Being & Metaphor:
Variations on World

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Foreword

Living well is the result of an attuned sensitivity and responsivity to beings around us. We often miss the opportunity because we tend to close off from others. Thus, we need a renewed sense of responsibility; we need to shift our mindset from a human-centred ethics to a broader ethical way of being.

This broader sense means we come to be aware of what it means to live in the midst of a multitude of divergent ways of being — animals, plants, so-called inanimate things. Only in this way does our world become more meaningful and responsive. And yet we're stopped from this experience by patterns of thought that insist on a unity to nature or being. So, we must transform ourselves and our ways of thought.

We must relinquish our habitual patterns to arrive at a new experience of other beings. In this book, we'll spend most of our time tracking and being tracked by this kind of experience, seduced by and seducing it. *The shape of this experience is the shape of living well.* What we see on this journey is similar to what a tracker sees when they take in a vista; thus, we will pause on traditional philosophical issues, like truth, space and time, ontology, metaphysics, aesthetics, and the self, amongst others. On our quest, not solely intellectual, we strive together for a rigorous, enactive philosophy that opens us to the mysteries of being. For philosophy is one way to rigorously try to live a good life.

The central transformation of this book is to transform one's world and self from an everyday way of being to a more open, responsive way of being: I call this a *phenomenological transformation*. Through this shift in our experience—in *how* we experience—we're struck by things in their particularity. Things take on senses that don't stem from us. Things reach out to us, show us their character, and stand forth from out of their world.

I explore this concept of "world," for our responsivity must be engaged from out of our world and towards the worlds of others. Thus, I draw on Martin Heidegger, for whom humans are in a world, where world is: the totality of involvements, how meaning hangs together, and the set of pragmatic relations, all ultimately based on how beings are disclosed to us. In other words, our world is where beings are what they are.

But there isn't just one world. First, there are different *human* worlds: historical and contemporaneous, for our world is not that of the ancient Greeks, nor that of contemporary indigenous Amazonian peoples.[1] Second, there are *non-human* worlds: animals, plants, and so on. Third, and more broadly, *all* beings have worlds, their own worlds—which are shared and distinct for each *group* of beings—for all things maintain themselves while opening beyond themselves—they maintain themselves while opening to all others, i.e., to beings as a whole. I call that which has this structure of maintaining and opening *opening-while-holding-back*.

In each case, worlds are where beings are what they are. They're encompassing ways that all things are, ultimately not reconcilable to any *one* world or perspective. Nonetheless, and paradoxically, each world constantly reconciles and is reconciled by other worlds and

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[1] "Our" means 'us' in our group, in the Western tradition and in Canada or America, though I hope this book finds resonance outside this group.

ways of being. To understand this irreconcilable reconcilability, I draw on Canadian poet-philosopher Jan Zwicky's ideas on metaphor.

Metaphors say X *is* the case while also implying that X *is not* the case (X *is* and *is not* Y). That is, metaphors gesture to the similarities between contexts (the 'is') while maintaining the essential distinctiveness of the contexts (the implied 'is not'). In our society, we tend to notice the distinctiveness of things (which we take as separability or independence) and their similarity (which we take as the reductive identity or sameness of things): thus, we take things to be both independent and interchangeable. Contrarily, metaphors emphasize what is common between contexts while respecting their difference. Like a *hinge* that connects and separates things, metaphors first bring contexts and entities together and then allow them to return to their own contexts. Things are simultaneously dependent and unique: that is, *dependently-independable*.

How does metaphor help with the multiplicity of divergent worlds? By "metaphor," I don't mean something representational or linguistic, though metaphors are something we use in language. I mean something broader, for I'm interested in the *structure* of metaphor. *Different worlds relate metaphorically*. This doesn't mean we represent this relation in consciousness; it means that the structure of how different worlds relate is the same as how a metaphor is structured.

There are different ontologies, ways of being, or worlds occupying the same space: though they share aspects in common, worlds are distinct. Because each wholly encompassing world opens its own way of *being* which overlaps with others (e.g., a bear's world is not our world), I speak of *metaphoric ontology*. Metaphoric ontology describes how Being *flashes out* as distinct worlds that are interacting, irreconcilably reconcilably.

I delve further into this by drawing, as Zwicky does, on the Necker cube: . This gestalt figure is a cube that projects either upwards and to the right, or downwards and to the left. The Necker cube is a metaphor for being, which projects in different ways: i.e., as distinct, overlapping worlds. The Necker cube is another way to show the *structure* that underlies how different worlds relate; while the two projections of the cube share aspects in common, they are distinct. In other words, metaphors and the Necker cube are similarly structured, and I use both to gesture to the structure of distinct worlds.

Thus, with Zwicky, I caution against our societal tendency towards *reductionism*—insisting the cube is ultimately a set of lines we interpret—for reductionism focuses either on what is in common at the expense and collapse of difference or on difference at the expense and denial of commonality.

Likewise, though worlds are distinct and multiple, they do overlap, share aspects, and interact with one another. Every world is open to every other, and exists only *because* it's open to others. The multiplicity of worlds finds a kind of unity in each distinct world; all worlds are shared worlds. This is how they're irreconcilably reconcilable.

We glimpse other worlds from our world. For example, when we're *struck* by a thing's particular *this*ness, we may see how the world could be for it: we see the whole focused

through *this*.[2] We glimpse a *wisp of world*, which is how worlds can appear in other worlds. An *ontological transformation* is to explicitly open oneself to the world of an other.

Because other beings are in one's world, worlds are ongoing negotiations with others. At times, we can be inattentive, neglectful, or outright violent towards others. And yet, they strive for their own relations and, if we let them be (or even if we don't), an *auto-ontological transformation* may occur: the uncovering of one's own world and ways of relating. Before imposition on others, *power* is to be called by and placed into relations with things. Only secondarily does power function as imposition of one's way of relating onto others.

Inattentiveness can be unintentional. To bring ourselves to an understanding of the multiplicity of worlds requires we transform ourselves and our world onto-theologically: on the level of principles of how beings appear and are gathered together in a world. In our tradition, we're led by an ever-increasing reconciliation of being in our transition from Homeric gods to the Judeo-Christian God, who becomes replaced by the *One*. This is the principle of objective relation and the view from nowhere, and it informs atheism, science, multiculturalism, and managerialism. The One is the onto-theological reconciliation of all ways of being in a single unity. Thus, it hinders awareness of other worlds, for its reconciliation is based on reductions. Therefore, we need an *onto-theological transformation*.

In this book, our guiding thread is the phenomenological transformation—the transformation of our mode of being. This path is how we arrive at other transformations.

Transformation involves ethics: we *attend* to beings and their ways of being in the world; we enliven all beings and our relations to them. Thus, this is an enactive and practical philosophy.

This book is about the importance of attending to one's attention; it broaches an ethics of attentiveness. It's a mystery how and that we are called to beings.

A note on structure:

This book isn't a scholarly work. It comes from outside academia, which gives it some freedom from some academic convention. Although I write in the genre and style of philosophy, my hope is that those less acquainted with the nuance of particular discussions and philosophers will derive meaning from this text — that references to 'big names' or concepts can be glossed over without much loss.

The book is for those who are interested in responding to calls from beings all around us: environmentalists, anthropologists, those who love plants, animals, and other living beings, including other cultures, those who are fighting to dismantle colonialism and the dominion of capitalism, and those who feel that responsivity is at the core of living well.

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[2] Jan Zwicky, *Wisdom & Metaphor*, 2nd ed. (Kentville, Nova Scotia: Gaspereau Press, 2003, 2008), LH53–5. Zwicky's *Wisdom & Metaphor* is composed such that the left hand (LH) and right hand (RH) pages are given one page number (e.g., LH2 and RH2). The left-hand page of each spread consists of her writing, and the right-hand page consists of parts of works by others, which she has compiled and arranged.

The book is organized in a series of *sections*.[3] Within each *chapter* (I-III), also called *layers*, there are 108 sections. Sections flow successively (horizontally): e.g., in the first chapter are sections 1.1, 1.2, 1.3…1.108, then comes the next chapter (2.1, 2.2, 2.3…2.108), and finally the third. Sections also flow vertically: 1.1, 2.1, 3.1. I call these sectional *overlays*. Thus, we can leap through each chapter and read the first sections together, then the second sections, and so on. Thus, the book is structured so one can read front-to-back or by leaps, horizontally or vertically.[4]

The book has resonances both *within* layers (e.g., 1.1, 1.2, 1.3…) and *between* layers (e.g., 1.1, 2.1, 3.1). Yet, while there are intra-layer resonances available to be explored, the text is meant to be read, at least at first and most completely, in the regular front-to-back direction.

Each layer has a unique flavour. The first layer, chapter I (e.g., 1.1, 1.2, 1.3), is tightly aphoristic in structure, concerned with the theme of transformation and an introduction to basic concepts. The second layer, chapter II (e.g., 2.1, 2.2, 2.3), is written in prose paragraphs; it engages more overtly with the history of philosophy and draws out arguments and assumptions of layer I. And the third and final layer, chapter III, is a quasi-theology, a mythic layer, that strives to think the onto-theological differently.

Like a bell or curtain drawing us across a threshold, each layer begins and ends, opens and closes, with what I call a *bow quote.* These quotes introduce an intentional element—they strike a dominant tone for the chapter—as though we're *bowing* before entering a *dojo*, *kwoon*, or hall, and again as we leave. Or, as though we draw the *bow*, ready for a target; ready for the cello's strings and its resonances. Our intention, focused, like a graceful ribbon, knotted; a boat that sets out to sea, and returns to harbour. In each layer, we set out on an adventure, and return.

Because each layer resonates with previous and future layers, our journey traces a spiral: a whirlpool, where each circle occurs on a slightly different plane and level of resonance. Thus, we approach the middle of a circle: the transformative experience, that which draws this text into being with its gravity and the space it creates. Thus, imperceptibly, we approach the experience of transformation. But, at times, we ripple *out* from the experience, a reversing whirlpool, a pool with a stone tossed in the middle. — We move, at turns towards, at turns away from the middle, in a tidal system created by the experience of transformation and the attempt to write about it. We do not travel in a simple, unbroken line.

In tracing this path, I found I couldn't write as if things were settled: it's as though I've seen shapes and figures in the distance, with glimpses of them here and there up close. Not that my text is ill-defined or needs more precision, but this just may be how this landscape is. Thus, I invite the reader into this particular vein of unsettled thoughts, where writing forges its own path, forced into and forcing its own twists and turns, like a river in the heart of a forest.

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[3] In text, the symbol '§' is used to denote "section."
[4] For the PDF version, clicking on the first word of a section will link you to the next section in the overlay. So, clicking on the first word for 1.1 will link you to 2.1, the first word for 2.1 will link you to 3.1, and the first word for 3.1 will link you back to 1.1. This enables vertical navigation.

Writing is never fully transparent. It's as though you have in your hands a sheet of stained glass. Or perhaps three sheets, layered on top of one another.

I tend to think aphoristically — thoughts bubble to the surface from the din of many voices, like horses in battle who suddenly breach the enemy's lines. The first layer is the most aphoristic in form, which is why I've provided the reader with this foreword as a kind of guide. If the first proves too austere, the reader may wish to start on the second layer, or skim the first, and return to the first layer in more depth at a later time.

My thinking is indebted to many who have come before. In addition to Heidegger and Zwicky, my influences include Wittgenstein, Nietzsche, Husserl, Foucault, Deleuze, Rancière, Watsuji, and Derrida. Again, this book should be of interest even if you don't know these thinkers at all.

Thanks to the places that have welcomed me in and given me space to write, think, and respond. Thanks to the Pacific Northwest, Vancouver Island, and pockets of Victoria, B.C. May they retain their beauty as emplacing places, and may they foster more beauty; may we have the wisdom and courage to allow such places—and places everywhere—to become well-established and intense.

Thanks to my relations. My work is indebted to my friend Jarrad Reddekop. Our discussions have fueled many of my reflections. I've been influenced by informal discussions, but I'd be remiss to not cite his dissertation, which shows the depth of my debt to him.[5]

Of course, while ideas emerge from relational contexts, they've passed through me, for better or for worse. Voices of others come through, but ventriloquized by me. – Thanks to my friends, my family, to my wife, to my daughter.

In all honesty, I'm probably a bad philosopher: what you have here may be better described as a painting or musical composition, with swatches of colour and tones struck at various intervals. — Perhaps it's a bell, several bells, tolling from across the intervals of a city, one rooftop to the next, from buildings for which no one can remember the use. May the tones be pleasing—engaging and helpful—and may this place be welcoming to you in your time here.

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[5] Jarrad Reddekop, "Thinking Across Worlds: Indigenous Thought, Relational Ontology, and the Politics of Nature; Or, If Only Nietzsche Could Meet a Yachaj" (PhD diss., Western University, 2014).

I

And it was, of course, connected with the very nature of the investigation.
For it compels us to travel criss-cross in every direction
over a wide field of thought.[6]

1.1 It is possible for our world to be transformed. This transformation hinges on what is common between our world and others.
— The trees are still there, the rocks are still there, but everything has changed.

1.2 What does this mean, that it 'hinges on what is common'?[7] — Jan Zwicky talks about metaphor as a gesture that brings two or more contexts together on the hinge of what they have in common before releasing each to each:[8] good metaphors enable insight into commonalities and differences between contexts.[9] We notice commonalities within difference, and vice versa.[10] Thus, the transformation hinges both on what is common, and what is different, between our world and others.

It involves an *experiential* shift that's structured metaphorically. We experience commonalities within difference.

1.3 It's as though a switch has been flicked, though the profundity of the change depends on a variety of factors. Things shift into place.

This experience, a possible or latent experience, reveals fundamental philosophical insights. The experience transforms other experience; its possibility transforms possibilities.

1.4 The transformation is of the world, and thus of all things.

1.5 Though the hinge—the hinge of what is common (§1.1)—is not on, or attached to, the outlines of things, it almost is. It's *as though* the outlines of things remain while things themselves are transformed.

The transformation involves concentration—a stilled breath—a focus of being.
Then, it happens.
It's easier, for me in any case, to experience the transformation in particular forests.
But, shortly thereafter, I lose it and return to the familiar way I experience things.

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[6] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1953, 1958 (1972)), preface, p. 3.
[7] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH51, LH62, LH67, LH80, LH83, LH98; both 'hinge' and 'what is common' are terms from Zwicky.
[8] ibid, LH51.
[9] ibid, LH4.
[10] ibid, LH32, LH59, LH62.

1.6 — *"It is the essence of our experience of gestalt figures like the Necker cube […] that, however adept we become at performing the gestalt shift, we can never see the two figures simultaneously. So in the awareness of one is always the shadow of the loss of the other."*[11]

There are several key ideas here: the cube can be seen as projecting upwards to the right or downwards to the left, but we never see both figures at once; each figure carries the loss of the other; and, with that said, we can get better, more adept, at performing the shift.

1.7 Zwicky's concept of *this*ness[12] is important to understand the transformation. That is, the importance of *this particular* thing. (*This* day, *this* tree, *this* song.)

1.8

> *"Deer come out of the poplars just as day becomes night. […] They see me standing by the woodpile. They stare. I stare. […] The deer show out from around the word 'deer' and they have no name. The world is its names plus their cancellations, what we call it and the undermining of our identifications by an ungraspable residue in objects."*[13]

> *"The* this *strikes into us like a shaft of light. […] [W]hat is* this *is unique, it has an utterly distinct […] fragrance."*[14]

1.9 The tree you're walking past shows itself, reaches out. It shows its character.

1.10 As you walk past, the tree hovers beside you and commands your attention.
As you heed it, the very space of the encounter changes.

1.11 *"[…] to return sensation to our limbs, in order to make us feel objects, to make a stone feel stony […]."*[15]

1.12 Trees show themselves. They aren't all the same: a tree is not a tree.

1.13 The shift (§1.3) is to sense all things and the world differently.
— Which always includes you.

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[11] ibid, LH56. On the Necker cube in Zwicky, see also LH80, LH97–99, and *The Experience of Meaning* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019), p. 12–13, 17, 149–150.
[12] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH52.
[13] Tim Lilburn, "How to Be Here?," in *Living In The World As If It Were Home: Essays* (Dunvegan, Ontario: Cormorant Books, 1999), p. 3, 5, quoted in Zwicky, *W&M*, RH76.
[14] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH53.
[15] Viktor Shklovsky, "Art as Device," in *Theory of Prose* (Champaign, Illinois: Dalkey Archive Press, 1929, 2009), p. 6.

You are changed. —— You must change your life.[16]

1.14 But *why* should someone seek out this transformation? Why bother with it?

The transformation opens new ways of relating, grounded in a deepened responsivity. This is how we can live a good life.

1.15 In our culture, we hear "transformation" and think that means we need to 'wake up.' We imagine an 'awakening' down the road, but we need a teacher, a lover, a push or a shove. We feel we need *something* external or internal.
— But because of how we think about this, we go astray.

1.16 You cannot look elsewhere. You must turn to things.

1.17 'Awakening' is a concept, a calcified metaphor,[17] one that obscures things.

1.18 Much philosophy has been concerned with thinking the conditions for something to be the case — e.g., for our experience to be what it is. This focus on conditions of possibility has been useful and has helped open a tradition that had become turned in on itself.

The tradition is turned in on itself again and, in time, will need to be opened again, beyond us and towards other beings.

1.19 Rather than conditions of possibility, I'm concerned with *onto-ethics* — the inseparability of ontology and ethics. The transformation affects our world, our self, and our relations.

1.20 We're called on by things and worlds.

1.21 And we may sense fragments of worlds, *wisps of worlds*, other ways of being, if we're attentive.
These stretch towards us like a bridge.

1.22 Metaphors also create taut, partial, temporary bridges. There's a torsion, oriented around the hinge (the hinge of what is common). Metaphors connect distinct contexts and call on us to see what certain things have in common within difference.

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[16] Rainer Maria Rilke, "Archaic Torso of Apollo," in *Translations from the Poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke*, trans. M.D. Herter Norton (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1938, 1962), p. 181; cited in Jan Zwicky, *Lyric Philosophy*, 2nd ed. (Kentville, Nova Scotia: Gaspereau Press, 1992, 2011), RH219. *Lyric Philosophy* is composed in a similar way to *Wisdom & Metaphor*: see footnote 2 for information on book and citation format.
[17] 'Calcification' comes from Zwicky: e.g., *W&M*, LH8, LH11.

Wisps of world *are* metaphoric (§1.2).

1.23 To be receptive to a call is to be vulnerable, which is to be strong.

1.24 But receptivity is blocked by usual ways of being. Our everyday sense of things is policed and patrolled. While some calls are heeded, many are muffled, neglected, or suppressed.

And yet, certain things call. There are "*ways in which particular aspects of sense call for a resolution or response—a fulfillment—in another aspect of sense. The body's grasp of one such aspect of sense sets up in that body a felt need for—a propulsion toward—the other. The dots impel me to notice their regular pairing, and the music propels me to dance. In other settings, a doorknob calls to me to grasp and turn it, an open highway urges me to drive quickly, and the smooth, repetitive undulations of sand dunes invite me to wander aimlessly.*"[18]

1.25 In these words, we'll wander as well. And yet, the goal is to come home, in a transformed way.

1.26 This involves stillness. Other thoughts, other concerns, pull us away.

1.27 When we're still, things shine more crisply in our encounters with them.

1.28 We have so much to learn from the world.
(Hear the heron at night; see the waves crash on the shore; feel an arbutus growing up to the sky.)

1.29 What, really, is wind?

1.30 No, look again. — Use your senses.

1.31 Ask the same of water, fire, earth.
(The Presocratics can be helpful here. As a thought-experiment, perceive the 'elements' as they were before so much was piled on them — linguistically, conceptually.)

1.32 You can't entirely encounter them without language or concepts. That's not the point.
The problem is the calcification of thoughts — the particular orientation ours take.
Ask the water how it is with it.

