle.

Vous vous plaignez d'un joug imposé dès longtemps.

Les Dieux même, les Dieux de l'Olympe habitants,

Qui d'un bruit si terrible épouvantent les crimes,

Ont brûlé quelquefois de feux illégitimes.

To those familiar with the Jansenist accusations against the Jesuits, Oenone's arguments are familiar as well. The Jesuits, as portrayed in the Provincial Letters, are ready to conclude from the weakness of men, that morality must be loosened in order that it might become more comfortable for men. The Jansenists regarded this as highest heresy.

The weakness of humanity must not be catered to. We serve each other best by reminding each other to be virtuous. The Jesuits like Oenone believe that morality must accommodate itself to human weakness:

"You know," he said, "that the ruling passion of persons in that rank of life is 'the point of honor,' which is perpetually driving them into acts of violence apparently quite at variance with

Christian piety; so that in fact, they would be almost all of them excluded from our confessionals, had not our fathers relaxed a little from the strictness of religion, to accommodate themselves to the weakness of humanity. Anxious to keep on good terms both with the Gospel, by doing their duty to God, and with the men of the world, by showing charity to their neighbor, they needed all the wisdom they possessed to devise expedients for so nicely adjusting matters as to permit these gentlemen to adopt the methods usually resorted to for vindicating their honor, without wounding their consciences, and thus reconcile two things so opposite to each other as piety and the point of honor. But sire, in proportion to the utility of the design, was the difficulty of the execution...

(The Provincial Letters, p. 402. The underlining is my own.)

They forget that we are the descendants of God and Purity; they would have us forget that sin is something outside of ourselves with which we must battle.

Jesuits were in power in France. They controlled the Sorbonne and held sway at court. Jansenists believed they were misleading nations; hence Phaedra accuses Oenone:

1319 Puisse le juste Ciel dignement te payer;  
Et puisse ton supplice à jamais effrayer  
Tous ceux qui, comme toi, par de lâches adresses,  
Des Princes malheureux nourrissent les faiblesses,  
Les poussent au penchant où leur

coeur est enclin,  
Et leur osent du crime aplanir le chemin;  
Détestables flatteurs, présent le plus funeste  
Qui puisse faire aux Rois la colère céleste.

The role of advisors at Court is thus exposed: flattery and deception are seen as necessarily accompanying that life. The Jansenists remind us that as the descendants of Adam we have a penchant for sin. Excusing our sin before proper expiation is made will be disastrous. We will not repent properly and we will be damned.

#### CONCLUSION

598 Dans le fond de mon coeur vous ne pouviez pas lire

If only one character could have known the depths of another's heart, if only the isolation that surrounds each character were not so horrible, if only Racine had created another world in the play, perhaps forgiveness and expiation could have been possible between men and women, and especially between fathers and sons. Yet there is none. There are no human confessors to absolve the characters of their crimes. Unlike Euripides, Racine offers no reconciliation between father and son. There is absolutely no consolation in this world.

We are fallen. Perhaps once we might have seen into the depths of one another's hearts, but such is not the world in which we now live. We are cursed, as all the descendants of Helios were cursed, and as all the descendants of Adam were expelled from the Garden. We cannot rely on earthly forgiveness. Caught between the intolerable conflicts within us, our imaginations often provide temporary but untrustworthy escapes.

Yet, as the descendants of Helios and God, a part of our nature will always see through deception. In the ancient myth, it was the ability to see through a cloud that resulted in the curse:

It was Helios, let us recall, who shed his light in the skies, dispersing the cloud which hid Venus and Mars as they were love-making. Indeed, it was this very action which had led Venus in retaliation to curse all Helios' descendants...

(Bettina L. Knapp, Jean Racine - Mythos and Renewal in Modern Theatre, p. 171)

Helios' descendants will always see through the clouds that imagination creates to obscure the horror of their actions. And the descendants of Helios will always have actions that excite their horror; they will not be able to escape Venus.

We are the fallen mixture of purity and godliness and all the desires which Racine labels base. We are the noble children of gods, and we are monsters. Our stories explain ourselves to ourselves in those terms. We are born with the attributes of Helios and with the curse of Venus locked within us. Destruction will come from within and is inevitable. It is not within our power to save ourselves.

As children of the Sun, we are engendered with an ability to judge according to spiritual laws as well as earthly laws. We know the difference between Virtue and Honor. Lines 907 and 221 depend on our ability to make that distinction. For all our knowledge of spiritual laws, however, we are still unable to prevent ourselves from sinning. We remember Romans 7.14-25:

We know that the law is spiritual; but I am not: I am unspiritual, the purchased slave of sin. I do not even acknowledge my own actions as mine, for what I do is not what I want to do, but what I detest. But if what I do is against my will, it means that I agree with the law and hold it to be admirable. But as things are, it is no longer I who

perform the action, but sin that lodges in me. For I know that nothing good lodges within me -- in my unspiritual nature I mean -- for though the will to do good is there, the deed is not. The good which I want to do, I fail to do: but what I do is the wrong which is against my will and if what I do is against my will, clearly it is no longer I who am the agent, but sin that has its lodgings in me.

I discover this principle then: that when I want to do the right, only the wrong is within my reach. In my inmost self I delight in the law of God, but I perceive that there is in my bodily members a different law, fighting against the law that my reason approves and making me a prisoner under the law of sin. Miserable creature that I am, who is there to rescue me out of this body doomed to death? God alone, through Jesus Christ our Lord! Thanks be to God! In a word then, I myself, subject to God's law as a rational being am yet, in my unspiritual nature, a slave to the law of sin. (The New English Bible. The underlining is my own.)

One of the important differences between this passage and Racine's Phaedra is that Paul offers a God who intercedes. Racine

does not. Whether this is because the play is set in pagan times, or whether Racine meant something more, we do not know. Racine insists however, that we must never abandon that knowledge of ourselves as descendants of God. We must never stop attempting to purify ourselves, we must never abandon the distinctions between sin and innocence. We must not let the Jesuits mislead us. Pascal warns us:

....they conceal their carnal and worldly policy under the garb of divine and Christian prudence as if the faith, and tradition, its ally, were not always one and the same at all times and in all places, as if it were the part of the rule to bend in conformity to the subject which it was meant to regulate; and as if souls, to be purified from their pollutions, had only to corrupt the law of the Lord, in place of the 'the law of the Lord, which is clean and pure, converting the soul which lieth in sin' and bringing it into conformity with its salutary lessons!

(The Provincial Letters, p. 376)

As Phaedra dies, her last word is purity. She herself is not yet pure. The day is pure. Both the love of purity and the curse are her inheritance. In dying, she pays final homage to purity. She remembers who she really is. She achieves a moral dignity within our eyes once again. In such a dignity, she may rest.

#### Footnotes

1. Racine may also have been tempted to stress the lineage from the Sun, apart from the mythological significances, as a means of commenting on the French royalty. It is useful to note here that Phaedra and French Kings share the same ancestry.

2. R.C. Knight, in his notes on Phèdre, gives three examples: 1) the Christian Canon Law: I Corinthians, 5.1 ("I actually hear reports of sexual immorality among you, immorality such as even pagans do not tolerate: the union of a man with

his father's wife.") 2) the list of prohibited degrees in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer and 3) French Law

Note: When I use the term "Jesuit" within the body of this paper, I am claiming nothing about the Society of Jesus today or about the arguments of the Jesuits of Racine's day, apart from how they have been explicated by the Jansenists especially by Pascal in The Provincial Letters.

## A Poem by Francis Jammes

IL VA NEIGER...

A Léopold Bauby

Il va neiger dans quelques jours. Je me souviens  
De l'an dernier. Je me souviens de mes tristesses  
Au coin du feu. Si l'on m'avait demandé: qu'est-ce?  
J'aurais dit: laissez-moi tranquille. Ce n'est rien.

J'ai bien réfléchi, l'année avant, dans ma chambre,  
Pendant que la neige lourde tombait dehors.  
J'ai réfléchi pour rien. A présent comme alors  
Je fume une pipe en bois avec un bout d'ambre.

Ma vieille commode en chêne sent toujours bon.  
Mais moi j'étais bête parce que ces choses  
Ne pouvaient pas changer et que c'est une pose  
De vouloir chasser les choses que nous savons.

Pourquoi donc pensons-nous et parlons-nous? C'est drôle;  
Nos larmes et nos baisers, eux, ne parlent pas  
Et cependant nous les comprenons, et les pas  
D'un ami sont plus doux que de douces paroles.

On a baptisé les étoiles sans penser  
Qu'elles n'avaient pas besoin de nom, et les nombres  
Qui prouvent que les belles comètes dans l'ombre  
Passeront, ne les forceront pas à passer.

Et maintenant même, où sont mes vieilles tristesses  
De l'an dernier? A peine si je m'en souviens.  
Je dirais: laissez-moi tranquille, ce n'est rien,  
Si dans ma chambre on venait me demander: qu'est-ce?

1888.

De l'Angélus de l'Aube à l'Angélus du Soir

## Translation Geraldine McDowell

THE TIME HAS COME FOR SNOW...

To Leopold Bauby

The time has come for snow. I harken back  
to last year's snow. Back to my sadnesses  
by fire's glow. If I'd been asked, "What is't?"  
I would have said, "Leave me in peace. 'Tis naught."

I've contemplated in my room ere now,  
while outside snow fell heavy covering all.  
My contemplation's vain. For now, as then,  
I sit beside the hearth and smoke my pipe.

And still my oaken chest of drawers smells rich.  
Such foolishness to think these things could change!  
They never change. It is pretentiousness  
to want to chase the things already known.

For why then do we think and speak? Odd thing;  
Our tears and kisses, speechless though they be  
are understood no less, and sweet steps which  
our friends do make are sweeter than sweet words.

We've christened stars which have no need of names.  
And ratios foretelling comets' flights  
are not their moving force. Now then, where are  
my sadnesses of old? I faint recall.

And I would say, "Leave me in peace. 'Tis naught,"  
if I were asked while in my room, "What is't?"

1888.

From the Prayer of the Morning  
to the Prayer of the Evening

Geraldine McDowell attended St. John's in Annapolis for  
three years. She is now a junior at Goucher College.

Sometimes my mother's eyes were green as grass.  
How grey they grow.

Under the trees of autumn, red and blue  
Paint portraits of my race.  
When I roll over, and brush aside the leaves  
The grass is still green.  
Burrowing close  
I see my mother's eyes again.  
(Is your soul dusty, mama, too?  
Look for me, she says, I cannot reach to see.)  
Red is for burning  
and Autumn must end.

Now that the winter's come I'm sure  
My mother's eyes are underneath the snow  
A mile deep and more.  
They are there to be found  
And a wish is a spade  
And even the whiteness of winter must give way to spring.

Leslie S. Bellisario  
November 7th, 1982

Leslie Bellisario, '83, is currently writing fiction in London.

## Becoming Acquainted with a Knot

Ann Burlein

Seeking to uncover the nature of the soul, Aristotle learns the range of his inquiry by investigating the doctrines of previous philosophers. From these he gleans a statement of the attributes which we think belong to the soul because of its nature: 1) the ability to discriminate (which is the work of thought and sensation), and 2) the ability to move from place to place (which results from the previous ability, since the cause of locomotion -- desire -- cannot occur unless the animal imagines something<sup>1</sup>).<sup>2</sup> In describing both thought and sensation as methods of discrimination (*to krinein*), Aristotle recognizes a sharing of activity between the thinking and sentient soul -- an activity which results in *gnōsis*.<sup>3</sup>

As a result of this sharing, Aristotle separates these faculties more in terms of their objects than in terms of their activities. Since, for Aristotle, to apprehend means to become like the object of apprehension (although in a unique way), these objects determine the nature of both the activity of apprehension and the knowledge which the soul becomes as a result of this activity. So before we can understand the soul as the faculty by which man comes to know, we need to understand, first the things which the soul knows, and then the nature of that knowledge.<sup>4</sup>

Knowledge and sensation may be so marked off as to correspond to things...the knowing and sentient powers of the soul are potentially these things...and they must either be these things themselves or their forms. Certainly they cannot be the things themselves; for it is not the stone itself that is

in the soul but the form of the stone.<sup>5</sup>

Both the sensing and the thinking soul apprehend forms, by virtue of which we say one faculty senses flesh, and the other knows the essence of flesh.<sup>6</sup> But what is a form and how do these two forms differ from one another? Aristotle prefaces his investigation into the parts of the soul by placing form in the genus of things we call substance. But the science which enquires most fully into substance is first philosophy, for to first philosophy alone belongs the investigation of being qua being.

We use the term 'being' in many senses: something 'is' if it is 1) one, 2) true, 3) either potentially or actually as we say it to be, or 4) one of the categories. Despite this multiplicity, these senses are not equivocal,<sup>7</sup> because "all of these (senses) are related to something which is one and a single nature".<sup>8</sup> In our investigation of being, then, we must first examine this central nature, for we cannot know any of the other senses until we know the one upon which they depend.

