

Philosophic

Fragments

philosophiques

Volume 27, Spring 2011

Undergraduate Journal of Philosophy

Revue de philosophie des étudiants de premier cycle

McGill University

Acknowledgements

Editors

Éléna Choquette
Matt Essert
Rebecca Rodin

Undergraduate Readers

Daniel Atack	Rebecca Comerford
Lyndon Entwistle	Jonathan Fine
Ryan Healey	Mark Lamarre
Jonathan Wald	Rachel Zuroff

Graduate Reviewer

Robert Stephens

Copy Editor

Daniele Degano

Thanks to the Department of Philosophy, the Dean of Arts, the Arts Undergraduate Society and the Philosophy Students' Association for funding.

Special thanks to Mylissa Falkner and Angela Fotopoulos for their organisational help.



Contents

The Alien Environment An Interpretation of Foucault and Gadamer <i>Aaron Vansintjan</i>	5
Vulnerability and Control of One's Own Right Spinoza on the exclusion of Servants and Women in a Democracy <i>Anna Cook</i>	17
The Musical Education In Republic III <i>Jonathan Fine</i>	27
Abstractionism and <i>De Re</i> Modality <i>Theodore Reed Widom</i>	45
Contributors	57

The Alien Environment

An Interpretation of Foucault and Gadamer

Aaron Vansintjan

MANY environmentalists argue that we need a new set of values to create a more sustainable world and successfully fight environmental degradation.¹ Furthermore, many would say that we are alienated from our environment : that we need to recognise the fact that we are part of nature, and that we need to get closer to it. Deep ecologists, for example, attempt to provide a radical re-definition of humanity's place in the environment through recognizing the "inherent" worth in the ecosystem.² But who decides this ethic and who implements it? It can be argued that such an ethic would be tied to a naturalist conception of the self, which would be determined by those in a position of domination.³ In this paper, I look at Michel Foucault's analysis of the subject's relationship to truth in order to elucidate his claim that ecology plays the game of truth. I will therefore criticize the environmentalist's call for a new identity. While this won't result in a "true" identity of the self, it can at least give us a constructive method by which we might look at a relationship of subject and object that is not constructed by, as Foucault would say, "strategies". I will then use Hans-Georg Gadamer's distinction between environment and world to provide a possible alternative concept of the self and its world. This would be in keeping with real environmental problems by being in dialogue

1. See, for example, Leopold, Aldo. "The Land Ethic". *Environmental Ethics and Forestry : A Reader*. Ed. Peter C. List. Philadelphia : Temple University Press, 2000.

2. See, for example, a key text in environmental theory : Naess, Arne. "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement". *Philosophy of technology : the technological condition : an anthology*. Eds. Robert C. Scharff and Val Dusek. Malden, MA : Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2003.

3. This argument is developed in Darier, Éric. "Foucault against Environmental Ethics". *Discourses on the Environment*. Malden, MA : Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1999.

with the world. In this essay, I am not concerned with refuting environmental science, method, or ethics. I am concerned with sketching the self in relation to our environment and with what a threatened environment means for “the position of humans in the world” (Gadamer 1992, 226).

Foucault’s games of truth

While the casual reader may interpret Foucault as being concerned almost entirely with power relationships, in the January 1984 interview “The ethic of care for the self and the practice of freedom”, he claims that this concern was actually part of a greater interest in “games of truth” and how they affect the subject—namely, “the relationship of self to the self” (Foucault 1988, 19). This elucidates Foucault’s project to a large extent : instead of viewing him as deconstructing power relations, one can view him as analysing “different forms of subject” (1988, 10)—different forms of the self. To understand this, several of Foucault’s concepts have to be understood : namely, power relationships, games of truth, strategies, and, thus, care of the self.

Foucault’s method is guided by historical analysis of “the subject”. This is a subject caught in power relationships, and those may be relationships of domination or simply of communication. Foucault looks at power structures, not as large institutions stretching over society, but as politics that individualize the human being and determine its nature. Thus, the target may not be “what we are” but could perhaps be “to refuse what we are” (1982, 785). Foucault looks at power structures not by the way they control us, but through the way they enforce an identity of the self. Foucault wants to avoid “power relations” as being regarded exclusively as “violence” or “domination”. In any relationship, there are power dynamics. These power dynamics can be positive : in exerting power, one has to acknowledge a certain measure of freedom of the other and one must also acknowledge the other as a subject. For Foucault, power requires resistance, but it also requires openness to resistance of the other.

This is why power relations are explicitly related to “games

of truth" (« jeux de vérité »). What Foucault means by games of truth is that truth is defined by the rules of the power relations or the system of knowledge. Thus, it is possible to act according to different truths; we can be political subjects, scientists, or economic assets, all within moments. Gary Gutting claims that Foucault's body of work itself makes use of this fact: it discovers different truths through different methods and strategies. Gutting remarks that Foucault's work rarely is self-referencing and that even the second and third volumes of the *History of Sexuality* "acknowledge the first volume only to note their divergence from it" (Gutting 1994, 3). Gutting says that Foucault's constructions are independent from each other; they "are always subordinated to the tactical needs of the particular analysis at hand" (1994, 4). Truths are not final or unchanging; they are, rather, the products of strategies of struggle, rules of discourse, or methods of analysis.

Foucault explicitly defines these *strategies* in the essay, "The Subject and Power". Strategies are, first of all, "the means employed to attain a certain end" (Foucault 1982, 793). Strategies also refer to the methods one uses to control, or to have an advantage over, others. Foucault sees strategies as the "procedures" by which one attempts victory. Strategies can be part of games, or part of war. They show us that a power relation implies struggle, since there can be no strategy without resistance. However, not all power relations use strategies. Power relations and strategies lock together and may seem indistinguishable, however, strategies are an essential part of domination, whereas not all power relations are ones of domination.

One example of a "truth" that Foucault discusses is that of the Greco-Roman "care of the self". This subjectivity has been largely covered up by a "Cartesian moment", which placed importance on knowledge of the self. Rather than offering the "care of the self" as the "true" ideology that has been hidden from the world, Foucault uses it as an example of non-strategic subjectivity. This command—one ought to care for oneself—offers an alternative that does not dominate, nor does it use the nature of the self as its object. Here, Foucault has identified a truth that is a rule, but which does not necessarily objectify the individual

or aspects of the individual. "Care of the self" is an example of an ethic that does not use strategies of domination to achieve its goal.

Thus, we can look at the following passage, which is a rare remark about the "ecology movement," and make more sense of it. Foucault says :

There has been an ecology movement—which is furthermore very ancient and is not only a twentieth century phenomenon—which has often been, in one sense, in hostile relationship with science or at least with a technology guaranteed in terms of truth. It was in the name of knowledge concerning nature, the equilibrium of the process of living things, and so forth, that one could level the criticism. We escaped then a domination of truth, not by playing a game that was a complete stranger to the game of truth, but in playing it otherwise or in playing another game, another set, other trumps in the game of truth (1988 : 15).

Through looking at the state of nature and its equilibrium, ecological movements of the twentieth century argued against a certain scientific "truth" and established their own individualization, such as that of the human being destabilizing the equilibrium of nature. But Foucault tries to point out that such a conception of the self, while not following the same exact rules of progress-oriented science, follows other rules and absolutes to define its own ethic.⁴ While this doesn't mean that the truth is invalid, it does not uncover any meaning of what truth *is* for Foucault, nor does it uncover a subject that is not grounded in objectivity. Foucault criticises the ecological movement of his time by showing that, even though it is "hostile" towards progress-oriented science, it uses nature as objectification and individualizes the subject through claiming the subject's relationship with nature to be the absolute truth. The point is that any movement that

4. This is similar to what Hume calls the is-ought problem : even though there is a difference between what *is* and what *ought* to be, many people often confuse description and prescription, which often results in normative statements.

claims some hidden identity or absolute truth—be it based on nature, reason, or uncovering of historical fact—is using “truth” without being aware that truth is a function of rules defined by historical and societal structures and power relations. For Foucault, a genuine movement for liberation should be aware of such limitations and refuse individualization determined by domination or governmentalizing. That same movement must also be aware that any claim of “absolute truth” is actually determined by games of truth, and thus such a movement will not uncover any real concept of the self that is successfully liberating from existing structures and institutions of domination.

So how does this help us with identifying our relationship with our world, a world which—as scientists are telling us more and more—is changing because of a growing population faced with limited resources? What is “the self” in relationship to the environment, and how can we pursue a subjectivity that allows for a self embedded in the world, instead of a Cartesian “I” that is placed within the world without any connection to it? It is clear that prominent strains of environmental ethics focus on a concept of the self that employs strategies concerning the *nature* of a person. While they do attempt to *change* our self-image, their project is one that both *seeks* and *prescribes* an identity. Hans-Georg Gadamer, on the other hand, contributes a “self” that is not necessarily guided by a naturalistic theory and that is helpful with regards to our changing environment.

Gadamer’s “openness to the world”

Unlike Foucault, who rarely mentioned the environment, Gadamer was clearly concerned with the issue. Essays like “The Universality of the Hermeneutical Problem”, “The Diversity of Europe : Inheritance and Future”, and “Notes on Planning for the Future” show Gadamer’s concern with the increased scientification of our society and the effect that science has on our “natural view of the world” (Gadamer 1976, 3). While both Foucault and Gadamer are occupied with the scientific method, it is Gadamer who admits the major problems implicated by that method, such as the future of humanity or the limits of our natural resources.

Gadamer's project is concerned with describing understanding through the viewpoint of hermeneutics. Instead of providing a "method", Gadamer attempts to develop an idea of truth that corresponds to the "hermeneutic phenomenon". While "hermeneutics" seems to be a discrete study, Gadamer claims that everyone experiences hermeneutically. Understanding, says Gadamer, is rooted in experience, in events. Much like we are caught up in a theatrical play or in a game, we are caught up in understanding. It is something that happens to us, like a "passion". Gadamer shows how understanding and interpretation are linked—in attempting to understand a text or a poem, we interpret it through the way that it speaks to us. Thus, understanding is primarily dialectic. Its mode is that of question and answer. This means that to understand another we have to "consider the weight of the other's opinion" (1989, 361). However, we are always grounded in prejudice—we are always in some kind of mood before interpreting a text. Gadamer claims that, rather than limiting or creating boundaries, this actually opens us to an infinite world. We understand things differently because we always ask different questions, we are in constant creative response to the world. This is why ancient art can transcend time and have meaning to us—we experience it creatively and interpret it through prejudices that are constantly being formed.