1.33 We come already with answers, and they fit the world nicely — of course they do.

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[18] John Russon, *Bearing Witness to Epiphany: Persons, Things, and the Nature of Erotic Life* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), p. 14.

⬜ There are many ways to see 'the' world.

1.34 Ways of seeing fit the lines just so.

1.35 Each way of seeing is a whole. It fits all the lines.
But this also means you can't fully understand another way of seeing unless you *fully* understand it.

1.36 This doesn't mean you can't learn something anyway.

1.37 While each way of seeing fits all the lines, there's always slack. There's always room to change practices, including harmful practices.
   Seeing is a practice.

1.38 We're immersed in our worlds and attempts to understand or reach beyond limits fall within our world.
— This doesn't mean there aren't better and worse ways of understanding.

1.39 The world offers us feedback. We can sense if our orientation isn't quite right.
— We can ask the water.

1.40 What do we ask it?

1.41 Or, we ask other things; for example: What's an animal?
   — A distinct way of being in each case.

But this answer is not sufficient.

1.42 *"Things are, and are not, as they seem."*[19]

"*We step into and we do not step into the same rivers. We are and we are not.*"[20]

1.43 The point isn't just to feel the stoniness of the stone (Shklovsky; §1.11) —
It's to encounter the stone *as* stone. The stone shows a particular way of being — a particular take on being. The stone sits in its—and our—world.
(It seems to draw things in to it.)

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[19] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH79, LH81.
[20] Heraclitus, fr. 63, trans. Richard D. McKirahan, in *A Presocratics Reader* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1996), p. 36.

1.44 Our categories aren't innocent. They don't float free and descend onto the world; they enmesh with it, enabling certain things to show themselves or be unconcealed in particular ways, and certain other things to be concealed in other ways.

— Transformation comes from within.

1.45 Every unconcealing is partial.
There is no totality.
Though each unconcealing fits all the lines (§1.35), there are lines trailing off into the distance.

1.46 Lines trail off like paths into the woods. And each path leads to a new view of the whole.

1.47 The cube — ▱ — is a metaphor for worlds, for how each world takes all things differently. The cube can be seen in different ways.

Yet, importantly, the *image* of the cube, an image for divergent takes on things, emerges from *one particular* take on things. It comes from within our world. And so, to be accurate, it *should* (but does *not*) enfold back on itself.
  — Though this is saying too much.

The cube is my form of Wittgenstein's ladder: "*My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he [sic] has used them—as steps—to climb up beyond them.*"[21]

1.48 Can poetry transform our usual ways of engaging with the world? Can it help us return to things in a world dominated by technology, subjectivism, and capitalism (as diagnosed by Heidegger, Baudrillard, and others)?
— Not poetry 'proper.' But perhaps poetic thinking.
Poetic thinking responsively dwells with things and helps us overcome calcified concepts.

1.49 Is the transformative experience or what is revealed by it something universal, necessary, or absolute?
— I don't think so, but I'm not sure what these questions mean.
It's not as though there are veils—decorated and designed by various cultures—over top of true reality.
There isn't one reality existing under all appearances.

1.50 A colonizing logic will come and say 'now we've found the real basis.'

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[21] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. D.F. Pears and B.F. McGuinness (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1921, 1961), §6.54, p. 89.

For example: structuralism; Maslow's hierarchy of needs; Locke's primary qualities; Marx's base; Heidegger's Being; and even the ⬚, if understood in certain ways.
Philosophy is and has been bound up with—often essentially—colonizing logics.

1.51 Heidegger *can* open us to what we take to be limits or margins of thought: the question of Being; *Dasein* (i.e., the being of humans as being-there); the clearing; being-in-the-world; being-towards-death; world and things; hermeneutic phenomenology — these are important insights in Heidegger's texts. But they're insights from *within* a particular tradition and understanding. This should be obvious. Being is not transcendental.[22] A culture isn't better because it has thought that "*the being of being 'is' itself not a being*"[23] — profound as that is, for us.

One could try devices to remind ourselves of this—putting ~~being~~ under erasure—but all signs will *necessarily* become calcified in time. There's no way to guarantee meaning or communication. Which is part of the insight of Derrida's *différance*.

Heidegger revolutionized how we think of world, things, and humans. But he lagged in how we think of non-human animals, plants, and in other areas. And this isn't just a problem at the edges of his—or our—thought.

1.52 We aren't more advanced if we were to somehow catalogue various ways things are seen — if we index how the ⬚ is (or could be) seen.
Such a project tries to step outside its own mode to gather facts and data independent of its context. But we are always in our world.

Such a list would be part of how the ⬚ is revealed to and for us. It would not leave it behind. — Which doesn't mean it might not be a worthwhile activity.

1.53 There are better and worse ways to be responsive.

1.54 There are many different ways to see.

The cube is not a box. It's not hermetically sealed.

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[22] Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1967, 1997), p. 23: "*the sense of being is not a transcendental or trans-epochal signified […] but [is] already […] a determined signifying trace […].*"
[23] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany: State University of New York, 1927, 1996), 6/5. For citations of *Being and Time*, I will, first, cite the German page, followed by the English, translated page.

This is why there has been a transition in the discussion, which the reader may have noticed, from other ways within our world to intracultural ways.

Worlds are always with others.

And yet, Wittgenstein and Derrida are right: each death is the end of a world, of the world, each time.[24]

Worlds open at the edges like shores to the sea. They are *like* totalities, yet not contained. Worlds are not spheres.

1.55

> *"Because [Aphrodite] denotes a permanent reality which draws everything into her power, and bestows her spirit and impresses her character upon the whole realm of the elemental and the living, she is a world—and for the Greeks this means a divinity."*[25]

> *"It is in the full sense a world, that is to say, a whole world, not a fraction of the total sum of existence, which Hermes inspirits and rules. All things belong to it, but they appear in a different light than in the realms of the other gods."*[26]

> *"This applies also to the supreme gods, Zeus, Athena, and Apollo, the bearers of the highest ideals. None of them represents a single virtue, none is to be encountered in only one direction of teeming life: each desires to fill, shape, and illumine the whole compass of human existence with his [sic] peculiar spirit."*[27]

1.56 Worlds show themselves and recede. They come to us as wisps of worlds (§1.21).

1.57 We pay attention to things because they call us.

> *"Everything is blooming most recklessly; if it were voices instead of colors, there would be an unbelievable shrieking into the heart of the night."*[28]

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[24] Jacques Derrida, *The Work of Mourning*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), p. 95, 107, 115; Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, §6.431, p. 87.

[25] Walter F. Otto, *The Homeric Gods: The Spiritual Significance of Greek Religion*, trans. Moses Hadas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1954, 1964), p. 100.

[26] Otto, *Homeric Gods*, p. 120.

[27] ibid, p. 160–1.

[28] Rainer Maria Rilke, letter sent to Clara Rilke, April 8, 1907, in *Letters of Rainer Maria Rilke, 1892–1910*, trans. Jane Bannard Greene and M.D. Herter Norton (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1972), p. 274.

We do not bestow our attention, like a torch, to enable others to appear. Others appear and call forth to us. They cross over. Like a *metaphor*.

1.58 We're in constant exchange with the world around us. How we comport ourselves is a matter of ethics and character.

Are we good listeners?

We swim in the streams of our relations. Thus, it's a question of how well we pay respect to these connections.

1.59 *"The world is the totality of facts, not of things."*[29]
Instead of facts, let's say relations (which is, in part, what Wittgenstein is getting at).[30]
But let's not follow Wittgenstein too closely here, or too quickly.

1.60 Things, for Heidegger, are also never just 'sitting there.'

1.61 Things show their sense in how they are together. They call forth wisps of worlds, like pieces of fabric.

1.62 It may *seem* as though I'm arguing for something formal or structural (§1.49–1.50). But things just show themselves.
'How?'
In their particularity.
'— Isn't that formal, too?'

1.63 No. Particularity is just that: particular. A tree shows itself as the tree it is.
There are different ways of being and different ways of attending to them.

1.64 *"Ontological attention is a response to particularity:* this *porch,* this *laundry basket,* this *day. Its object cannot be substituted for […]."*[31]

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[29] Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, §1.1, p. 5.
[30] Facts are states of affairs (Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, §2, p. 5), which are states of things (§2.01, p. 5), i.e., how things are disposed, related, and combined (§2.01). Things are possible constituents of states of affairs (i.e., they combine to be facts) (§2.011, p. 6). Things are always open to relations (§2.0121, p. 6) and stand in determinate relations (§2.031, p. 9). It's unthinkable that things are not internally related (§4.123, p. 32). In addition, things are the unalterable form that allows for world (§2.022–2.023, p. 7; §2.026, §2.0271, §2.0272, p. 8); so, while there must be things, their configuration's concrete, particular, and variable. All this means that things are always in relations that determine states of affairs and facts, particular things (as distinct from things as unalterable form) are always relational, and the world is this totality of relations.
[31] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH52.

"Ontological attention is a form of love."[32]

1.65 We've come to see things as liquid, fungible, and entirely interchangeable. All space is the same, all time is the same, each atom is an atom. Forces act with uniformity and constancy. All is thrown into a massive indifference, blanketed in 'the same.'
All 'others' are the same others.

There's a complete and utter formal equality. Think of the term 'universe.'

1.66 We're called to a "linguistic responsibility",[33] for words enmesh with things. Examples: when a tree is called lumber, timber, wood product. But, even earlier: when a tree is a tree (§1.12): each and every tree. Any tree will do.

1.67 When you've agreed to the terms, the rest is simply negotiation.

1.68 And yet, this equality (§1.65) isn't straightforward.

As Derrida shows, binaries are set up, with one term cleansed of the other, valued over and at the expense of the other: male/female, white/racialized, cisgender/transgender, form/content, active/passive, human/animal, animal/plant, plant/inanimate, organic/inorganic, etc.

These binaries are the result of a continual, ongoing operation and disavowed violence. Purificatory rites maintain (a semblance and version of) order.

Things are controlled by being the same, with a vicious hierarchy imposed upon this background. ('All women are the same.')

And yet, our options shouldn't be limited to either removing all difference or emphasizing/reinforcing such divisions.

1.69 One way to understand part of what I'm driving at is as follows:
> *"The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it."*[34]

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[32] ibid, LH57.

[33] Karen L.F. Houle, "A Tree By Any Other Name: Language Use and Linguistic Responsibility," in *The Language of Plants: Science, Philosophy, Literature*, ed. Monica Gagliano, John C. Ryan, and Patrícia Vieira (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), p. 155–72.

[34] Karl Marx, "Theses On Feuerbach" in *Selected Writings*, ed. David McLellan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), thesis XI, p. 173.

1.70 Though, Marx's dichotomy is false: 'interpretation' (depending how we think the term) *is* bound up with changing the world.

1.71 'Interpretation' isn't when we throw an understanding overtop of a real material thing. It concerns something more primordial, which I earlier called 'unconcealing' (§1.45). It lets things be seen.

1.72 There are multiple unconcealings, leading in divergent lines, never originating from an originary convergence. There's a plurality, a polyphony,[35] at times a chaotic jumbling falling over itself. The word 'perspectives' doesn't capture it for the same reason 'interpretation' is insufficient.

1.73 (Because when one uses the master's tools, one is still indebted to the master, this path I'm tracing reintroduces problems it tries to diagnose. – And yet, nonetheless, there is a need for such paths.)

1.74 These divergences are traced through not only different 'cultures,' but also through and across any attempts to delineate speciation: animals, plants, and so on. These, too, have worlds.

We live in different worlds.

1.75 The hinge I described above—the hinge of what is common between contexts or worlds (e.g., §1.2, §1.5)—is *not* where we *touch* the world, as though what things have in common is more real; 'the' world is always already touched.

1.76 What is error?

Error is touching the world and things in a way in which they or we recoil.

Error has improper traction in the world: it is not how things are.

1.77 But what *is* a stone's world (§1.43)?
The stone's world is how it holds its surroundings open, through resistance to annihilation.

'But it doesn't have a perspective!'

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[35] Jan Zwicky, "Being, Polyphony, Lyric: An Open Letter to Robert Bringhurst," *Canadian Literature* 156 (Spring 1998): p. 181–4.

You mean it doesn't have senses, life, access to beings around it. (Or, if you believe that non-human animals don't have worlds, it doesn't have consciousness, reason, a concept of selfhood, etc.)

—— The stone holds open a space for itself.

1.78 'Well, but what doesn't do that! What could you possibly mean by a world, then?'

A world is a way of relating to other beings. It's an openness to being related.

1.79 'We can't go on multiplying perspectives — or whatever you want to call them!'

The principle of parsimony, Occam's Razor (and Morgan's Canon) — these are meant to keep things simple. But they can't tell us what simplicity is.

1.80 My goal is simply to get my foot in the door. And then maybe we'll see there are other rooms to explore.

1.81 'But, surely, we can agree that stones don't have their own worlds.'

The very thing that's in question is how we should proceed, for we cannot determine in advance how our discussions should go. It's only in discussing, in really listening, that this may become clear.

1.82 'The stone doesn't have a world!'

Maybe it doesn't. But maybe it does.
How shall we find out?

1.83 Criteria emerge from within a particular form of life and particular language-games. They come from a history of engagement between one form of life and others.

We cannot step outside of our unconcealing or disclosure to see 'how things really are'; we cannot *step outside* to see what accords best with 'reality.' Rather, reality is revealed to us in and through our very disclosure, in our interactions with other forms of life (and their disclosures).

1.84 There is no neutral resting-ground.

1.85 'Neutrality' is always tainted.

1.86 We cannot simply appeal to practical aims to determine criteria, for aims are determined within our disclosure. This in itself isn't bad (it's unavoidable), but it means they already come with certain metaphysical assumptions.

1.87 *"Once I have exhausted the justifications, I have reached bedrock, and my spade is turned. Then I am inclined to say: 'This is simply what I do.'"*[36]

This doesn't mean 'what I do' is right.

1.88 We can always listen more, listen better.
We should strive to be alive to connections among things.

1.89 Forms of life aren't simply what we do; forms of life—forms of living—are how the world appears (i.e., is) to us. They emerge from responsive engagement with the world.

Forms of living can conflict. One form of responsivity can appear irresponsive to others.

1.90 No world is hermetically sealed, nor can a world define itself.

1.91 Violence and rupture precede any security or identity. They come after, too.

1.92 (Common sense, self-evidence — these are terms for ruts of thought and being. Sometimes such ruts are useful or necessary. But this doesn't mean appealing to them is going to solve anything.)

1.93 Let's consider this phrase:
'The gods war amongst each other.'
— This seems to come out of nowhere, and yet it offers a different kind of vision from how we're used to seeing things. Held in our disclosure, which acts like a background, this phrase can leap to the fore like a flash of lightning.

When we consider this phrase, we aren't partaking in an intellectual game or poetic fantasy; the stakes are real. (We can sing a song in this key.)

In the flash across the gap between its vision and ours, it lights up our ways of thinking, including our ruts.

1.94 Maybe, we see how our steps tend to fall in certain ways.

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[36] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §217, p. 91.

How for so long we've tried to secure or guarantee progress (e.g., development, teleology).

But these attempts are thrown into question if the gods war and don't ensure consistency.

1.95 But this flash doesn't just light up our ways.
It lights itself up.

While we can never fully inhabit such an idea (along with whatever fuller context it may be a fragment of), we glean something from it.

We glean how different the world would be. What this phrase would require of us.

1.96 The gods war amongst each other.
This means there's no final arbiter.

Without casting poets out of the republic,[37] without the transition from many to one god (Judaism-Christianity-Islam), without the transition to the *cogito* — if the gods war amongst each other, or even if there just are many gods,[38] the Western (philosophical) tradition would be vastly different.

1.97 The transition from the Erinyes to the Eumenides:[39] one more marker of a changing landscape of thought — an increased centralization, brought about by a subjugation of previous ways of being.

1.98 For Freud, there are forces—like secularized gods—at work in our lives. While untethered from the sovereign subject, they're tethered all the same to a centre, to the subject of the unconscious, subjected to Oedipal triangulation: the (non-sovereign) subject is the point through which experience and all things get filtered.

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[37] Plato, "The Republic," in *Great Dialogues of Plato: Complete Texts of The Republic, The Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Ion, Meno, Symposium*, trans. W. H. D. Rouse (New York: Signet Classic, 2008). In Books II, III, and X, Plato speaks variously of the censorship or banishment of poets. He doesn't advocate casting *all* poets out; instead, he censors or refuses entrance to imitative poets: p. 224–5, 480, 482–3. Pertinently, he also prohibits poets from claiming that "*gods war against gods*" (p. 199; see discussion on p. 197–207).

[38] Thales reportedly said all things are full of gods. Aristotle, fr. 4, trans. Richard D. McKirahan, in *A Presocratics Reader* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1996), from *On the Soul*, p. 11.

[39] Aeschylus, *The Oresteia Trilogy*, trans. E.D.A. Morshead (Mineola: Dover Publications, 1996), p. 140–51. The Erinyes (the Furies) are blood and earth female deities who have a responsibility to haunt Orestes for killing his mother Clytemnestra (as vengeance for, in turn, her murder of his father Agamemnon); however, the Erinyes are overruled by a council-court of Athenian gods. At this, the Erinyes are filled with rage until Athena offers them a place within the Athenian *polis*. Here, they change from the Erinyes to the Eumenides (the blessed ones), as well as from earth deities to secondary deities within the Greek city-state.

"When the break between Freud and Jung is discussed, the modest and practical point of disagreement that marked the beginning of their differences is too often forgotten: Jung remarked that in the process of transference the psychoanalyst frequently appeared in the guise of a devil, a god, or a sorcerer, and that the roles he [sic] assumed in the patient's eyes went far beyond any sort of parental images."[40]

"[I]t has always been thought that the center, which is by definition unique, constituted that very thing within a structure which governs the structure, while escaping structurality. This is why classical thought concerning structure could say that the center is, paradoxically, within *the structure and* outside *it. The center is at the center of the totality, and yet, since the center does not belong to the totality (is not part of the totality), the totality* has its center elsewhere. *The center is not the center. The concept of centered structure — although it represents coherence itself, the condition of the* epistemé *as philosophy or science — is contradictorily coherent. And, as always, coherence in contradiction expresses the force of a desire."*[41]

1.99 Why should we accept the account that things are made up of atoms (and quarks, etc.) and that this is what *reality* consists in?

'The account explains the phenomena.'

Are there no other ways to explain the phenomena?

1.100

1.101 Why should we accept that what we eat is, in essence, nutrients? Or that scientific laws best explain natural phenomenal regularity? Or even that the principle of non-contradiction is essential to truth?

1.102 The bogeyman of 'nihilism!' is a cry of one unwilling to move from their rut.

1.103 To hold up an idea (e.g., the gods war amongst each other) is a metaphoric undertaking. It's "*to recognize that if one context or conceptual constellation is laid over another, just so,*

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[40] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Helen R. Lane, and Mark Seem (New York: Penguin Books, 2009), p. 46.

[41] Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," in *The Critical Tradition: Classic Texts and Contemporary Trends*, ed. David H. Richter (New York: Bedford/St Martins, 2006), p. 915–6. In this passage, Derrida is drawing out the contradictions inherent in a kind of structural thought, which he argues is older than 'structuralism.' These contradictions provide coherence to the structure, but this situation can maintain itself only by "the force of a desire": i.e., people *want* the structure to cohere, even at the price of contradiction.

aspects or outlines will spring into focus, a common pattern will be discernible—one that makes a difference to our grasp of the individual constellations or contexts separately."[42]

It's to see that other ways fit the cube, just so.
And some other ways, for instance, do not hold to the principle of identity.

1.104 Imagination and art also open us to variations.

> *"A reader lives a thousand lives before he [sic] dies. […] The man who never reads lives only one."*[43]

1.105 We never leave our world.

This doesn't mean we're immured within a form of living. It doesn't mean we must be assimilative or colonizing towards others. Rather, it points to the necessity of listening attentively and responsively to others as they reach out to us and we to them.