But after we look at the various senses of 'being' Aristotle claims to encompass, analogous predication seems impossible. Do these diverse senses really point to one nature, as do the different things we call 'healthy' because they signify either a sign of health or a cause of health? Perhaps the senses which mean 'to be true' and 'to be one' do. For while 'being' and 'unity' do not mean the same thing, they follow one another, since to be one means to be nothing other than one of the categories.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, what is one is not distinct from what is a being.<sup>10</sup> Further, we speak truly when we speak of something which is, but falsely when we speak 1) of something which is not as if

it is, or 2) of something which is as if it is not.<sup>11</sup> However, a category -- especially 'whatness' -- seems neither to point towards nor to be an activity. To ask "What is it?" seems very different from asking "What does it do?". Yet Aristotle, in identifying ousia as the sense of 'to be' which signifies that which is first among all things, merges whatness and actuality. In Book 7, he selects whatness as the primary sense of being<sup>12</sup> in 9, he asserts actuality as the being of a thing.<sup>13</sup>

But how can we reconcile these two senses, which appear so diverse, into one idea of being? Why is to be at work to be definite? And can we describe all substances to exactly the same degree by these two ways?

A discussion of the categories, the fourth sense of 'to be', begins Book 6. Immediately, Aristotle opposes the category signifying whatness to those remaining, for "it is evident that of these (i.e., the categories) the primary sense is whatness, and used in this sense it signifies a substance"<sup>14</sup>. He identifies being and whatness naturally and with assurance -- phaneron. For whenever something exists, it exists as itself -- some one, definite thing. (Only in thought can the fact that a thing is separate from what it is -- and even then that separation serves only as a momentary prelude, insures that the proceeding investigation into whatness does not really inquire into nothing.<sup>15</sup>) Unlike Plato, Aristotle does not find the nature of being in being itself, but rather in whatness.<sup>16</sup> So certain of this connection between whatness and being, Aristotle can even envision someone asking whether affections exist at all:

Because of this (the primacy of whatness), one might even raise the problem whether walking, being healthy, sitting and the others of this kind are beings or not beings; for by nature each of these does not exist by itself and cannot be separated from a substance,

but rather, if anything, it is that which walks or that which sits that is a being. These latter appear to be beings in a higher degree, because there is something definite in each of them, namely, the underlying subject; and this is the substance and the individual.<sup>17</sup>

Aristotle separates whatness from the other categories because of 'definiteness' -- that on account of which things appear to be to a higher degree. Translated as 'definite', literally, hōrismos means 'having been marked off by boundaries'. Elsewhere, Aristotle calls this notion of having been set apart and made distinct peculiarity (to idion).

In the Topics, Aristotle names the types of things we predicate. One of these, to idion, consists of two parts: 1) properties, whatever belongs to a thing and can be predicated convertibly of it; and 2) essence or whatness.<sup>18</sup> This derivation reveals that the idea of peculiarity underlies and determines our notion of whatness.

The dominant meaning of idios is uniqueness; it signifies something that pertains to one person alone. Often indicating something that by its very nature is private or personal, it opposes koinos and dēmosios. Homer uses the word in exactly this sense: Telemachos, when speaking to Nestor at Pylos where he has travelled seeking news of his father, says: "This is a private matter, not public business I tell you (prēxis d' hē d'idiē ou dēmois). I follow the fame of my father, on the chance of hearing of the great Odysseus..."<sup>19</sup> A young man's quest to learn about himself in seeking word of his father is an idion, something that by its nature belongs to him alone. Ta idia are one's private interests, one's own property; an idiōtēs is a private person who, due to a preoccupation with his own affairs, does not participate in those of the city.

Thus idios has its roots in the idea of something that, because of its

private nature, sets itself apart from things we share. Such a thing becomes separate and distinct simply because it concerns the owner alone. Yet this esoteric separation does not result in concealment; rather, we call a thing peculiar if its whatness makes it come forth to exhibit itself.<sup>20</sup> Because of this, the separation that belongs to peculiarity causes a thing to become definite. Peculiarity then, as the Topics indicates, provides the key to the puzzle of ousia. This characteristic alone do we ascribe with certainty to substance, for by 'a thing's substance' we mean that which is peculiar to it. But as with all knowledge that is more known to the individual, confusion and generality mark our notion of peculiarity; rather than knowing explicitly the type of peculiarity which belongs to substance, we have only a vague notion of a many-faceted whole. First philosophy attempts to unpack this whole, to isolate the parts compounded within and set each out distinctly so that our confused awareness can become definite, complete, and articulable knowledge.<sup>21</sup>

Aristotle begins 'unpacking' by explaining why whatness -- when it signifies substance -- is primary among the categories. His reasons parallel the theory of pros hen predication which he states in Book 3: "In every case a science is concerned mainly with that which is first, both 1) that on which the others depend, and 2) as that through which the others are named."<sup>22</sup> A substance is 1) prior in time because it can exist independently, requiring nothing else in order to be. It is also prior 2) in logos (for we can't define any of the other categories without referring to substance), and 3) in knowledge (for only when we understand a thing's substance do we understand the thing).

Chapter One suggests that composites appear to be to a higher degree because of the presence in each of an underlying subject. In Chapter Three, by examining the notion of 'underlying subject', Aristotle refines the idea of separate which led us to consider an underlying subject as a substance. He describes substance as that of which we predicate

other things, but which itself we never predicate of other things.<sup>23</sup> He suggests this formulation because it seems to indicate a type of self-sufficient separation -- the kind which belongs to individuals (atoma kai hen arithmoi).<sup>24</sup> But the foremost distinction of any underlying subject is not separateness but the ability to receive something. Yet by 'substance' we do not primarily mean such a potential, as the case of matter -- the primary underlying subject -- shows. While matter has a type of ultimate separability in that it alone can exist after we remove all else, matter in this state is not definite (but would appear as nothing<sup>25</sup>); therefore it can't be a substance. A substance is not that which is separable at the expense of all else, but that which is both separable and a this.<sup>26</sup> Separate because of its definiteness, a substance is peculiar.

After concluding with the suggestion that form seems to be substance in the highest degree (since it lacks the indefiniteness present in composites due to their material parts), Aristotle retreats, asserting this to be most perplexing.<sup>27</sup> For how can a form be separable and a this, and also be a part of a composite? We can always point to tode ti, but we can never point to a form without pointing to something else as well. Thus Aristotle starts again, this time beginning with something more familiar to us. His reliance upon what we already know shapes Chapter Four, which stresses speech -- how we say things are. Such an emphasis highlights the new element of separability he investigates --- the ability to be alone in statement (or in the words of Chapter One, priority in knowledge).

Chapter Four examines essence, what we say a thing to be in virtue of itself. By exploring this notion of 'separate in virtue of one's self', Aristotle refines further our notion of peculiarity.

He begins by excluding two instances of 'in virtue of itself' predication: 1) when a property belongs essentially; and 2) when we predicate of an accidental composite its underlying sub-

ject (for example, when we predicate the definition of 'man' of the composite 'white man'). These disqualifications reveal that substance *kath'auta* is that which we can utter alone; to be separable means to be said alone. Essence does not belong to something in such a way as to require the statement of its underlying subject in its definition; rather, to be the essence is to be the thing. Essence corresponds to the thing in a way in which accidents and properties do not.<sup>28</sup>

Aristotle now returns to sensible composites, asking whether a white man (a composite plus an accident, which is the only type of composite we ever find since all sensible substances, because of their matter, have attributes) is an instance of an essence at all. Aristotle concludes he is not, strictly speaking:

But an essence is just a this, whereas if something is said of something else we do not have just a this, eg. a white man is not just a this, if a this belongs only to substances.<sup>29</sup>

The type of separation that belongs to peculiarity belongs also to things which are primary. Something is primary if, in its *logos*, we do not predicate anything at all. Essence is the only thing we can state in this way:

Essence, then, will belong to nothing which is not a species of a genus, but only to a species of a genus; for it is these that are thought to be stated neither according to participation, nor with an attribute, nor with an accident.<sup>30</sup>

But a genus does not participate in its differentiae<sup>31</sup>, nor does a composite require its accidents in order to be. Also, if essence belongs to something, in what way is it primary?

Clearly, we don't think about an individual without also considering different things about him; I can't think about Socrates without also considering attributes such as snub-nosed or philosopher. If I were to omit such things, I would be thinking, not of Socrates, but of

'man'. So while separate spatially from the rest of the world,<sup>32</sup> an individual is not separate from attributes whose being differs from his. Because these attributes can change, every individual is somehow indeterminate -- there is something of the infinite about each of us.

We can separate in thought, however, a genus from its differentiae. I can think 'animal' without also thinking 'dog', 'bird' and all the remaining differentiae -- or even without thinking any at all. However, a genus is indeterminate because these differentiae vary greatly. So while we can separate a genus in thought, in order to speak definitely, we connect the genus with one of its differentiae.

Since both an individual and a genus involve potential, and we understand potential only by reference to its corresponding actuality<sup>33</sup>, neither is primary. A species too involves potential, for it includes the intelligible matter of the genus to which it belongs. Yet both an individual and a genus contain, in addition to intelligible matter, still other potentialities which render them even more indefinite.

Thus Aristotle chooses species as essence because a species is both separate in thought and a this. Essence, which is prior in knowledge, expresses the thing most fully since it corresponds to the thing. But unlike the individual to which it corresponds, such essence is never completely separate because it must always act in matter. But how can something we separate in thought not also be separate simply?

In Chapters Four and Five, Aristotle speaks of essence as belonging.<sup>34</sup> While not denying this relation, Chapter Six asserts that essence is the same as each particular thing. How can essence have this dual relation -- especially if an essence is a species? What does it mean to be the same as that which makes one separate because of what it is?

Aristotle provides a syllogism: We judge (*dokoumen*) each thing to be nothing other than its own substance. We say (*legomen*) that the substance of each thing

is the essence. Therefore, he implies, each thing is the same as its essence.<sup>35</sup> Strictly speaking, the conclusion is that we judge or say each thing to be the same as its essence. Thus he says: "From these arguments it is clear that each thing and its essence are one and the same, but not by accident, and that to know each thing is to know its essence."<sup>36</sup> The sameness of essence and thing is sameness in knowledge or in speech; essence signifies the thing.<sup>37</sup> To signify (*semainein*) means to indicate by signs, to declare and also to interpret or explain. Essence declares a thing; the sameness between essence and its composite arises from the manner in which essence accomplishes this declaration.

But since essence is substance, sameness in thought would seem to separate a thing's substance from the thing -- to claim that while in a sense each thing is its substance, the two really only become identical by an act of intellect. But Aristotle rejects this view.<sup>38</sup>

The 'to be' of each thing and the thing, then, must be one and the same, not only in the soul, but in the world external to the soul as well. Clearly though, they can't be identical in all respects: Chapters Three and Four assert essence to be a this, but not its composites. So by 'one and the same' Aristotle must mean 1) that essence and its composite are together in one place and 2) to the extent that they exist together, some one thing exists which both are. This one thing, the form of the individual composite, functions as the means by which essence declares the thing. Aristotle investigates this (and thereby investigates the extent to which essence can be both a species and be primary) by studying generation.

All destructible things are generated by something (a form identical in kind with that of the thing generated), into something (which we signify by a form), and out of something (which, because it is a privation, has in a sense the same form as the other two). Throughout the entire process, matter is present, since every change requires the potential to be and not to be. It is matter that

becomes something, changing from a 'that' to being 'that-en'.<sup>39</sup> This manner of speaking makes it clear that matter is not an active cause of the such-this it becomes, for matter functions as the underlying subject upon which something else acts. Form plays the dynamic role.

An example of generation by art clarifies the nature of form. "Things generated by art are those whose form is in the soul."<sup>40</sup> Such a generation consists of two parts, with *noēsis* first. Thinking begins from the principle or form:

Now the healthy is generated when a man thinks as follows: since health is so-and-so, if the subject is to be healthy it is to have such-and-such, let us say uniformity, and if uniformity, then warmth; and he always thinks in this manner until he arrives at something final which he himself can produce.<sup>41</sup>

This final stage must be potentially in the body, needing only something to make it actual. The second part of generation, *poiēsis*, refers to the motion from this instant onward -- from the end of thinking, through stages until the form in the soul - health - becomes present in the body.

This example presents form at work; it reveals form to be an active whatness. The form in the soul -- the essence -- determines both the thinking and the production by organizing them towards itself. Essence oversees the process and imposes its requirements at every stage. In 4, Aristotle recognizes a sense of *dynamis* which means "...the principle of change or of motion which exists in another thing or in the same thing *qua* other".<sup>42</sup> In this sense, essence has a dynamic nature. Thus essence, by existing in the composite, is one and the same as the composite not simply, but in so far as it orders the nature of the thing.

Yet why does Aristotle mention stages?<sup>43</sup> Even in the case of an animal's acquisition of its soul he speaks of a gradual development:



...it is not the fact that when an animal is formed, at that same moment a human being, or a horse, or any other particular sort of animal is formed, because the end or completion is the last of all, and that which is peculiar to a thing is the end of its process of formation.<sup>44</sup>

The significance of the stages appears two-fold. The form in a composite is not immediately perfect (hence the two stages of actuality -- hexis and entelecheia) nor entirely simple (present without combination with another type of being<sup>45</sup>). The stages account for variation and individuality. Not a mere direct actualization of one potential, generation is a gradual process during which matter's diverse potentialities become actual -- and actual to different degrees.<sup>46</sup> With animate things, these variations continue throughout the creature's lifetime. This continual change however, does not indicate a ceaseless flux -- that we must at any given instant give the composite a different name and definition because its 'to be' has always just changed. The form (both, 1) the stages -- i.e., the composite's properties and perfections<sup>47</sup> -- and 2) the attributes we receive through sensation) does determine the composite -- and all the constituents of the form do not remain constant; but the essence, which does remain constant, determines the form. While attributes can add or take away from the sensible form, in so far as they cannot alter the composite's determining principle -- essence, they can't alter the composite.