This leads Gadamer to look at language as a fundamental comportment of our being. He argues against a scientific understanding of language as a "tool" that we pick up and use. The Platonic idea that language is flawed because words are unsatisfactory in describing the world misses the point. According to Gadamer, it actually confirms the connection between language and understanding, since we can only express those words with which we "rise above" linguistically. The temporality of understanding allows us to question norms and the linguistic tradition. Gadamer claims that a "language-view is a world-view," since we don't just "possess" language, but it actually allows us to have a world at all. Because we express everything through language, "there is no point of view outside of a linguistic world". Thus Gadamer claims that "language is a medium where I and world meet or, rather, manifest their original

belonging together" (1989, 469). Because language is interpretation, we must be in a dialectic relationship to the other; we must pose questions to understand the other. Thus, hermeneutics is "*a universal aspect of philosophy*" (1989, 471), because it understands understanding, language, and laying oneself open to questions, as the way to truth. Thus, understanding is known as "not just one of the various possible behaviours of the subject but the mode of being of Dasein itself" (1989, xxvii). Gadamer stresses that the phenomenon of understanding has to be primary because understanding comes before anything else; there is no experience without understanding.

Gadamer's concept of *world* is especially useful in our analysis. In the section "Language as experience of the world", Gadamer discusses the relationship between environment and world. While "environment is the 'milieu' in which man lives", Gadamer notes that other animals do not have a world in the same sense that we do. While other creatures are "embedded in their environment", humans are characterized by "*freedom from environment*". This freedom is the cause of the linguistic constitution of our world. Essentially, we have a free relationship to our world because of the nature of our understanding, which is always "in the process of being concretized" (1989, 471). To "rise above" the world means "to have a language and to have a world" (1989, 441). Thus, we have a certain freedom from our environment—even though language is where the self and facticity meet, the self can understand the environment in whichever way it opens itself to it. Gadamer claims that we "suffer" the world in the same way that we suffer understanding (1989, 469).

Thus, we can see a new concept of the "world" emerge. Gadamer advocates openness to the other and openness to the world. He explicitly calls for this in the essay, "The Diversity of Europe : Inheritance and the Future," which deals with our modern scientific method and how it influences our thought. Gadamer concludes the essay with an urgent call for respect. He says, "[w]e may perhaps survive as humanity if we would be able to learn that we may not simply exploit our means of power and effective possibilities, but must learn to stop and respect the other as an other, whether it is nature or the grown cultures of

peoples and nations; and if we would be able to learn to experience the other and the others, as the other of our self, in order to participate with one another" (1992, 236). Gadamer reveals the tension between understanding and alienation. To understand art, for example, we need to distance ourselves from it and acknowledge it as inherently mysterious, as an other. This is similar to the other of nature, which we must open ourselves to, and allow to pose questions to us. Acknowledging and accounting for the alien is important in our dialogue with the world.

Gadamer compares nature to "praxis," which he defines as "how life is treating one [...] we are therefore not masters and rulers of our life situation, but [...] one will be affected by this or that [...]. In such praxis lies clearly a new proximity to the totality of our position in the world as humans" (1992, 230). In accepting praxis, which Gadamer equates with the facticity of our world, we can understand the world as something which happens *to us*.

The environment is alien

To Foucault, power relations require both freedom of the other and acknowledgement of the other *as an other*. In defining the self in relationship to our environment, both Gadamer and Foucault would call for almost the same thing: a continuous questioning, or an openness to questions. Gadamer acknowledges the hazards of our current conception of the world as "artificial products" (Gadamer, 1992, 226). If we were to, instead, view it as an alien "other", which we are constantly in the process of understanding, then our worldview would change, it would adjust its framework to include an acknowledgement of the unpredictability and unmanageability of the environment.

Through an analysis of Foucault we have seen that we cannot approach the environment by appealing to ideas of "natural" or any objective theory of the self, which is sure to ensnare the subject in subjectivities of domination. Gadamer adds to this by looking at the way we understand the world, the way *truths* are created, the way we comport ourselves towards the world, and the way we find ourselves *within* a world. This implies that we must regard the environment within which we live as an

other, an alien, which we are able to understand but unable to objectify, in much the same way that we cannot objectify a piece of art. The environment must remain an *other*. We are selves within a world and we must understand that world as unpredictable. In being open to questions, we can open ourselves to letting the world change us. This, like Foucault's "care of the self", is a concept that does not implement strategies or dominate others—it respects the tension between, as Gadamer would call it, understanding of the other, and as Foucault would call it, the relationship of power to the games of truth. A conception of the subject as constantly shifting would lead to a more positive conception of the object. Such a self would be open to dialogue, participate with, and open itself to a changing and threatened environment.

The rise of the importance of ecology⁵ will affect the scientific community and change our ways of dealing with the world. The refusal to say what human nature "is" and an openness to a constantly shifting environment are necessary for environmental movements. A global crisis causes a plethora of theories to emerge, some of which imply domination and normalization. For example, the common statement that the degradation of the environment is caused by human nature reveals the tendency to normalize the human : the subject is the cause of the problem. The technological drive to manage the environment forgets the instability and unpredictability of Earth's global system : it normalizes the object. The desire to assess environmental impact through cost-benefit analyses normalizes the human being as an economic construct and suggests that policy-makers lack the ability to take into consideration the complexity of socio-environmental interaction. The environmental movement cannot tell us what it is to be a human being, as seen in cost-benefit analyses, or tell us what our place must be within the environment, as attempted in deep ecology. Acknowledgement that the environment is alien and ungraspable is necessary in contem-

5. See, for example, Homer-Dixon, Thomas. "The Newest Science : Replacing Physics, Ecology Will Be the Master Science of the 21st Century." *Alternatives Journal*. Volume 35, number 4. Waterloo, Canada : University of Waterloo, 2009.

porary discourse. To escape the current domination of truths that has driven science and technology, ecology must use "other trumps in the game of truth" and simultaneously avoid prescription.

Works Cited

- Gutting, Gary, ed. 1994. *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault*. New York : Cambridge University Press.
- Darier, Éric. 1999. "Foucault against Environmental Ethics" in *Discourses on the Environment*. Malden, MA : Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Foucault, Michel. 1998. *The Final Foucault*. Edited by James William Bernauer and David M. Rasmussen. Cambridge, MA : MIT Press.
- . 1982. "The Subject and Power" in *Critical Inquiry*. Vol. 8, No. 4. Chicago : The University of Chicago Press.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. 1976. "The Universality of the Hermeneutical Problem" in *Philosophical Hermeneutics*. Translated and edited by David E. Linge. USA : University of California Press.
- . 1992. "The Diversity of Europe : Inheritance and the Future" in *Hans-Georg Gadamer on Education, Poetry, and History : Applied Hermeneutics*. Edited by Dieter Misgeld and Graeme Nicholson. Translated by Lawrence Schmidt and Monica Reuss. USA : State University of New York Press.
- . 1989. *Truth and Method*. New York : Continuum Books, 1989.

Vulnerability and Control of One's Own Right Spinoza on the exclusion of Servants and Women in a Democracy

Anna Cook

ALTHOUGH Benedict de Spinoza describes democracy in the unfinished *Political Treatise* as a “completely absolute state,” in which sovereignty is “held by the people as a whole,” his enumeration of the eligible participants in a democracy excludes the majority of the adult population (TP 11.1, 8.3).¹ He defines the participants in a democracy as native adults who are in “control of their own right and lead respectable lives” (11.3). This provision is meant to exclude women and servants—“who are under the control of their husbands and masters”—from voting and undertaking offices of state in a democracy (11.3).

To understand what it means to be “in control of one’s own right,” it is important to consider Spinoza’s equation of right and power. He asserts that a man is “subject to another’s right for as long as he is in the other’s power” (2.9). Spinoza defines what it is to have another in one’s power in 2.10—“one man has another in his power if he holds him in bonds, or has deprived him of the arms and means of self defense or escape, or has terrorized him, or has so attached the other to himself by benefit conferred that the man would rather please his benefactor than himself and live as the other would wish rather than at his own choosing” (2.10). One is thus in control of one’s power as long as one is able to defend oneself against subjugation and to “live as [one] chooses to live” (2.9).

1. I will cite Spinoza parenthetically in the body of the paper with the standard notation. Citations from *Ethics* refer to the part (Roman numeral), proposition (P), demonstration (D), scholium (S), corollary (C), appendix (App), preface (Pref), lemma (L), definition (D), and Definitions of the Affects (Def Aff). Citations from *Political Treatise* (TP) and *Theological-Political Treatise* (TTP) refer to the chapter, followed by section number (e.g., ‘8.2’ refers to chapter 8, section 2).

In this paper, I will examine Spinoza's claim that women and servants are not in control of their own right in light of Aurelia Armstrong's arguments for the inherent relationality of individuals. I will first outline the destructive effects that would result from the inclusion of servants and women in a Spinozist democracy, as articulated by Alexandre Matheron. I will then examine how we can distinguish womanly pity, which Matheron deems to be the source of women's weakness, from vulnerability and receptivity, which Armstrong takes to be sources of self-determination.

*The Black Page : Spinoza on the exclusion of Servants and Women*²

To begin, I will consider Spinoza's discussion of the exclusion of servants from political participation. Matheron illustrates the difficulty in determining Spinoza's distinct use of the term *servos*, which can designate 'slave', 'serf' or 'servant' (Matheron 1977, 182–185). Matheron compares Spinoza's use of the term with that of Hobbes, who employs *servos* as a general category in the *Leviathan* and in *De Cive*, within which 'slave' and 'servant' are distinct sub-categories (quoted in 183–184). While Spinoza does not provide a clear definition of servant (*famuli*), he refers to servants in 6.11 as "menials gaining a livelihood by some servile occupation". Matheron concludes that the term *famuli* or *servos* is not distinguished with respect to the moral character of servile work—since the morally dubious work of wine-shop keepers does not prevent them from being patricians (TP 8.14)—nor by the pay of servile work—since soldiers of a monarchic military are unpaid citizens (6.10). He argues rather that the term 'servant' is defined with respect to the inability to be in control of one's own right and power (Matheron 1977, 186–187). Matheron asserts that servants are under the power of their masters insofar as they are attached to their master "by benefit conferred" (TP 2.10). Since the servant has no personal property, he risks destitution if he displeases his master, and is

2. "The black page" refers to the last page of the unfinished *Political Treatise* in which Spinoza argues for the exclusion of women from politics (see Margaret Gullan-Wuhr's "Spinoza and the Equality of Women" (2008).

therefore completely dependent on him (Matheron 1977, 189). It is the servant's personal dependence on his master that renders him unable to control his own power, since he cannot live as he chooses insofar as he is continually fearful of and dependent upon his master.

The servant's inability to be in control of his own right prohibits his political participation in a Spinozist democracy insofar as he is unable to enact his *conatus*, which is his desire to strive for his own advantage (EIIIP6). Matheron asserts that since the servant's livelihood is dependent on his master, the servant's desire for his own advantage will become distorted to the point where his political voice will mirror that of his master (Matheron 1977, 189). Matheron claims that the inclusion of servants in a Spinozist democracy is dangerous, since it would ensure that their master's political voice would count for $n + 1$ votes, where n is the number of servants (191). The inclusion of servants in a democracy would thus undermine Spinoza's commitment to the proportionality and democratization of political power.