The inevitability that we will fall short of a fully sufficient response is no deterrent.

1.106 Reductionism is an enemy to responsive living.

For example, technology: in the technological enframing,[44] wherein all beings appear susceptible to technological handling (as standing-reserve), we lose or miss something about the world, about being and beings, and about ourselves.

Technological enframing and its cousins have manifested themselves in many ways: managerialism (all things can be managed), capitalism (all things can be exchanged), modern capitalism (all things can be replaced), legalism (all things are susceptible to laws), and so on — i.e., all in the form of 'all things are susceptible to…'.

We're experiencing catastrophes—climatic, pathogenic, geopolitical, and more—brought on by insufficiently responsive (reductive) ways of living.

1.107 What must be the case for a *metaphoric ontology* to exist?

Things must be mutually attuning and resonant. There's a quivering, a distancing that enables space and sound, gaps and ruptures, and openings to the violence or the balm of meaning. Tremblings, stammerings: different ontologies.

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[42] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH24.
[43] George R.R. Martin, *A Dance with Dragons* (New York: Bantam Books, 2013), p. 490, chapter 34.
[44] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology" in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1977), p. 19.

The transformation (§1.1) is an immersion into this *kind* of a space. That is, talking about gaps, ruptures, tremblings, and stammerings provides a scent of what I mean by the transformation, a scent we'll pursue as we sail between various Scyllas and Charybdises identified in this layer.

1.108 Is there a ⬛ onto which the ⬛ fits?

No.

The ⬛ is a metaphor.
There is no outside.

I want it to swallow its tail.
It cannot.

Perhaps this book will be understood only by someone who has […] already had the thoughts that are expressed in it—or at least similar thoughts. […]

Its purpose would be achieved if it gave pleasure to one person who read and understood it.[45]

[45] Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, preface, p. 3.

II

Listen: even now, behind this
you can hear faint music,
the lilt of voices
in some other tongue.[46]

2.1 "It is possible for our world to be transformed. This transformation hinges on what is common between our world and others."
This means that a transformed world is experienced, a new world that never fully leaves behind the old one. – But does this mean that we live in two worlds now? That there are two worlds in one? From whence comes this other world? Does it come from above or outside the old world, maybe from some mental projection?

This 'other world' comes from things themselves. Minds are grounded in world, and there is no outside from which a world could come. This world comes from seeing things, allowing things to show themselves, differently. As with the projections of the cube ( ), this projection doesn't superimpose itself on top of things, but is rather a way that things show themselves. Things bear different senses of world.

There can be two—or more—worlds in one. This is because we never leave our world, even though it's open to others — a claim to which we'll return.

Having several worlds in one, or becoming aware of this, can be experienced as a source of tension. This is because some of us deplore contradiction or when world—the place of familiarity and home—is exposed as not definite.

The trees are still there, the rocks are still there, but everything has changed. Everything becomes more expansive, in a sense. As though things have been given back to themselves.

2.2 To help us understand this, allow me to introduce the concept of *metaphor*. As described by Zwicky, a metaphor depends on both an 'is' and an implicit 'is not': a metaphor (which, for us, includes things like similes) says that X is and is not Y.[47] 'Her eyes are like gems' —this obviously means her eyes *are* like gems: they're breathtaking and rare, catch light, and can be seen through in a way that imparts to everything a particular colouration.

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[46] Jan Zwicky, "Small song for the sky in spring," in *Thirty-Seven Small Songs & Thirteen Silences* (Kentville, Nova Scotia: Gaspereau Press, 2005), p. 41.
[47] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH5.

But this also says that her eyes are *not* like gems: X is *like* Y implicitly includes the recognition that X is also *not* like Y. Again, obviously, her eyes are not inanimate, cannot simply be held, are not cold, and so on.

A metaphor creates a temporary hinge or fulcrum that draws two terms from two contexts together.[48] In coming together, it's like a lens focuses light through them: we see things more clearly than before. But this similarity, this 'is like' or 'what is common' between the contexts, is only one facet of the metaphor: we also see how the metaphor brings differences into focus, including when it releases the two terms back to their original contexts. There's commonality as well as irreducible difference (i.e., 'is *not* like').[49]

After a metaphor has been set up, it can change how we view the two terms: we see how eyes are (in some ways) like gems. A metaphor changes not only how we view one term: it changes the other.[50] We see how (in some ways) gems are like eyes. Neither term is left unchanged in the interaction.

A metaphor sets this dynamic exchange up between two contexts, like how a bee acquires pollen from a flower. A metaphor is a dual *process*: re-seeing/refocusing and releasing/relinquishing. In this way, a metaphor respects both difference and similarity. It doesn't prioritize one over the other.

The structure of metaphor isn't primarily literary. Instead, it's broader: in encounters with others, understanding hinges on the discernment of difference and similarity in relation to ourselves and others. Thus, the metaphoric structure is experiential before it's communicative: a literary metaphor gestures to an experiential one. If done well, it may help us notice and respect difference and similarity.

And so, when I say that: "It is possible for our world to be transformed. This transformation hinges on what is common between our world and others." — I mean there's a way that a different world can be 'transposed' as though upon our world, like the shifting of lenses into place, so that commonalities and differences are noted. – There are other ways—similar but different, irreducibly different—that 'interpret' the 'same' phenomena that we see to make sense of them.

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[48] ibid, LH18–9, LH24, LH62.
[49] ibid, LH106.
[50] ibid, LH76–7.

2.3 The transformation is like the flick of a switch: you can't just change one aspect and then the next, for they have internal relations to one another.[51] The cube and its lines helps us see this: .

Some of this may seem unrelatable, like I'm describing an experience that I've had, and you have not, and I'm trying to convince you that it's worth having.

But is this different from other works of philosophy? You may retort that philosophy makes reasonable cases for accepting something as true. I agree. We've only just emerged from the aphoristic layer and my case will now be more overt. But the question is also the role of argumentation, for arguments and reasons are ways to lead you to see what the philosopher has seen. *"I have myself always thought of a mathematician [or a philosopher] as in the first instance an* observer*, a man [sic] who gazes at a distant range of mountains and notes down his observations […]. [W]hen he sees a peak he believes that it is there simply because he sees it. If he wishes someone else to see it, he* points to it*, either directly or through the chain of summits which led him to recognize it himself."*[52]

For any philosophy worth its salt, this seeing entails a corresponding transformation in the seer. *"Metaphysics is a questioning in which we inquire into beings as a whole, and inquire in such a way that in so doing we ourselves, the questioners, are thereby also included in the question, placed into question.*

"Accordingly, fundamental concepts are […] concepts of a properly peculiar kind. In each case they comprehend the whole within themselves, they are comprehensive concepts *[Inbegriffe].[53] Yet they are also comprehensive in a second sense which is equally essential and which ties in with the first: they also in each case always comprehend within themselves the comprehending human being and his or her [sic] Dasein [i.e., there-being][…]. Metaphysical thinking is comprehensive thinking in this double sense. It deals with the whole and it grips existence through and through."*[54]

Am I implying a distinction between (at least) two kinds of philosophy (e.g., transformative and more 'mundane' philosophy)? — Perhaps there's philosophy that renovates the house, adds an extension on, and then there's that which tidies it up.

2.4 Philosophy and the transformation always pertain to the world. The world. We speak of the world as though there's just one, a totality. As though, if we counted all the facts, we'd

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[51] For "*internal relations*," see Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, excerpts from §4.122 and §4.123, cited in Zwicky, *W&M*, RH98; see also LH98.

[52] G.H. Hardy, "Mathematical Proof," *Mind* 38 (1929): p. 18, quoted in Zwicky, *W&M*, RH64.

[53] German included in original text.

[54] Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995), p. 9.

have a picture of the world. As though it's one thing, one spacetime container, that contains all objects.

But we don't sit inside the world like water in a cup.[55] Rather, our being is such that we are, in Heidegger's term, *being-in-the-world*: that is, put simply, world is the set of our relations. Because I'm largely drawing on Heidegger's concept of world throughout the text, we need to spend time with this concept.

In our everyday way of being, we're immersed in our world, engaged with things, and we don't, for the most part, thematize our surroundings. For example, I ride my bike to get to where I'm going; I'm absorbed in the world of my concern, engaged with the task at hand.

Things with which we're engaged are *ready-to-hand*.[56] Ready for engagement, ready to be taken up, not as isolated things, but as part of a totality of things.[57] The bike light fits with the bike and its interactions with traffic laws, routes at night, and batteries. To isolate a thing is artificial, for things are always within networks comprised of *assignments/references*,[58] where each thing refers to/is assigned to other things. In our example, the bike light is assigned to and involved with the project of bicycling, and so referential networks are made of *involvements*.[59]

Each involvement has the structure of 'in-order-to': for example, a bike light is 'in-order-to' bike at night, 'in-order-to' commute from A to B, and so on. If we inquire continuously into the network of involvements and follow the lines of the referential structure, we reach what Heidegger calls the for-the-sake-of-which: *Dasein*.[60] *Dasein*, German for 'there-being,' is the term coined for the kind of being of a human. For Heidegger, *Dasein* is what *lets* the ready-to-hand *be* as such;[61] it engages itself within these totalities by assigning itself to projects. In assigning ourselves, we engage with the totality of involvements: *this totality of involvements is the occurrence of world*.[62] Thus, world is not understood spatially, but is instead this totality of involvements wherein *Dasein is*.[63]

In our engagement with the totality of involvements, we encounter the world as *familiar*.[64] We can never not seize upon *possibilities*, for we're always involved and our being cannot be

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[55] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Toronto: Harper & Row, Publishers, Incorporated, 2008), Sect. 12, 53–4/79–80, 56/82. (Note: when I use "*B&T*" I'm referring to this version.)
[56] ibid, 69/98.
[57] ibid, 68/97.
[58] ibid.
[59] ibid, 84/115.
[60] ibid, 84/116–7.
[61] ibid, 84–5/117.
[62] ibid, 86/119.
[63] Ibid, 64–5/93.
[64] Ibid, 86/119.

without world. Furthermore, this structure of involvements is characterized by *meaning*: when we take up projects within the horizon of world, we do so within a horizon that makes, or has the possibility to make, sense: e.g., the meaning of the bike light is found in how it relates to the totality. We're always engaged with things and projects that are meaningful for us. Because we encounter things, the world, and involvements before us, and find ourselves immersed in and thrown into fields of sense, we say we're characterized by *thrownness*

We always have, even if implicitly, an *understanding* of things and their involvements. We're attuned to things and encounter the world meaningfully and as understandable. The bike light, for example, is understandable prior to anyone approaching it. Our world is this meaningful set of involvements wherein we find ourselves always already engaged with things and possibilities afforded by them.

But, since we're first and foremost immersed with things in our world, how is it possible for us to 'emerge' from this immersion and grasp the world: i.e., to be able to perceive and discuss the concept of world at all?

When a thing becomes conspicuous,[65] our absorption is interrupted: the thing's unsuitable for the task. When the bike light stops working, we're taken aback. The thing's readiness-to-hand may recede and the thing, in retaining its readiness-to-hand, announces what's called *presence-at-hand*;[66] its readiness recedes and the thing conspicuously protrudes *as* a thing that's present-at-hand.[67] Because ready-to-hand is our primary mode of engagement, to encounter a being *as* a thing is based on a disruption of our engagement.[68]

When the bike light stops working, this thing and its context stand out and become noticeable. We become aware of the thing in question and survey our surroundings to think through possible solutions. The bike light is just *there*, and yet, it doesn't lose its readiness-to-hand, as our problem-solving mode reveals: we check the batteries; we give it a shake. If nothing works, what was absorbed in the world now stands out. Nonetheless, we've glimpsed its worldliness in catching sight of the item's 'in-order-to,' even if only in a subtle or implicit way. This glimpse is enough to start a wedge that becomes a gap essential for theorizing, thematizing, and philosophy.

— However, if world is the set of relations—the set of meaningful involvements—that depend on *our* involvement with this set, i.e., that we ourselves are implicated in world—that we ourselves partake and enable the structure of *worldhood*[69]—then, I claim, *there isn't just one world*. There are different worlds for different peoples: both historically and

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[65] ibid, 73–4/102–4.
[66] ibid, 73/103.
[67] ibid, 71/101.
[68] ibid, 61/88.
[69] ibid, 65/93, 86/119.

contemporaneously. For example, the ancient Greek world isn't the same as our contemporary one because the totality of relationships and involvements have changed. Nor is our world the same as the contemporary world lived by indigenous Amazonian peoples, for the same reasons. The horizons of meaning—how things make sense—and hence possibilities are different.

Worlds enable an understanding of how they fit together and what things are, and this means that another world comes with a *different* understanding of how they fit together and what things are. A thing *is* how it fits together with other things, for this is *what* it is. A world is *an ontology*: i.e., a way that things *are*. In saying there are different worlds, I'm saying there are different ontologies.

It could be countered that divergent understanding or different worlds are about what or how subjects *know* or *believe* (i.e., epistemology) or arbitrary convention (i.e., practicalities), and not what or how things *are* (i.e., ontology). However, Heidegger helps us see that ontology must precede epistemology and every epistemology must be grounded in an ontology, because the question is about how beings are before it's about how we know them.[70] Beings can appear epistemologically (e.g., as uncertain-entities, or as entities invested with cultural and subjective interpretation), but this is still a mode of how they appear as beings (i.e., ontologically). Every epistemology has already made ontological assumptions about oneself (e.g., as a doubtful subject, or as a cultural subject), others, and relations between them: epistemology requires an ontology within which it makes sense. To engage with something practically or as an object of knowledge, the thing must already appear as it is (i.e., as a being involved with other beings).

To adopt the position that other worlds are *beliefs* or epistemologies is to take one's own position as fundamental, objective, and ontological.[71] But then the question arises how one *knows* one's own position or that one's position is fundamental, and also how one knows one's own position is ontological and not just another epistemology. But can we have epistemologies without ontologies? Of course not, for epistemologies rely on ontologies. We are primordially open to engagement with things in our world.

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[70] ibid, 59–62/86–90, 202–3/246–7, 218–9/261, 220–2/263–4. For a related approach that shows that, in Heidegger, any project (pragmatic or epistemological) must be grounded in being-in-the world and temporality, and thus grounded in how *Dasein* discloses beings (i.e., in ontology), see John Richardson, *Existential Epistemology: A Heideggerian Critique of the Cartesian Project* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 90–113; see also Charles B. Guignon, *Heidegger and the Problem of Knowledge* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1983), p. 147–94. Richardson shows that, for Heidegger, epistemology is a founded mode of interpretation, based on an unthought reliance on the temporal mode of presence (i.e., entities as present-at-hand). A position that would try to interpret different dispositional modes (i.e., worlds) as 'epistemologies,' even if we understand 'epistemologies' to mean 'bodied/practiced epistemologies' or 'pragmatics,' requires a particular present-at-hand ontology. But theorizing that takes entities as present-at-hand emerges from a ready-to-hand context (see also Richardson, p. 90–113).

[71] For a similar point from a different angle, see Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "Cosmological Deixis and Amerindian Perspectivism," *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 4.3 (1998): p. 478.

An 'understanding' of being more fundamentally emerges from an encounter and immuration withing being: it derives from how being appears to us.

In being gripped by different ontologies—i.e., different metaphysics, different takes on Being, different worlds—beings reveal themselves to us differently as reflected in practical orientation. Therefore, radically different understandings of beings, which can be displayed practically—i.e., the display of fundamentally different totalities of meaningful involvements— reveal different ontologies.[72]

What this means is that there are different ways that things hang together, different ways that beings are and can be disclosed.[73] Perhaps, in a transformative experience, it's even possible for the horizon of meaning to change *now*, *within* our world, for us. Perhaps *this* is the possibility of 'two worlds in one.' – On the hinge of what is common between worlds, our world can be transformed.

2.5 It's *almost* as though, when we undergo this transformation, the outline of things acts as a fulcrum or hinge on which the world transforms into this other world that also fits the outlines just so.

I say "almost" because world and things are intricately and intimately connected. They're both part of a mutual gathering of being,[74] which means that things are always determined as things from within their context that is the world. The world is the way all things hang together; and the world is never to be found except in things.

World is not only sets of pragmatic relations (§2.4), for different engagements with things in a total context entail different understandings of things more generally. I'll call this the *ontological gathering of beings*: things are gathered in a world as ready-to-hand within particular understandings of being, *Dasein*, and so on, which are based on how being appears. Pragmatic engagement entails an understanding of what a thing *is*, and how it relates to oneself and other beings. It entails a particular way we are immersed in beings and a particular way that they get taken up.

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[72] For other approaches to this problem, see Jarrad Reddekop, "Against Ontological Capture: Drawing Lessons from Amazonian Kichwa Relationality," *Review of International Studies* 48.5 https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210521000486 (2022): p. 858, 859–62; Reddekop, "Thinking Across Worlds," p. 27–37 (where Reddekop uses the "world" terminology); Mario Blaser, "Political Ontology," *Cultural Studies* 23.5 (2009): p. 877.

[73] Eben Hensby, "The Metaphoricity of Being and the Question of Sameness: Heidegger and Zwicky," *Dialogue* 61.1 https://doi.org/10.1017/S0012217321000111 (2022): 177–96.

[74] Martin Heidegger, "Language," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2001), p. 197–200, 203–4. While Heidegger arrives at this conclusion through the lens of language, I'm setting language aside for now.

And so, I say "almost" because, if we're speaking of transforming the world, this makes sense only if we're also thinking of transforming things; a transformation of things wouldn't leave their outlines intact, not in the way we currently understand them. There may not be a consistency of *things* between gatherings, for a thing in one world may not be a thing in another. Another way to put this is that the outlines are part of the world that undergoes transformation.

"*The experience of understanding something is always the experience of a gestalt — the dawning of an aspect that is simultaneously a perception or reperception of the whole.*"[75]

"*The fundamental 'formula' of Gestalt theory might be expressed in this way: There are wholes, the behaviour of which is not determined by that of their individual elements, but where the part-processes are themselves determined by the intrinsic nature of the whole.*"[76]

The transformation seems to require concentration and stilled breath, and is easier in particular forests or on particular blocks, in part, because of their familiarity. But what does this mean? It has to do with a certain way that a space, an environment, certain relations have opened up and cleared a space for you to be in; familiarity involves a deepening of relations. But there are plenty of familiar environments within which the transformation doesn't occur, and I can undergo the transformation in unfamiliar places. It has something to do with the particular relations offered and opened by the particular place.

One is touched by things in their particularity when one is touched: this isn't simply tautological. We pass by things all the time without paying them attention or noticing them, or, noticing them only as example of a general or universal phenomenon. It's less common for us to encounter things in their raw particularity. When we're touched by them, when we notice them, we're touched by them: we can be opened to them and drawn into their particularity.

The exposure of particularity can enable a space to grow within which a transformation becomes possible. As though we're opened to a whole through particularity. As though opening to a particular thing can cause a transformation in our world.

For instance, there are particular trees, more expressive trees, that enable this transformation more readily than others.

2.6 The metaphoric relation, which I've likened to the transformative experience (§2.2), is one of loss. It's rife with loss—the outlines that subtend the gestalt shift are the ones that held up the other image a moment ago (§2.5); the gesture of presence traces a shadow of absence:

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[75] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH2.
[76] Max Wertheimer, "Gestalt Theory," in *A Source Book of Gestalt Psychology*, ed. and trans. Willis D. Ellis (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1938), p. 2, quoted in Zwicky, *W&M*, RH78.

. But notice that, even on the cube, the outlines aren't the *same* outlines they were before (don't let their status as 'lines' deceive you). When the cube projects one way and you experience a shift so it projects the other, the outlines that are the hinge of what is common between the two change: structurally, they're not the same (this one 'travels' to the other side of that one; this one now bears the weight; etc.).