Thus essence -- not sensible form -- declares the composite, because essence is the source of the composite's nature. Most clearly, then, sameness in knowledge differs from complete sameness, for essence is neither the composite's material constituent, nor simply all the actualities that comprise its form. Yet the conclusion of the syllogism that began Chapter Six omits the dokoumen and legomen of the premisses, and asserts, not that we judge each thing to be the same as its

essence, but that each thing is its essence. Now, 'We judge A to be A's x' is understandable when only essence and matter compose A, and matter in itself is unknowable.<sup>48</sup> But how can a thing, not be thought in terms of something that belongs to it, but be that something? A is A, not A's x -- especially when x excludes not only matter, but the individual attributes by which I distinguish A as an individual.

When concluding his study of generation, Aristotle recognizes this:

...in some cases the essence of a thing and the thing are the same, as in first substances;... (By 'first substance' I mean one which is not stated as being in something else or in an underlying subject as in matter). But things which exist as matter, or which include matter, are not the same as their essence...<sup>49</sup>

Because only a first substance is both separate from matter and separate in thought, it alone 'is' in the fullest sense. However, the substances we find in the world, because they need to act in matter, can't be separate in every way, and therefore can't be totally self-sufficient. Hence we do not refer all other beings to substances such as these, for the one and central nature must be simple in all respects.

Chapters Thirteen through Fifteen disclose another falling short of essence when it is not simple. Thirteen begins by rejecting universals as substances. Each of the numerous arguments he presents hinges upon a fundamental claim which arises from his notion of sameness. He says that when present in a thing, substance is present as something peculiar to that thing.<sup>50</sup> A universal, as the one within the many, is peculiar to nothing and so cannot be substance, because things whose substance is one have one essence and are themselves one.<sup>51</sup> But how can we identify essence with substance, then, if an essence is a species?

In a sense, when essence acts in matter, it fragments; found here and found there, essence in each instance makes its matter peculiar. Such substances possess

oneness in kind, not numerical unity. This differs from the unity of a genus in terms of self-sufficiency, since a species, once generated, does not require its instances in order to be, as does a genus. In the case of first substances, however, nothing inhibits the type of sameness they possess; because they do not require matter, essence and substance here are one, simply.

Before unravelling some further difficulties which arise from essence's fragmentation, Aristotle closes his arguments against universals by repeating his central theme. This time, however, he states it in a new way: the actuality of each thing makes it separate.<sup>52</sup> Actuality implies separateness; substance sets each thing apart because of what it is. Separateness provides the first link between whatness and actuality.

Chapter Fifteen intensifies the problems which arise from the reduplication of essence in matter. Answering the question "Of what is definition possible?", Aristotle concludes that we can only define things which are both common in some way (not indivisible in place, as are individuals) and eternal. If essence exists 'in' each thing, and we cannot define these composites because they do not remain, neither can we define essence. But we define substance most of all<sup>53</sup>, and think substance most of all to be permanent and unchanging.<sup>54</sup> Clearly, essence possesses a type of permanence, since it preserves oneness in kind from one generation to the next. Permanence without qualification belongs only to first substances.

But when we view essence solely as whatness, we cannot account for this permanence. Thinking of essence as that which sets each thing apart because of what it is leads Aristotle to focus upon the 'setting apart', thereby unpacking the notion of actuality. Chapter Sixteen illustrates this progression.

In Sixteen, Aristotle identifies the fallacy in two wide-spread notions of substance. "...most of what are regarded as substances are potentialities."<sup>55</sup> The parts of animals, whether we consider them as parts (in which case they are not sepa-

rate), or not as parts (but as matter), cannot be substances. For in either case they are potential and therefore not primary. "...for none of them is one, but they exist like a heap until they are transformed and a unity is produced out of them."<sup>56</sup> One cannot understand a heap without considering its many elements; one can understand a unity, a heap transformed, by considering only the type of unity it is -- by considering its principle or cause. Which is to say, one needs to understand the unity itself, simply.

Neither are universals primary, since we must always refer them to that of which they are the principle.<sup>57</sup> Therefore Aristotle claims that they, too, cannot be substances.

In the case of both the universal and material elements of a thing, then, to be potential is not to be one, for potentiality is always indeterminate. To be one, as Chapter Thirteen states, is to be actual. Aristotle's vision of substance as primary verges on actuality, for actuality implies oneness, and thus also implies separation in virtue of what one is.

At this point, Aristotle chooses to "...continue the discussion from another starting point, so to say,"<sup>58</sup> by asserting substance to be a principle and a cause. We seek the causes of sensible things in two ways, for we can inquire either 1) Why is A A? or 2) Why does B belong to A? Only the latter expresses the investigation properly, because the first either intends the second (although fails to specify the belonging), or the first asks "Why is a thing its whatness?". But when we ask why something is itself, we ask, not whether there exists a cause of its being itself (for the thing's existence makes this clear), but what that cause is. Yet as Chapter One makes clear, there exists no other, more fundamental cause for Aristotle than the 'what' that the thing is; a thing is because it is its essence.

Because of the presence of essence in matter then, when we ask why a thing is, we need to ask why something belongs to something else. For when we seek the

cause of existence or unity in a composite, we seek the unity itself -- we seek the essence which belongs to the composite. This cause is the final cause and -- in cases of generation -- the efficient cause.

Compounds which are one in totality then, consist of material elements and the cause which makes these elements one definite thing. This last is not an element, but "...the substance of each thing; for this is the first cause of the thing's existence". This leads Aristotle to identify essence with nature; since "...those (objects) that are substances are formed according to nature or by nature, the substance of these would appear to be this nature which is not an element but a principle."<sup>59</sup>

The Physics asserts nature to be the principle of movement or rest in a thing.<sup>60</sup> Is substance really such a principle? Throughout 6, Aristotle depicted substance as that which, because of what it was, made a thing peculiar. We knew essence as 'the what the thing was and is and always will be'; any 'making' which resulted from this whatness took place somewhat secondarily. Now however, the 'making' has become identical with the whatness: essence is what we say the thing to be in virtue of itself. Before, Aristotle emphasized 'selfness'; now he emphasizes the atemporal 'to be'.

This shift began in Chapter Seven, which describes whatness as a cause in so far as essence acts dynamically. But why should whatness automatically give rise to movement? Can we really combine these two ways of seeing substance, as Aristotle does in his description of essence?<sup>61</sup> By his very method of presentation, Aristotle seems to say that whatness and actuality are by nature intertwined, and their assimilation inevitable.

Yet they appear to conflict. Essence is a this. But when substance acts in matter and determines the nature of the resultant composite, it no longer seems a this (as Seventeen's insistence upon predication indicates). Rather, it acts as a quality:

But the form signifies a

such and this is not a this and a definite thing; and what the artist makes and the man begets is a such from a this, and what is generated is a such-this.<sup>63</sup>

No whatness except first substance is ever separate from matter. Yet whenever we speak about essence at work in matter, we also speak about suchness, for forms can function as the differences between things.<sup>63</sup>

However, we distinguish two types of differences -- those between individuals and those between species. A composite becomes a man because essence sets matter apart and makes it definite. Yet since essence acts in this way more than once, this 'setting apart' also groups composites. Hence, essence in itself does not set matter directly apart, for it unites individuals in kind.

Of the differences between individuals, those attributes which manifest an individual's progress towards its essence -- properties -- set the individual apart in the greatest degree. Snubness does not distinguish only Socrates; the way in which Socrates was what every man is said to be does set Socrates apart from all others.

So we call a thing 'such' in virtue of its essence, but we call a thing a 'this' in virtue of certain particularities of its sensible form. Yet the very properties we select to distinguish an individual reflect its essence. Indeed, because essence acts as a potency, directing all that occurs towards itself, it both causes the composite's properties and alters its accidents (and these two together comprise sensible form). Therefore essence -- not the properties -- makes the thing a this. And even though essence, due to its fragmentation, acts as a such when it determines basic characteristics, the act of essence itself is still a this.<sup>64</sup>

The thisness of essence appears as suchness then, solely because of its presence in matter. But all substances except first substances act in matter. Therefore only first substances are peculiar in the fullest sense for only they both act and

are a this without qualification. But can an act ever be a this? What does it mean to be in act?

In place of a definition, Aristotle opposes actuality to potentialities and then to motion. "Energeia is the existence of a thing, not in the way that we say something exists potentially."<sup>65</sup> The examples he cites fall into three classes: 1) the exercise of an ability, which he contrasts with the ability; 2) something we separate from its matter, which he opposes to the matter; and 3) the finished product, to the raw material. In a sense, all three perform the same act -- the act of being what we say each to be. When seeing, the eye is doing what an eye is said to do; when separated, the line segment is being itself rather than a part of some large line. They also -- if we speak analogically -- share whatness, for each is the accomplishment of an intention. Energeia then, is both an act and an end. Derived from ergon, energeia, points to entelecheia.

This same set of relations creates the opposition between energeia and kinēsis. While a motion has limit (toperas), a motion is not an end (telos); rather, it exists for the sake of something other than itself. Hence, we call a motion incomplete (ateleia). An actuality, while not finished in the way of a motion (for an actuality can continue indefinitely), nevertheless completes itself at any time because it is its own end. Due to its completeness, energeia points to entelecheia.

But can we identify actuality, as Aristotle describes it, with substance? When we viewed substance as whatness, peculiarity characterized substance most of all. The peculiarity of actuality, its 'thisness', becomes manifest as completeness.

In Book 6, Aristotle unpacked the separateness compounded within peculiarity by examining the three ways in which whatness is prior. Actuality is prior in the same three ways.

It is prior in formula: "that which is primarily capable is capable by

view of the fact that it may be an actuality".<sup>66</sup>

Secondly, only a thing in actuality can bring a potential into act.<sup>67</sup> This moving cause can either resemble the potential, in which case the priority arises from time (for example, a seed becomes actual because of its parent), or it can differ, in which case the priority arises because the substance of the cause is eternal simply, while the substance of the thing caused is permanent only in a qualified way. Priority in substance precedes temporal priority because, in order to become actual, every potential relies ultimately upon necessary and indestructible things -- upon eternally active substances. In either case, however, actuality is both self-sufficient and the efficient cause of destructible things.

Finally, we said essence was prior in knowledge, because we understand a thing in the highest degree when we understand its essence. Essence declares a thing, as Chapter Seven shows, because it acts as a final cause. An actuality, as complete, is also a final cause. Thus it, too, declares a thing.

These three priorities reveal that definiteness does belong to an actuality. We call a thing peculiar when it sets itself apart in virtue of what it is; we say a thing is in act when it sets itself apart in virtue of what it is doing. Aristotle's two visions of substance need not contradict.

If something has, in itself and because of itself, a tendency for change, we call that thing 'natural'.<sup>68</sup> Since essence acts as a final cause, it is a principle of movement which initiates and governs the progress of the composite in its actuality and towards itself. (For example, if the essence of an animal is to partake in the divine by the preservation of its species, an animal -- because of desire -- will feed itself and reproduce.) In such a principle resides the nature of each composite. Yet essence does not abandon peculiarity when it acts as a nature, for an act can be a this.

Thus in Aristotle's vision of a substance as nature, whatness and actuality merge clearly. But if we view essences

in this way we must also regard only first substances and souls as genuine substances -- as things which are substances not merely by an analogy. This merging of whatness and actuality then, transforms the investigation of De Anima into an investigation of substance, as substance appears due to its fragmentation in matter.

Just as the Metaphysics progresses towards the Prime Mover as 'substance' in the fullest sense, so De Anima focusses upon one particular principle of movement as the most complete expression of substance when present in destructible things. For De Anima investigates man's last differentia, his ability to know. This ability rests upon a meeting or encounter between the soul and its object. As a result of this meeting, the soul becomes a likeness (to homoion) of this object and exists in a way like that object (hōmoiōtai).<sup>69</sup> Hence the object upon which the soul focusses determines the nature of both the activity of meeting and the knowledge in which this meeting results.

Now the soul encounters two types of objects -- sensible and intelligible. As the soul comes to know them, it becomes all things.<sup>70</sup> What then, are these objects, which together contain all our world? What does the soul really come to know by means of this meeting in which the soul preserves itself by progressing towards its own actuality?

The division between sensible and intelligible objects coincides with the division in the Metaphysics between sensible form and essence:

Since there is a difference between magnitude and the essence of magnitude, flesh and the essence of flesh...and since flesh exists not without matter but as this snubness in this nose, it is by the sentient power that the soul discriminates the hot and the cold and the things whose formula is flesh;

but by the intellect that the soul discriminates the essence of flesh.<sup>71</sup> Therefore when sensing, the soul encounters sensible form -- the form of a composite in so far as the form is sensible; when thinking, the soul encounters essence -- what we say the composite to be in virtue of itself. This distinction first appeared in the Metaphysics when Aristotle spoke about generation in 6,7 (pg. 9-11). For in his example of generation by art, he distinguished the essence of health from the various stages in which the doctor produces that form in the body. The stages seem to express the individuality and diversity which mark every composite simply because 1) essence acts as a first actuality and 2) essence is present in matter, which has diverse potentials. Yet although these stages involve individuality, they still progress towards health, their cause. Likewise, although the soul receives the perceptible attributes in all their individuality, these attributes still point towards essence, their source. Yet even though essence causes this showing forth of itself -- i.e., causes the attributes, while we sense the attributes, we do not sense essence itself (just as the form of health regulates the stages which lead to it without becoming identical with them).