With respect to the exclusion of women, Spinoza attempts to justify their—our—exclusion neither in terms of female essence or social construction, nor “by nature or by convention,” but rather in terms of a universal truth—that there has never been “an instance of men and women's ruling together,” such that we always find women being ruled by men and “both sexes thus living in harmony” (TP 11.4). Spinoza contends that this universal truth proves that women are not “naturally the equal of men and [are not] equally endowed with strength of mind and ability—*qualities wherein human power and consequently human right consists*” (11.4—my emphasis). It is thus the case—although not by means of a weaker female *essence*—that “women do not naturally possess equal right with men and that they necessarily give way to men” (11.4). Matheron asserts that this weakness should be understood in terms of strength of character, whereby one's strength of character is evaluated in terms of the vulnerability to be overcome by fear and compassion in the form of “womanish tears” and *muliebri misericordia*, translated as “unmanly compassion” or “womanly pity” (TTP Preface 3, EIVP37S1). Spinoza asserts that the reliance on womanly pity prevents one

from enacting the “rational principle of seeking [one’s] own advantage” (EIVP37S1). Women—insofar as they are affected by womanly pity—lack tenacity, which Spinoza defines as strength of character expressed as “the desire by which each one strives, solely from the dictate of reason, to preserve his [sic] being” (EIIIP59S).

In his description of intimate relationships, Spinoza assumes a heterosexual model whereby women and men each strive, by any means, to impose their own views on the other (EIIIP31S). Matheron states that one will seek to institutionalize the imposition of one’s own views through education and other structural means. This initial gap in power between men and women, which Matheron articulates as women’s vulnerability to be influenced by “womanly pity” (EIVP37S1), becomes fixed such that the dependence of women becomes irreversible and the relative weakness of women is naturalized (Matheron 1977, 196). Matheron argues that the institutionalization and internalization of women’s weakness thus renders them unable to participate in a democracy. He contends that women—insofar as they are subjugated by their husbands—will not challenge their husband’s political views, but merely mirror them (196).

Hasana Sharp accounts for Spinoza’s claim that those who are under the control of another cannot participate in politics in terms of his definition of virtue, whereby one must be able to desire what is to one’s advantage in order to desire it for others—“when each man most seeks his own advantage (*utile*) for himself, then men are most useful to one another” (EIVP35C2 in Sharp 2011, 13). Insofar as Spinoza considers women to be unable to desire for themselves—instead of merely mirroring the views of their husbands—he argues that they are unable to be rational and “help produce those laws that enable each to practice virtue” (9).

Spinoza argues, moreover, that women’s political inclusion is not only useless since they are unable to articulate independently formed political views, but also that their inclusion is dangerous to the democratic system. Unlike the inclusion of servants, the inclusion of women is not damaging to the proportionality of political representation, since Spinoza assumes that

men will have only one wife and that every adult will marry. The inclusion of women in a democracy is considered to be destructive because of their effect on male lust. Spinoza asserts that “men generally love women from mere lust, assessing their ability and their wisdom by their beauty” (11.4). He thus fears that the inclusion of women in a democracy will result in an infiltration of lust and desire into politics. To fully appreciate the damage rampant lust and desire would cause to a democratic system, we must consider men’s passionate nature as articulated in his *Ethics*. Spinoza affirms that “a man thinks more highly of [...] what he loves than [what] is just” (EIIIP26S), and therefore, he claims that men will come to love and assess a woman’s political abilities in terms of her appearance. He fears that in a democracy in which women are included, the most sexually pleasing women would receive all of the male votes and, therefore, all the votes of their wives as well. Matheron asserts that according to this schema, a man whose wife has n admirers would receive $2 * (n + 1)$ votes (Matheron 1977, 197). For example, if a woman has 5 admirers, then her husband would acquire 12 votes—5 from the admirers, 5 from the admirers’ wives, his own and his wife’s. The inclusion of women in a democratic system would make sexual seduction the primary political tool in obtaining political support (198). Given the disproportionality of votes garnered by the husbands of sexually seductive women, the inclusion of women in a democratic system would necessarily destroy the system in favour of an oligarchy ruled by the husbands of these good-looking women (197).

Moreover, Spinoza affirms that the inclusion of women is dangerous insofar as it would threaten the peaceful relations between men. Given their passionate disposition, men will come to resent “any favours which the women they love show to others” (TP 11.4). Furthermore, Spinoza tells us that if a man imagines that the woman he loves—or is simply attracted to—is “united with another by as close, or by a closer, bond of friendship than that with which he himself, alone, possessed the thing, he will be affected with hate toward the thing he loves, and will envy the other” (EIIIP35). Spinoza is thus fearful that the inclusion of sexually attractive women in a democratic

system would spark sexual conflicts between men and consequently undermine the peaceful relations among them. Spinoza thus concludes that the inclusion of sexually attractive women in a democratic system would inevitably lead to the destruction of peace at the hands of jealous men.

It is important to note, however, that in these situations it is, in the end, *male* imbecility rather than female weakness that destroys democracy (Matheron 1977, 197–200). The inclusion of women undermines democracy insofar as it threatens men's ability to desire "what will genuinely increase their power and, by extension, that of the commonwealth" (Sharp 2011, 13). Spinoza's argument for women's inability to desire for themselves amounts to an articulation of the fear that feminine beauty will disturb men's ability to desire what is in their advantage.

Spinoza on Vulnerability and Womanly Pity

Now that I have considered Matheron's arguments for Spinoza's exclusion of women and servants from a democracy, I will examine Aurelia Armstrong's arguments for a constitutively relational account of autonomy. Armstrong interprets Spinoza as articulating a feminist reconfiguration of autonomy as relational whereby receptivity, vulnerability, and interrelatedness are taken to enable the striving and empowerment of the individual (Armstrong 2009, 54). Armstrong asserts that a constitutively relational account of autonomy conceives autonomy as "a social process that requires the maintenance of certain sorts of ongoing relations with others" (60). She calls for a relational conception of autonomy in order to reconcile the conflict between the feminist project of revaluing "interpersonal capacities central to women's lives and identities" and the project of advancing women's autonomy (46). This feminist reconception would deconstruct "masculine models of selfhood and masculine character ideals," which inherently valorize the life of the "separated and self-sufficient individual" at the expense of non-male conceptions of selfhood (45, 48).

In Armstrong's attempt to articulate a relational account of autonomy, she emphasizes Spinoza's claim that the body and the mind's power of *acting* increase in proportion with the po-

wer to be *affected* and *acted upon* (EIIIP13S). Thus, the ability of an individual to thrive is inextricably tied to her capacity to be acted upon and affected by other bodies that contribute to her survival. Armstrong interprets Spinoza as depicting receptivity as “a power that increases our power of acting” (Armstrong 2009, 54). Vulnerability and sensitivity are thus taken to be capacities for agency rather than signs of weakness and passivity (54). Spinoza’s account of interrelatedness suggests a close association between “the development of the capacity for autonomy and the endeavor to promote harmonious forms of sociability” (52). Armstrong suggests, moreover, that this understanding of vulnerability resituates the role of relationships in one’s own empowerment. Armstrong concludes that according to a relational account of autonomy, individual striving for self-empowerment and autonomy requires and implies the empowerment and autonomy of others (61). Self-empowerment, insofar as it is a product of one’s relationships, is tied to the empowerment of others such that self-empowerment is always mutual empowerment.

While Armstrong interprets Spinoza as articulating a conception of autonomy in which vulnerability and receptivity are essential to individual striving, her claim seems to contradict with Spinoza’s assertion that womanly pity is irrational and a sign of a weak character. In order to reconcile these two claims, we need to examine how Armstrong’s notion of vulnerability differs from Spinoza’s definition of womanly pity. Spinoza describes womanly pity as inhibiting the enactment of the rational desire to thrive and to persevere in being (EIVP37S1). We can thus understand womanly pity to be a form of enslavement or bondage insofar as it stems from “man’s lack of power to moderate and restrain the affects” (EIV Pref). This description of womanly pity as bondage, however, conflicts with Armstrong’s description of vulnerability as the ability to be causally affected by others in an enabling or disabling way that increases or decreases one’s power of acting. Armstrong reconceives notions of interiority and exteriority such that they should be described not in terms of the spatial boundaries of the body, but rather in terms of enabling and disabling relations (Armstrong 2009, 55). In this regard, the concepts of interiority and exteriority come

to reflect affections that agree or disagree with an individual's identity (EIIIP4–5). A body is thus external and forms a disabling relation with the individual when it disagrees with her nature such that it opposes her striving to persevere in being (Armstrong 2009, 55). According to this reconception of exteriority in terms of individual striving, womanly pity should be understood as the vulnerability to be affected by external bodies that form disabling relations with the individual.

A further distinction between vulnerability and womanly pity can be formulated in terms of self-determination. Armstrong interprets Spinoza as conceiving self-determination in terms of adequate knowledge of the causes of one's emotional states (EIVP59D quoted in 56). Womanly pity, insofar as it is similar to Spinoza's conception of bondage, is overcome when one gains adequate knowledge of the causes of one's passions, thereby becoming actively self-determined (EIVP59D). According to this interpretation of self-determination, an individual becomes autonomous by gaining adequate knowledge of one's causal interactions and one's social embeddedness, rather than by separating oneself from others in an attempt to gain independence. Given the distinction between vulnerability and womanly pity, we can now see that womanly pity does not refer to a distinctly *female* weakness, but is rather the power to be affected by disabling relations. The reason for Spinoza's description of it as a distinctly *female* weakness can be chalked up to his attempt to justify his sexist views.

Now that we have explored the distinction between Armstrong's claims about vulnerability and Spinoza's notion of womanly pity in terms of self-determinacy, we should reexamine Spinoza's claim about participation in a democracy. In light of Armstrong's discussion about a relational account of autonomy, we should reconsider what it means to be in control of one's own right. While Spinoza's claim that political participation requires control of one's right seems to suggest that a legitimate political voice is one that is unaffected and unencumbered by others, it is important to note that full independence from others and complete mastery of one's passions is impossible since "man is necessarily always subject to passions" (EIVP4C). Furthermore,

given Armstrong's arguments for a relational account of autonomy, control of one's own right should not be understood as the ability to be unaffected by relations with others. A relational understanding of being in control of one's right should be formulated in terms of enabling human interactions that allow an individual to live as she chooses. Women and men are thus in control of their own right to the extent that they are in an environment in which enabling relations with others are fostered.