It's quite remarkable that we can never see both projections of the cube simultaneously—that each projection emerges from the loss of the other[77]—but also that we can get better at switching between the two. Sometimes we get to the point where we can alternate between one and the other so rapidly it feels as though we should be able to see both at once: but we cannot.

It's difficult to provide a reason for this. (But, then, why do we want a reason? It's simply a fact.) It has to do with the reorientation required in the gestalt shift to see one projection in distinction from the other: parts of the outline have to play different roles in different projections.

The cube, in my text, is a metaphor. The transformation of the world involves a new alignment in the relations of things and world. It doesn't just reveal new possibilities, it reveals new possibilities for possibilities; because possibilities unfold within the horizon of our world (§2.4), a transformation of the world transforms the basis of possibilities themselves. We see a new projection of the world, analogous to a new projection of the cube: we shift from one world-projection to another.

Each way of seeing occludes other ways of seeing—this is the basis of the possibility of transforming the world—yet none is fundamentally more 'natural' than any other. This occlusion points to the absence and loss inherent in seeing. Not as loss of parts from a whole, for there's no perspective from which we could see all projections; rather, loss as ontologically constitutive, as the condition of any presence.

But we can get better at switching between projections. Imagination is one way of doing this: we get better at seeing how things are or may be for other ways of being; for people in other cultures; for other lifeforms. Imagination is a sensitivity to the ways of being of another (which also reveals one's own ways of being).

Projections of the cube are structural possibilities. The cube "*could not* be *the one without also* being *the other (whether we see this or not).*"[78] Things necessarily enable other

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[77] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH56.
[78] ibid, LH98.

projections. Zwicky drawing on Wittgenstein calls the 'failure' to see a projection aspect-blindness: "*a* failure *to see what* is there."[79]

2.7 In being pierced by a particular thing (§2.5), we see how it *is* and *is not* everything (§2.2). First, a particular thing can reveal to me how my care, love, or ability to attend to it is limitless because it means the world to me (it *is* everything), and yet it's also clear that it is not everything: actually, its power comes from it precisely *not* being everything else: it stands out, unique.

Second, a thing is only the particularity it is thanks to the infinite context of relations around it: any given particular thing is what it is because it has been contextualized, shaped, placed by the things and relations around and transpiercing it (it *is* everything). In partaking of these relations of 'is' and 'is not,' we see that *this*ness has a metaphoric structure (§2.2).

Because the transformation is of the world, and the world *is* only through things (§2.5), the transformation involves a return to things themselves. When we return to things, we're struck by their particularity, by their irreducible *this*ness (§2.5). But the experience of *this*ness cannot simply be willed: we cannot stare at a thing and expect to be pierced by its *this*ness. Only certain things pierce and draw us in.

To be struck by a thing's *this*ness is to be struck by its losability,[80] which reverberates through our being and bones. We can feel it. To love something is already to have lost it, just as to lose something is already to have, if not loved it, found a place for it and been concerned with it. Transformation is constitutively bound up with loss (§2.6), and *this*ness shares this connection. Our openness to loss is to the vulnerability of the other and also to our own.

Openness to *this*ness is a mode of engagement typically occluded by everyday comportment.[81] *This*ness has the power to change our world, for it pierces through everything with its metaphoric structure, vulnerability, and particularity. If we're affected deeply, if the *this*ness shows us something of its way of being, we can experience a kind of transformation in and of the world.

Things call to us, draw us in, and pique our interest; and because each thing is placed within the context of the whole—is related in its way to every other thing—to be pierced by a particular thing is to feel the pressure of the whole expressed through it, to see the whole gathered in a particular way through the particularity — as though hearing *sygyt* funnelled through one mouth.

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[79] ibid, LH25.
[80] Zwicky, *Lyric Philosophy*, LH70, LH89, LH147, LH243, LH302.
[81] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH53–5.

2.8 *This*ness and its metaphoric structure subvert attempts to capture the experience in language. This is part of why it's difficult to explain the transformative experience in words.

Language is rooted in particular gatherings of beings/being. It's not that language is placed overtop of the world, lain down over things. Rather, the ontological gathering of beings (§2.5), wherein things are gathered as the things they are, also gathers language; for there to be a word for a thing, it must appear as amenable to language. What we encounter is already 'in' language: it can already be spoken to, even if the word is lacking or uncertain. This includes the structure of grammar: for example, in English and some other European languages, this is a noun-thing; this, a verb-thing. The structure of the language one is immersed in is deeply rooted in a particular gathering of beings.

Nonetheless, while beings are gathered, and language too is gathered, there can be a slippage between the two — for they live different lives. Languages fit the world *just so*. But beings have different faces: different aspects can dawn. When this happens, when a new wisp or fragment of beings and world becomes manifest, we may be able to speak to it only by shifting our language.

It's also undeniable that there are things we cannot put to words and not just because we cannot find the word right now. – A being, any being, is always revealing aspects and projections that escape any language. Much of the experience of a particularity, of a *this*ness, escapes language.

Lyric language, as Zwicky points out, tries to precipitate just such an experience: rather than trying to precisely index the experience, we realize we can properly speak to it only if our language takes on the form of the experience in its expression, reverberating through to the listener.[82]

Lyric poetry often deploys metaphors, which short-circuit our regular linguistic pathways and thus our perceptual/ontological pathways. They short-circuit the *calcification* of language (tied to calcification of thoughts, perception, ontology, and so on): i.e., the ruts of our linguistic use that preclude us from sensing other aspects of things around us.

2.9 *This*ness reveals new aspects of things, as we open to the particular way of being—the character—of a thing.

As we walk, *this* tree wisps past, like a ghost; but also, it intrudes. Surely, not all trees have the same strength of character, not all mesh with everyone (what I see as strength of character,

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[82] ibid, LH68, LH73, LH111–2, LH133, LH155, LH181, LH216, LH219, LH239. Zwicky, *The Experience of Meaning*, p. 27–8, 31, 44.

you may see as weakness). Different beings have different characters, different ways of engaging with the world.

Trees reach out. — They aren't just sitting there, present-at-hand, nor are they just there for our projects, ready-to-hand (§2.4); they aren't just raw material for use. Each tree exhibits a particular way of being: engaged with their surroundings, they respond, dynamically, in their environment. — But what do I mean in saying they reach out? That they physically move towards something, for example, phototropism? No, I mean they're not just standing there, inert, contained. They're engaged, open to encounter.

'But, surely, you're not saying that a tree encounters you? How would it even know you're there?'

The tree is open for encounter. This doesn't mean that the tree is consciously aware of your presence. It simply means there can be an exchange between you and this tree.

2.10 Things demand attention. We've become used to seeing nature as backdrop and landscape, so often the things that demand attention are the things *designed* to call attention to themselves: signs, automobiles, buildings, etc. But if you're walking in a forest or on a quiet residential street, you'll find your attention drawn to particular plants and trees — not to all or just any, but certain ones beckon.

Different phenomena have different ways of capturing our attention. Signs are tasked with breaking through the circulation of the everyday so they can be noticed. Some signs, such as stop signs, are part of the everyday, yet each must grab our attention. — On the other hand, trees, for instance, aren't 'designed' to break through this circulation. And yet, sometimes they *do* break through.

Plants are taken up in the circulation of the everyday. Be it as houseplants, garden plants, landmarks, scenery, backdrop, and so on, plants tend not to be considered as beings in their own right; they get taken up as things we pass by.

When a plant gets noticed, it can grasp us, changing the space of encounter for us. In the encounter, time slows down, and the tree takes up a broader sense of space; this is why it seems to hover beside you (§1.10). This is based on observation: encounters with others bring with them a distinct sense of space and time. Space and time are found (only) in encounters with things; they're that within which encounters occur. More specifically, encounters occur only within places.

Places are always specific instantiations of space and time: space and time, when understood in an absolute or universal sense, are abstractions or reductions from places.[83] Places are wherein particularities—you, tree, and all other things around you—encounter. Particularities encounter within particular instantiations of space and time; we can arrive at absolute or universal space and time only by taking 'what is common' and disregarding what is different and unique.

Even if our being is spatial and temporal, our *placeness* is even more primordial:[84] it's because we can be placed that we can open to spatiality or temporality and hence to space and time; space and time do not spring forth merely from our being but result from encounters with other beings. Our placeness, which is always a specific *placedness* (i.e., we've always already been placed), enables particular inflections of time and space.

The tree hovers beside us because our placedness—how we're placed—has changed. Its placedness has changed too: hence the dialogic quality of the encounter.

2.11 In such encounters, stones become stonier, trees hover beside us, and non-human animals come more into their own.

Different kinds of animals encounter beings in different ways. This is, I think, what Jakob von Uexküll was getting at with his notion of *Umwelten* and the tones associated with these lived environments:[85] while, for us, the chair and floor can (usually) be distinguished by their sitting and standing tones, both have sitting tones for a dog. Tones are rooted in perceptual, bodily, sexual, and social differences. Thus, the things we find ourselves surrounded by are encountered in different ways by different kinds of animals.

Animals live in different worlds — different from one kind of animal to another. But this thesis isn't without difficulties. For instance, Derrida traces out the immense machinery of the Western philosophical tradition that works to deny that non-human animals are open to something like a Heideggerian world (§2.4); or even that non-human animals can respond as opposed to react.[86] All this bleeds into the immense machinery of factory farms, agribusiness, scientific experiments, and so on.

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[83] Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, p. 151–4 (on space and place).
[84] This is influenced by Heidegger. On spatiality, see Heidegger, *B&T*, 105–8/139–43; see also 110–3/145–7 on how this makes possible something like Cartesian space. On temporality, see Heidegger, *B&T*, 326/374.
[85] Jakob von Uexküll, *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans*, trans. Joseph D. O'Neil (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).
[86] Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, trans. David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008). On Western machinery in and alongside the tradition, see in particular p. 25 and 101; on reaction/response, see p. 122–6.

As example, Heidegger famously declared that "*the stone is worldless, the animal is poor in world, man [sic] is world-forming.*"[87] He wants to say that animals (all animals equally, yet not humans) are deprived of the 'as such': while they encounter beings, they never encounter beings *as* beings, beings *as such*.[88] This subtle point means that a dog encounters its food, but not *as* food, not *as* a being that stands out over there against the dog.

In Heidegger's account, the dog is an organism encircled by a ring of drives. When it encounters a disinhibitor, a particular drive is disinhibited, and so the dog is driven until the drive is satisfied and re-inhibited. The animal is always being-driven and is never open to encountering beings as such. In this way, Heidegger provides ontological grounds that can underpin stimulus accounts of non-human organisms.[89]

For Heidegger, non-human animals encounter disinhibitors. But which precise beings are disinhibitors for an organism are always enfolded within and pre-determined by the organism itself. The organism is a totalization of possible encounters. It *needs* a disinhibitor to drive behaviour (i.e., to be disinhibited), yet it never encounters the disinhibitor *itself* (i.e., *as such*); the non-human animal is merely driven.

But is it possible for something to open to an other without being open to an other *as such*, i.e., to an other *as* an other? Are non-human animal responses prescribed like knee jerk reactions? For a drive to eat to be disinhibited, mustn't the organism first recognize the food *as* food?[90] Otherwise, how does the drive encircling a non-human animal 'know' to loosen itself for this being? How do drive and being connect? Mustn't there be an openness on the part of a non-human animal to the being? 'There's a connection, but the animal's never aware of it.' – What's our evidence for this claim?

Lumping all animals but humans together is untenable: it both treats vastly disparate animals the same (the honeybee, the red-eyed tree frog, the lantern fish, Rothschild's emu, the Asian elephant) while treating humans as somehow entirely distinct, *and* it disregards overlapping categorizations that depend on the attribute or relations in question[91] (e.g., 'animals that use tools' may overlap with 'animals that pass the mirror test').

Furthermore, considering the role of adaptation, which Heidegger discusses,[92] how could an animal *adapt* to its environment if there's only an openness to what's given by its disinhibiting ring, as pre-programmed and pre-enfolded?[93] It seems to me that adaptation should be

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[87] Heidegger, *FCM*, p. 185.
[88] ibid, e.g., p. 193, 197–8, 210, 241, 247–8, 287.
[89] ibid, p. 254, 256–7.
[90] Ka-wing Leung, "Heidegger on Animal and World," *New Yearbook for Phenomenology & Phenomenological Philosophy* 10.1 (2010): p. 248–9.
[91] Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, p. 29–31.
[92] Heidegger, *FCM*, p. 264.
[93] ibid, p. 242, 256.

understood as part of a dialogic encounter with an environment. That is, animals are beings that struggle with and interact with a shifting and changing environment in an openness beyond predelineation.

Another way to put this is that, for Heidegger, a disinhibitor is always paired with a drive, which matches with what he calls a "capability" of the organism.[94] But how could the organism be originarily capable (i.e., how could it come to acquire the capabilities it has/starts with) or how could its capabilities change (i.e., presumably in response to environmental shifts, for example), if it is not open beyond prescription? Capability must refer to and be directed to and by an environment—a particular capability has to 'fit' 'between' an organism and an environment—and so it must come to be, or to change, through an openness to an environment.

In short, I find Heidegger's account unsatisfying. And yet it, or something like it, is at play throughout our society for non-human animals. We challenge these cultural attitudes and practices when we turn to the onto-ethical level. That is: we question the move that lumps all animals except humans together (which includes the subsequent move to extract certain animals from the animal-lump based on similarity to humans—'intelligence,' for instance—for this uses humans as the yardstick for others). We see all animals (including humans) as a dialogic result of environment and beings interacting and co-responding. We see non-human animals as open to their own world that is not the same world to which we're open (due to social and bodily differences and unique dialogic histories). We deny Heidegger's implicit distinction between 'as such' and 'not as such' and instead see a plethora of modes and ways that beings appear, even for us[95] (e.g., when *we're* driven compared to when we're calm, or when things move at different speeds or with different intensities, and so on). And we deny the hierarchy of organisms, reaching from us on one end to something like single-cellular organisms on the other.

Heidegger's account is strangely reductionist. Strange, because he's careful to argue against reductionisms (when they pertain to humans). Just because we can talk about human or non-human animals in terms of stimuli doesn't mean that this is ontologically primary, for there's a holism to phenomena. And just as we surmount the problem of other human minds through sensing meaningful gestures, so too, barring speciesism, we sense this of non-human animals. The approach I'm taking here is to ask, through observation, how is it for particular animals to be in the world, in *their* world? We do *not* inhabit the same world; *and yet*, we're in a dialogic encounter with animals, open to each other.

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[94] ibid, for example, see p. 221, 231–2.
[95] Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, p. 156, 159–60.

Why do I use the word 'world' with non-human animals? Because world is the network of meaningful relations and possible involvements (§2.4). Animals move within such networks. This seems patently obvious to me.

2.12 Plants also have meaningful relations. They relate and open to soil, light, water, mycorrhizal fungi, pollinators, other plants, and so on.[96] It seems to me that there's no strong reason, besides a lack of (direct) access combined with a lack of imagination, that we should deny that plants, and living beings more generally, have their own worlds.

The proposition that plants have their own worlds may be uncomfortable for some of us. One could retort that, as with non-human animals, plants aren't open to their surroundings in the way we are; they merely react to stimuli and are under the dictates of laws of nature. But, again, the fact that we can analyze something through the conceptual lens of stimuli doesn't mean that phenomena begin or stop there;[97] we must ask what makes *openness* to stimuli possible (if this is the model we're using) (§2.11).

World is the totality of meaningful involvements (§2.4), of sense and significance. Worlds are how other beings stand forth and are oriented and gathered for the enworlded being.

Plants show their character (§2.9), for they aren't all the same, but are distinct; different plants have different styles and ways of being. In their placedness, they have distinct relations to things. These are relations of directedness (towards/away/etc.) and thus reveal meaningfulness for the plant in question, for meaning resides in directed behaviour, not in reason, intelligence, or consciousness. The directed behaviour reveals the sense that things have for the plant.

Many plants are phototropic: they move towards the sun, which draws them towards itself. They're oriented to water: they move towards it, and it draws or calls them. The sun and

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[96] David Chamovitz, *What a Plant Knows: A Field Guide to the Senses* (New York: Scientific American/Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012). David George Haskell, *The Songs of Trees: Stories from Nature's Great Connectors* (Australia: Black Inc. imprint of Swartz Publishing Pty Ltd., 2017). See also, as examples: Marcus Anhäuser, "The Silent Scream of the Lima Bean," Congress Report, *MaxPlanckResearch* 4 (2007): p. 60–5; Kevin J. Beiler et al., "Mapping the wood-wide web: mycorrhizal networks link multiple Douglas-fir cohorts," *New Phytologist* 185 (2010): p. 543–53; Monica Gagliano, "In a green frame of mind: perspectives on the behavioural ecology and cognitive nature of plants," *AoB Plants* 7 (2015): p. 1–8; Monica Gagliano, "Learning by Association in Plants," *Scientific Reports* 6.38427 (2016): p. 1–9; Monica Gagliano, "The mind of plants: Thinking the unthinkable," *Communicative & Integrative Biology* 10.2 (2017): p. 1–4; Suzanne W. Simard et al., "Mycorrhizal networks: Mechanisms, ecology and modelling," *Fungal Biology Reviews* 26 (2012): p. 39–60; Suzanne W. Simard et al., "Net transfer of carbon between ectomycorrhizal tree species in the field," *Nature* 388 (1997): p. 579–82; Yuan Yuan Song et al., "Defoliation of interior Douglas-fir elicits carbon transfer and stress signalling to ponderosa pine neighbors through ectomycorrhizal networks," *Scientific Reports* 5.8495 (2015): p. 1–9.
[97] For example, see Heidegger on how this type of analysis wouldn't capture the phenomenon of being human: *B&T*, 55/82, 181/226, 232/275, 246–7/290–1.

water hold significance for the plant. There's a meaning-full economy of give-and-take and call-and-response.

Meaning occurs when, for beings that can orient themselves, things fit.[98] Things cohere in their relatedness to one another: their relatedness is a making of sense.

Plants engage with the world in a way similar to animals insofar as, in Uexküll's sense, there are different tones to different things for them. And so, building from what I said above regarding animals (§2.11), I take this to mean that there are plant worlds, and life worlds more generally.

2.13 Acknowledging that one is surrounded by this multitude of interlocking, interweaving worlds—by nature divergent—can be unsettling. The simple thought that the world is not held together or oriented around 'the human' can be disconcerting, and entails a shift in one's understanding and in one's self, for one's sense of self is intimately bound up with one's world and one's sense of others.

The self is not an extensionless point—an agent, actor, or will—confronting the plethora of things over and against a subject: the idea of an actor who deliberates and then enters the world is based on a misconception of a separation between self and world. The self is embedded, bodied, and contextual: the world and things to which one is related already impinge upon oneself.

Just as the world cannot be without a self or self-like concrescence (i.e., a world is a relational totality that orients towards a for-the-sake-of-which—§2.4—and there is no view from nowhere), so self or self-like concrescences cannot be without a world (i.e., intentionality). The self is intentional and responsive: it's directed and directs itself.

And thus, since our world is such that it makes room for other worlds—life, plant, non-human animal, and other human worlds—the self, too, is changed. For the self isn't the centre, the *arche*, the *telos*, nor the source for criteria. The self is, instead, a responsiveness to its situation — which is now, as always, the situation of overlapping enworlded beings striving within worlds. One's self is thus intimate with countless other beings and ways that things are taken up.

And so, to be aware of other worlds changes our world and changes how we experience our self as a responsiveness to others, for the self is negotiating fluidity, an intentionality, intentional beyond its own intentions.

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[98] David Morris, "From the Nature of Meaning to a Phenomenological Refiguring of Nature," *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement* 72 (2013): p. 329–30.