We, too, acknowledge a difference between sensible form and essence: for while we sense water (sensible form), we would not say that we know water -- but we do know what water is (essence). And while we drink water, we would not claim to drink what water is. Therefore even our manner of speech suggests a tension between these two methods of knowing.

The source of this tension lies in the work within the composite that each object performs. For essence, as a first actuality which directs the composite onward and towards itself, strains against the present actualities of the sensible form. This strain constructs a conflict between what the composite appears at this moment to be and what the composite strives to be. Since both of these in some sense are the composite (although neither is simply identical with it), it

seems as if we can know some one composite in two respects -- for we can encounter essence or sensible form (essence as it manifests itself when in matter).

But before we know anything in either of these two ways, the soul attends to its object; a 'meeting' occurs. The meeting from which sensation arises appears to be a sort of mediated touching -- we come to know each composite through 'touching' its perceptible qualities.<sup>72</sup> When I see a robin, it 'touches' me by its color and shape; when I hear it, it 'touches' me by its sound. Sensible form functions as a mediator whose activity enables us to know an individual composite. We recognize this immediate connection between attributes and their composite in our speech while I can say "I see a color" or "I hear a sound" without mentioning the subject in which they must be present, when I am actually sensing I would be far more likely to say "I see a bird" than "I see the color of a bird", or "I hear a bird" than "I hear the sound of a bird". While we can separate an attribute from its composite -- because they do in fact differ -- whenever the soul encounters the world we recognize their connection: sensible form is essence as essence reveals itself when in combination with potentiality, with indeterminacy.

The process in which sensible form becomes known manifests even further the indirect nature of sensation. For we always receive sensible form through an intervening medium which is of a physical nature, such as air or flesh.<sup>73</sup> Yet despite the involvement of a physical medium, and the related fact that the proper sensibles have a close connection with the proximate matter of their composite, we never 'touch' matter. When I 'touch' a composite -- matter that a form has made actual, such as any one of the four elements or their combinations -- I 'touch', not its matter, but the actuality in the matter. Since matter, when not in combination with a form, is nothing but potentiality, a type of non-being,<sup>74</sup> a soul can never encounter it. Whenever the soul apprehends an object, it meets a being.

In the case of the meeting we call

thought, the soul requires neither a medium nor an organ. For an essence is not a being in so far as being shows itself through secondary categories associated with proximate matter; rather, it is a being simply. Therefore whenever the soul contacts essence, it contacts being directly -- by an indivisible act in an indivisible time.<sup>75</sup> (Aristotle uses thigein in place of haphē -- his usual word for touch -- to describe this rare meeting.) As a result of this direct contact, the intellect comes to know an essence in a way in which such beings never exist actually outside the soul -- as separate.

Yet despite its separation from sensible matter, such essence is still not primary in the fullest sense. Rather, since the actuality that is an essence makes definite one potential of its genus, essence becomes part of an intelligible composite.<sup>76</sup> As a result of the action of essence in the intelligible matter of its genus, the soul can define essence -- unlike first substances -- because it can analyze essence into its constituents.<sup>77</sup>

But when the soul meets these two different objects -- sensible form and essence -- in these two different ways, what does it know? What sort of thing is an aisthēma or a noēma? What do they reveal to us?

In Book 2 of De Anima, Aristotle says:

That which acts in producing actual sensation is external to the thing which senses it, and this is the visible thing or the audible thing (to horaton kai to akouston) or any of the other sensible objects; and the cause of this is the fact that sensation, when actual is of an individual object. Knowledge, on the other hand, is of things universally taken, and these exist in the soul in a certain manner.<sup>78</sup>

Because sensible form arises from the activity of essence in matter, sensation can only result in knowledge of individual

facts or in groupings of these facts. Thus sensation tells me that this fire is hot, or that this round, sweet, red thing which I find on a certain tree each year in autumn is an apple. Since, as we sense qualities, we become aware of the form these qualities somehow express, even our most basic sensations are not simple; rather, they connect a quality or qualities with the composite, which underlies them. For when seeing, I see a particular bird, as its color and shape reveal it to be. Sensation acquaints us with what is at any given moment, for it tells us how things appear. By making known the phenomena, sensation enables us to take effective practical action.

Therefore when we sense, we 'touch' certain differentiae of an individual composite<sup>79</sup>; when we think, we contact a composite's last differentia (*Teleuta diaphona*) -- the principle which sets the composite apart because of its peculiarity.<sup>80</sup> This knowledge of the whatness of thing explains the combinations sensation makes known by revealing their cause.

But to know the precise contents of such an explanation seems a difficult thing. A *prōton noēma* is not a definition because when we define something we distinguish between its material and actual parts -- yet we contact essence by an indivisible act in an indivisible time. Indeed, such knowledge precedes definition. But if we don't really know what a thing is until we define it, how can we claim, merely by contacting essence, to know whatness?

A similar problem surfaces in the case of sensation, since the knowledge in which sensation results connects with whatness, while it also precedes definition. For when we 'touch' qualities such as sound or color, we become aware of the essence which causes them, and therefore say that we sense the composite substance in which we find them. But in this 'awareness' we neither contact essence nor define it; rather, we gain a sense of the composite's purpose. Because a composite's final cause -- its essence -- orders the entire composite towards the attainment of itself, sensible form

expresses that end. Therefore when I hear a whisper behind me, and then a scream, I discriminate between the two on the basis of their purpose, which I discover from differences in their qualities. But knowledge of the function for which a thing appears to be shaped merely points to whatness; the soul has not yet reached a clear understanding of the one ordering function which causes all the rest.

However, as we describe sensation and thought in relation to what each reveals about whatness, the strength of the difference between the two dwindles. Why then does Aristotle insist so strongly upon the importance of isolating the one ordering function? Aristotle states this difference most strongly when he contrasts the relation each holds to wonder. ('Wonder', to *thaumazō* comes from *theaomai* which means to gaze at or behold, and hence also, to contemplate).

Knowledge of a phenomenon fails to satisfy wonder -- indeed, it is the source which sparks our amazement. And while repeated sensations can dull or stifle wonder, they cannot bring us to the contrary state -- knowledge of the cause can. For example, once a geometrician knows the cause of the incommensurability between a diagonal and the side of its square, nothing would make him wonder more than if he found a diagonal which was commensurable with its side. We feel wonder whenever we can't give an account of something because it contradicts our expectations -- whenever we are perplexed (*aporoumen*) and lack a way (*apōros*).<sup>81</sup> Once we know a thing's cause, however, we can account for it; at this point, conviction (*pistis*) replaces wonder.

Aristotle calls this knowledge which satisfies wonder 'wisdom', and asserts it to be the highest of all the sciences. He calls 'experience' the most advanced knowledge which the soul becomes as a result of sensation. If the strain between essence and sensible form -- between thinking and sensing -- is more than just ostensible, it should find its highest expression in a conflict between experience and wisdom.

When Aristotle explains the vari-

ous ways in which the soul encounters the world, he constructs a hierarchy, all the levels of which arise originally from the soul's ability to encounter sensible form.

...out of many sensations memory comes to be, and out of many memories of the same thing experience comes to be. Out of experience, or out of the universal which has come to rest in the soul, and which, being the one alongside the many, is the same in all of them, a principle of art or of science (comes to be).<sup>82</sup>

Because the diverse memories which combine to create experience concern sensible form, the soul responsible for experience is the sentient soul. But Aristotle also describes experience as similar *homoios* to wisdom<sup>83</sup>, and speaks of it with a universal, for experience is the *logos* of many memories. Although these memories differ in content, because each points to one common thing, they together form a system or unit of observations. In experience, the soul recognizes the existence of a cause and effect relationship, for it applies the past to the present but the reason for the success of this application remains unknown. When a certain set of events occurs (for instance, a child has a fever, sore throat, and lethargy), experience tells us what to do to remedy the situation (to give the child medicine since he has strep throat). However, experience can not reveal that this medicine cures the child because it kills the particular strain of bacteria responsible for strep throat.<sup>84</sup> Thus while it provides an account of the memories which act as its material, experience cannot account for itself. Rather, either science or art provides the account we desire.

Now wisdom is the highest of all the sciences, for it studies the causes and principles upon which all beings depend. Therefore, as a result of following the method which seeks the one function that orders all the remaining activities, we come to know an essence which cannot be known by sensation because it doesn't

reside in matter.

Such a science is not a productive science:

...for it was when almost all the necessities of life were supplied, both for comfort and activity, that such thinking began to be sought. Clearly then, we do not seek this science for any other need; but just as a man is said to be free if he exists for his own sake and not for the sake of somebody else, so this alone of all the sciences is free, for only this science exists for its own sake

Does the tension then, between experience and wisdom, sensing and thinking, find voice in this self-sufficiency? Has Aristotle cemented the division between sensible form and essence in the estrangement of first philosophy from all other knowledge?

But Aristotle envisions these different ways of encountering the world as forming a hierarchy. Thus, rather than straining against each other, experience leads to wisdom, just as sensible form leads to and is ordered by essence. Wisdom, while it does not require the other sciences, regulates them -- practical and speculative alike -- because all other things depend upon and strive to resemble the primary object of its investigation.<sup>86</sup> Because all other substances stand as underlying subjects in relation to this first principle, whoever knows this first principle understands potentially all other things.<sup>87</sup> Therefore, in order to possess the deepest understanding of the things and actions around us, we require wisdom. Yet we do not by nature desire this understanding because of the benefits it renders with respect to these other objects; rather, we desire it for its own sake.

But when a man possesses wisdom, he knows not merely the first principles, but also that which follows from them.<sup>88</sup> To contact essence is not sufficient in order to be wise; we need to reflect discursively as well. So, then, what do we

know by the act in which we contact an essence? Would not the nature of this knowledge be similar to that which the first philosopher possesses of the primary principle? But what would such knowledge be?

Aristotle says:

Those who wish to succeed in arriving at answers will find it profitable to go over the difficulties; for answers successfully arrived at are solutions to diffi-

culties previously discussed, and one cannot untie a knot if he is ignorant of it.<sup>89</sup>

Before we can understand the essence of man -- the essence of ourselves -- we need to understand 1) the object of the soul's activity -- being (both sensible form and essence), and 2) the result of this activity (aisthema and noema). Clearly then, our difficult knot remains still tied, awaiting a further attempt.

1. De Anima, 433a31-32; 433b29-31.
2. Ibid., 432a15-17.
3. Ibid., 432a30-32.
4. Ibid., 415a15-23.
5. Ibid., 431b24-a3.
6. Ibid., 429b13-18.
7. Metaphysics, 1017a9-b9.
8. Ibid., 1003a33-34.
9. Ibid., 1054a13-19.
10. Ibid., 1003b23-24.
11. Ibid., 1011b25-28.
12. Ibid., 1028a15.
13. Ibid., 1048a32.
14. Ibid., 1028a14-15.
15. Ibid., 1041b4-5; and Posterior Analytics, 89b36-a15.
16. Ibid., 1054a10-13; 1053b16-23.
17. Ibid., 1028a20-31.
18. Topics, 101b19-24.
19. Odyssey, Book III, line 82-84.
20. Metaphysics, 1003a10. A substance is a this and can be exhibited
21. Physics, 184a16-b14.
22. Metaphysics, 1003b16-18.
23. Ibid., 1024a8-9.
24. Categories, 3b10.
25. Metaphysics, 1029a27. Matter would appear as nothing because, in order for it to be absolutely separate, we must remove the attributes which bound matter (length, width, and depth) and also those which make matter's presence known to us (color), because the being of these attributes is not the same as that of matter (which is solely potential)
26. Ibid., 1029a26.
27. Ibid., 1029a33.
28. Ibid., 1007a29-b16.
29. Ibid., 1030a3-5.
30. Ibid., 1030a12-14.
31. Ibid., 1037b17-21.
32. Ibid., 1052a23-29.
33. Ibid., 1050a9-10.
34. Ibid., 1030a30.
35. Ibid., 1031a15-18.
36. Metaphysics, 1030b19-21.

#### Footnotes

37. Topics, 103b31.
38. Metaphysics, 1033b26-30. and On Interpretations, 16a4-9.
39. Metaphysics, 1033a18-22.
40. Ibid., 1032b1. While there seems to be an inconsistency in naming both essence (the form in the soul which determines generation) and the properties and accidents by 'form', this is really only another expression of analogous predication. While the two do differ, both are actualities although to different degrees.
41. Ibid., 1032b5-10.
42. Ibid., 1019a15-21.
43. Ibid., 1032b26-28.
44. Generation of Animals, 736a35-b11.
45. Metaphysics, 1037b15-17.
46. Physics, 193b13-19.
47. Properties and perfections are closely related--perhaps even identical. For a property is something that belongs to its composite because of its essence, for example, the ability to learn grammar is a property of man. Thus, properties are essence, improperly understood. Perfections are similar: "For neither the habits of the body nor those of the soul are alterations. For of the habits, some are virtues and others vices...a virtue is a kind of perfection (for when each thing acquires its virtue it is said to be perfect; for a thing exists in the highest degree according to nature when, to use an example, like a perfect circle, it has become a circle in the highest sense and the best circle), while a vice is a destruction or departure from that perfection." Physics, 246a10-17.
48. Metaphysics, 1036a9-10.