Works Cited

- Armstrong, Aurelia. 2009. "Autonomy and the Relational Individual : Spinoza and Feminism." In *Feminist Interpretations of Benedict Spinoza*, edited by Moira Gatens, 43–63. United States of America : Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Gullan-Whur, Margaret. 2008. "Spinoza and the Equality of Women." *Theoria*. 68.2 (August 2002), 91–111.
- Matheron, Alexandre. 1977. "Femmes et Serviteurs dans la Démocratie Spinoziste." *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger* 167 : 181–200.
- Sharp, Hasana. 2011. "Eve's perfection : Spinoza on sexual (in)equality." Paper presented at The Madeline Renee Turkeltaub Memorial Symposium on Ethics, *Spinoza : Feminist Perspectives/Aspects of Embodiment*, Washington, D.C., February 7.
- Spinoza, Benedict de. 1996. *Ethics*. Translated by Edwin Curley, New York : Penguin Books.
- . 2000. *Political Treatise*. Translated by Samuel Shirley. Indiana : Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.
- . 2007. *Theological-Political Treatise*. Translated by Jonathan Israel and Michael Silverthorne. New York : Cambridge University Press.

The Musical Education In *Republic* III

Jonathan Fine

THE primary concern for the education of the guardians in Book III of Plato's *Republic* is the sorts of things that the young guardians will be allowed to impersonate (*mimēisthai*), for the manner in which they act presumably shapes the character of their souls. Much recent scholarly debate centres on the similarities and differences of Plato's use of the term *mimesis*, often translated as 'imitation,' in *Republic* II, III and X.¹ However, I will not be concerned with that here. Nor do I want to assess either the political context to which Plato directs his critique of poetry² or the morality of the censorship that the guardian education involves. Rather, I am interested in the psychological mechanism by which the mimetic education in *mousike* occurs. In particular, I want to see how this mechanism works for rhythm and harmony, discussed at *R.* 398d–402d and 411a–d.³ I shall show that, for Plato, music tempers *thumos* — the spirited part of the soul — to the degree necessary for a well-ordered soul through the imitation and transfusion of the qualities of the virtuous person. To this end, I first examine the broader context of *mimesis* as a psychic assimilation in Book III and the tripartite soul. Then, I connect movement in the soul with the *ethos* theory of music and explicate how music rears a beneficial form of *thumos*. In a final section, I suggest that the educative mechanism of music both problematizes the belief that Plato fears the imagination and raises interesting questions about music's relation to rationality.

1. See for example Elizabeth Belfiore 1984, Ferrari 1989, and Halliwell 2002.

2. See Ober and Strauss 1990.

3. There is unfortunately little scholarship on these passages. Pelosi 2010 and Woerther 2008 are noteworthy exceptions. My aim here is partly to galvanize more attention to these rich and confusing passages.

First Movement : Of the Soul

The childhood education of the future guardians of Kallipolis, the city in speech imagined by Socrates, Glaucon, and Adeimantus, is comprised of *mousike* and gymnastics. Literally 'the art of the Muses,' *mousike* consists of musicopoetic arts that include myth, fiction, poetic speech, dance, and the art of rhythm and harmony (Halliwell 2002, 51). I will refer to this category of arts as *mousike* and reserve the term 'music' for the specific art of rhythm and harmony. The education of the guardians is an education to virtue, encapsulated by the following :

Isn't this why the rearing in music [*mousike*] is most sovereign? Because rhythm and harmony most of all insinuate themselves into the inmost part of the soul [*kataduetai eis to entos tes psyches o to rhythmos kai harmonia*] and most vigorously lay hold of it in bringing grace [*euschemosynen*] with them; and they make man graceful if he is correctly reared, if not, the opposite...the man properly reared on rhythm and harmony would have the sharpest sense for what's been left out and what isn't a fine [*kalos*] product of craft or what isn't a fine product of nature...He would blame and hate the ugly in the right way while he's still young, before he's able to grasp reasonable speech [*prin logon dunatos einai labein*]. And when reasonable speech comes, the man who's reared in this way would take most delight in it, recognizing it on account of its being akin [*di' oikeioteta*]. (401d–402a)⁴

Our task is to understand the above passage. Plato does not specify the psychological mechanism by which *mousike* rears the guardians and how rhythm and harmony contribute most heavily to that education, but we can fill in we can fill in some important details of that mechanism once we examine how *mimesis* works in Book III and the tripartite structure of the soul made explicit in Book IV. Let me put the main pieces in play.

4. Unless specified otherwise, all quotations of Plato's *Republic* are from Allan Bloom's (1968) translation in his *The Republic of Plato*, 2nd ed., (New York : Basic Books, 1991).

Before this passage, Socrates and company proscribe the content of poetry so as to expunge harmful descriptions of gods and demigods and the tragic worldview and fear of death that stories of the underworld inculcate (376e–392c). They subsequently discuss the style (*lexis*) in which the remaining poetry should be told (392c), and attend to imitative narration, whereby the poet speaks as if he were another person (392d–394b). This is *mimesis*, in the sense of impersonation: “isn’t likening himself to someone else, either in voice or in looks, the same as imitating (*mimēisthai*) the man he likens himself to?” (393c).⁵ The interlocutors reply that the guardians should not be skilled impersonators (a *mimetikos*) for two reasons.⁶ The first is that, based on the principle of specialization that one person can only perform one job (370a–c, 374a, 394a), a guardian cannot actually be a *mimetikos* if he is a guardian (395a).⁷ Yet the deeper concern is that the guardians will internalise the qualities of those they impersonate, which will inculcate a set of dispositions that form their character (*ethos*): “imitations, if they are practiced continually from youth onwards, become established as habits and nature, in body and sounds and in thought” (395d; cf. 522a).

The internalization of dispositions through imitation is possible, first, because the guardians are children who lack ‘reasonable speech.’ As such, they lack the critical distance required to ward off the habituation of the qualities that they emulate. Their souls are impressionable, like wax moulded by a *typos* (377b–c, 398b–d); what they perceive and how they perceive it will remain in their souls like an indelible dye on a fabric (429e–430b; cf. 401c–d). Second, they are moulded by what they emulate because, for Plato, it seems that the children’s mimetic activity

5. Cf. Halliwell 2002 and 51; Tarnopolsky 2007, 5.

6. The cognate of the *ike*-suffix (*ikos*) means that *mimetikee* is a *technē*, an art or craft. Specifically, it is the art of “versatile imitation,” that is, skilled imitation of many things. See Belfiore 1984, 126–7.

7. Socrates seems to say that a skilled *mimetikos* is not even possible, for one man cannot produce good imitations of two different things. This is why he thinks that the same poet cannot produce both good comedy and good poetry and similarly, that the same actor cannot perform well both tragic and comic poetry (395a). But see *Symp.* 223d for the identification of good comedy and good tragedy.

involves a process of psychic assimilation. In impersonation, the young guardians liken themselves (*aphomoioun hautous*, 396a) to the object of the *mimesis*: “the mind orients itself to, and positions itself ‘inside’, the viewpoint of the speaker” (Halliwell 2002, 52).⁸ Therefore, the guardians cannot act as if they are, for example, drunk, mourning in excess, wailing, or an inferior person acting badly (395e–396a, 396c–d; cf. 604b–d, 605b). For reasons that we will see in due course, they will feel “ashamed” to act in such ways (396c–d).

Plato sees a potential danger in impersonation, because he is aware that the guardians’ fictional play can have serious effects on their psyches. The worry is not just that they will take on pernicious habits, but also that indiscriminately taking on the qualities of many things leads to many acts of psychic assimilation, and thereby disrupts the integral unity of a well-ordered person. This is evident from Socrates’ prohibition not to imitate such things as horses, pulleys, and thunder (396b, 397a). These things are not themselves degenerate, but imitating them makes a guardian become “a double-man” instead of a single human with one harmonious nature (397e, 402e). The ‘double-man’ is associated with insanity (397b) and the fickle, unrestrained pursuit of pleasure (398a–b).⁹ Instead, the guardians should impersonate only the virtuous person in order to become that person.

This brings us to the discussion of music in the narrow sense. Socrates says that a melody (*melos*) is composed of speech (*logou*), harmony (*harmonia*)¹⁰ and rhythm (*rhythmou*). The content

8. Cf. Halliwell 2002, 75–6 and *Leg.* 656b.

9. Cf. “many-headed beast” at *R.* 588c. At *R.* 398a–b, a *mimetikos* who can “become every sort of thing and to imitate all things” comes to the city to recite his poetry. We should not think that Plato’s definition of a *mimetikos* trades on an ambiguity between someone who impersonates others in the act of writing poetry and someone who impersonates others in the act of reciting poetry. Poetry was intended for recitation, making the poet an author-qua-performer and, on the model of psychic assimilation in Book III, the performer is performer-qua-audience when he is young. See Halliwell, 52; Tarnopolsky 2010, 17; and Ferrari 1989, 93.

10. Bloom and many others translate this term as ‘harmonic mode.’ Woerther 2008, 91 n11 points out that ‘mode’ is a gloss, as ancient Greek music almost surely did not have an equivalent of what we call modes.

and manner of speech was already prescribed, so harmony and rhythm remain (398d). The treatment of rhythm and harmony is technical, and perhaps this is why the section is usually overlooked. However, I hope to show at least that these passages merit further attention, as I think they both enrich *mimesis* in Book III and raise interesting questions about the education of the guardians. First, the mixed and the 'tight' Lydian, both used in threnodies and dirges, are not beneficial for the guardian education because they foster wailing and lamentation; the melancholic qualities they express tend to promote an excessively tragic character without self-rule (398e). Recall that guardians were not to impersonate these traits and that poetic tales of fated misfortunes and the evilness of death were also excised (387e–388d). Socrates also does not allow the guardians to hear the Ionian and Lydian, for they are "soft" (*malakai*) and characteristic of drunkenness and lack of restraint at symposia (399e). Only the Dorian and Phrygian are permitted because these "imitate the sounds and accents" (*mimesaito phthoggous te kai prosôdias*) of ideal guardians (399a). These harmonies inculcate moderation and courage, which are preliminary for guardianship and, for some guardians, philosophy (399a–c). I will return to explicate this passage later.

Restraint and simplicity similarly characterize the instruments and rhythms with which the Dorian and Phrygian harmonies should be played. Pan-harmonic instruments such as the lute and *aulos* are banished (399c–d), because their multiple harmonies appeal to lower pleasures and infuse the soul with multiple characters, inducing the same psychic conflict that typifies the 'double-headed' *mimetikos*. The rhythms, too, should be "the rhythms of an orderly and courageous life" (399e) and Socrates twice defers to 5th-century BCE music theorist Damon to say which rhythms, comprised of types of feet in a certain proportion, are acceptable to convey these traits (400b–c). Again, Socrates' thought is that the formal properties of rhythm and harmony can imitate the qualities of a person. These qualities spring from the disposition of the soul and can likewise become habituated in the guardians' souls through their acquaintance with music that expresses those qualities. Put otherwise, if a

guardian is reared with the right music, he too can have “good speech, good harmony, good grace [*euschemosyne*], and good rhythm” in virtue of possessing a “good disposition [*euetheia*]” (400d-e).¹¹ Socrates concludes that this good *ethos* will allow the guardian eventually to recognise both virtue and vice; and “images” (402c) of these in people, crafts, or nature; and he will love the good and beautiful products and despise the bad (402b-d; Pelosi, 110–114). We will see that this bidirectional awareness of both good and bad, and the corresponding love of the good, emblematises the *thumos* of the guardians and are propaedeutic to intellectual studies and philosophy.