2.14 It can be difficult to explain why one should undertake this experience. Nonetheless, I'll try.

The type of experience to which I'm gesturing seems expansive, maybe freeing. There's something that seems right, that accords with a sense we may have, a sense about what according is. Zwicky expresses this sense when she writes that *"truth is the asymptotic limit of sensitive attempts to be responsible to our actual experience of the world."*[99]

We often overlook aspects of our experience of the world. I've argued for an expansion of beings to which we customarily assign "world," and for the correlative challenge this poses to our sense of self (§2.13). Truth, in Zwicky's sense, is both epistemological and ethical. We live in the truth through sensitively striving to accurately respond to our situation, which means to other beings with which we're related; or, better, we aim *at* the truth, for this sensitive, responsive engagement is an ongoing practice.

2.15 "Awakening" is one way to express the gestalt shift of transformation, and a movement towards truth. Awakening involves practice. Transformative philosophy must walk: the philosopher must wander and stumble, and not just in 'thought.'

Thought isn't an activity that transpires in the head; thoughts aren't ideas hovering in mental space. In part, they permeate how we (implicitly) understand and navigate even the most basic things: *"When I go to the door of the lecture hall, I am already there, and I could not go to it at all if I were not such that I am there. I am never here only, as this encapsulated body; rather, I am there, that is, I already pervade the room, and only thus can I go through it."*[100] Thinking is an orientation and openness to understanding beings around us. Though, thoughts can also have a more explicit sense.

"Thoughts come at random, and go at random."[101]
"We never come to thoughts. They come to us."[102]

Thoughts of all kinds never start or stop with a subject: they come from beyond us. They come from places, intertwined with others of all kinds, as they visit and stay for a while.

We must transform thought. But practice and thought aren't opposed. My thinking attempts to lead towards a new kind of practice and a new kind of thought: moving with thoughts differently, changing our orientation to beings. This practice cannot be delimited or defined ahead of time: it can be uncovered only by walking towards it, by *preparing* for it. — When we

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[99] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH102.
[100] Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, p. 155.
[101] Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, trans. A. J. Krailsheimer (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1995), par. 542, p. 190.
[102] Heidegger, "The Thinker as Poet," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, p. 6.

'go to sleep,' really, we *prepare* ourselves for sleep; we get ready for bed. Sometimes, sleep doesn't come. — Such preparation is a kind of offering.

We cannot just think or do philosophy on the side. Since the modern era, Western philosophy has often forgotten about an enactive side: in many Eastern traditions this divide was never instantiated. (Of course, there are exceptions in the West, for instance, Pascal,[103] Marxism and critical theory, and other praxis-oriented philosophy.) We need to disable our safe compartmentalization: over here is thought, over there is action; over here is philosophy, over there is the everyday. Instead, we should see how the first term, in both cases, bleeds into and taints the second; otherwise, we haven't *understood* them. Understanding isn't merely intellectual. Living responsively—coming transformatively to the truth—involves our whole being.

Our ethical or practical question is: how do we carry on in the face of this?

2.16 There's an urge to shirk responsibility and look elsewhere—e.g., to defer or wait for a transformation—but we must turn to things themselves. Yes, waiting and patience are part of transformation. But this transformation happens only by a turn to things themselves as it is about finding a new way of relating within our world.

The call to turn to things themselves isn't new: we hear it from classical empiricists and phenomenologists.

But we need to clear up a common misconception. To turn to things themselves isn't to be rid of metaphysics, as though we access the naked thing, with things (physics) on the one side and metaphysics on the other. These two are bound to one another: *physics* is already *metaphysics*. 'Meta' doesn't mean going beyond physics in the sense of leaving things behind, for example, in another realm. Instead, physics itself is a going-beyond — physics becomes possible within a metaphysics.

Physics is a going-beyond because it embodies a meaning of being and beings; it involves an interpretation of things, including what and how things are. 'Physics' is how a particular metaphysics conceives of collections of things; the study of 'metaphysics' is the explicit theorization of going-beyond *this* collection. But the concept of 'physics' *already* goes beyond beings.

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[103] Pascal, *Pensées*, par. 418, p. 124–5; par. 808, p. 244; par. 821, p. 247–8; par. 954, p. 307. For Pascal, reason is insufficient to lead us to God alone. Faith is required, which comes as a gift of God. Thus, while we wait, we do as others have done (this immediately follows Pascal's famous wager): "*They behaved just as if they did believe, taking holy water, having masses said, and so on. That will make you believe quite naturally […]*" (par. 418, p. 125). Practice or habit can lead to faith: "*The habit makes the doctrine*" (par. 954, p. 307), for "*we must resort to habit once the mind has seen where the truth lies, in order to steep and stain ourselves in that belief which constantly eludes us […]*" (par. 821, p. 247). Thus, there's an enactive side, but wrapped densely in a metaphysics not amenable to the position I'm staking here.

Our understanding of things always involves more than bare things because things themselves are always involved with more than themselves: in being related to countless others, they, too, go beyond themselves. Any engagement with beings involves going-beyond.

To clarify, it's also not that *metaphysics* is subjective (our projection) and *ontology* is objective (what's really there). Rather, *metaphysics* is a going-beyond things, and we go beyond because things always go beyond themselves. *Ontology* is what there is, and because things can be taken up in different ways for different beings, there are different ontologies (§2.4–2.5). The idea that there is 'physics' on one hand and 'metaphysics' on the other is a particular ontological understanding (*an understanding* of what is really there). An ontology is what is really there, and what is really there is going beyond itself and, thus, drives us beyond itself.

Thus, our task, rather than getting rid of metaphysics (which we cannot do), is to make our it, or our engagement with it, more responsive to our situation. And our situation is to respond to *real* others who we encounter from within their own worlds.

I renew a call to turn to things themselves. To try to look elsewhere is to try to shirk our responsibility (§2.14). Of course, to look elsewhere *is* a response, but an inadequate one. We're always already responding and open to responding. How do we respond to our responding? – How do we take up our situation?

2.17 Awakening, once an active metaphor, has calcified (§1.17).

'Calcification' emerges in Zwicky's discussion of metaphor.[104] As we've seen, she argues that metaphor is based explicitly on an 'is' and implicitly on an 'is not' (§2.2): "*Why, then, is metaphor, as a linguistic trope, dependent on an implicit 'not'?—Metaphor results from an over-riding of calcified gestures of thought by being.*"[105]

Calcification occurs when insight and dynamism are replaced by lifelessness; for example, a metaphor dies when it recedes into the background and the general circulation of things.[106] But as a dead metaphor can be re-enlivened, let's try to re-enliven the calcified concept of awakening to relate it to the transformation.

Awakening carries a strange metaphysics. It speaks to the transformation from one state to another, from one level to a higher level of awareness, from illusion to reality. This is based on our dominant views on dreams and sleep: in sleep, we're shut off from the world, with ideas or neurons bouncing around without traction, producing the meaningless display we call

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[104] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH8, LH11.
[105] ibid, LH8.
[106] ibid, LH68.

dreams. The dream state represents a continual possibility and thus a need to be vigilant (what if you're dreaming right now?).

Dreams are illusory: they cover over sensory input that can be evidenced through intersubjective relations. Instead, they come from the individual in question. Similarly, our senses and reasoning aren't perfect, and our finitude and subjectivity limit and obscure experience of the world. Thus, we need practices like science, an institutionalized and intersubjective practice of knowledge that works towards precision and accuracy, and that aims at knowing what's out there.

— This is *a* picture, with a hierarchy from direct knowing (i.e., an infinite being, the absolute), to human senses, sensory deception, and hallucinations and dreams. – But what if we question this picture? What if we insist on the *reality* of dreams and hallucinations? For when we're dreaming, that's where we are: that *is* our reality. This is also the situation for the one hallucinating. Dreams and hallucinations are ways that aspects of the world reveal themselves. Let's allow the phenomena to speak to us again: what really *is* a dream? Let's heed what dreams show and how, for dreams are meaningful in showing how things relate to one another. And hallucinations are often connected to one's surroundings: what and how do they show?

When we *awaken*, we awaken to a '*different*' reality. We don't 'awaken' to the real opposed to the illusory; we awaken from one mode of the real to another. This other mode provides a distinct *clarity*: more distinct shapes, outlines, and the extent of others, which provide clearer opportunities for responsive engagement (§2.14). Thus, awakening is a transition: a transformation (a gestalt shift, a rearranged fit).

2.18 Addressing our situation, *awakening* to it—presuming we've rescued something of the term—is a major task of philosophy. There's often another impetus in philosophy to *describe* the world: not 'what is the case' but 'what can be the case' (e.g., logically) or what makes 'what is the case' possible. One problem is that this impetus tends to ossify historical contingencies as either transcendental principles or necessary stages of development. (For example: Freud, Kant, Husserl, Heidegger, and so on.)

Perhaps I should be more precise: the problem is that this impetus *always* ossifies historical contingencies, for any articulation derives from a moment within a world and so brings forth metaphysical and historical particularities.

This isn't to say that such projects aren't worthwhile. Nor that such projects don't open up new possibilities for thought. But such projects needn't be the limits to thought either.

Of course, in this text, I'm also discussing conditions of possibility. But I'm trying not to make this the beginning and end of thought, because it's become important to think not only

conditions or grounds *but also to think new orientations*. Such reorientations can take place only within world, and so must be precipitated within relational contexts infused with our tradition, into which we're thrown and which we never simply leave behind. This means that we must, in some sense, repeat what we find in our tradition but with a difference: i.e., not simply expanding on or stepping back[107] from a supposed grounding moment, but also reorienting ourselves relative to things and world; not stepping back from particular things, but entering into engagement with them. We aim at a new interpretation, or, at least, we point in the direction of one: for example, interlocking multiplicities of worlds.

2.19 More than conditions of possibility, I'm interested in onto-ethics.

'Onto-ethics' gestures to the inseparability of ontology and ethics. Every ontological understanding includes an ethical understanding, just as every ethical understanding includes an ontological understanding. But, too often, these are thought of as two separate concerns.

Determining what ethics consists in—for example, our responsibilities—is bound up with other concerns: what is responsibility, to whom do we owe it, who is the agent of responsibility, and so on. So, if we say that individual agents are responsible and hence punishable for their acts, we have a whole metaphysics and ontology involved here: what agents, choices, and acts are.

From the other side, determining an ontology will always be defining the realm of possibilities within which ethics is to be concerned (e.g., to reverse the example above: to determine what a subject is, what various objects are, how to categorize them ontologically, and so on, entails ethical possibilities for response). For example, if we take a rock to be an inanimate object, then it's not the kind of thing towards which we feel any direct ethical responsibility.

Ontologies involve ethics in another sense: the former is determined only through *responsive* openness to being. But because we already come with a sense of things, our openness and responsivity are already conditioned by an ontology. Therefore, to be responsive, we must heed our sense of ontology — be ethical towards it. Ontology and ethics inseparably dovetail, like a Möbius strip.

In what sense do I prioritize onto-ethics over conditions of possibility? I'm shifting from an emphasis on a *descriptive* project—what enables things to be the way they are—to a *descriptive-prescriptive* one: what enables a better responsiveness to how things are.

Thus, while 'onto-ethics' can *describe* the dependencies between ontology and ethics, as explained above, it can also *prescriptively* lead to a responsive openness to beings. In this way,

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[107] See Derrida's imaginary discussion with Heidegger on this matter in Jacques Derrida, *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 110–3.

we try to sensitively *understand* others (§2.14); we learn to respond to what *is* there. Thus, our new orientation (§2.18) is towards how particular others really are.

2.20 But how can things call to us? How can worlds call to us?

These questions come from an erroneous point of view fostered by Western culture, from a standpoint wherein supposedly only what has a voice can call, voices are sounds that carry meaning, and only humans have voices. While we think some non-human animal sounds carry *some* (emotive) meaning, elevated above these are human voices—language—that carry full emotive and intellectual meaning.

What I wish to draw to our attention is that our attention can be drawn to something only because it's amenable to being noticed; when we turn to pay attention to anything we do so because our attention has been called to it. We direct our attention towards something because it stands out for us, which means that *it stands forth for us*.

If I scan the room absent-mindedly, certain things grab my attention in certain ways; I'm drawn to certain encounters. If I cultivate a meticulous sense of attention to detail, so that, next time, I scan the room and patiently take in as much as I can, still only certain things grab my attention. Opening to things is a response to being called. *Even if* as humans we're structurally 'predisposed' to certain types of experience, we're fundamentally a receptivity to things. Receptivity means we don't determine which things appear to us or how. – A tree in bloom suddenly grabs our attention.

'*How* can things call us in such specific ways?' Us and things *lean towards* one another. This is how we can encounter them; we couldn't encounter things if they were fully withdrawn into themselves. Things aren't constituted as identities that subsequently call; things continuously reach out and maintain themselves in the face of others. Opening to others is a readiness for impact and to be impacted, to encounter and be encountered. Other things make things how they are: how they open and respond to interactions and impacts with others. Things are as they are through relations with others. They are an 'internal' relating—the parts to the whole—and an 'external' relating—to other things. Things face outwards. In this way, things are responses as well as questions.

Things call to us because of our relations with them; things call to us because of how they fit in and stand out amidst and relative to other things. We notice things because of this differentiation. But things stand out *in relation* to us, so we must take ourselves into consideration.

We likewise call on things, for we *are* precisely this calling and being called. We aren't a pre-constituted identity that only subsequently calls and gets called; we're being constituted only because we're called and calling: we're constituted relationally, by and as openness (§2.13).

We've already responded before any response can be formulated. Our self is an ongoing negotiation: it's a calling amongst various voices, held together by their calling together. Memories, habits, perceptions, unconscious desires — all these, and more, interrelate and relate to others: this is what we call our self. As new factors are brought into play, depending on how deeply they cut, they change who we are. We're enticed, teased, seduced by worlds and things to come forth and respond.

What this means is that things stand out because of mutual interrelations. We're always engaged in projects and activities that throw us into particular dispositions. We always come to things with our particular character and style. We always come to things carrying other things: e.g., our memories or unconscious desires. And we always encounter things as humans within a particular world. All of these show that we're a *relational nexus*.

Things are also relational nexuses. In encountering them, new nexuses are formed.

Thus, things stand out for us because of the ongoing processes involved in who we are, but also because of the processes involved in who or what they are. Things call to us because we're open to them, but openness would still be waiting if things didn't stand out. Likewise, things are open for how we stand out and approach them. What we bring to things (habits, character, etc.) doesn't dictate what we notice: it only pre-disposes us to ways of relating. In coming to our attention, particular things align or cut across pre-dispositions.

We notice particular things because of how we are, because of how they are, and because of how we are together. Things call to each other because they are, fundamentally, opening to and leaning toward each other.

2.21 Responsive listeners, because they're engaged with things and their calls, may experience and express things and world in ways that we call 'mythological,' in order to express particular ways of relating. Subsequently, mythologies themselves can become things to which we respond and which can harbour renewed ways of engaging things. Walter Otto is one who seeks to understand how the Homeric mythology was lived. He interprets the mythology in a quasi-phenomenological way (a way of being and experiencing).

Each Homeric god cast different lights and revealed things in different ways (§1.55): e.g., Hermes revealed things differently than Apollo. *"And so in the case of each deity we find anew that it is most intimately bound up with the things of this earth, and yet it never denotes one single facet but is an eternal form of existence in the whole compass of creation."*[108]

While these gods each opened their own sense of world, the latter wasn't somehow hermetically sealed. Rather, gods opened to each other: they even warred amongst each

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[108] Otto, *The Homeric Gods*, p. 162.

other. While Otto tries to downplay the warring side,[109] it's important to see, first, that Plato takes them as warring,[110] and, second, *they certainly did have conflict*: there's no way to have lived 'equally' in the midst of *all* gods since each encompasses the whole; instead, certain gods showed the world in certain ways, and others receded. In this picture, each god encompassed the whole, which never aligned into some greater totality.

We can learn from this mythology, for it shows us something about our existence amidst things that call to us, and the transformative potential in our world. Thales is reported to have said that all things are full of gods.[111] Because these gods are all within the ancient Greek world, and Otto's use of 'world' (§1.55) isn't the same as mine, I'll say for now that the gods reveal *colourations* of the world.

We slight or honour the gods. — We *cannot* honour them *all*. But we *can* cultivate ways of relating to make room for a particular god. Perhaps then we'll catch a glimpse of a colouration of world.

2.22 A good metaphor offers insight that's surprising and enticing.[112]

A metaphor sets things up, as though on a table, in a particular way: the scene is set for a connection to be made.[113] Metaphors—and aphorisms—focus attention, and reveal and release tension in leading us to see the connection, to see the dawning of aspects.

A metaphor doesn't *point* something out exactly, as perhaps an assertion does; a metaphor *shows*.

With a strong metaphor, we *feel* its truth. We feel something is the case by how it hangs together. We're drawn into proximity with it, and if the metaphor is strong enough, we even see how *we're* implicated in it; at times, we set parts of ourselves on the table — we must rearrange ourselves for insight to dawn.

I've placed many things on this table for us to see.

2.23 To be receptive to a call is to be vulnerable; it's to open to letting others move you. Of course, we *are* this inevitable openness to being moved – we *are* this vulnerability through and through. Things have meaning for us *because* we're fragile, where meaning is an arcing across things that are facing and open to one another.

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[109] ibid, p. 250–2. But see, e.g., p. 170.
[110] Plato, "The Republic," Book II, 377A-378C range, p. 199.
[111] Aristotle, fr. 4, in *A Presocratics Reader*, p. 11.
[112] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH45.
[113] Charles Simic, "Notes on Poetry and Philosophy," in *Wonderful Words, Silent Truth: Essays on Poetry and a Memoir* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), p. 64, cited in Zwicky, *W&M*, RH2.

While openness is inevitable, we can adopt various dispositions towards it. We can imagine all kinds of independence and security: we say we're secure, but when this is inevitably challenged by the world, we can get angry, driven by vengefulness, acting violently to, as it were, restore ourselves as secure agents and re-establish our security. We take out violence against the world in response to being violated, and take all sorts of steps to try to guarantee hermeticism. But we're always impinged upon, and these attempts at restoration are, of course, *responses* and so betray notions of independence and security.

To try to seal oneself off reveals a weakness — a vulnerability that tries to deny itself.

Meaning can be violent (§2.1). It's an exchange that points beyond ourselves.

To open to the receptivity of a call is to be vulnerable, but also to be strong. The strength isn't that of stone, but of water or the reed that bends in the wind. Strength faces both the other and the vulnerability at its root. It maintains integrity while opening to the world: adaptable, flexible, patient, and welcoming. These are the values of transformation.

2.24 Let's turn to an obstacle to this kind of openness. People learn, with precise responsivity and vulnerability, how to fit in with glances, gestures, facial expressions, body language, and tone. We learn how to answer, to whom or what and how much, to whom to yield, when, and so on. This regulation never ends — it is re-established, reaffirmed. The investment requires constant energy and attention.

This situation can lead to *ressentiment*, a drive for revenge born in those who've bent in these various ways.[114] This revenge, this weak grasping towards security, is taken out on those who don't bend in the same and 'proper' ways.

There's what I'll call a code of sensations, a patrolling of insights, an adjudicating morality of and for spaces and time. We pass by what calls and addresses itself to us — the trees, the birds, the sunshine. Sociologically, psychologically, and aesthetically, we're blocked by the patrolling of the sensible instilled in us — where the 'sensible' isn't only what is available through our senses, but also that which makes sense.[115]

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[114] Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, ed. Keith Ansell-Pearson, trans. Carol Diethe (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 20, 33, 93–4.

[115] These thoughts—the realm of the sensible and its rupture—are indebted to Rancière, whose politics are discussed in §2.67. Jacques Rancière, *Dis-agreement*, trans. Julie Rose (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1999), p. 28–31, 40, 55, 104; *The Politics of Aesthetics*, trans. Gabriel Rockhill (New York: Continuum, 2009), p. 12, 64; "Ten Theses on Politics," trans. Rachel Bowlby and Davide Panagia, *Theory & Event* 5.3 https://doi.org/10.1353/tae.2001.0028 (2001): par. 20, p. 8–9; Davide Panagia and Jacques Rancière, "Dissenting Words," trans. Davide Panagia, *diacritics* 30.2 (2000): p. 114–6, 124, 125.