49. Ibid., 1037b1-8.  
 50. Ibid., 1038b24.  
 51. Ibid., 1038b14-15.  
 52. Ibid., 1039a8.  
 53. Ibid., 1034a20.  
 54. A substance, because it is prior in time, is that upon which all other beings depend. If no substances were to exist, nothing would exist. Therefore it seems as if substances are eternal. Metaphysics, 1071b5-8.  
 55. Ibid., 1048b5-6.  
 56. Ibid., 1040b9-10.  
 57. Categories, 8a31-b2.  
 58. Metaphysics, 1041a7-8.  
 59. Ibid., 1041b27-32.  
 60. Physics, 192b22-23.  
 61. Metaphysics, 1029b14-15.  
 62. Ibid., 1033b23-25.  
 63. Categories, 10a11-13: A fourth genus of qualities is the shape or the form of each thing, and we may add to these straightness and curvature and other like them. For a thing, in virtue of each of these, is said to be such and such." Topics, 144a20-22: "...the differentia always signifies a quality."  
 64. When speaking of the three kinds of substance Aristotle says: "...another is nature, which is a this, and it is that to which something changes, and a possession... In some cases, that which is a this does not exist apart from a composite substance." Metaphysics, 1070a11-16.  
 Or again: "...in another sense it (substance) is the formula

- or the form, which is a this and separable in formula (only) ..." Ibid., 104228-29.  
 65. Ibid., 1048a32-33.  
 66. Ibid., 1049b13-14.  
 67. Ibid., 1029b32-a28.  
 68. Physics, 192b16-21.  
 69. De Anima, 418a6-7.  
 70. Ibid., 431b20-23.  
 71. Ibid., 429b10-18.  
 72. Ibid., 418a74-76.  
 73. Ibid., 423b12-17.  
 74. Metaphysics, 1089a26-31.  
 75. De Anima, 430b14-16.  
 76. Just as we call both the sensible composite and its essence 'substance' (because the first points to the second), so we call both the intelligible composite of species plus genus and also just the part of the composite that is actual 'essence'.  
 77. Metaphysics, 1045-34-35.  
 78. De Anima, 417b20-23.  
 79. Metaphysics, 1042b32-35.  
 These differentiae are members of the secondary categories.  
 80. Ibid., 1038a16-30.  
 81. Ibid., 982b17.  
 82. Posterior Analytics, 100a3-9.  
 83. Metaphysics, 981a2-3.  
 84. Ibid., 981a4-12.  
 85. Ibid., 982b12-28.  
 86. Ibid., 1072b14; and Nichomachean Ethics, 1141b23-24, and 1145a10-11.  
 87. Metaphysics, 982a21-23, and 992b3-4.  
 88. Nichomachean Ethics, 1141a16-20.  
 89. Metaphysics, 995a28-30.

## Beethoven...A Comedian?!

Kenneth Martin

At the time that Beethoven wrote the Third Symphony, there was a certain form for the composer to follow when he wrote a symphony. This form dictated the number of movements and a certain order in which they were to be placed. Since the movements were entitled according to the tempo at which it was to be played, this order also dictated the tempo of each movement. For instance the first movement of the Third Symphony is entitled "Allegro con brio". This means merry, with spirit. Beethoven breaks from this tradition when he writes the second and third movements. Traditionally the second movement was slow--Beethoven keeps that, but he entitles the movement "Marcia funebre" which means funeral march. He seems to want to place an image in the listeners mind. To make sure that the image gets there, he gives the movement a title which will place it there. The image is that of a funeral--thus one of grief.

The third movement he entitles "Scherzo" which means joke. The traditional third movement of a symphony was a minuet. This is a dance in 3/4 time which was played quickly. Why does Beethoven bring a joke into his symphony and why is it a joke? Before we approach the technical question of "how is it a joke?", we shall put forth a hypothesis about why he chooses a scherzo.

As we mentioned before, Beethoven breaks tradition at first with the second movement--the funeral march. This is an extremely slow movement designed to convey a feeling of grief to the listener. At the conclusion of this movement the listener is immersed in a cloud of grief. This cloud is thick, making it difficult to breathe or move. The listener is in danger of suffocating or drowning because

he is so saturated with grief. For Beethoven to leave the listener in that cloud of grief is to stab him in the heart and let him bleed. Since he immersed us into that cloud, he now has to reach out to us and help us back into the clear air. He does this by telling us a joke.

Beethoven realizes that although grief is an important thing for humans to express, it should not overwhelm us and become part of us. If grief does overwhelm us, it is bad because grieving is basically a selfish emotion. When someone dies, the mourning is not for the person who died, but for the lives that have to go on living without him. After all, if we believe in life after death, we should rejoice for the person who died, for he has moved to someplace better. Thus it can be seen that grief is a selfish thing and when a person lets it overwhelm him, he is being selfish. Beethoven seems to think that the best way to move a person from grief is to make him laugh. Let us see how he attempts this difficult task.

The third movement is a masterpiece whose main purpose is to keep the audience off balance. Throughout the piece, although the tempo never changes, it is difficult to keep in time with the music. It keeps running away from the listener, who is trying to catch it and make it part of him. Beethoven never lets the listener catch up, because if he does, he will become wrapped in his own inner world. He lets this happen in the second movement. Now he wants us to become part of society again. This means we have to strive to catch what we want--as in the third movement.

To make clearer what I mean by keeping someone off balance, to let him laugh, let us glance at how a comedian

works. A comedian's job is a difficult one, because his audience's purpose is to be made to laugh. Since they expect this it makes the comedian's job tougher, because that is the easiest way to make people laugh--to give them the unexpected. But it has to be unexpected in an uncertain way. For instance, a comedian who came out and read a tragic poem probably would not get laughed at, for tragedy is simply the opposite of comedy. The comedian has to move in a completely different motion than the audience would ever expect.

A good stand up comedian never lets his audience rest once he has got them laughing. He tells a joke and when it is over he immediately tells another. If the audience does not laugh, he can sometimes salvage it by buffoonery. If the audience does laugh, as soon as they have quieted enough to hear him speak, he begins another joke. This way the audience does not have time to get its expectations straight. Thus they laugh more easily.

Beethoven does much the same thing. The movement opens in 3/4 time with three beats to a measure. He states the theme of the movement in the first fifteen measures of the piece. By the end of the seventh measure the listener's sense of time is already confused. If he has a score, he knows it is 3/4 time, otherwise he is in limbo. In the first place the music is moving so fast that it is impossible to count each beat in the measure, so the listener is left tapping his foot to the first beat of every measure. The problem with this is that the listener has to trust his ear to tell him which beat is the first beat of the measure. Usually, since it is the strongest beat in the measure and composers use it as such, it is easily found. However Beethoven fools everyone because he starts on the last beat of a measure and uses a one, two count to fool the listener into 2/4 time. This is accomplished by emphasizing every other beat, thus the person counts 2/4. But at measure nine he slips in an extra unaccented beat--meaning that we are in 3/4 time. The listener

starts tapping every one of the one, two, three count. Then at measure sixteen he jumps back into the 2/4 time of the first seven measures. The listener is off balance again. At measure twenty-two, he moves back into 3/4 emphasizing the first beat of each measure again. Then at thirty he reenters 2/4 time. This lasts until measure forty-two where 3/4 time asserts itself again. We stay in 3/4 time until measure fifty-eight where 2/4 comes in again. This is a confused section where it is tough to get any sort of rhythm at all. This confusion lasts to measure seventy where 3/4 is emphasized strongly by the violas and contra bass playing the same note (D) eleven times through three and two-thirds measures (70-73) then moving to another note (Bb) on the first beat of bar seventy-four and playing it eleven times through another three and two-thirds measures (74-77). Then at the last beat of bar seventy-seven we move back to the one, two punch of 2/4 time. This back and forth motion lasts until bar one hundred and sixteen. We have been in 2/4 since bar one hundred and eleven. Then we get three successive sets of quarter notes moving to half notes. These throw our timing off completely. The nearest thing we can grasp is 3/4, but it is difficult because the strong beat comes on two of the measure, instead of one where we need it to get the sense of 3/4 time. As soon as these three bars (116-119) are finished we get a solid statement of 3/4 time with two bars (122-3) which state one chord on each beat in the first bar then another chord on all three beats of the second. Then in bar one hundred twenty four we get that confused quarter note to half note step again. After this set (124-7) we get another set in a 3/4 time as before. This lasts until bar one hundred and forty four where 3/4 reasserts itself by playing the melody notes only on the first beat of the measure. This moves us all the way to the repeat of bar one hundred and sixty four in 3/4 time. It is evident then, that Beethoven strives to keep us off balance and does so in the first section of the movement.

The trio which begins at measure one hundred and sixty seven and ends at measure two hundred and sixty, may be the only place where we have a chance to catch the music. Although the tempo stays the same, the fact that the same note is being held over a longer period of time tends to make us think of a slower tempo. From bar one hundred and sixty seven to bar two hundred and six he uses the last beat of a measure to emphasize the first beat of the next measure. This gives the listener a steady sense of 3/4 time which lasts for a time. This enables the listener to catch his breath and get some stable ground for a moment. A moment later he plunges the listener into a trio of flute, clarinet, and bassoon (Fogotto) at bar two hundred and six. Our sense of 3/4 time lasts for a measure before he starts emphasizing every other beat again. The listener falters, striving to get in time with the melody. This lasts from bar two hundred and six to bar two hundred and twenty five where a trio of horns comes in with the first melody of the trio to bring us back to 3/4 time. Again Beethoven just lets the listener get the feel of the rhythm before he changes it again. We last in 3/4 until the repeat at bar two hundred and sixty.

At two hundred and twenty five of the second ending he brings us back to the original theme of the movement, starting again in 2/4 time. This part is almost an exact replica of the beginning. The crucial difference occurs in measures three hundred and eighty one to three hundred and eighty five. This is the spot where we are used to a quarter note to half note to quarter note half note cadence. We finally have come to terms with the back and forth motion from 2/4 to 3/4. Then here he moves to 2/2 time. Our timing is thrown into outer space. This is the climax of the joke and "the joke is on us". From there he move back into a 2/4 at measure three hundred and eighty five until around four hundred and one. Here he emphasizes the first beat of every measure

again, giving us our sure 3/4 time. This lasts until bar four hundred and twenty two where he gives us an authentic cadence on the first beat of a measure. This occurs in bars four hundred twenty one to four hundred twenty two. This gives a sure sense of 3/4 time.

He moves into the coda in a 2/4 time. This is seen in bar four hundred and twenty three in the timpani giving us a one, two count. Then the violins and viola come in emphasizing the 2/4. Over-top of this 2/4 time in the bass, he puts the melody in 3/4 with the clarinet and foggotto playing two dotted quarter notes back to back followed by a quarter note on the first beat of the measure (425-27). The flute joins with the melody in bar four hundred and twenty nine to four hundred and thirty one. Then we get a solid 2/4 from bars four hundred thirty one to four hundred and thirty nine with the entire orchestra moving at one two, one two. Then at four hundred and thirty nine he gives us a cadence on one, then two rests. Bar four hundred and forty and four hundred and forty one do the same. This pushes us again to 3/4 time and ends the piece.

It becomes evident that Beethoven has masterfully designed this movement to bring the listener out of his own inner world of grief and self pity. He strives to move us to a shared outer world full of joy in that sharing. If he gives us a joyful sounding piece in which we are able to find our timing, he offers us a way back into that inner world which is so lonely. By constantly shifting the rhythm from 2/4 to 3/4 he refuses the way to that inner world. Before we can get there we have to be able to become as one with the music. This can only happen if we are with it rhythmically. Thus in chasing the music to become one with it we forget ourselves and think of the music, or even better, of someone else. Thus, the third movement is not a joke so much as an end to grieving.

Kyrie  
Jerry Spires

Handwritten musical score for Kyrie on page 74. It consists of two systems of music. Each system has four staves: a vocal line (treble clef), a piano accompaniment line (treble clef), and two bass lines (bass clef). The lyrics are: "KY-RI-E E-LE-I-SON. CHRI-STE E-LE-I-SON." The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *mp* and *pp*.

Jerry Spires attended St. John's in Annapolis for two years. He is now studying liberal arts at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon. The Kyrie here printed is part of his Mass entitled "The Solemn Joy".

Handwritten musical score for Kyrie on page 75. It continues the musical composition from page 74. It features four staves per system: a vocal line (treble clef), a piano accompaniment line (treble clef), and two bass lines (bass clef). The lyrics are: "KY-RI-E E-LE-I-SON." The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *mp* and *pp*.





# The Harmony of the Solids

Martin Marklin

A Project for the Laboratory  
Mr. Curtis Wilson, Advisor

Preface:

I sense I have today witnessed something great!