So far, we have seen the sorts of dispositions that the education in *mousike*, and music in particular, intend to combat and those that it intends to develop. We have a glimpse of how this works, through the psychic assimilation involved in *mimesis* in Book III and music’s expressive-cum-representational capacities. But we’re not happy with a glimpse. In order to better understand this process, we must examine the tripartite soul, the two forms of *thumos*, and the *ethos* theory of music.

Plato famously says in the *Republic* that three parts constitute the human soul: an appetitive (*epithumetikon*), a spirited (*thumoeides*), and a reasoning part (or calculative; *logistikon*). The division is based on the principle that the same thing cannot act in opposite ways at the same time and in the same respect (436b–437a). The fact that we can will not to act on our immediate desires separates a rational from a non-rational part (*alogiston*) (439c–d). *Logistikon* is the rational part: it should govern the soul, as it is the most human element in us (439b, 588e). Socrates argues that the story of Leontius shows that the non-rational part is itself bifurcated. Leontius desires to look at corpses, but feels disgusted by this “at the same time” and turns away (439e). However, his desire overcomes him and he looks at the corpse, but then feels anger (*orge*) toward the desire (440a). This shows, Socrates says, that anger (*orge*) and epithumetic desires do not come from the same part of the soul. *Epithumetikon* seeks to satisfy immediate, transitory material

11. Halliwell 2002, 70 n76 provides that good (*eu*) is identified with beautiful or fine (*kalos*). See inter *alia* R. 378e, 389e, 390a, 400e, and 401b.

desires—the most exemplary of which are thirst, hunger, and sex—for the sake of base pleasure (403a, 437d–e, 583e). The spirited part (*thumoeides*) in the story is filled by anger, but this needs qualification.

Thumos is the seat of anger, but also of honour, shame, courage, and other social emotions. Importantly, it has two manifestations : a debased form and a beneficial form. The debased form of *thumos* is the anger (*orge*) that Leontius feels when the resolve of *thumos* is weakened by epithumetic desire. Thus, lack of restraint and irascibility characterise the debased form of *thumos*; it is enfeebled and can neither fight against epithumetic pleasures nor ally with *logos*, the rational part of the soul (Rubidge 1993, 277–8).

When *thumos* functions properly, it holds *epithumia* in check and acts like a “burst” that allies with *logos* to rule the soul (Newell 2000, 139; cf. 388d, 440c–e). It can do this because *thumos* has a sort of double-nature : it naturally has both the capacity for gentleness to what it knows and to what is its own, as well as the capacity for savagery to what is alien to it (cf. 375a–e). In this respect, *thumos* ‘sees’ in two directions simultaneously.¹² This bidirectional awareness of the beneficial form of *thumos* epitomizes the guardians of Kallipolis, who must be savage to enemies but gentle to their own, have sharp senses, retain the opinions of the rulers and fight for the city amidst inducements of fear, pain, and pleasure (375a, 429c–430c, 440c). It will become clear that the goal of the musical education is to move the soul to this beneficial form of *thumos* and away from the debased form of *thumos*, so that the soul of the guardian can be well-ordered.

Second Movement : Of the Music

The early education in rhythm and harmony targets *thumos* for four chief reasons. The first is simply that the guardians must be properly thumoeidic to guard Kallipolis. Second, *thumos* is responsible for “vigorously” (401d) holding onto the habits and opinions received in education, which keeps that education entrenched. Third, *thumos* is the part of the soul that

12. Cf. Newell 2000, 123; Tarnopolsky 2007, 27; and Tarnopolsky 2010, 8.

“takes to heart” (*enthumeomai*) images, analogies, metaphors, and crucially for us, expressive and representational properties of music (Tarnopolsky 2007, 10). It seems that in their *alogonality*, they can “insinuate themselves into the inmost part of the soul” (401d) because *thumos* can make cognitive and evaluative sense of them without the need for discursive activity. For now, our concern is with the fourth and most important reason, which is that *thumos* is the linchpin of the soul of a child. If well-trained, it links the parts of the soul, for it is gentle to reason, but strong enough to ally with reason in resistance to the immoderate pursuit of appetites (Newell 2000, 130). This is why the restrictions of impersonation, harmony, rhythm, and instruments aim at “thumoeidic simplicity and restraint” and rebuke deviances that immoderately pursue *epithumia* as shameful (Rudbidge 1993, 257). Shame resides in *thumos*, and a philosophic *thumos* is savage enough to thwart its debased manifestation (*orge*) if it is made to feel shame at the right things. But the gist of our original question remains : by what mechanism does music habituate either the beneficial or debased form of *thumos*?

The answer, I believe, comes from Socrates’ deference to Damon’s music theory.¹³ Socrates explicitly defers to Damon concerning rhythm at *R.* 400b–c, but it should be clear that what Socrates says about the imitation of character through harmony just is Damon’s ‘*ethos* theory’ of music. The theory is preserved as a fragment in the *De Musica* of Aristides Quintilianus : “Damon’s school showed that among children and those who are advanced in age the sounds of a continuous melody fashion through resemblance [*di’ homiotetos*] a character [*ethos*] which they don’t have, or bring out a character which is latent” (DK B7 = Aristides Quintilianus, *De Musica*, 2.14 in Woerther 2008, 93). Before, we saw Socrates say that music shapes character by imitating qualities of individuals, which are then internalised by auditors. This fragment adds that it does so ‘through resemblance.’

The resemblance cannot be a pre-existing correspondence between sounds and dispositions, for then musical education would be unnecessary. Rather, the music forges the resemblance

13. Cf. *R.* 400b, 400c, *Lach.* 200b, and *Alc.* I, 118c

through what some call a “homeopathic mechanism” (Woerther 2008, 94)—the movement of the music produces a sort of movement in the soul that makes them akin to one another. This might explain why at *Leg.* 790d–91b the Athenian Stranger reports that rocking and singing lullabies can cure infant souls through movement; the movement of the music produces an internal agitation in the soul (Pelosi 2010, 16–7, 30). A causal relation between movement in music and movement in the soul fits nicely with the idea that *mimesis* in Book III involves a movement of psychic assimilation.

On the *ethos* theory, then, rhythm and harmony inculcate a certain *ethos* because they permeate the soul and “stimulate” in it the qualities that they express or represent (Woerther 2008, 94). As a cautionary note, despite analogies to ‘stamping’ souls or ‘flowing’ music (424d), the movements in the homeopathic mechanism cannot be understood in physical terms. A sequence of tones does not have motion in the usual sense, and from the *Republic* onwards, Plato does not conceive of passions as physical motions in the body, as he does for example in the *Phaedo*.¹⁴ However, I concede that it is unclear just what a causal relation between sensible sounds and movement in the soul would be, if not something physical. Although this may be unsatisfying, we should note that the interaction between the physical and the mental remains opaque to many contemporary philosophers.

We can now get a clearer picture of how bad music harms the tripartite soul and how good music harmonises with it. At *R.* 411a–b, Socrates says that :

when a man gives himself to music and lets the flute [*aulos*] play and pour into his soul...using those sweet, soft [*malakai*], wailing [*threnôdeis*] harmonies...he is softened [*emalake*] like iron and made useful from having been useless and hard [*sklerou*]. But when he keeps at it without letting up and charms his spirit [*thumon*], he, as the next step, already begins to melt and liquefy his spirit, until he dissolves it comple-

14. Cf. *Phd.* 66b–c.

tely and cuts out, as it were, the sinews from his soul and makes it a 'feeble warrior'.

This is the move from a *thumos* uneducated in music to the debased form of *thumos*. When first exposed to music, *thumos* is 'made useful.' Without music tempering the savagery inherent to it, it will be savage towards everything and its second capacity for gentleness, especially gentleness towards reason, is never actualized (cf. 411e).¹⁵ Moreover, Socrates says that without any *mousike*, reason becomes "weak, deaf, and blind because it isn't awakened" (411c). However, if the man continues to experience the soft and wailing harmonies without remission, his *thumos* becomes enfeebled. It is 'charmed' by the pleasures that the harmonies and the *aulos* provide : it cannot stand up against *epithumia*.

Notice that Socrates refers to a pan-harmonic instrument and the harmonies that he proscribed earlier ; the Ionian and Lydian were described as 'soft' and the mixed and tight Lydian are the 'wailing' harmonies used in threnodies. Now, he groups these together because they all threaten to compromise the auditor's resolve and to turn proper *thumos* into its debased form as *orge* : once *thumos* is enfeebled, the man becomes "quick-tempered and irritable [*orgiloi*] from *having been* spirited [*thumoeidous*]" (411c ; my stress). The harmonies can do this because the melancholic and soft (read : epithumetic) characters that they imitate permeate the soul and transform one's dispositions, which then resemble the properties of the music. The physical analogues of 'pour', 'liquefy' and 'cuts out' are, of course, just analogues, but they attest to the penetrative power that Plato ascribes to music. Of course, one might object that music or any impersonation is pernicious only if one 'keeps at it,' as Socrates says. However, my thought is that part of the interlocutors' worry is that, like the skilled impersonator and tragic poets, the threnodies, pan-harmonic instruments and so forth appeal to the appetitive part of the soul. The pleasure of

15. This is a species of the debased form of *thumos*. Here, *thumos* has not become enfeebled by and overly gentle to *epithumia*, but is irascible and angry towards everything, including *epithumia*. I would like to thank Christina Tarnopolsky for impressing on me the importance of this distinction.

this tempts one to make the appetitive part the ruling principle of his soul, and then he will not be self-ruled but immoderate, fickle, and irascible with his spirit turned to anger.

R. 411a–d shows that music is necessary to temper *thumos*, but that some rhythms and harmonies produce a harmful, debased manifestation of it that violates the goal of the guardian education. If that is what music should not do, then what should it do? We saw that *R.* 399a–c, Socrates prescribes the Dorian and Phrygian harmonies because they are mimetic of courage and moderation.¹⁶ I promised to explicate that passage, and now that we have worked through the *ethos* theory and the two forms of *thumos*, it is time for me to make good on that promise. After he says that the other harmonies will not benefit childhood education, Socrates asks Glaucon to leave him, first, the harmony that will “imitate [*mimesaito*] the sounds and accents of the man who is courageous in warlike deeds and every violent work [*biaio ergasia*].” This man is one “who in failure or when going to face wounds or death or falling into some other disaster. . .stands up firmly and patiently against chance [*tuchen*]” (399a–b). This harmony is called “violent” and the man it imitates “unfortunate” (399c).