Limits can be made explicit through transgression; even minor transgressions are resisted. Some forms of response are governed by law. Others, by custom. There are ways to punish transgressions: ostracization, which operates on many levels, from the gross to the subtle; glances, postures, gestures, conversations; people and behaviour can be labelled furtive, suspicious, odd, weird, crazy, insane. There are responses up to and beyond incarceration; behind symbolic violence lurks possibilities of physical violence.

If this sounds hyperbolic, pay attention to pockets of behaviour, which happen within particular language-games, in particular contexts, in particular institutions, with particular actors and characters. Pay attention to gendered, racialized, classist, marginalized, and normalizing differences of all kinds. I'm drawing our attention to *micro-behaviours*, *micro-gestures*, that codify everyday experience.[116]

There's nothing wrong with micro-gestures *per se*: they aren't avoidable for a species like ours (probably for many species).

Nonetheless, politics, or any transformative project, must contend with micro-gestures and the level of the sensible. Thus, Zwicky's concepts of *this*ness and metaphor are political, for they think around the contours of the everyday fungible experience of things as objects. Transformation is political.

What we need is a 'bravery': to listen and let be, not necessarily to, but in spite of the micro-gestures. We must work around particular micro-gestures when they deny parts of our experience.

2.25 I strive to express myself clearly in this text. Philosophy in the 19th and 20th centuries, in particular, is often difficult to read and relate to. (This difficulty falls on *both* sides of the 'analytic-continental divide.')

With that said, philosophy will always be difficult for common sense because philosophy tries to go against what we take for granted. Thus, some difficulty is unavoidable.

Philosophy should strive to be as clear as it can without giving up on its basic insights.

2.26 The way of seeing I'm aiming at involves stillness, and a holding-to-one-side of overt thoughts, otherwise, those thoughts may pull you away, for they have the traction of their history, ruts, and projections. Stillness can be the first step to opening to openness.

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[116] I suggest we see Rancièrian politics operative on the level of micro-gestures. See §2.67.

Pulling a thing out of general circulation might also pull yourself out of it. Short-circuiting the given circulation is done in the service of a deeper, more respectful attunement. The capitalistic circulation is, on the whole—often and structurally—not a respectful one.

Stillness is an attempt to listen to things.

2.27 Particular things can be re-encountered in a way analogous to the transformation: . Though, to enable the transformation at the level of things enables the transformation at the level of worlds (§2.5): when we notice the thing change, we may not notice that the world that houses it changes as well.

Things become crisper when taken on their own terms. They show more of themselves to the one who's opened and showing themself in turn. This is an *ontological transformation*. (This makes way for an *auto-ontological transformation*, when beings are uncovering their own relations.)

The transformation of the world gets us back in touch with things and how it is for things to be the things they are. Things shine outwards—they radiate from themselves into the rest of the world (§2.7)—like a tuning fork with sympathetic resonance, reverberating through space and time (§2.10) and things.

One metaphysics—which permeates our experience—is questioned by other metaphysics (§2.16).

2.28 What can we learn from things, say, a heron, waves, an arbutus? Not just simple facts. And we don't simply learn new ways to do things. Instead, we can learn ways and styles of being. For all these beings—herons, waves, arbutuses—are responses (§2.20), styles and forms of responses — they are being-responses. The world is a giant vibrating, reverberating arena of conversation.

But they aren't just responses. They're questions (§2.20). They're promises and memories. Beings etch and are etched by temporality and others; they're their temporality through and through. Temporality is a horizon for any being: beings show how time is for them.

Herons that congregate in trees at night are in constant responsiveness with the things around them: night, other herons, nests, trees. They bring with them and bear their whole past. They *are* the passing of each moment *and* the yet to come of the next. Their memories, of which they aren't necessarily consciously aware, are held in the way they hold themselves. Likewise, memories are held in the smoothness of a stone caught in the waves at the shore: the stone is its pasts and its passing past; it carries marks from what it touches, in dialogue with the

transient waves. This arbutus tree carves its past in its corkscrew journey through the sky: its history of responsiveness and inquisitiveness, shedding layers of skin.

These beings don't *carry* promises: they *are* promises. They're promises to be responsive, open and vulnerable, and to persist for a while. Response carries the promise of future response: responding once is opening to response for all time, till one is out of time. Each response opens an endless possibility of revisiting and revising, re-responding to the situation or the response itself. – There is no closure.

"*It is not possible to step twice into the same river.*"[117]

And yet, what we learn from these beings is never something as empty as a *general* response, question, promise, or memory. We learn something that can't be put to words: the particularity of *this* heron, *this* seashore, *this* arbutus.

We learn what it's like for other particularities to be.

2.29 Some beings are more difficult to understand. Is wind a thing? What about air? What kind of beings are these?

The answers we're prepared to give reflect contexts within which they're legible and make sense (language-games, worlds). Facts are constituted as facts by their context.

How we've come to understand phenomena can be changed by phenomena themselves.

The wind can be questioned and investigated, though we must be attentive to our methodologies and style: *how* do we question? How we question reveals an onto-ethical disposition: it reveals what we think something is (even if in broad outline) and also what we think an appropriate approach and engagement with the phenomena could be.

2.30 Empiricism is a methodological and stylistic position that focuses on our senses as sources of our (accurate) ideas. Of course, we need our senses to encounter the world. What I'd like to question are the assumptions that go into an *empirical* observation.

When we sense something, we do so within a context, bound up with sets of practices, institutions, and so on. We never seize upon something just sitting there, unbound from our and its context; this is partly addressed by Heidegger's description of the ready-to-hand and present-at-hand (§2.4). A scientific experiment is a particular way of observing phenomena. It often takes phenomena as isolatable, repeatable, mathematizable, physical, amenable to scientific discourse, and so on.

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[117] Heraclitus, fr. 62, in *A Presocratics Reader*, p. 36.

The best way to observe and engage with a phenomenon can be determined only by a network of concerns: our aims (explicit and implicit), our practices and institutions, our traditions and customs, our conceptual map (i.e., our concepts of what we're observing and how the concepts fit into larger contexts, e.g., of our world), our metaphysics (§2.16), and—most importantly—what the phenomenon itself uniquely demands, to name just a few.

When I ask about wind, I'm implicitly asking about our context, about how we answer such questions. Asking about wind is a call, in part, to put ourselves in question. We put ourselves in question insofar as we ask which answers will satisfy us and why.

When we have a network of concerns in place, we anticipate how things fit. – It's possible for things to question these assumptions.

2.31 Why question wind, why not water, fire, and earth too? The elements — those 'things' that make up all other things.

Raising this question allows us to sense how our questions, historico-culturally, tend to point towards what things have in common as their foundation (the smallest units), and how we've tried to narrow this down to one single, unchanging thing: a constancy meant to explain and underpin diversity; stability meant to explain and underpin change. It's apparent that 'elements,' which reflect a set of metaphysical commitments, are central to our way of thinking and being.

Let's observe the 'elements' again. Let's imagine what it was like for the Presocratics, for example, to think about the elements, before we piled all our understanding onto them. — 'But what's the point of this activity?' — The phenomena may shine through and reveal other facets of themselves.

When we spend time with a friend, new aspects are revealed. We're surprised. — We can't help but be.

Notice, though, that wind, water, fire, earth, too are concepts. We needn't think of these as the discrete entities that we do. We needn't feel as though an instance of fire is a mere particularization or instantiation of a universal, and 'fire,' as atomic definitional essence, explains and underpins it.

'But I don't understand what you're hoping we'll get out of this. Sure, I can go look at a pool of water, or a dirt path, but what am I trying to do?'

Ontological attention is a way of opening to a thing.[118] Opening to a thing is opening to being surprised by it. If we know how things are, then things appear regular and regulated and we notice nothing else, except deviation. The deviation/norm pairing, the subsumption of particulars to generalities or universals, and the lawfulness of nature have informed how nature appears to us.

My call is for a different approach. One part of the method might be imagination (§2.6): imagination can reveal how things touch the world. For example, one could ask how the wind could be otherwise understood: without already *knowing* what wind is, let it tell you *how* it is. Observational imagination can be a receptivity to phenomena.

2.32 Certain expressions can feel as though they're puncturing through language to things themselves (poetic expressions or Zen language). However, an interpretation of this that says we're puncturing through human artifact and reaching the reality of a thing is going too far. Rather, it may feel this way because we're approaching and according more with the thing and avoiding calcified ways of speaking, thinking, and being.

We can pay ontological attention to language and be struck by its *this*ness: words and phrases, yes, but also a particular language or even language itself as phenomenon. When words feel wrong, in some ways it's language itself telling us this. Language comes forth from the world.

We can pay heed and respond to both linguistic and thingly beings, and their ways of being together. This means we can choose *how* we attend to calcified expressions: we pick them up, as though ready-to-hand (§2.4), or see their relations with things *as* calcified and, so, as a sign to return to things themselves.

In returning to things, new expressions and forms of language can emerge. Like when you dip your foot in the water: the fish scatter, and return shortly after, nibbling at the edges.

2.33 There's a difficult point here and it's that our way of being fits the world just so — it fits it as well as any other way does (§1.34–1.35, §1.37). If this is so, how can I argue for a transformation? Why wouldn't we stay with our current ways of being?

Even when calcified ways of being fit the world, they call for a renewed response. (This 'fit' may be more like wearing baggy clothes.) Rather, what calls for a renewed response are things themselves. The slack (§1.37) can be more or less, ranging from a close fit to aspects that don't fit at all.

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[118] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH52, LH55, LH 57–8, LH100.

The call for transformation emerges within our world at a particular juncture: a moment of decision that makes possible particular responses — some of which, like Copernicus's epicycles,[119] seek to patch and maintain current structures; others call for a deeper response.

How we respond is partly based on how our selves are gathered as relational nexuses (§2.20). Our tolerance in being able to stomach calcification, change, or the amount of slack relates to what Nietzsche calls will-to-power. Though our will never starts with us (in an absolute sense), it does pass through us. But, if we're *called* to transformation, we're *ready* on some level.

There is no perfect fit. Ways of being have more to learn and room to improve their responsivities. The sense of things is constantly tested and prodded by things themselves. Ways of being have inconsistencies and *aporias* (e.g., the mind-body problem). There'll always be *aporias* because the world is open in countless ways. It's a question of how we respond to this.

2.34 Many (perhaps most) of our concepts fit together and they (mostly) fit the world.

We generally don't see how such things fit because we think we're at a centre, and don't see how the position we take up is rounded about by a concurrence of pushes and pulls within our world.

We miss our essential *thrownness* in the world, which is never just the moment of our birth, but is how we're constantly thrown into and find ourselves in a world that pre-exists us, including a horizon of meaning.[120] Our thrownness is a constant being-drawn, being-siphoned, and being-propelled onward. Caught in the draw, we think of ourselves as sitting in the midst of calm. We miss that we're in motion amidst a gathering of past senses of interpretations and understandings that carry forward; we're thrown into a stream of group meaning (history and tradition), and yet we think we're acting 'naturally,' 'independently,' 'spontaneously,' or 'freely.' Things are always interpreted within this horizon.

You may scoff at what (erroneously) appears as idealism. You may attempt to point to the real, outside of us, allegedly free from this draw. But kicking a stone as Johnson did ("*I refute it thus*"), albeit in a different context, is no refutation: it's to miss the point.[121] For this gesture, too, reaffirms our thrownness. (Which doesn't mean that our thrownness isn't involved with real entities that exist independently of us.)

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[119] Zwicky, *The Experience of Meaning*, p. 67.
[120] Heidegger, *B&T*, 179/223, 284/330.
[121] James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson LL. D.*, ed. John Wilson Crocker (New York: George Dearborn, 1833), 1763 AETAT. 54, p. 209.

This thrownness is part of the gathering of our world. There are, however, possibilities of re-orientation — it's worth thinking about how this is possible: how the draw isn't totalizing; how there's always a gap, a disjunction, an irreparability.

2.35 If there was a world that *fully* encompassed us, a *real totality*, we could have no distance from it.[122] Because there's no distance, there could be no deviation and so could be no question of ethics and no question of decision. No question of ethics, because our ethicality is our responsivity, which is our responsiveness or our responsibility to things; if our world was a totality, there would be no 'otherwise,' for all would be encompassed. Thus, how we respond would be predelineated — there would be no other and no surprise.[123]

We know things aren't like this. We can speak of worlds, different disclosures, tensions inherent in worlds, and the varying takes on or in the world. However, we can also say that worlds are *like* totalities.

Worlds are like totalities insofar as one can ask what it would be like to be immersed in *this*. Though they trail off or show fragments, they show in these cracks how one could be immersed. They beckon one to consider this possibility: they say, 'Look at things this way.' Worlds appear, at times, as *fragments* of worlds, tatters of world, wisps of world; all worlds are fragmentary and never full totalities.

Thus, we're always inside our world, which is always open to the outside: this is how any world is. The limits are, shall I say, fuzzy. There's no need to doubt that worlds can encounter each other, because the fact is they do: you already catch glimpses of other ways of being from within your way of disclosure.

There isn't a question of fully and authentically experiencing another's way of being. This desire, like the desire to completely disregard it, will lead us astray.

2.36 Trying to see how another form of living sees is fraught with difficulties. There are many dangers: removing agency; trivializing; over-glorifying; understanding or attributing the wrong things, or the right things but in the wrong way; claiming full understanding. As with any phenomenon, some aspects are shown, and some pull away.

The urge may arise to fully and authentically experience another's way: as though one could, with or without leaving behind one's world and metaphysics, fully immerse oneself elsewhere. This is impossible, so one smuggles one's world into the other's or assimilates the other, sets up foreign standards for authenticity from one's own disclosure, and then purports to

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[122] Even those who've (implicitly) tried to maintain one world nonetheless argue for some other 'realm': e.g., the *noumenal*, the real, the outside, the supersensible, beings without being.
[123] This is Heidegger's fantasy for animals (§2.11).

understand the other (even as the other supposedly can't fully access one's own world). One doesn't notice the caricaturizing reduction of the other.

The opposite urge may arise: 'I'm not that; I can't possibly know what it's like. I'll leave it as it is, I'll be as I am, and we shall part ways.'

This opposite urge, like the first one, is over-hasty. While it masquerades as coming from a place of respect, it reveals a different underbelly: laziness, indifference, superiority, rejection, maybe even disgust or hatred. That is, 'I can't possibly understand that way of being, so why bother?' (Huntington's clash of civilizations.[124])

Respect, while letting the other be, is intertwined with listening. Phenomena want to be heard: while sometimes they demand seclusion, often they demand attention. Phenomena continuously show themselves, showing that we haven't got it right (we can always do better).

Here, we encounter the asymptotic limit of truth (§2.14): asymptotic because of the ongoing interplay in the call and response of things. Calls demand response but there's no response that can address all aspects of a call.

No matter how good one thinks one is at listening, phenomena can demand a different focus. They reach out and *demand* listening: the fact of listening, *how*, and to what. There is an ethics of listening: there are better and worse ways. One learns from different ways of being.

It's mysterious how phenomena *demand* attention, especially when they don't 'speak' with human language (§2.20).

2.37 'Are you an idealist?'
I don't think the real is constituted by our minds.

'So, you think there's a real world out there?'
I think that, though the question is poorly formulated, the world is constituted by things that are really there. There is a sense in which things aren't mind-dependent.

'But how can you think this when you seem to subscribe to some kind of divergence theory of truth, i.e., even though you gesture towards asymptotic convergence (§2.14), you multiply worlds?'
You seem to imply that truth is true if and only if it converges on one thing or one fact.

'Why shouldn't truth be restricted in this way?'
Why should it?

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[124] Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?," *Foreign Affairs* 72.3 (1993): p. 22–49.

'Are you a relativist? Relative either to a culture or to the individual? Wouldn't you say that if someone believes something crazy they're entitled to it insofar as it's true *for them*? Doesn't this remove all ability to criticize the practices of others?'

I'm not sure why we need to speak of entitlements, but maybe this will help. Today, I saw an inebriated man treat a rivulet of water as though it were a river. — Would I say that for me it's a rivulet, but for him, his truth, is that it's a river? — No. Because I can inspect the phenomenon; I can examine the rivulet. And then I could, if I wanted, ask others around me. We could discuss the rivulet and the man's reaction. All this evidence would show that he's wrong.

However, we could ask him why he acted that way. Perhaps his shoes have holes in them. Perhaps he was surprised by the rivulet and that surprise played out in his body. Perhaps the context of his inebriation provides reasons. Perhaps there are even reasons that emerge from a differing set of metaphysical assumptions, themselves from a different way of being, a different world.

'So, something may be reasonable *to him*?'
Of course. But it may also turn out that he erred. *Nonetheless*, he acted in a specific way, and the action emerged from a context for him.

'But what if he insists that the rivulet is in fact a river?'
Well, if the point is whether or not I'd concede that this was true for him, I would not, for truth isn't relative to an individual. Truth has to do with opening and responding (corresponding) to phenomena as they unfold into and in relation to our world-horizon. And our world, into which we're thrown, is an intersubjective world: it's always already constituted by (as Heidegger calls it[125]) being-with, that is, by others. We're fundamentally and essentially open: an opening, a clearing.[126] This clearing of being is always open to others (humans, but also others — not just animals or plants, but all others, every or any other thing): Heidegger calls this *ek-sistence*.[127]

Am I a cultural relativist? For I've seemed to admit the existence of other worlds. Well, but first, let's bracket off life worlds (§2.12), which suggest my relativism, if I'm a relativist, is broader than human cultures.

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[125] Heidegger, *B&T*, 118/155.
[126] ibid, 132–3/171; Martin Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," in *Pathmarks*, trans. Frank A. Capuzzi, ed. William McNeill (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 248.
[127] Martin Heidegger, "On the Essence of Truth" in *Pathmarks*, trans. John Sallis, p. 144–5, 147, 150; Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism,'" p. 248–9.

Let's think what we mean by cultural relativist. We may mean that truth is relative to cultures. Or that morality or ethics is relative in this way. We may mean we have no grounds on which to base criticism of another culture's practice.

As a preliminary point, I don't think 'culture' is the right way to think about this. I'd rather speak of *groups* with shared histories, traditions, languages, and so on—i.e., shared *worlds*— because 'groups' touches more directly on the assemblage of beings (whereas 'culture' can mean trappings, ideas, beliefs, or some surface phenomenon). In addition, 'groups' works better for life worlds.

Groups are never immured in themselves—there's no way to transmit an exact meaning generation to generation—and they may be, and often are, geographically dispersed. 'Groups' isn't a locational, but an ontological category: a group, in my sense, is the nexus for a shared world. With that said, we cannot draw strict lines around groups: groups are symbiotic with and open to other groups and things; groups aren't static, stable, or essentializable.

Truth and morality *are* relative to groups in their relations with others because disclosures or worlds are relative to groups. Worlds disclose an onto-ethical (§2.19), metaphysical (§2.16) horizon of understanding (§2.5) and thus of correspondence (§2.14) for truth and ethics. A group provides an arena within which its members *begin* their understanding of truth and ethics. From there, one engages with things themselves.

If that's the case, can we criticize another group's practice? Of course; we do it all the time. What's required, however, is that we acknowledge that this criticism occurs from within a particular disclosure, reaches towards another, and gains its force there, in the relation between the two. However, there's no full understanding, and conveying meaning requires that bridges be built, not once and for all, but constantly each time. One strategy might consist in trying to show an internal contradiction within the group's thinking.[128] Criticism is better or worse, depending on how much of the practice and its context are understood. For *even if* a group has justifications for a practice, borne out by history and traditions, such that the practice makes sense and fits within a larger scheme, it may be that the group's practice doesn't heed phenomena and silences resistance.