It is my intention to show in this little paper something remarkable which I happened upon not totally by accident, namely this: there is indeed audible harmony among the five regular solids. These solids, celebrated since the days of Pythagoras and Plato, have more harmony and design than I suspect has been known until today. But before I begin to give my account, permit me, kind reader, to recount the occasion of such a blessed finding and to explain why I undertook this endeavor.

It was some months ago that I first was introduced to the study of acoustics, and undoubtedly the most fascinating phenomenon of this science was the Harmonic Overtone Series of a vibrating string. While I was perusing those small whole number ratios, I recollected seeing them before in my geometrical studies. For I had discovered in Euclid's Thirteenth Book that, for at least three of the five regular solids, the edges were related in square to the diameter by small whole number ratios. What a beautiful coincidence!

Lest I lose someone before I even begin, allow me to recall here the ratios of the five regular solids and those of the Harmonic Overtone Series:

\*The symbol  $()^2$  is not algebraic. It is a short way of expressing "The square constructed on..." It would be inconsistent to think here that one should multiply the length of the side by itself.

Tetrahedron:

The square on the diameter of the comprehending sphere is one and a half times the square on the side of the pyramid.  
 $(\text{side of tetrahedron})^2 : (\text{diameter})^2 :: 2:3$

Octahedron:

The square on the diameter of the comprehending sphere is double the square on the side of the octahedron.  
 $(\text{side of octahedron})^2 : (\text{diameter})^2 :: 1:2$

Cube:

The square on the diameter of the comprehending sphere is triple the square on the side of the cube.  
 $(\text{side of cube})^2 : (\text{diameter})^2 :: 1:3$

Icosahedron:

The side of the icosahedron is the irrational straight line called minor.

Dodecahedron:

The side of the dodecahedron is the irrational straight line called apotome.

The Harmonic Overtone Series

|       |             |
|-------|-------------|
| 1 : 2 | Octave      |
| 2 : 3 | Fifth       |
| 3 : 4 | Fourth      |
| 4 : 5 | Major Third |
| 5 : 6 | Minor Third |

Now what was immediately obvious to me was that the octave and the octahedron have the same ratio, namely 1:2. Moreover, the octave and the octahedron embody the same number eight: eight notes in the

former and eight faces in the latter.

Now this similarity could hardly be accounted a simple coincidence! And so I set out upon my search for perfection, to see where blessed nature left fingerprints of her perfection. I looked to geometry and music, for my presumption was that music is in a sense "sensed mathematics".

The five regular solids were not new models of perfection, harmony, and creation. They go as far back as Pythagoras and Plato; and perhaps the best lighting for the solids appears in Plato's Timaeus, in which Timaeus tells his "likely story" of creation. But his account is not a creation account--and by creation I mean strictly "creation from nothing"--for the demiurge fashions the world after archtypes eternal and perfect. Timaeus links the solids to the four elements: For bodies to be bodies they must be both tangible and visible which are the results of earth and fire, respectively. Earth is represented by the cube and fire by the tetrahedron. Now between any two solid bodies there need to be two proportionals. Hence, water (icosahedron) and air (octahedron) serve to bind these two elements together. The fifth solid, the dodecahedron, serves as the container for the other elements.

But even better than this, I had for my guide Master Johannes Kepler, who said that God the creator was a playful, geometricizing God. By this Kepler meant that God created the world out of love and for delight. Furthermore, God used the two tools of the geometer, the straight-edge and the compass. Even though the phrase "Harmony of the Spheres"--to describe celestial mechanics--precedes Kepler by many centuries (it goes back to Pythagoras, who claimed that he and a few other select persons in history were capable of training themselves to audibly hear the musical harmony of the planetary heavens), Kepler used this as his foundation for his Harmonice Mundi (Harmonics of the World).

Accordingly the movements of the heavens are nothing except a certain everlasting polyphony

(intelligible, not audible) with dissonant tunings, like certain syncopations or cadences (wherewith men imitate these natural dissonances), . . . Hence it is no longer a surprise that man, the ape of his Creator, should finally have discovered the art of singing polyphonically (per concentum), which was unknown to the ancients, namely in order that he might play the everlastingness of all created time in some short part of an hour by means of an artistic concord of many voices and that he might to some extent taste the satisfaction of God the Workman with His own works, in that very sweet sense of delight elicited from this music which imitates God.

--Harmonice, Book V, Chapter 7

Now the phrase "not audible" befuddled me, and I resolved to try to make audible harmonies by means of the five regular solids, in light of the coincident ratios with the harmonic overtone series.

#### First Beginnings:

My first inclination was to construct out of wire the regular solids, given the correct dimensions so that they would be comprehended within the same sphere. My thinking was this: since the edges of the solids were in harmonic ratios, why not make them as one tunes a string? In this manner the notes produced by the plucked strings would give the harmonic intervals of the octave, the fifth, the fourth, and so on.

What significance this would have! We now stretch strings over several feet within a piano. Wouldn't it be beautiful to have those very same ratios given within the confines of one sphere, determined by the five regular solids--the most perfect of all rectilinear bodies. For the mystery of the five regular solids

lies in the fact that there are precisely five and no more. Moreover, the regular solids are the most a rectilinear body can approach the sphere, the perfectly curved.

My enthusiasm was not enough, however, to surmount the obstacle of "commensurable only in square". For no sooner had I begun my calculations than I realized that those small whole number ratios applied only to the squares constructed on the sides of the solids. To a geometer these squares mean area, not the algebraic notion of taking a length times itself. It became increasingly clearer to me that my polyphonic model would not be so easy to construct. I had already begun, whether I had realized at the time or not, my war on incommensurability.

One day, however, I learned that while string-lengths exhibit a one dimensional vibration mode, drums require two-dimensional membranes to sound their natural resonances. What a joy and what new hope this news brought to me! Once again I had the hope of somehow circumventing "commensurable only in square".

And why not drums? For the five regular solids are three-dimensional bodies; they are polyhedra and not polygons. Why should their natural resonance be limited by a one-dimensional string length? It would be far more appropriate to construct the solids as drums, thus letting the whole body sound its own natural resonance.

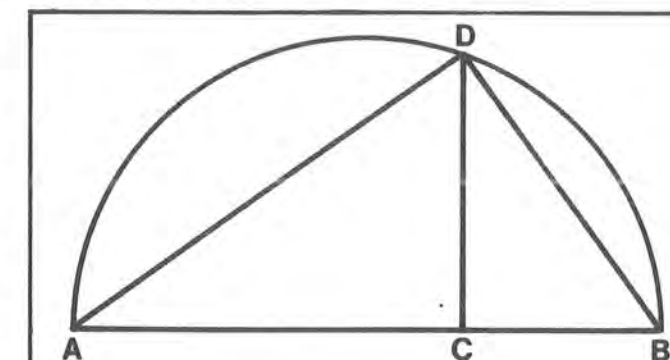
And so I undertook to study drums and the wave equations appropriate to drum-heads. The first bit of information was shocking: drums, like bells, do not exhibit a harmonic overtone series like a vibrating string or a column of air. For drums and bells, their partials above the fundamental are inharmonic and their resonance not linear.

Two of the most important contributing factors to the pitch of a drum are the volume of enclosed air and the size of the vibrating membrane. The trapped air will reinforce certain partials and cancel others; if this were not the case, one would simply get a "thud" and no musical pitch. Also important to the pitch is the thickness and tension of the membrane.

Now each of the five regular solids had its own particular volume, surface area, and lateral face area. I thought to myself: "If I could keep my drum-head of constant thickness and tension--then perhaps I might be able to bypass 'commensurable only in square'". Just perhaps in combining the specific volume with the specific aperture of each of the solids, I might arrive at notes harmonically related. For by this time it was clear that what I was hoping was that the natural resonances of the five solids as drums would be in small whole number ratios.

#### Constructing the Solids:

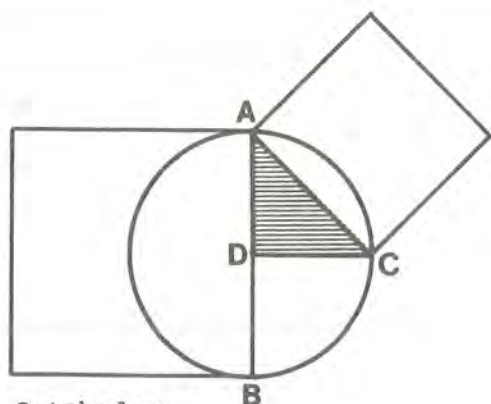
The construction of each solid begins by taking a segment equal to the diameter of the given sphere, the sphere within which the regular solid will be comprehended. The diameter is divided into a specific ratio, and a perpendicular is set out from the point of division to the circumference. Lines connecting the ends of the diameter to the point on the circumference give three right and similar triangles. The following two theorems are vitally important for Euclid's proofs in Book Thirteen:



$$\begin{aligned} AB : AD &:: AD : AC && \text{(sim. tri.)} \\ AB : AC & \text{dup. } AB : AD \\ (AB)^2 & : (AD)^2 \text{ dup. } AB : AD && \text{(VI.20)} \\ 1) \quad AB : AC &:: (AB)^2 : (AD)^2 \end{aligned}$$

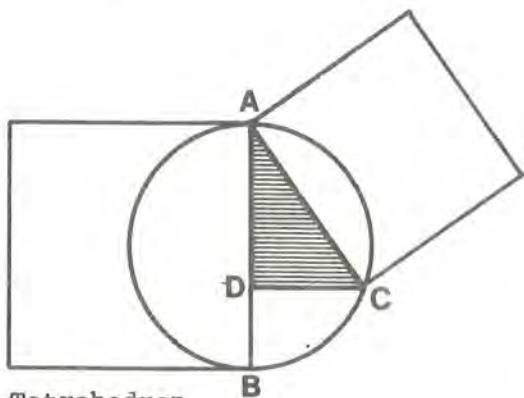
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$$\begin{aligned} AB : AC &:: (AB)^2 : (AD)^2 \\ 2) \quad AB : BC &:: (AB)^2 : (DB)^2 \end{aligned}$$



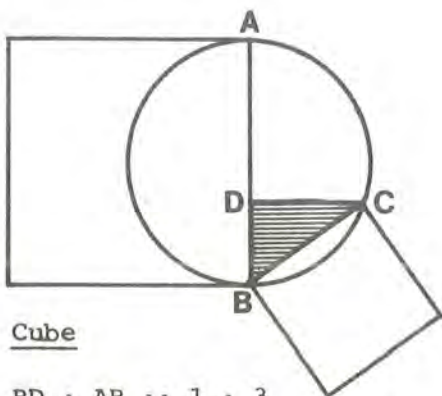
Octahedron

$$\begin{aligned} AD : AB &:: 1 : 2 \\ AD : AB &:: (AC)^2 : (AB)^2 \\ (AC)^2 : (AB)^2 &:: 1 : 2 \end{aligned}$$



Tetrahedron

$$\begin{aligned} AD : AB &:: 2 : 3 \\ AD : AB &:: (AC)^2 : (AB)^2 \\ (AC)^2 : (AB)^2 &:: 2 : 3 \end{aligned}$$



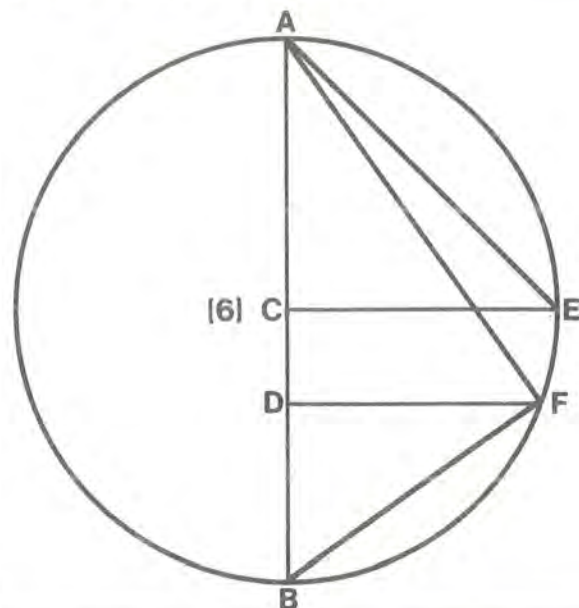
Cube

$$\begin{aligned} BD : AB &:: 1 : 3 \\ BD : AB &:: (CB)^2 : (AB)^2 \\ (DB)^2 : (AB)^2 &:: 1 : 3 \end{aligned}$$

Now let us consider more closely the specific construction of the octahedron, the tetrahedron, and the cube.

What was noted before about the octave and the octahedron also holds for the diapente (fifth) and the pyramid. But where does the cube lead us? It alone gives us the interval of the twelfth, a fifth above the range of the octave. It would complete things, it appears at first glance, if the ratio of the cube were 3:4, the same as the diatessaron (fourth). But in fact, the ratio of the cube, namely 1:3, does not appear in any of the octave's intervals.

Consider the diagram below. Circle ABFE is the circumference of the sphere circumscribing the five regular solids, and AB is its diameter. BE is the side of octahedron, AF the tetrahedron, and BF the cube. Let us assign 6 units to the square constructed on the diameter. (It is important to remember that the numerical unit 6 refers to the square constructed on the side AB, not to the specific length of AB). We already know the ratios of the octahedron\* (1:2), the tetrahedron (2:3), and the cube (1:3). Consequently, the square on length AF will be 4, and the square on length BF will be 2.