We know that this harmony is supposed to develop the proper manifestation of *thumos* in the soul. It is meant to do so, I believe, by expressing the courage and moderation exemplified by a man who behaves well in bad circumstances. Bloom translates *biaio* as ‘violent’, which is its most literal translation (Liddell and Scott 1869, 126), but the context indicates that here it means ‘forced.’ Chance has thrown war, misfortune, or the prospect of death at this man. He may have cause to mourn or to wallow in pity or fear, but instead he ‘stands up’ in the face of misfortunes. Thus, he still has that beneficial thumoeidic doggedness in him, requisite, for instance, to go into battle. This also means that he does not do what the man with a debased form of *thumos* would do, which is wail, mourn excessively, and adopt a fatalistic, tragic worldview (cf. 387e–388d, 395e, 604b–d

16. The passage does not make clear whether both of the Dorian and Phrygian harmonies instill courage and moderation or whether each instills one disposition.

with Rubidge 1993, 259–60). Plato is not saying that the virtuous person does not mourn, but only that he does not do so without proper measure : he has moderation. His ability to stand firm in the face of fear seems like a manifestation of the political courage necessary for guardianship (375b, 440c). This ‘forced’ harmony is retained in the education of the guardians because it will promote dispositions for courage and moderation in the child guardian that hears it, as the harmony forms an impression on his character ‘through resemblance.’ The harmony, in turn, intends to combat the onset of the debased manifestation of *thumos*.

The second harmony that Socrates asks Glaucon to keep is the one that imitates the *ethos* of a man who performs a “voluntary” deed (*ekousia praxeis*) of one of two types. The first is persuasion or “making a request”, either by entreating a god or by instructing or exhorting someone (399b). The second type of voluntary deed is the self-restraint that an intelligent and modest person exhibits when someone instructs him or persuades him to change (399b). Socrates says that this man is “fortunate” and acts “moderately” (399c). It is difficult to see how these deeds or the character from which they follow could be expressed or represented by formal properties in the harmony, especially since the second is not a deed in the straightforward sense but a reflexive motion in the soul. Notwithstanding this aesthetic concern, however, Socrates seems to want the harmony to work on the natural capacity of *thumos* to be gentle towards others. Particularly, it seems geared towards fostering openness to the authority of *logos*, both as a means of persuasion and as a corrective to one’s own beliefs and practices.¹⁷ If this is right, then Socrates here intimates what he later calls philosophic courage (567b). For this reason I agree with Frédéric Woerther that this second harmony instils philosophic traits (Woerther 2008, 91) by instilling a philosophic *thumos*.

Woerther does not elaborate on how Plato thinks these two harmonies, the Dorian and the Phrygian, prepare the way for philosophy. However, a clue comes moments later in the discus-

17. Cf. *R.* 411e for the opposition of persuasion (*peithō*) and speech (*logos*) with violence (*bia*).

sion of music, when Plato suggests that good music, like other good products of craft or nature, forges a kinship between *thumos* and *logos* in the guardians. He has Socrates state that “something of the fine works [*kalon ergon*] will strike [*prosbale*] their vision or their hearing...it will, without their awareness [*lanthanei*], with the fair speech lead them to likeness and friendship as well as accord [*eis omoieteta te kai philian kai sophmonian to kalo logo agousa*]” (401c–d; my stress). I find Bloom’s translation of ‘*eis omoieteta te kai philian kai sophmonian to kalo logo agousa*’ less helpful than the following: “lead them to similarity, friendship and concord with beautiful reason” (in Pelosi 2010, 21). This means that, for Plato, good music establishes in children a harmonious relation between *thumos* and *logos*, such that the soul is not conflicted when rational capacities develop.

Music attunes *thumos* to reason because it instils love of things that are good and fine and hatred of things that are bad and shameful. Thus, what reason judges as good and bad will correspond to what the child already loves and hates in his own soul and in the world. To quote the passage with which we began: “having the right kind of dislikes, he would praise the fine things...when reasonable speech comes, the man who’s reared in this way would take most delight in it, recognizing it on account of its being akin” (402a). Again, the musical education intends to achieve this by developing a beneficial form of *thumos* that can ‘see’ with “the sharpest sense” (401e) in two directions: towards appetites in order to guard strongly over them and towards reason in order to be gentle to it and help it function as the governing principle of the soul. Music habituates the proper thumoeidic dispositions through movements in rhythm and harmony that imitate qualities of the virtuous person and cause a movement in the soul of the guardians that produces like qualities.

Third Movement : Of the Spheres

Despite its richness, many scholars tend to absorb the discussion of rhythm and harmony into the wider discussion of *mimesis* in Book III. However, I think a sustained treatment of

the passages we have considered reveals an important difference between musical *mimesis* (*ethos* theory) and the psychic assimilation in the impersonation of characters. I believe, in turn, that this difference both problematizes the view that Plato fears the imagination *per se* and raises some interesting questions about the cultivation of *logos* in the education of the soul. First, the difference. If Plato views education in rhythm and harmony as we have described, then it seems entirely passive. In other words, the dispositions in the soul are modified solely by external things acting on it; the soul suffers the consequences of the movement in the music (Pelosi 2010, 20, 22). For instance, Socrates says that what the guardians hear will “strike” (401c) their ears — they passively receive it. Indeed, all *mousike* enters their soul “without their awareness” (401d) and the psychic assimilation in the impersonation of characters is passive in a sense, too. However, the difference is that impersonation in speech and gestures in Book III requires an *act* of the imagination on the part of the child. There is no such imaginative act in the *ethos* theory of music. If musical *mimesis* impersonates, it does so only indirectly through formal properties of rhythm and harmony.

Yet the guardians seem too underdeveloped to consciously impersonate characters via music or to imagine or represent the qualities embodied by the music that they hear. The music simply gets into their souls. In this way, rhythm and harmony seem to operate much more like myth and poetry in Book II. They even seem to enter at a more primary level of consciousness: “rhythm and harmony *most of all* insinuate themselves into the *inmost part* of the soul” (401d; my stress). (Perhaps this is because they do not use speech.) It is, then, misleading to think that Book III provides only “conscious first principles of action” that operate at a higher level of consciousness than the stories in Book II (Tarnopolsky 2007, 25). This is true of acts of *mimesis* in Book III, but not of the *mimesis* that occurs in music, which equally conditions habit and action. The difference in these pedagogic mechanisms, along with the fact that Plato prioritises the effect of rhythm and harmony, signals that music in Book III deserves more attention than it is usually afforded.

The degree to which the homeopathic mechanism of mu-

sis is passive also makes it problematic to think that Plato's worry about *mimesis* is "a radical attack on the imagination itself, where imagination is to be understood as a dimension of the mind's capacity to explore the possibility of *difference* in one's life" (Halliwell 2002, 54). This view is problematic because, in the censorship of mimetic activity in Book III, a whole section on *mimesis* in music does not rely on imagination. Reading Plato as an enemy of imagination misses the extent to which mimetic assimilation is generated by the potency and the pleasure of qualities of the object of the *mimesis*. Further, Plato is concerned not with the imagination *per se*, but with the imaginative role-playing of morally bad characters. He is also particularly concerned with this harmful sort of imagination among children. Even when considering adult spectators, Plato is worried that certain pleasurable performances will infect the soul and enfeeble *thumos* (Rubidge 1993, 259–67).¹⁸ As we saw, Plato does worry that imaginative impersonation can disrupt the unity of one's psyche (cf. 397e), and the above interpretation has this in its favour. However, I think that Plato has the indiscriminate imitation of numerous people and objects in mind here and that qualified worries about imagination do not constitute a 'radical attack.'

Finally, although much of the discussion on *mousike* focuses on habituating the right manifestation of *thumos* insofar as it stands up against immoderate pleasure and lack of self-restraint, we also saw that this manifestation both awakens and harmonizes with reason (cf. 411d). Part of this kinship has to do with the way in which *mousike*, and music in particular, instils in the guardians a love of the *kalon*, that is, the fine or the beautiful (cf. 401c–e). This accord explains the harmonious relation between *thumos* and *logos*, but it does not really explain how music awakens or cultivates *logos*. I want to suggest, albeit tentatively, that Plato believes that the good music and good rhythm that the guardians should hear contain the seeds from which rational capacity grows. *Thumos* desires are directed at the *kala*, which include symmetry, order, and proportion (Tarnopolsky 2007, 10). For Plato, fine rhythms and harmonies are fine

18. But see *R.* 606a–b with Ferrari 1989, 135, 137–9.

because of their proportionality, and they have proportions that they do because they are rational structures. At *Tim.* 47c–e, Timaeus strikes a threefold correspondence between the harmony of the orbits (spheres) of the heavenly bodies, the harmony of music, and the harmony of the soul. Not only does movement in music foster a resembling movement in the soul, but when the rhythm and harmony is good, both the music and soul move smoothly like the circular and perfectly rational movement of the spheres (Pelosi 2010, 107).

Apart from its sensibility, Plato thinks that good music contains “rationality” in a scientific and intelligible component : the *kala* in music that appeal to *thumos* contain “an ideal structure in the sensible material of sound” (*Ibid.*, 110). It is for this reason that, at *R.* 530d–531a, Glaucon and Socrates can discuss “harmonic movement” (*euharmonion phoran*) as one of the sciences preparatory for dialectic (530d). We must note that here music is no longer discussed in terms of sensible sound-structures. Philosophers require training in metaphysics that advances beyond the education in *mousike* and gymnastics that the young guardians received (522a–b), and hence Plato disparages empirical harmonic scientists who “put ears before intelligence” by attempting to find the smallest perceptible interval (531a–b).

Nonetheless, if good music is good because its harmony and rhythm partake in rational proportions, then that rational structure is absorbed by the child guardians when they hear it as a fine concatenation of sounds. I think this cultivates *logos*, giving rationality a kick-start, as it were, which paves the way for the contemplation of intelligibles. If this suggestion is correct, then the passages on rhythm and harmony not only enrich *mimesis* in Book III with the homeopathic mechanism of music, but also open up questions about the connection between *logos* and *thumos* and relations among music, the soul, and the cosmos in Plato’s works. There are many puzzles here, but “it’s always good to fill the mind with puzzles.”¹⁹

19. Ronald de Sousa, to me in a very funny and very accurate *mimesis* of Bertrand Russell

Works Cited

- Belfiore, Elizabeth. "A Theory of Imitation in Plato's Republic." *Transactions of the American Philological Associations* (1974–) 114 (1984) : 121–146.
- Ferrari, G.R.F. "Plato and Poetry." In *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism Volume One : Classical Criticism*, edited by George A. Kennedy, 62–148. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Halliwel, Stephen. *The Aesthetics of Mimesis : Ancient Texts and Modern Problems*. Princeton : Princeton University Press, 2002.
- Liddell, Henry George and Robert Scott. *A lexicon abridged from Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon*. Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1869.
- Newell, Waller R. *Ruling Passion : the Erotics of Statecraft in Platonic Political Philosophy*. Lanham : Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000.
- Ober, Josiah and Barry Strauss. "Drama, Political Rhetoric and the Discourse of Athenian Democracy." In *Nothing to Do with Dionysus? : Athenian Drama in its Social Context*, edited by John J. Winkler and Froma Zeitlin, 237–270. Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1990.
- Pelosi, Francesco. *Plato on Music, Soul and Body*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Plato. *Republic*, translated by Allan Bloom (1968). In Bloom, Allan. *The Republic of Plato*. 2nd ed. New York : Basic Books, 1991.
- Rubidge, Bradley. "Tragedy and the Emotions of Warriors : The Moral Psychology Underlying Plato's Attack on Poetry." *Arethusa* 26 (1993) : 247–76.
- Tarnopolsky, Christina. "Plato's Politics of Distributing and Disrupting the Sensible." *Theory and Event* 14.3 (Forthcoming

Dec 2010).