To take up the image of the cube again, while the lines may fit the cube, they leave room for slack. The goal of transformation isn't to fully tighten the relations between the cube and the lines: there'll always be slack, but it's a question of what kind. Why will there always be slack? There's no absolutely consistent way to understand all phenomena because phenomena hang together in various ways, they constantly and relationally reveal new aspects of themselves,

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[128] This may be a Rancièrian-inspired strategy. Rancière's theorization of politics will be introduced in §2.67.

we can't (adequately) respond to all that calls us, and we're also always changing. Phenomena and how they're arranged always leave room for gestalt shifts and other ways of seeing.

There is room to change harmful practices, which often come from inattentive relations. Harmful practices come from an urge to speak for someone or something other, to deny that this other can speak, or to ignore them.

Seeing is a practice: it's something we do. And it's something we can work on.

2.38 Because we're immersed in our world and never leave it behind, even while opening to others, we never exceed the limits of our world. Other experiences can occur only within our world.

Thus, we know there are limits to my perspective (not solely visual, but 'situational') insofar as there are other perspectives; limits to my world insofar as there are other worlds; and limits to my being insofar as there are other beings and the possibilities of 'no-world' or 'not-being.' But these limits and how they're conceived are disclosed within my world, even if they shift and expand my world. — There is no neutral position from which to observe them.

'But, then, how can you know about the multitude of divergent views you speak of, if you lack access?'

My enworldedness reveals that other beings are also enworlded: that they have meaningful relations trailing off in various directions. Now, I can't fully know their worlds. My claim that there are other worlds—as with my claim that there are other perspectives (or, more traditionally, other minds)—comes from within my world (my perspective); it's a way to make sense of the phenomena, to approach what's *really* there. While I can know *that* my world 'ends' at a certain point (not a linear point, but a blended, overlapping, fuzzy 'point' that's not really a point but instead occurs at all 'points'), I cannot *directly experience* my world ending. Derrida makes a similar claim regarding death: I cannot directly experience my death. Any imagination of it instantiates a phantasm by which I survive it (i.e., there's always *my* perspective *there*, 'watching' myself after death).[129] – So too, here, I survive, persist, and insist through any projection 'beyond' my world.

Nonetheless, there are better and worse ways to take up this fact, grounded in part in feedback given from things themselves. We must *imagine* what it's like, or rather, what it *is* or

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[129] Jacques Derrida, *The Beast & the Sovereign, Volume II*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), p. 117, 130, 157, 160. See also Sigmund Freud, "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death" in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. XIV, trans. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press Limited, 1957), p. 289: "*It is indeed impossible to imagine our own death; and whenever we attempt to do so we can perceive that we are in fact still present as spectators.*"

could be for the other. Yes, you can never directly experience nor ever know fully—there's no such thing, not even for the being in question—but you can learn in part. As with death, you cannot experience your death 'as such,'[130] but this doesn't mean that it isn't important to interrogate it. Nor can you avoid these transgressions any way (i.e., we cannot avoid thinking about and imagining others, our death, and our limits).

Non-human animals, like death, demarcate a limit for *us* and our worlds. Undoubtedly, something like Morgan's Canon, the directive against anthropomorphizing non-human animals, exists for good reason. There's a problem with a facile transference of too many facets between two contexts just because they have some facets in common. Yet, there are several responses here.

First, the same facile transference that Morgan's Canon is meant to prevent occurs amongst that diversity that we call 'the animal': i.e., *all* non-human animals are presumed to be alike in fundamental ways or, put otherwise, humans are presumed to be utterly unique compared to all other animals (§2.11).

Second, when we notice a commonality, the directive is applied to stop us from assuming that there are further commonalities: e.g., birds chirp and other birds respond, which is similar to what we do with our vocalizations, yet Morgan's Canon says we shouldn't assume that chirping is a form of language. In this way, we maintain anthropocentrism. But how many of the things that we attribute to ourselves, under the concept of 'the human,' do we actually have in the (exclusive) way we think we do?[131]

Third, the directive blinds us to commonalities. We end up erring on the side of difference at the expense of similarities, and so we miss commonalities-in-difference (§1.2, §2.2).

Fourth, just because the directive says one shouldn't attribute some facet to non-human animals doesn't mean a.) they don't have it (either at all or in part), b.) they have its negation or lack, or c.) they're inferior to humans. (There are attributes they have that we wouldn't attribute to ourselves, such as, possibly, magnetoreception.)

This directive is a methodological principle that usefully avoids collapsing difference. But when it's used (even if implicitly), for instance, to question whether non-human animals can feel pain in a way that matters[132]—when it's used to deny non-human animals worlds and to view

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[130] Jacques Derrida, *Aporias*, trans. Thomas Dutoit (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 76.

[131] Derrida asks this question about death as such, the other as such, deception, auto-reference (in deictic terms), and so on. Derrida, *Aporias*, p. 76; Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, p. 94–5, 133–6.

[132] That is, whether they can consciously experience anything, which includes pain, and thus whether their pain has any moral concern for us: Peter Carruthers, "Brute Experience," *The Journal of*

them as outside ethics (§2.11)—we need to ask whether it continues to be the best way to respect difference. Yes, there's a danger in too hastily attributing, but there's the opposing danger in too hastily denying.

Another principle, which we may perhaps do well to heed *in conjunction with its opposite*, might run as follows (though I'm sure others could refine it better):

> Do not withhold attributing commonality without good reason; or, positively put: Assume there is commonality unless you can show more substantial difference.

These principles, taken together (i.e., don't leap quickly into either emphasizing difference or commonality), may act as a prophylactic against our tendency to block imaginative leaps, blocks which restrict better approaches to thinking and imagining.

2.39 When I say that the world offers us feedback (§1.39, §2.38) and that we can sense if our orientation isn't quite right, I'm restating the idea that things demand attention, not just once, for things *are* this demanding of attention. Things demand attention because of the dynamism of their relational web (i.e., how they're situated in our and their world), for various relations tighten and relax, build up and collapse, and are fostered or neglected. Things call because of these differentials (§2.20).

How can things, across worlds, appear in so many ways at once? They appear one way to one group, another to another group, partly because of the differentials situated in relational webs of world. Things appear differently—they *are* different in different disclosures—because of different world-relations.

That is, enworlded beings have certain possibilities open for them based on certain characteristics. For instance, their particular, bodily, perceptual nature. In each case, the relations that an enworlded being has to being as a whole varies. An enworlded being is related to different kinds of beings, each related to other beings, which inform how beings appear for the enworlded being, and vice versa. Relations include histories. Each world-disclosure is a deep set of metaphysical, ontological relations. — As I'll show, we don't need identity at the core of this differential set of relations.

How can things appear in so many, non-convergent ways at once? – Because things are relational.

2.40 'You implore us to ask the water (§1.39), as though it'll somehow tell us if our orientation isn't quite right. But what does this mean? What do we ask it?'

Philosophy, 86.5 (May 1989): p. 258–69, see p. 268. Carruthers argues that non-human animals only have nonconscious experiences which are of no moral concern.

This is precisely the question!

What do we ask it? – That is, we can ask ourselves what we're *already* asking it ('what *do* we ask it?,' i.e., 'what are we already asking it?'). We can also go to water, for instance, and ask: 'What do we ask here?' (What can, what *should* we ask?)

Before any specific question seeking an answer, we should be puzzled by the question itself; we're put into question through encounters. The questions leave marks: '*?*'.

Asking 'What do we ask it' puts our questions and *us* back into question. – *What* do we ask it?

2.41 If we approached phenomena with this kind of questioning attitude, what might, for instance, an animal respond? Well, there's no essence of animals, let alone of *the* animal. And yet, we can say that non-human animals are other ways of being.

Other animals show us ways of being in the world: they show us possibilities for navigating the world; they show us what our orientation could be like if we were in their place — which is a way to see from our place how our orientation could be. — But don't say that all (non-human) animals do is orient themselves to sex, food, predators, shelter, and so on! And it doesn't help to say that these are what, at root, we do too because the problem is the reductive abstraction. While it explains something, it over-generalizes and passes over lived particularities and reduces worlds to externalities. These problems are connected as one.

First, this kind of reductive abstraction draws a connection across diverse ways of being— otter, oyster, orangutan—and lumps variegated behavioural phenomena into a small number of categories (e.g., 'predator'). In doing so, it risks foreclosing on investigation, for one thinks 'what more is there to know about otters? They're like all other animals, aside from some details, which we can now work out' — but the exactitude of the otter's predator isn't a 'detail'! As though you have 'the animal' in the skin of the 'otter' and all the rest falls into place.

Second, world is reduced to externalities. To understand this, let's think about structuralism. Structuralist anthropology, for instance, claimed we could investigate other groups and say, 'here's what *they think* they're doing, but in *reality*, they're doing X' (a similar gesture to Marx, insofar as we distinguish consciousness or ideal superstructures from real material conditions or some other such basis). What this amounts to, then, is the claim that 'we can know from outside, externally, what's *really* going on better than those who are inside.'

While undoubtedly this is a way to think about things and interesting patterns have been observed, this doesn't mean that the 'inside perspective' should be discounted. What we have here, at the very least, are two *contexts* of explanation butting heads: 'don't you see, *this* is

what you are *really* doing?'; 'no, I mean, while that may be interesting, that's *not* what we're *really* doing…the *reason* we do X is because of Y.' In other words, this way of looking at things reduces worlds to externalities: to observations from 'outside.'

My concern is not to think of inside/outside, necessarily. What I'm gesturing to is the disclosure of worlds; this is what I mean by 'contexts.' There's a meaningful horizon within which things make sense, and in anthropological work we see a conflicting and confluence of two such horizons.

And so, in the case of non-human animals, the claim runs analogously: non-human animal worlds are reduced to externalities. People may use as justification here that non-human animals lack language, for without language we seem to have only one context of explanation. And yet, we ask: what is language? Do only humans have it? Why would that be the case? — How do I know that you have language? You use it, you respond to my use of it. Well, when dogs bark back and forth, are they not responding to each other? And are we not, if sensitively attuned to the situation involving the dogs, also drawn into a glimpse of a realm where we could respond to this take on things? Why would a bird chirp if not to be heard?

Language is a way of projecting possibilities into the world that *make sense* (can be sensed) by those properly attuned. Languages are ways of being-together meaningfully, of gesturing towards and meaningfully responding to world and things, even if not in the form or style of a statement or assertion. Likewise, non-human animals' behaviour, which is responsive engagement, shows us the same. Humans show, display, and say how things are for them. So, too, do non-human animals: they show, display, and say—as with humans—'through' their way of being.

There are languages extending in various directions, like so many streams of moss.

The reduction of externalities is related to over-generalization: in not paying attention to the particularity of what's in question in both cases, we miss the phenomena. Our concepts float free.

And yet, generally, I'm also not trying to merely 'give back' to non-human animals a subjectivity we've denied them. This isn't merely addressed, then, by conceiving of non-human animals as, for example, conscious subjects. Instead, I'm questioning a model of subjectivity. This also isn't addressed by conceiving of non-human animals as perspectival centres. Yes, there's a way that they're perspectival centres, but this term would just become another category brushed broadly over all animals (or even over all beings). We need to avoid a complacency and co-option in which other animals are brought into our likeness insofar as they are subjects, perspectival centres, have worlds, and so on: there's a way that other animals are *also not like us*, and this mysteriousness and this gap should reverberate to our core.

Other animals show us a way of being in the world. And yet, this statement isn't sufficient. Not sufficient how? It, too, is insufficiently general, and is simply intended to point us in a better direction.

2.42 In a sense, though, it's true that animals (and other beings) *should* be taken as perspectival centres. It seems obvious that animals have a variety of meaningful relations with things around them based on how they sense things.

Yet, it's also true that animals aren't *reducible* to 'perspectival centres.' First, 'perspectival centre' risks being thought of as a formal, general characteristic that's abstractly applied to or derived from different cases. Just as consciousness is always intentional, so a perspectival centre is always intentional, relational, embedded, enworlded, and directed: it's *particular* in each case, and commonality shouldn't be reduced to sameness. Second, our work is not done when we find this commonality, for we must sit with the vast differences, the abysses, that exist as well. So, animals *are* perspectival centres, but we can't stop there.

The abysses between us and other animals are vast, indescribable, and irreducible. But this is true between all kinds of animals: the abyss from bird to bear, bear to fish, fish to bird. (And, to push the point, are all birds 'birds'? Just how similar are hummingbird and emu, penguin and woodpecker; in both a bodily and an enworlded sense?)

We must ask ourselves anew, how do phenomena present themselves? Try to imagine transposing yourself into a squirrel. How would you do so? What would that be like? Would it just be 'you' *in* or *as* a squirrel? There are innumerable difficulties with questions of access, and we find ourselves pushed away. So, how does the phenomenon, which holistically includes being pushed away, reveal itself? As an ambiguous possibility of access; as an epistemological and abyssal limit.

Animals, some more than others, reveal ways that they come close to us, approach us, share some features with us; yet they also, some more than others, reveal ways that they don't come close, recede, have features we don't understand in their irrevocable difference. — In other words, as with all beings, they reveal and conceal, approach and recede, share and withhold.

Either difference or similarity can be used oppressively. But if, on the other hand, we let non-human animals be the beings they are, then we see that they show us, through similarity and resonance, something other, something *fundamentally* other: they show us a fundamentally different way of being.

It's not hard to see why certain peoples have encountered certain non-human animals as majestic, mythical, and fantastically terrifying beings.

2.43 Animals show us ways of being in the world.

Stones also show ways of being in the world.

'But, surely, now, you're stretching. While the point above may have been that we aren't simply trying to give back to non-human animals a subjectivity, personhood, or perspectival centre, surely this is a big part of your argument: if non-human animals have worlds, it's because they have meaningful relations, which seems to be how you've defined world. We could even grant the possibility to plants, which seem, in some limited sense, to have a 'perspective' and be open to their environment. But with a stone, you've gone too far! A stone has no access and no possibility of meaning: a stone has no openness to world! This *should* be clear!'

Yes, this is how we think. — Heidegger, in his comparative evaluation of world for stones, non-human animals, and humans, dismisses stones from consideration: "*the stone is worldless*":[133] *"No, we reply, we cannot transpose ourselves into a stone [….] It is impossible because the stone as such does not admit of this possibility at all […]."*[134] And *yet*, he also says: *"there are ways and means belonging to human Dasein in which man [sic] never simply regards purely material things, or indeed technical things, as such but rather 'animates' them, as we might somewhat misleadingly put it. […] What is at issue here is […] the distinction between quite different* kinds *of possible* truth.*"*[135] But even with this remarkable aside, he nonetheless tosses the stone aside.

Let's instead tarry with possibilities here. It doesn't seem controversial to state that a stone has a particular way of being: that is, it displays how it is in the world (our world). We come upon a stone and see it, resting in the ditch. The stone *is*; it *exists*. That is, it is a being. The stone *is*, only *as* a stone. — Again, I don't take any of this as controversial.

But, how *is* it for the stone? — We can ask this question. It isn't nonsensical. We can investigate it; we can inquire into how the stone is what it is.

How *is* it for the stone? This stone sits in our world in a particular way. But it's not ultimately dependent on us. Instead, the stone opens and holds open a space within which it can appear. It doesn't just sit there, as a stone, but rather it's in tension with a variety of forces it resists (and we need not posit consciousness for resistance) as it maintains itself. It 'pushes out,' so to speak, against an outside (i.e., it stands firm), which has the consequence of the stone

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[133] Heidegger, *FCM*, p. 185.
[134] ibid, p. 204.
[135] ibid.

maintaining a kind of integrity: a wholeness and distinctness.[136] (The fact that it gains or loses particles, or even chunks, isn't an argument against my claim here, and I'll bracket this concern for now.) We might even be inclined to think in terms of verbs: the stone *stones*. It 'stands out' from its surroundings. It is what it is because it maintains itself as such: it *continues* to *be* what it is. *"Each thing in so far as it is in itself endeavours to persist in its own being."*[137]

In maintaining itself against an outside, and through a cohesion of an inside (§2.20), the stone exhibits the (fuzzy) boundary required for an enworlded being. Enworlded beings inhabit worlds, which are ways that all things are meaningful for them, i.e., all things are meaningfully related or relatable to them; a stone encounters other things on its own terms. This is meaningful not in the sense of meaningful for a subject, but in the fit between stone and others; its ability to encounter others (impact or be impacted by them) means it fits with them on terms set out between it and this other. It's able to encounter others because it's open in advance to others in its own, stony way. Its openness is always an openness to others, both particular others and in general, and thus shares the kind of structure of world-intentionality. The stone is with-others. It exhibits a persistent way of being on its own terms, but also, relationally.

Though I've only brushed the surface of this large question, to which I'll return, we may glimpse why we shouldn't be so quick to deny that stones have worlds.

'But *all* things stand out from their surroundings!'
— In some sense, yes. Things stand out, stand forth, get subsumed or offer resistance. This is the basis that enables them to call to us (§2.20), to penetrate our attention, our realm of sensing.

Note, by the way, that this is *not* an argument for *noumena*. How so?[138] How am I not claiming that things exist outside all disclosures? – Because I'm arguing against thinking that disclosure must be connected with perceptual perspective. Disclosure is a being's openness to other beings. Openness is being open to encounter or being impacted or influenced by the other. Beings precisely *are* as disclosed. Yes, they *are*, for us; but they also *are*, in or for themselves, i.e., in their worlds. They're disclosed, with others, for themselves. Since disclosures happen in a world, there is a world for each being.

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[136] Inspired loosely by Evan Thompson, *Mind in Life: Biology, Phenomenology, and the Sciences of Mind* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 48–9, 64.

[137] Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics*, ed. G.H.R. Parkinson and trans. G.H.R. Parkinson and Andrew Boyle (London: Guernsey Press Co. Ltd., 1989), Prop. VI, Part III, p. 91.

[138] For a different take on the *noumena*, see Eben Hensby, "Kant and Heidegger: The place of truth and the shrinking back of the *noumena*," *Philosophia* 49 (2021): p. 1507–24. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11406-020-00319-x.

2.44 But what about our categories of understanding? For instance, we're the ones who call this a 'stone.' How could we say that the stone has a world if it's merely called this by convention and there are no actual boundaries that correspond to our naming? As Varzi writes: *"On closer look, material objects are just swarms of subatomic particles frantically dancing in an otherwise empty space."*[139] He writes: *"Take this cat, Tibbles [… ;] Tibbles is eating a chunk of tuna […] now it is in Tibbles's mouth: is it part of Tibbles? Will it be part of Tibbles only after some chewing? Only when Tibbles swallows it? Only at the end of the digestive process?"*[140] *"It is true that I had the impression of seeing the shoreline of Long Island from my plane; but it is also true that when you actually go there, ground-level, things look very different […:] an intricate disarray of stones, sand, algae, piers, boardwalks […]."*[141]

Do we just call it 'stone' for pragmatic reasons?

The fact that entities don't have strict delineations, in an ontic sense, doesn't really get to the core of the issue. To return to the discussion from the previous section, a stone that's broken in half, for instance, is now (now becomes) two pieces (or two stones?) that also show us particular ways of being in the world. This would be true of any number of pieces. When the stone is not broken, it coheres into a whole (§2.20).

'But the stone is already in these pieces: this is just what atoms are!'

Atoms show us a way of being in the world. As Koffka writes, *"The whole is something else than the sum of its parts"*:[142] the way of being of an atom is other than that of the stone. While these different levels are *nested*, this doesn't affect my claim. This is also true in the case of, for example, ecosystems: we can travel 'upwards' (in scale) and notice that the berry is nested in the context of its various relations, nested in the context of a particular bush, a forest, and so on: and we can travel 'downward' to the atomic level. This inter-nesting is just part of how the world *is*.

This means that the (sub-)atomic structure of a given thing doesn't affect the thing's way of being (in the sense under discussion).