\*For the sake of clarity and brevity, I will introduce the term "ratio of the

$$\begin{aligned} (\text{octahedron}) : (\text{tetrahedron}) &:: 3 : 4 \\ (BE)^2 : (AF)^2 &:: 3 : 4 \\ &\text{(diatessaron)} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} (\text{cube}) : (\text{octahedron}) &:: 2 : 3 \\ (BF)^2 : (BE)^2 &:: 2 : 3 \\ &\text{(diapente)} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} (\text{cube}) : (\text{tetrahedron}) &:: 2 : 4 \\ (BF)^2 : (AF)^2 &:: 2 : 4 \\ &\text{(octave)} \end{aligned}$$

We can immediately deduce, from looking only at the tetrahedron and the octahedron, that the square on the side of the octahedron has to the square on the side of the tetrahedron the ratio of 3:4. This ratio, the diatessaron, is the complementary ratio that when compounded with the diapente gives the octave. Arithmetically, we see that 2:3 compounded with 3:4 gives 1:2. Hence, the fifth and the fourth, the two major consonances within the octave, are unequal but complementary parts that together make a complete and ordered whole, a harmonious whole, the octave. This is precisely what we mean by harmony.

Just as the Pythagoreans needed only the octave and the fifth to generate the entire musical scale, so too the octahedron and the tetrahedron will generate the other intervals.

We saw that the ratio of the octahedron together with the ratio of the tetrahedron gave us the fourth. Alternately, we get the fifth from the ratios of the octahedron and the cube. Since the ratio of the octahedron appears in both equations, we can see how closely the cube and the tetrahedron are related--not as regards the ratios of their sides to the diameter, but with respect to the octahedron itself, the octave.

octahedron" to mean "the ratio of the square constructed on the side of the octahedron to the square constructed on the diameter of the comprehending sphere". Hence, the "ratio of the octahedron" is 1:2; "of the tetrahedron", 2:3; and "of the cube", 1:3.

Perhaps the most striking proof that the pyramid and the cube are indeed complementary is this: the square on the side of the pyramid has to the square on the side of the cube the ratio 1:2 or the octave.

A beautiful illustration of all this is seen in compounding ratios. Since triangle AFB is right, we know that the square on the side of the cube when added to the square on the side of the tetrahedron is equal to in area the square on the side of the diameter. (Euclid I. 47). In other words,  $(BF)^2 + (AF)^2 = (AB)^2$ . Moreover, the square on the diameter is twice as large (2:1) as the square on the side of the octahedron. When the ratio 2:3 is compounded with the ratio 3:4, the number 3 is used as the middle term. In the same manner we can use length BE as the middle term:

$$\begin{aligned} (BF)^2 : (BE)^2 \text{ comp. } (BE)^2 : (AF)^2 &:: (BF)^2 : (AF)^2 \\ 2 : 3 \text{ comp. } 3 : 4 &:: 2 : 4 \\ &:: 1 : 2 \\ &\text{(octave)} \end{aligned}$$

I proceeded this way:

So the groundwork was laid and I began to experiment. I first constructed models of the solids, given a comprehending sphere whose diameter is 20 centimeters. I made the faces out of 1/4 inch plexi-glass, and during the assemblage I left one face out. This was to be the opening for my drum. To assure the same tension and thickness in the membrane, I used the same drum-head for all the solids. It was constructed out of 0.003 inch mylar stretched between a 10 inch embroidery hoop. I placed the taut membrane over the open-faced solid, which was supported by its edges (to avoid any dampening of the solid). The over-hang of membrane was dampened by 1/2 inch foam, upon which was placed 260 grams, evenly dispersed. I repeated this very same procedure for each of the solids.

Upon the exposed membrane I placed poppy seeds, weighed out to 0.1 gram. I held a four-inch speaker to one face of

the solid by means of a rubber band (again, I placed spacers between the rubber band and the edges to avoid any unnecessary dampening). The speaker was hooked up to a frequency generator.

My hypothesis was this: I would excite the air inside the solid at different frequencies and notice when the membrane would resonate. The advantage of this set-up was that it took into account at the same time both the volume of the solid as well as the size, thickness, and tautness of the membrane. The frequencies at which resonance would occur, I could be sure, would be the natural resonance of the collective body.

The poppy seeds were on the membrane to indicate when there was resonance as well as the mode of oscillation. Since my frequency generator did not have enough power, it was unable to detect the resonance of the unaided membrane. Moreover, the poppy seeds would move when they sat on points of oscillation, seeking nodal points (points of inactivity). Since the drum head could have an infinite number of modes of oscillation, and since four of my membranes were neither circular nor rectangular, I had no way of reasonably foretelling the pattern of oscillation. The poppy seeds would trace such a pattern.

Now even before I began my experimentation I knew that there would be inaccuracy. For one thing, my models were constructed with a bevel on each face. When I removed one face, I was left with an extruding bevel which gave a lateral surface area greater in proportion to the inner volume of the solid (the thickness, as you recall was  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch). Furthermore, I did not know how accurately calibrated my frequency generator was, particularly since it was incremented at 20 cycles per second. Given all this, I searched not for precise experimental data, but rather for large patterns. And patterns I did receive. The following graphs record at what frequency and to what intensity the particular solid resonates.

I had no way of measuring the intensity of the resonance other than to watch the activity of the poppy seeds and listen

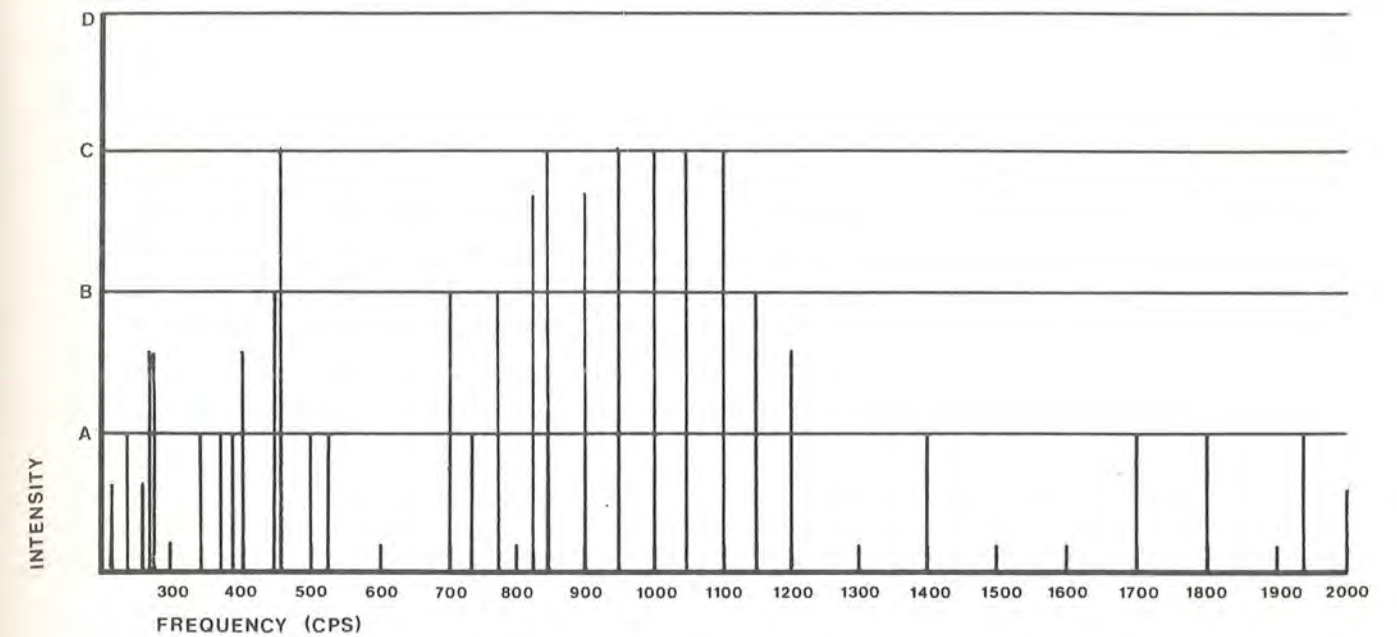
with my ear. Thus, the recordings A, B, C, D are subject to my own limitations.

The Findings:

I took the strongest lowest frequency of each of the solids as its fundamental. In all cases I was able to reach a strong second partial, many times with greater intensity than the fundamental. The closest that I came to harmonics was with the cube, where the fundamental was around 350 cps and the second partial (harmonic?) was at 730 cps, nearly a 1:2 ratio. This would seem to make sense, for the cube in many respects is the most "regular" of the solids, by virtue of its parallelism and perpendicularity.

But even more astonishing than this was the pattern and sequence to the fundamentals. First of all, they all fell within the same octave, which happened to be the middle register on the piano, with the dodecahedron being very nearly middle C (270 cps). And except for the icosahedron and dodecahedron, this pattern holds: as the solids increase in volume or in the number of faces, the frequency decreases. This also is what one would

| Natural Resonances<br>for the Five Regular Solids |           |       |
|---|-----------|-------|
| Solid   | Frequency | Pitch |
| Tetrahedron                                       | F 460     | A#    |
|   | 2 850-950 |       |
| Cube  | F 340-360 | F#    |
|   | 2 730     |       |
| Octahedron  | F 325     | E     |
|   | 2 1125    |       |
| Icosahedron                                       | F 310,320 | D#    |
|   | 2 800     |       |
|   | 3 1100    |       |
| Dodecahedron                                      | F 270     | C     |
|   | 2 640     |       |
|   | 3 875     |       |



**TETRAHEDRON**

VIEW SHOWING CONSTRUCTION OF EDGE

ONE OF FOUR FACES

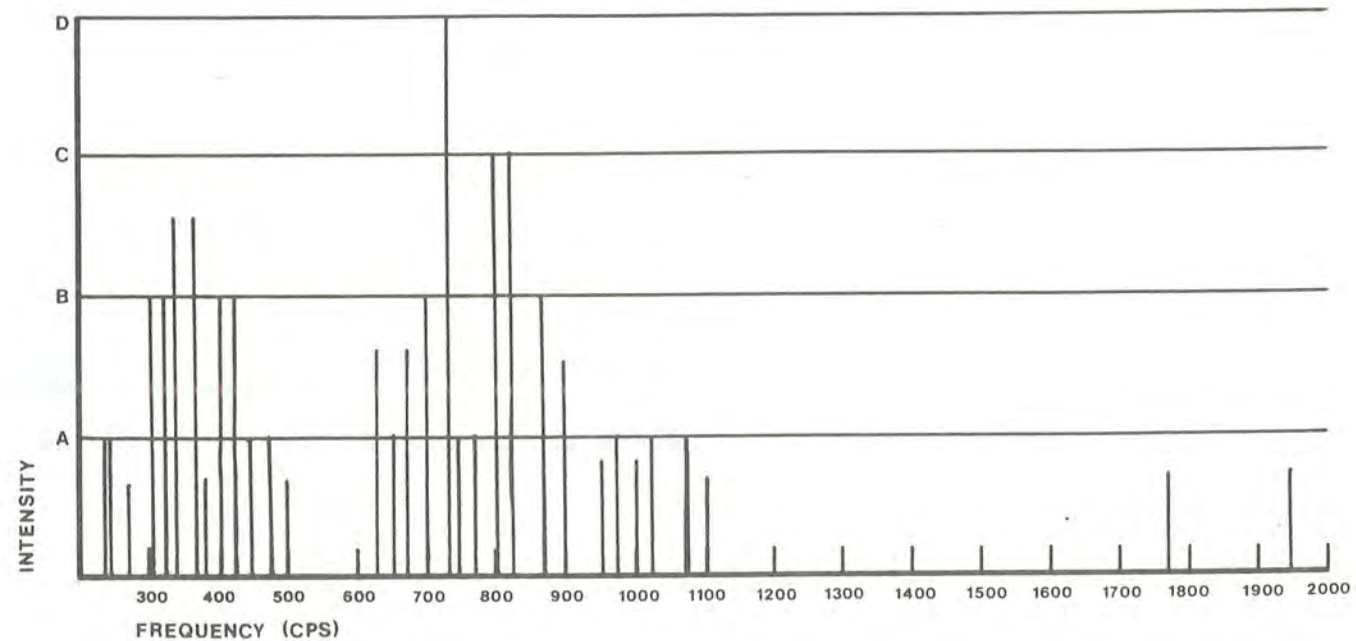
**TETRAHEDRON**  
INSCRIBED WITHIN A SPHERE