—. "The Logic of Thumos and Mimesis in Plato's *Republic*." Paper presented at Brown University Political Philosophy Workshop. Providence, November, 29 2007. Manuscript in possession of author.

Woerther, Frédérique. "Music and the Education of the Soul in Plato and Aristotle : Homoeopathy and the Formation of Character." *Classical Quarterly* 58 (2007) : 89–103.

Abstractionism and *De Re* Modality

Theodore Reed Widom

THIS paper treats the difficulty of interpreting, in an abstractionist fashion, Saul Kripke's claim that "there is no reason why we cannot *stipulate* that, in talking about what would have happened to Nixon in a certain counterfactual situation, we are talking about what would have happened to *him*" (1980, 44).¹ Generally speaking, the difficulty is to understand how one can talk about what would have happened to "*him*," i.e., the concrete particular Nixon, while only referencing abstract states of affairs, which contain no concrete particulars. This difficulty is one specific case of the general difficulty of incorporating *de re* modality into abstractionist accounts of possible worlds. I propose to resolve the problem by interpreting "Nixon" and "*him*" not as concrete particulars, but as parts of abstract states of affairs. This interpretation of Kripke's specific case then provides a model which, once fully fleshed out, might help reconcile abstractionism with *de re* modality in general.

I start off by describing the philosophical function of possible worlds. I then introduce two different accounts of the ontology of possible worlds, namely those of the concretists and the abstractionists. I move on to explain why abstractionism raises problems for Kripke's claim, and thus for *de re* modality in general. Then I propose my own interpretation of Kripke's claim, which serves as a stepping stone towards my general abstractionist account of *de re* modality.

Background

Although modal notions, i.e., notions of necessity, contingency, possibility, and impossibility, have played important roles in metaphysical discussions, they have not been without critics. The most serious critique comes from those who thought that any serious philosophical language must be extensional,

1. Where not otherwise noted, all emphasis is Kripke's own.

so that substitution of co-referential terms or phrases never alters the truth-value of a sentence. The reason for insisting on using extensional languages for philosophy is that, unlike for non-extensional languages, philosophers have logics with which they can determine which sentences of extensional languages follow from which others.

Until the 1950s and 60s, modal notions were thought to render language non-extensional, and did not figure in widely accepted logics (Loux 157). However, when philosophers started understanding the semantics of modal logics in terms of quantification over possible worlds, modal logic became better accepted.

De Dicto Modality

In the possible worlds framework for the semantics of modal logic, for a proposition to be necessarily true is for it to be true in all possible worlds. For a proposition to be contingently true is for it to be true in the actual world but false in at least one possible world. For a proposition to be possibly true is for it to be true in at least one possible world. And for a proposition to be necessarily false is for it to be false in all possible worlds. This is our account of *de dicto* modality—the application of modal concepts to the truth and falsity of whole propositions (Loux 159–60).

De Re Modality

The framework of possible worlds also gives us the resources to understand *de re* modality—the application of modal concepts to a concrete particular's exemplification of an attribute. For a particular necessarily to exemplify an attribute is for it to exemplify the attribute in all possible worlds in which it exists. For a particular to contingently exemplify an attribute is for it to exemplify the attribute in the actual world, but not exemplify it in at least one possible world in which it exists. For a particular to possibly exemplify an attribute is for it to exemplify the attribute in at least one possible world. And for a particular necessarily not to exemplify an attribute is for it not to exemplify the attribute in any possible world. We can note the restriction on quantification in *de re* necessity and contingency

to worlds in which the particular exists—a restriction that does not appear in *de dicto* necessity and contingency.

The Function of Possible Worlds

Our account of the history of discussions of modality and possible worlds has shown that although possible worlds have several functions,² the most important of these is to play a role in the semantics of modal logic, i.e., on formal discourse on the necessary, contingent, possible, and impossible as applied to propositions (*de dicto* modality) and to particulars (*de re* modality). We will now see two accounts of the ontological status of possible worlds. The sense in which these accounts are accounts of “the same thing” is that they are both accounts of things that have this function (Van Inwagen 192–3).

Two Accounts of the Ontological Status of Possible Worlds

Concretism

David Lewis is the main supporter of what Van Inwagen calls the concretist account of the ontological status of possible worlds. For concretists, all worlds are made up solely of concrete particulars, and every concrete particular is spatiotemporally related to every other concrete particular within a possible world. Another way of saying this is that the objects within possible worlds are maximally spatiotemporally related to each other (Van Inwagen 186). However, concrete particulars are not spatiotemporally related across different possible worlds. For concretists, an object in one world cannot have the same identity as an object in another world. The only cross-world tie of roughly this nature is that of being a “counterpart” (Loux 166–8).

In the concretist usage, “actual” is an indexical term which refers to the world we are in when we utter the term “actual.” The difference between “actual” and “non-actual” worlds is not indicative of a difference in ontological status, since every possible world is the “actual” world for its own inhabitants.

2. Aside from their role in the semantics of modal logic, possible worlds have a function in the semantics of non-formal philosophical discourse on modality, counterfactuals, essence, and truth-theories for natural languages (Van Inwagen 193).

Abstractionism

Alvin Plantinga is the main contributor to the view Van Inwagen calls *abstractionism* about the ontological status of possible worlds. According to abstractionists, a possible world is a state of affairs (i) that possibly obtains, and (ii) which, when joined in a conjunction with another state of affairs that it does not already include, does *not* possibly obtain (Van Inwagen 186–7).

To clarify (i) and (ii), “states of affairs,” “possibly,” and “to obtain” are primitive terms which cannot be defined in terms of other, more basic terms. A “conjunction x ” of two states of affairs y and z , is a state of affairs in which both y and z obtain (Van Inwagen 187).³ Lastly, for a state of affairs x “to include” a state of affairs y is for it to be impossible for x to obtain while y does not obtain (Van Inwagen 186–7). Conjunctions thus include the states of affairs they contain.

Like concretist possible worlds, abstractionist possible worlds are “maximal” in a sense. Abstractionist possible worlds are “maximal” in the sense that they are the conjunction of every state of affairs or its negation.⁴

In the abstractionist usage, a possible world is “actual” if and only if it obtains. There can be no applying of the word “actual” to concrete particulars because while abstract objects like states of affairs are the kinds of things that can obtain, concrete particulars are not the kinds of things that can obtain (Van Inwagen 189).

The Abstractionist Problem for De Re Modality

A Problem for De Re Modality

Philosophers such as Quine have challenged the notion of *de re* modality (Quine 1953, 151). Only “states of affairs,” or “propositions,” which are descriptions of particulars rather than par-

3. It is *not* part of the definition of the “conjunction x ” that x obtains. If it were part of the definition, then we would be unable to talk about non-obtaining conjunctions of states of affairs. What *is* part of the definition, however, is that *within* x , y and z obtain, so that *if* x obtains, then y and z obtain.

4. To clarify “negation,” if the conjunction x of states of affairs y and z consists in y and z obtaining, then the conjunction x' of y and *the negation of* z consists in y obtaining and z not obtaining.

ticulars themselves, behave extensionally when modal notions are applied to them, these philosophers say. Take the sentence :

(I) Richard Nixon might not have won the 1968 election.

This is an example of *de re* modality, because it is about the modal status of a particular's (Richard Nixon's) exemplifying an attribute (winning the 1968 election). Plugging our terms into the formula for contingency in *de re* modality, the framework of possible worlds analyzes (I) as :

(II) Richard Nixon exemplifies the attribute of winning the 1968 election in the actual world, but not in at least one possible world in which Richard Nixon exists.

In an extensional, philosophically adequate language, we should be able to substitute "the winner of the 1968 election" for "Richard Nixon" without changing the truth-value of the sentence, because the two phrases are co-referential. The framework of possible worlds should thus also be able to analyze (I) as :

(III) The winner of the 1968 election exemplifies the attribute of winning the 1968 election in the actual world, but not in at least one possible world in which the winner of the 1968 election exists.

(I) is true and (II) is false (Kripke 1980, 40⁵), but the only difference between them is the substitution of a co-referential yet descriptively different phrase. In the framework of possible worlds, then, the modal status of a particular's exemplifying an attribute depends on which description, or "criteria of identity" (Kripke 1971, 227), is used to identify the particular across different possible worlds. Unfortunately, there is no objective standard by which to decide on the correct criteria of identity. Would Nixon still be Nixon if he were of a different height? Of different political leanings? Of a different species? There is no objectively correct place to draw the line. Unlike *de dicto* modal notions, then, *de re* modal notions seem problematic because they are

5. Quine (139–47) has similar examples, but which do not invoke possible worlds.

not extensional and cannot be employed in truth-preserving logical systems.

Kripke's Reply

Kripke dismisses this challenge to *de re* modality by stating that criteria of identity are not the only way to establish the cross-world identity of two Nixons. Instead of using criteria of identity, Kripke says that :

(IV) "[T]here is no reason why we cannot *stipulate* that, in talking about what would have happened to Nixon in a certain counterfactual situation, we are talking about what would have happened to *him*" (1980, 44).

The name "Nixon" thus becomes what Kripke calls a "rigid designator," that is, a term which refers to identical particulars in every world in which those particulars exist (1980, 48). The substitution of rigid designators for one another never alters the truth-value of a sentence—even of a modal sentence. Thus, if when substituting co-referential terms we restrict ourselves to rigid designators, then *de re* modal sentences are extensional and can unproblematically be used in logical systems.⁶

6. Kripke thinks that coupling the notion of rigid designators with a criteria of identity view of cross-world identity results in a circularity (1971, 227). I disagree. I think that philosophers who define cross-world identity in terms of a set of qualitative criteria of identity can usefully adopt the notion of a rigid designator. For them, the use of a rigid designator is that it stands in for a certain, fixed qualitative description of a particular. Both this and Kripke's notion of rigid designators render *de re* modal sentences extensional : the former by fixing a single set of criteria by which to identify identical particulars, and the latter by immediately stipulating the cross-world identity of particulars. However, both notions are also subject to charges of subjectivism : the former for lacking an objective standard for choosing a set of criteria of identity, and the latter for lacking an objective standard for stipulating which particulars are identical with one another. While this is a real problem, the main purpose of this paper is rather to address the issue that even speaking of Kripke's stipulating that two cross-world *particulars* are identical with one another becomes problematic given his abstractionism.

A Problem for Kripke's Reply

Kripke couples claim (IV) with the broadly abstractionist⁷ assertion that "a possible world is *given by the descriptive conditions we associate with it*" (1980, 44).

Kripke's abstractionism poses a problem for his claim (IV). The problem is that Kripke means to talk about what would have happened to "emphhim," i.e., the concrete particular Nixon. The way he proposes to talk about "*him*" is by pointing to the part, "Nixon," of a state of affairs. But states of affairs are abstract representational entities and do not contain concrete particulars. Since "*him*" is a concrete particular, Kripke cannot point to a part, "Nixon," of a state of affairs and say that it is "*him*," since no part of a state of affairs is a concrete particular. Thus we cannot interpret (IV) literally as :

(V) "[T]here is no reason why we cannot *stipulate* that, in talking about what would have happened to Nixon [i.e., the actual concrete particular Nixon] in a certain counterfactual situation, we are talking about what would have happened to *him* [i.e., the actual concrete particular Nixon]."

This problem only arises because Kripke is an abstractionist. For concretists, other possible worlds are filled with concrete particulars just like the concrete particulars in our actual world. Were Kripke a concretist, it would make perfect sense for him to talk about concrete particulars in counterfactual situations as in (V). For abstractionists like Kripke, however, other possible worlds are abstract entities and are not filled with concrete particulars. Given his abstractionism, (V) is thus not a viable interpretation of Kripke's claim (IV).

Other interpretations of (IV) pose yet more problems. We cannot interpret (IV) by pointing to a part, "Nixon," of a state of affairs and saying that it is a *representation* of "*him*." "*Him*" is a concrete particular in our actual world. But the part, "Nixon," of the state of affairs in question does not represent particulars

7. Although Kripke wrote before the term came into use and did not fully develop the abstractionist view of possible worlds as states of affairs, Van Inwagen considers him an abstractionist (186).

in our actual world because, as Kripke states in (IV), we are concerned with “Nixon in a certain *counterfactual* situation” (my emphasis). Thus, we cannot interpret (IV) as :

(VI) “...to Nixon [i.e., the representation of the actual concrete particular Nixon] ...to *him* [i.e., the actual concrete particular Nixon].”

Nor can we say that the part, “Nixon,” of the state of affairs in question represents a concrete particular in a non-actual world that is identical to (or the counterpart of) the concrete particular “*him*” in our actual world. This is because to admit that there are concrete particulars in non-actual worlds is to admit the truth of concretism. Thus we cannot interpret (IV) as :

(VII) “...to Nixon [i.e., the representation of a concrete particular in a non-actual world which is identical to (or the counterpart of) the actual concrete particular Nixon] ...to *him* [i.e., the actual concrete particular Nixon].”

Given Kripke’s abstractionist view of the ontological status of possible worlds, we cannot accept any of (V) through (VII) as interpretations of his statement (IV). The problem is, then, how can we interpret (IV)? This problem does not arise for concretists, who will be content with a slightly modified version of interpretation (VII). And this is a problem not only for Kripke’s claim (IV), but for abstractionist accounts of *de re* modality in general ; how can we talk about what concrete particulars might have been like when our only resources for dealing with modality are abstract ?

Reconciling Abstractionism and De Re Modality

*Particularly for Kripke : “him” as an Abstract Object rather than a Concrete Particular*⁸

Interpretations (V) through (VII) assumed that “*him*” is a concrete particular. But we could interpret “*him*” as not a concrete

8. We only propose one of the two acceptable interpretations we have found. Alternatively, abstractionists could accept interpretation (VII) after all, thereby reducing abstractionism to concretism. This is not a high price to pay if abstractionism reduces to concretism anyways. See Van Inwagen (188) for an argument that it does.

particular but a part of a state of affairs, just as "Nixon" is a part of a state of affairs in (VI) and (VII).

For the abstractionists, all but one state of affairs are non-actual, and we can talk about the parts of these non-actual states of affairs. For the one state of affairs that is actual, we can also talk about the concrete particulars represented by that actual state of affairs represents. For instance, we can talk about the concrete particular "*him*" because the actual state of affairs represents "*him*."

The idea underlying the new interpretation we propose of (IV), however, is that although we can talk of the concrete particulars that actual states of affairs represent, we can also talk about parts of actual states of affairs without mentioning the concrete particulars those parts represent. We do not have to interpret "*him*" as a concrete particular. Rather, we can take "*him*" to be a part of the actual state of affairs. There happens to be a concrete particular, "*him*," which this part of the actual state of affairs represents, but this is of no relevance to us. We are not interested in the concrete particular "*him*," but rather in the abstract representation "*him*," in the actual state of affairs.⁹

Thus we interpret "*him*" not as the concrete particular Nixon, but as the part of the actual state of affairs which is a representation of the concrete particular by the same name, "*him*." Then, we interpret "Nixon" as a part of a non-actual state of affairs. We can now stipulate that these two different parts of states of affairs are identical. We arrive at the interpretation :

(VIII) "...to Nixon [i.e. the part (of a non-actual state of affairs) that is stipulated to be identical with the part of the actual state of affairs which represents the concrete particular "*him*"] ...to *him* [i.e. the part of the actual state of affairs which represents "*him*"]."

Here, we do not run into the problem that we are looking for concrete particulars in parts of abstract states of affairs, because

9. This is *not* the same interpretation as (VI). In (VI), "Nixon" is the representation of the actual concrete particular, and "*him*" is the actual concrete particular. In (VIII), however, "Nixon" is a part of a *non-actual* state of affairs, and "*him*" is not a *concrete* particular but is a part of the *abstract*, actual state of affairs.

"*him*" is no longer a concrete particular. "*Him*" is now just as much an abstract part of the actual state of affairs as is the thing we have stipulated to be identical with "*him*" in the non-actual state of affairs. This interpretation therefore eliminates the clash between Kripke's claim (IV) and his abstractionism.

As mentioned above, the problem of providing a thoroughly abstractionist interpretation of Kripke's claim (IV) is a specific case of the problem of providing an abstractionist account of *de re* modality. We can therefore widen our interpretation (VIII) of Kripke's claim (IV) to arrive at a general abstractionist account of *de re* modality :

(IX) A concrete particular x necessarily exemplifies an attribute Y if and only if either (i) the part P_A of the actual state of affairs which represents x is stipulated not to be identical with any part of a non-actual state of affairs, or (ii) for every part P_{NA} of a non-actual state of affairs stipulated to be identical with P_A , if P_{NA} were actual it would represent a concrete particular x' which would exemplify Y .

Although this account only addresses necessity, fitting accounts could easily be added for concrete particulars contingently, possibly, or (necessarily) not exemplifying given attributes. Analogously to interpretation (VIII) of Kripke's specific example, our general account (IX) does not run into the difficulty of looking for concrete particulars in abstract states of affairs. This is because, in deciding whether x exemplifies an attribute necessarily, we focus not on x the concrete particular, but on the abstract part P_A of the actual state of affairs which represents x . We thus avoid searching among abstract non-actual states of affairs for things identical to concrete particulars, and instead simply stipulate that certain parts of abstract non-actual states of affairs are identical to certain parts of abstract actual states of affairs.

Conclusion

Kripke's abstractionism raises a problem for his claim that "there is no reason why we cannot *stipulate* that, in talking about what would have happened to Nixon in a certain counter-

factual situation, we are talking about what would have happened to *him*." In order to address this problem, I have proposed to interpret "*him*" as the part of the actual state of affairs that *describes* the concrete particular Nixon. This contrasts with other interpretations in which "*him*" is the concrete particular Nixon.

Since Kripke's claim is a specific case of the problem abstractionism raises for *de re* modality, I have tried to use my interpretation of it as a stepping stone to reach a general reconciliation of abstractionism with *de re* modality. Admittedly, my proposed reconciliation is only in its preliminary stages. Further work on this general abstractionist account of *de re* modality would have to counter charges of subjectivism in stipulating which parts of non-actual states of affairs are identical with parts of actual states of affairs. Even more seriously, my focus on abstract states of affairs rather than on concrete particulars raises questions concerning the extent to which my account is actually one of *de re* modality at all.¹⁰ Further work would have to *provide reassurance* that, despite its emphasis on abstract states of affairs, the account does remain one of *de re* modality and does say something about concrete particulars and their exemplification of attributes.

10. I thank Professor Jessica Alden Pepp for raising this issue.

Works Cited

- Kripke, Saul, "Identity and Necessity," in *Identity and Individuation*, ed. M. K. Munitz, New York : New York University Press, 1971. Reprinted in ed. M. Loux, *Metaphysics : Contemporary Readings*, 2nd edition, New York and Oxford : Routledge, 2008.
- , *Naming and Necessity*, Cambridge, Massachusetts : Harvard University Press, 1980.
- Loux, Michael, *Metaphysics : a Contemporary Introduction*, 3rd edition, New York and London : Routledge, 2006.
- Quine, W.V.O., "Reference and Modality," in Quine, *From a Logical Point of View*, Cambridge, Massachusetts : Harvard University Press, 1953.
- Van Inwagen, Peter, "Two Concepts of Possible Worlds," in *Midwest Studies in Philosophy, XI : Studies in Essentialism*, ed. P. French, T.E. Uehling, and H. Wettstein, Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press, 1986.

Contributors

Aaron Vansintjan is a U3 Joint-Honours in Philosophy and Environment. His research interests include our relationship with the environment and how our attitudes form that relationship. In addition, Aaron likes journalism and activism, and is a Belgian citizen.

Anna Cook is graduating from McGill University with an Honours degree in Philosophy and a Minor in Gender Studies. Her undergraduate thesis is a Spinozistic interpretation of the impact of abuse and disempowering relations on one's sense of bodily capacity and affective disposition. Anna was one of the principal organizers of Philopolis 2011, and is the current president of McGill's Philosophy Students' Association.

Jonathan Fine is an Honours Philosophy student with a minor in Political Theory. Graduating this semester, Jonathan hopes to pursue graduate studies in philosophy in the coming years, with particular interests in aesthetics, action theory, and ancient philosophy. Maybe one day he will understand what it is he is doing when he is doing philosophy.

Theodore Reed Widom is finishing an undergraduate degree in philosophy and Chinese studies. He will either continue his studies at a Chinese university, or will "get a real job." He would like to thank his parents Mary and Michael for his education!