VIEW SHOWING ALTITUDE OF ZONE

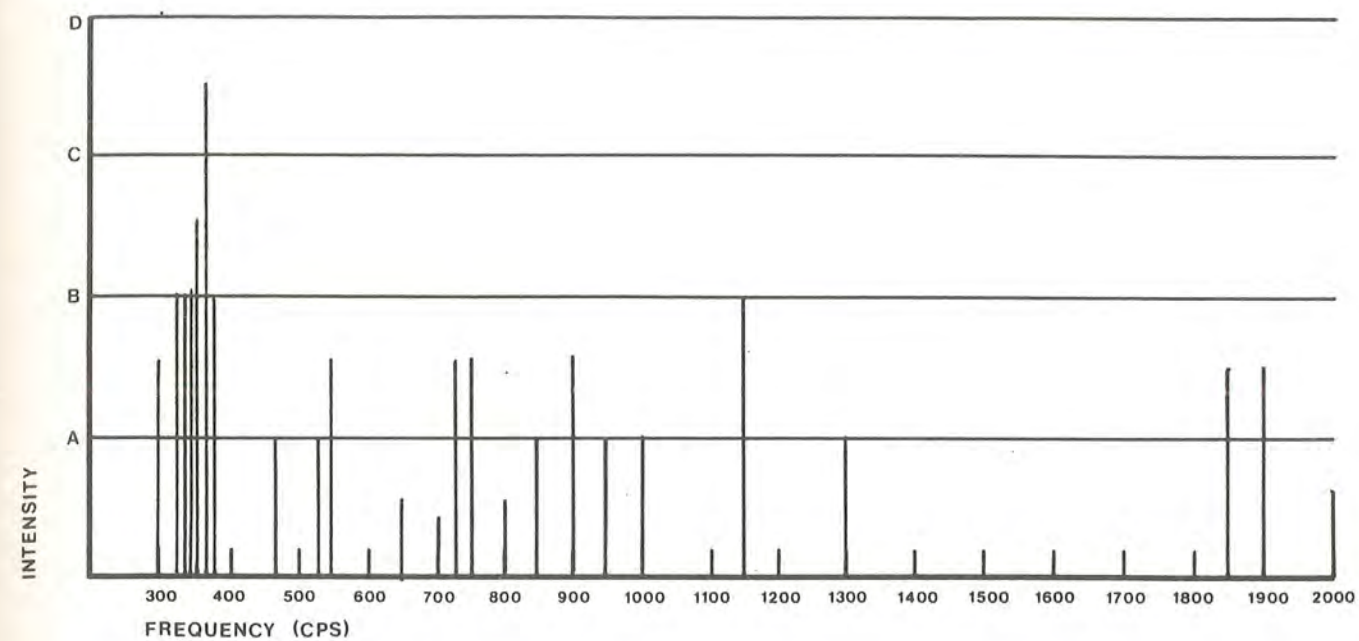
DIHEDRAL

VIEW SHOWING DIHEDRAL ANGLE

| TETRAHEDRON V=4 F=4 E=6  |            |
|--------------------------|------------|
| <b>LENGTH</b>            |            |
| EDGE                     | 0.81649658 |
| SLANT HEIGHT             | 0.70710678 |
| APOTHEM                  | 0.23570226 |
| RADIUS                   | 0.47140452 |
| <b>AREA</b>              |            |
| FACE                     | 0.2886751  |
| SURFACE                  | 1.1547005  |
| <b>VOLUME</b> 0.08415003 |            |
| <b>ANGLE</b>             |            |
| FACE                     | 60°        |
| SOLID                    | 180°       |
| DIHEDRAL                 | 70.53°     |



### CUBE



### OCTAHEDRON

VIEW SHOWING CONSTRUCTION OF EDGE

ONE OF SIX FACES

**CUBE**  
INSCRIBED WITHIN A SPHERE

DIHEDRAL

VIEW SHOWING ALTITUDE OF ZONE

VIEW SHOWING DIHEDRAL ANGLE

| CUBE          |            |          | V=8          | F=6 | E=12 |
|---------------|------------|----------|--------------|-----|------|
| <b>LENGTH</b> |            |          |              |     |      |
| EDGE          | 0.57735027 |          |              |     |      |
| SLANT HEIGHT  | 0.57735027 |          |              |     |      |
| APOTHEM       | 0.28867514 |          |              |     |      |
| RADIUS        | 0.40824829 |          |              |     |      |
| <b>AREA</b>   |            |          | <b>ANGLE</b> |     |      |
| FACE          | 0.3        | FACE     | 90°          |     |      |
| SURFACE       | 2.0        | SOLID    | 270°         |     |      |
| VOLUME        | 0.1924501  | DIHEDRAL | 90°          |     |      |

VIEW SHOWING CONSTRUCTION OF EDGE

ONE OF EIGHT FACES

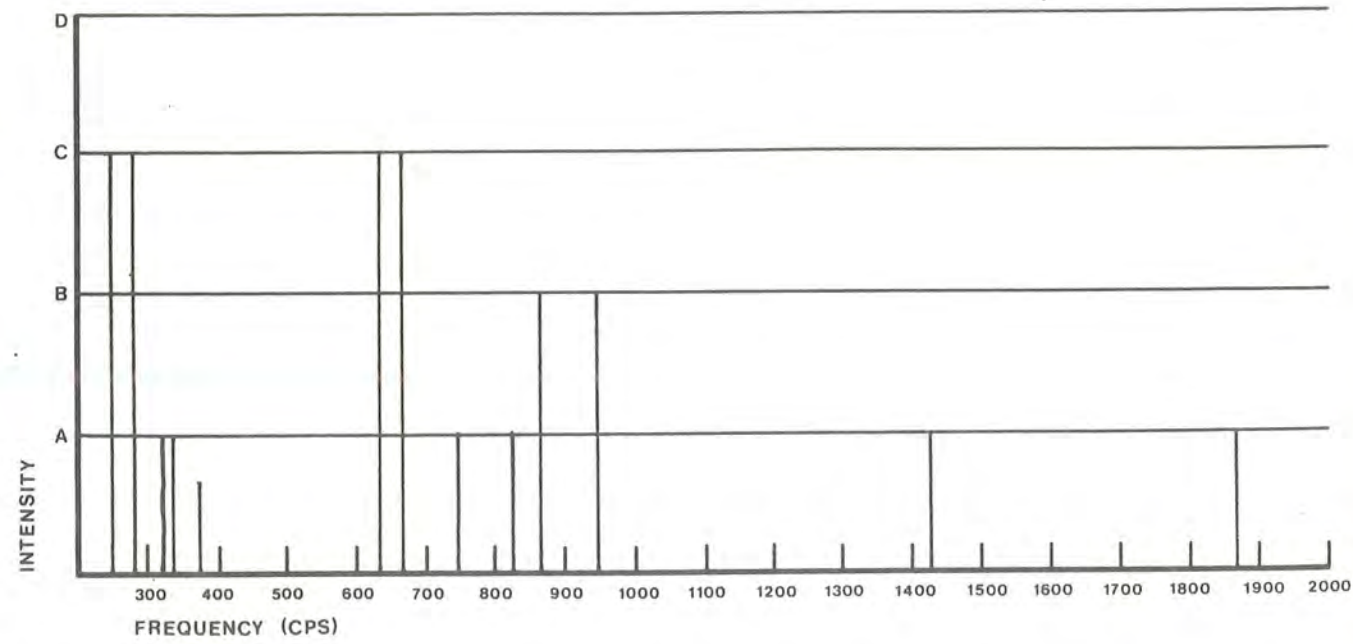
**OCTAHEDRON**  
INSCRIBED WITHIN A SPHERE

DIHEDRAL

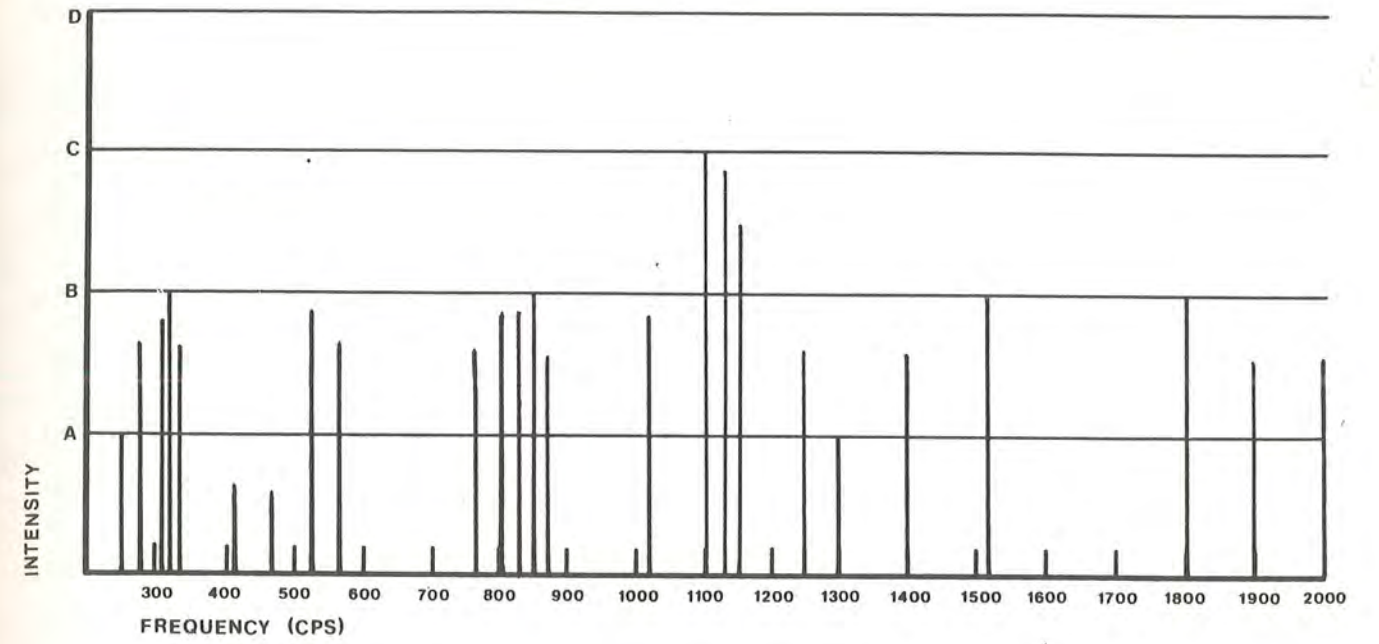
VIEW SHOWING ALTITUDE OF ZONE

VIEW SHOWING DIHEDRAL ANGLE

| OCTAHEDRON    |            |          | V=6          | F=8 | E=12 |
|---------------|------------|----------|--------------|-----|------|
| <b>LENGTH</b> |            |          |              |     |      |
| EDGE          | 0.70710678 |          |              |     |      |
| SLANT HEIGHT  | 0.61237244 |          |              |     |      |
| APOTHEM       | 0.20412415 |          |              |     |      |
| RADIUS        | 0.40824829 |          |              |     |      |
| <b>AREA</b>   |            |          | <b>ANGLE</b> |     |      |
| FACE          | 0.2165064  | FACE     | 60°          |     |      |
| SURFACE       | 1.7320508  | SOLID    | 240°         |     |      |
| VOLUME        | 1.6        | DIHEDRAL | 109.5°       |     |      |



DODECAHEDRON



ICOSAHEDRON

VIEW SHOWING CONSTRUCTION OF EDGE

ONE OF TWELVE FACES

DODECAHEDRON  
INSCRIBED WITHIN A SPHERE

VIEW SHOWING ALTITUDE OF ZONE

DIHEDRAL

| DODECAHEDRON V=20 F=12 E=30 |            |              |        |
|-----------------------------|------------|--------------|--------|
| <b>LENGTH</b>               |            |              |        |
| EDGE                        | 0.35682209 |              |        |
| SLANT HEIGHT                | 0.54909274 |              |        |
| APOTHEM                     | 0.24556174 |              |        |
| RADIUS                      | 0.303531   |              |        |
| <b>AREA</b>                 |            | <b>ANGLE</b> |        |
| FACE                        | 0.1585094  | FACE         | 108°   |
| SURFACE                     | 1.902113   | SOLID        | 324°   |
| VOLUME                      | 0.2519204  | DIHEDRAL     | 116.5° |

VIEW SHOWING CONSTRUCTION OF EDGE

ONE OF TWENTY FACES

ICOSAHEDRON  
INSCRIBED WITHIN A SPHERE

VIEW SHOWING ALTITUDE OF ZONE

DIHEDRAL

| ICOSAHEDRON V=12 F=20 E=30 |            |              |        |
|----------------------------|------------|--------------|--------|
| <b>LENGTH</b>              |            |              |        |
| EDGE                       | 0.5257311  |              |        |
| SLANT HEIGHT               | 0.4552965  |              |        |
| APOTHEM                    | 0.1517655  |              |        |
| RADIUS                     | 0.303531   |              |        |
| <b>AREA</b>                |            | <b>ANGLE</b> |        |
| FACE                       | 0.1196817  | FACE         | 60°    |
| SURFACE                    | 2.3936353  | SOLID        | 300°   |
| VOLUME                     | 0.31701884 | DIHEDRAL     | 138.1° |

expect. A larger volume would produce a lower pitch, hence a lower frequency.

I hesitate to draw any more conclusions, given the known inaccuracies of the instruments and models. But the results that I have received thus far, however imprecise, lead me to suspect that more awaits to be discovered. Yes, I am guilty of suspecting that there is harmonic perfection in the five regular solids, but even more than that. I should think that one would be able to sense such harmony with one's ears, that is to say audibly.

Acknowledgements:

Allow me here to acknowledge those persons who generously gave of their time and advice and talents to this endeavor. First of all, I wish to thank Mrs. Allanbrook, my music tutor, for her patience despite my plethora of questions. Mr. Herbert Neustadt deserves my gratitude for his obliging and professional advice. I am grateful to Mr. Nicholas Maistrellis and Mr. Roy Armstrong for providing me with working space and technical assistance. My very special admiration and thanks goes to Mr. Curtis Wilson, a modest and humble adviser.



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ENERGETIA

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