Ontology is not delineated by convention (§2.4). As I've alluded to above (e.g., §1.86), practices aren't primary. Our practices and conventions don't emerge from a vacuum but from our interactions with things. How things appear is in a dialogic kind of encounter with our practices. This is because, as I've mentioned, things aren't pre-constituted or eternally

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[139] Achille C. Varzi, "Boundaries, Conventions, and Realism," in *Carving Nature at Its Joints: Natural Kinds in Metaphysics and Science*, eds. J.K. Campbell, M. O'Rourke, and M.H. Slater (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2011): p. 129–53, see p. 136.
[140] Varzi, "Boundaries, Conventions, and Realism," p. 140.
[141] ibid, p. 139.
[142] Kurt Koffka, *Principles of Gestalt Psychology* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1935), p. 176.

constituted things (present-at-hand) but are bound up with how we engage them (ready-to-hand), which has to do with our understanding and interpretation of *Dasein* (of our own being and of Being itself) (§2.4–2.5). Thus, the appearance of things and the horizon of our practices are both grounded in an ontology. Beings are the beings they are as revealed through practice or engagement, and practice can take up beings only as the beings they are. Beings can also call out to be taken differently.

Therefore, first, the argument of scale misses that entities on different (nested) levels still have ways of being and, second, convention doesn't precede ontology. The fact that a stone appears to us as a thing doesn't mean we've made this up; its appearance as a thing is made possible by *its appearance* (where 'appearance' is, to emphasize, *not* an illusion, but how it shows up for us), i.e., by its way of being.

Furthermore, language and concepts are bound up with things and aren't merely conventional or artificial modes we impose upon reality. As practiced, languages reveal a deep engagement, a deep entanglement, with the world. Our categories are enmeshed with phenomenal appearances: they enable or hinder, reveal or disavow, certain relations. Language is part of how things are gathered.

— Philosophy is concerned with this gathering and, thus, with language and concepts. It's concerned with precision, the criterion for which can emerge only from its activities. – To be careful with language is to be concerned with how one is in the world.

2.45 Gatherings are wholes insofar as they gather all things orbitally: a world is a *gathering*, a relational *nexus*. Meaning emerges from the particular arrangements and arrays, from the gaps, spaces, and proximities of one thing to the next.

In a different gathering, things are rearranged; the relational nexus shifts and pulls in different ways: there's a different set of resonances, orbitration, and solar system—which isn't to say that all things revolve around a central spot akin to the sun; a solar system is situated within a vaster, more complex system, even when things *seem* to revolve around a centre.

If all things are gathered orbitally in a relational nexus within a world, it's also true that things themselves exert their own gravitational push-and-pull: things are, on their own, exerting themselves to likewise gather things around themselves orbitally (and, from their 'perspective,' they do — which is *their* world). Thus, we can, so to speak, observe interference patterns between worlds.

'Ah, so the other solar system over there would be oriented like ours.' — The metaphor doesn't *quite* work, for it's not as though *here* is one gathering and *there* is another and they're all laid out in one space. Rather, gatherings are overlapping: things are *simultaneously*

differently organized such that they conflict with—or harmonize with or question—one another.

While we can *experience* interference patterns, we can't ever *simply* travel to other solar systems.

Therefore, the wholes—never totalities—trail off, so to speak. They reveal cracks, divergences, re-organizations — all ultimately non-totalizable.

Love is the feeling when we see how things are, or can be, gathered around some thing. We see that thing at the (or a) centre: *this* thing (§2.7).[143] We let ourselves be drawn into its way of standing forth in the world, maybe catching a glimpse of a tear in ours.

— The centre cannot hold,[144] for it cannot remain both central to and exempt from the gathering (the centre outside the system; §1.98). The centre cannot remain as centre: it collapses for it's internal to the gathering, which is itself always part of a larger (dis)array of, and thus decentring by, other gatherings.[145]

2.46 As Heidegger points out, we don't encounter being anywhere except 'as' beings; and we don't encounter beings anywhere except 'as' *this* stone, *this* stream, *this* deer, and so on. This isn't due to some limitation on our part: it's because this is how these 'concepts' '*are*.' – Being '*is*' a hinge of what is common between worlds.

To feel the *stoniness* of the stone (§1.43) isn't simply to feel the stone as it rests in your hand in your world; it's to feel how *the world of the stone is stony*. The stoniness of the stone is the way of being of the stone, which is the way of the stone's *world*. This is how it opens to things as a stone: its world is stony. The stone sits on a path, and this path is encountered stonily by the stone; the stone rolls into a root, and rolling and root are both encountered stonily by the stone.

The world as stony is also un-stony, for this stone stonily encounters things that aren't in the way of being of a stone. Such encounters (possible or actual) are what determine the stoniness of the stone. To feel the stone's stoniness is thus also to feel its un-stoniness; how it would never, could never, make or encounter everything stony. This is what allows it to be stony.

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[143] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH52, LH54–5, LH57.
[144] William Butler Yeats, "The Second Coming," in *Anthology of Twentieth-Century British and Irish Poetry*, ed. Keith Tuma (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), line 3, p. 40.
[145] Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," p. 915–6.

In this way, we *are* and *are not* how we are (§1.42). Ways of being are metaphoric, crossing-over, for they always cross over towards other ways of being. Everything we encounter is both like and unlike us.

2.47 Why do I use the ? Because it tries to subvert rigid structure or structuralism—which either take the cube as exclusively one of its projections or reduce it to a series of lines—by showing other possibilities internal to a given picture. And it shows a way of moving, a dynamism. That is, it subverts rigid or universal structure with metaphoric 'structure.' It isn't the naked truth upon which group interpretations and understandings are lain. It, too, is a metaphor: a metaphor for metaphors (§2.2). It's like Wittgenstein's ladder (§1.47): it tries to do the impossible.

"6.54 My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he [sic] has used them—as steps—to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.)
"He must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the world aright."[146]

Wittgenstein's ladder comes in the penultimate subsection of the *Tractatus*, prepared for by definite steps. Ultimately, however, neither the cube nor the ladder, despite Wittgenstein's claims for the latter, lead to a *higher* place to "*see the world aright*",[147] nor can we simply throw them away; rather, they can lead only sideways or in a circle; they're caught in the gust of a historic throw, an inescapable whirlwind of context, from within a particular disclosure. There are certain definite steps, which we can trace through the history of our tradition and philosophy, that lead to the possibility of their use and understanding. Nobody can climb out of this, or beyond themselves. Additionally, if they've led us to see something, these steps stay with us, for they've shown us something from a particular angle.

I want the cube to be 'enfolded' back upon itself. What would this mean? The cube, and images like it, try to express the inexpressible. The cube tries to point outside its particular disclosure while acknowledging it cannot do so: it tries, impossibly, to acknowledge its own limits. And yet, there's something responsible about the attempt, despite the impossibility of success.

Nothing that matters is guaranteed. Ethics precisely emerges from the impossibility of doing justice—responding adequately or sufficiently—to the situation. Nonetheless, we cannot but respond, for we can't forsake ethics. It's a question of whether we do a good job or not even though we never guarantee that we've adequately responded to what phenomena demand.

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[146] Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, §6.54, p. 89.
[147] ibid.

2.48 Poetic thinking, thinking rooted in metaphoric structure, can see things differently. Not poetry as a literary form. Poetry can be, but needn't be, poetic; just as the poetic can be, but needn't be, poetry. (It follows that not all poetry is poetic.)

Poetic thinking is differently attentive, as though it tugs loose strands woven through the world to reveal other patterns, other connections. Poetic thinking thinks in leaps.

This thinking responds differently, letting beings appear as the beings they are: not grounded in the general circulation, it interrupts this circulation through the unexpected, through surprise, through drawing together various axes of resonance for us, and finds patterns that aren't necessarily unilateral or linear.[148]

This style of thinking emerges from an experience of the world. It challenges and bends language to resonate with the experience. And it challenges the reader to respond to the provocation to see things like this; but to see things like this, you can't see things the way you usually do.

2.49 'You've discussed the case of an inebriated man who mistook rivulet for river (§2.37). But what about other related cases? What about the person who thinks that reality, at a deep level, isn't as it seems in experience? For instance, what could we say if someone insists that we're just brains in a vat and all appearances are illusory? Or we're brains in a lab and appearances are electrochemically induced by scientists, or aliens? Or we're hallucinating or dreaming — we'll wake up and realize that we're actually in a padded room, in a computer simulation, or we're about to die and this is our life flashing before our eyes? — In other words, what about all-encompassing cases? Doesn't your thinking lead to the need to accept these as true or legitimate, for like the poet (§2.48) they all say, "see things like this"?'

How do you know you're not a brain in a vat, a madman hallucinating, or someone whose life is flashing before their eyes? — Well, but why would it matter? *This* is the set of phenomena you experience; *this* is the world within which you live.

'But how can you be happy with that? What about reality?'

This *is* real. We're really experiencing this.

'Well, but isn't the reality of one who believes they're seeing their life flash before their eyes informed by this belief? Based on what you've said so far, how would you deny that this view is a legitimate one?'

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[148] See Zwicky on uni- vs polydimensionality, axes of resonance, and integrity: *Lyric Philosophy*, LH3–6, LH172, LH181, LH195, LH234, LH239.

— Yes, their reality would be constituted in large part by such beliefs.

How would I deny these beliefs? – They don't gain purchase or traction in our experience. Sure, they're *possible*…but what do we mean by possibility, here?

'But the same could be said for beliefs from other groups! Why should we take seriously other beliefs as viable if you won't take *these* ways of seeing as viable?'

Viability has to do with responsiveness to our situatedness. We say: Could this be true? If so, how? How, phenomenologically, could these odd 'beliefs' be true? How would it be to see things this way?

Group beliefs emerge from an ongoing dialogic encounter with phenomena, and so emerge as responses to what is. Sure, the strange philosophical thought-experiments—*our* society's neuroses—are responses, though caught up in the metaphysics of sensory uncertainty/rational certainty, and fallenness/enlightenment. But how, phenomenologically, *could* these be true? If, precisely, we doubt our lived, bodily existence; if we assume some totalizing deception based on possibility and doubt. But how can we phenomenologically doubt our very phenomenology? Through universalizing particular moments of illusion or error, thereby reducing experience itself to a form of localized moment, i.e., through substituting the continuousness of experience with moments of error or, in other words, through self-refuting reductionism, reducing one's experience to the experience of an error, to the error of experience.[149]

'Well, but of course, these *could* be true. They say, "Look at things this way" and reorient the totality, just as, for example, Augustine's view does: *"And to all things which stood around the portals of my flesh I said, 'Tell me of my God. You are not he, but tell me something of him.' Then they lifted up their mighty voices and cried, 'He made us.'"*[150] How are you going to say these views are wrong?'

Here, we get to the core of the issue: what are the criteria for better and worse, for right and wrong, for true and false, if we accept my position? If I say criteria are contextual, how do we make a decision here?

One of the criteria is what best accommodates the phenomena, for our positions are always responses to what is. There are cases in which several positions could equally well explain the phenomena. In such cases, we can learn from these other positions. Perhaps we'll learn that these positions are unequal in terms of investments or commitments they demand (e.g., other claims they entail). Or, perhaps we won't, and any position will do.

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[149] None of this is meant to deny possible heuristic benefits of such thought-experiments.

[150] Saint Augustine, *The Confessions*, trans. Maria Boulding (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), Book X, p. 202–3.

What about Augustine's position: a convergence theory of truth based on a distinction between creator and creation, where all things point to God but are not him. I've been offering an alternate view, which, in part, has to do with not seeing how creation/creator or a convergence theory of truth fit the phenomena. Do we experience that the horizon of meaning of the world is a harmonious one (e.g., creator God) or is the world a series of, at times harmonious and at times conflicting, forces (e.g., the gods war amongst each other)? Do all things point to a single creator, or do things stand forth in their being and spin off into their own constellations? Are things created and derive their sense from the creator (the centre outside the system; §1.98), or do things derive their sense immanently? If the this-worldly is held together by the this-worldly, what need have we for the other-worldly?[151]

We must be strong enough to face our situation without recourse to an everlasting entity, since there's nothing in our experience that points to this. We may be *inclined to want* an everlasting guarantee—an immortal soul, the promise of morality and progress, an omniscient all-seeing confessor and bestower of rewards, an omnipresent accounting, as found in the One True God—but this inclination reveals more about our disposition: *viz.*, that we can't face up to our situation without it. A respectful stance, then—one that respects the phenomena— is a *strong* stance: it requires strength of spirit to face phenomena.

If my claims about the variety of worlds go through (contemporaneous and historical human, non-human animal, plant, stone, and thingly worlds), then we should agree that there is no über-world that encapsulates these other ones (§2.35), i.e., that harmonizes or acts as a convergence 'behind the scenes,' for such a postulate would extend beyond phenomenological experience.

2.50 Now and then, someone will say, 'now we've found the real basis' — which is a form of 'colonizing logic.' — Such a statement presupposes several things. It presupposes that 'we' have found the real with knowledge that cuts through illusion. It says, 'what *you* thought was illusory' and negates the experience of an other, typically, of another group.

'But what if we *have* found the basis? It's not then respectful to pretend we haven't!'

What does this mean? That we've found *the* way to look at things? How can that claim even make sense? Perhaps the claim emerges when, for example, we've found the cure for a disease. Do we not then say that we've used our science and knowledge of the real to make the discovery? Well, but, neither the cure nor the disease are context-free. And we needn't suppose that we've tapped into 'the (singular) real' to make this discovery: rather, connections were made, and this enabled a certain structure of meaning, through which we were able to uncover a cure. This doesn't mean that there aren't other ways of looking at and encountering phenomena.

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[151] This 'other-worldly' should be understood as the heavenly or eternal realm.

Let's take up Maslow's hierarchy of needs, setting aside its accuracy, to criticize a general and related way of thinking. Physiological and safety needs are placed on the bottom and each need must be secured for a person to be able to move on to the next.[152] It's clearly a universal developmental hierarchy[153] that's often seen as deferring ethics, art, spirituality, and so on until later. It assumes that underneath culture, we're all biological beings.[154] But why think this way? What sense is there in making claims about us 'under' or separate from our culture or group? What kind of operation must be done to perceive us this way?

Well, the response is that we see the truth of this in the deprived and poor who are reduced to 'bare life.' – But there are unwarranted assumptions here. There's no natural way to engage with the world opposed to an artificial/group way. Displaced peoples continue to carry with them group-based structures of meaning from their place of dispersal. Sure, practices change: radically new situations demand radically new engagement. Yet, we always approach things in particular ways: in metaphysical, enworlded ways.

People in these situations aren't devoid of ethics, art, and spirituality (later stages in the hierarchy). We're ethical beings, always responding to our situation, at times better than at others. If we steal food because we're starving, there's a particular context within which that theft takes place.

Our ethicality, our artistry, our spirituality — these aren't superficial qualities added to base biology; rather, they well up from our deepest recesses. They're fundamental ways of understanding our situation: hunger, for instance. They're ever-present modes of being-in-the-world, but not in the way we tend to think them: not as universalist Kantian or utilitarian ethics, or detached aesthetics, or pious spiritual pomp and circumstance. But, rather, as an opening to ethics (to response; which is always about asymptotically approaching beings in their situation in the world; §2.14), an opening to artistry (to *alternate* response; a creative reassembling of meaning-arrangements in alternate displays), an opening to spirituality (to *'passive'* response; swept up in meaningful arrangements, noticing the reverberating, resonating of things deeply rooted in their web of relations).[155]

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[152] A.H. Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," *Psychological Review* 50 (1943): p. 370–96. See p. 375; this is the case even if by 'securing' a need, we mean partial, percent-wise 'securing': "*For instance, if I may assign arbitrary figures for the sake of illustration, it is as if the average citizen is satisfied perhaps 85 per cent in his [sic] physiological needs, 70 per cent in his safety needs, 50 per cent in his love needs, 40 per cent in his self-esteem needs, and 10 per cent in this self-actualization needs*" (p. 388–9).
[153] Which, undoubtedly, admits of some exceptions. See p. 386–9.
[154] P. 370. More precisely, for Maslow, we're all unconscious beings, but unconscious motivators are primarily rooted in biology: see p. 370, 373–4, 389.
[155] None of this denies the importance of physiological and security needs.

The type of claim in Maslow's hierarchy is reductionist. It insists on its meaning above all others and has real consequences, in, for example, how something like structural adjustment plans are conceived. It prepares the ground for ongoing colonizing activity.

'But you haven't foreclosed on the universality of claims that purport to reach the real basis of things; you've merely argued against the particular claims of Maslow's hierarchy.'

Reductionism, in this kind of case—i.e., 'now we've found the real basis'—creates a world in which a distinction is made across the board between reality and illusion, after which zealots for this reality emerge. — As a particular way of responding to things, it's one that denies and flattens the phenomena.

2.51 What the gestures to (including *how* it gestures) is more primordial than Being.

Heidegger opens our thinking to our openness to Being. He shows how dominant modes of thought emerged from decisions made by the Presocratics in differentiating Being and beings. This originary difference subsequently became concealed.[156] For Heidegger, there's a quasi-teleological playing out of possibilities through the history of metaphysics until we arrive at its culmination in Nietzsche, where metaphysics is understood by Heidegger as the gradual forgetting of Being and the taking of Being as *a* being: through its various epochs, Being conceals and then reveals itself as this or that being.

For Heidegger, then, the meaning of the question of Being—the task for which *Being and Time* is a preparation, and the task that follows him throughout his life—needs to be revived or uncovered. This is done through a *destruktion* of metaphysics[157] to reveal the unthought in it: the originary difference that becomes concealed as it positivizes itself (the difference collapses and Being becomes a being).

For numerous reasons, in *Being and Time*, the path towards the question of Being works through rethinking what the being of humans is: i.e., *Dasein*, that is, being-in-the-world.[158] *Dasein*, there-being, is the clearing,[159] the opening to and of world, to and of Being. This, for Heidegger, is reserved exclusively for humans. Thus, for Heidegger, *Dasein* leaps into beings and forgets the more primordial question of Being. Yet, in engaging with and turning towards beings, we already have an implicit understanding of Being.[160]

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[156] For instance, in how we understand truth and essences. See Martin Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), p. 50–1, 73; Martin Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking?*, trans. J. Glenn Gray (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2004), p. 152, 222–4, 227, 242; Heidegger, "On the Essence of Truth," p. 153.
[157] Heidegger, *B&T*, 19–27/41–9.
[158] ibid, 191/235.
[159] ibid, 132–3/171; Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," p. 248.
[160] Heidegger, *B&T*, 5/25.

When Heidegger speaks of the importance of returning to the question of the meaning of Being, he does so within a particular, historical tradition. The thinking of Being derives its sense from within this tradition. This doesn't mean it's insular to that tradition, but it means that the way Being is thought makes sense only in the context of that tradition: for example, one first needs to think of beings as beings; i.e., things need to have revealed themselves *as* beings. Heidegger's intervention is important: he opens the Western tradition in many key ways, but this doesn't mean that, outside the tradition, thinking through Being is necessary, advisable, or even possible. To insist on the thought of Being as the most 'real' thought, the most basic, is to reassert a colonizing logic. There's no superiority in thinking the question of Being, for it emerges as a particular response to a particular set of problems.

We can create signs to remind or indicate to ourselves that the thought of Being emerges from within our tradition. One way to do this (which isn't why Heidegger did it) may be to cross out Being: ~~Being~~. This gesture, however, is insufficient: not only because of the confusion over my use versus Heidegger's use, but also and relatedly because with time such signs become forgotten and altered. There is no monument that can concretize its own meaning: there is no letter that can guarantee the delivery of a set meaning. We cannot guarantee or secure transmission of an insight.

It's part of our ethical response to heed an insight, an utterance, in the most responsive way we can.

In his discussion of Being, Heidegger works through the hermeneutic circle. This circle describes the movement of understanding: the understanding of any given thing is bound up with our understanding of its being, the world in which it is, *Dasein*, and Being ('in general') (§2.4–2.5): "*Things bear world. World grants things*"[161] (§2.5). The mutual openness of world and things passes through our understanding of *Dasein*, the being that we ourselves are (in terms of our openness to beings and how such an openness gets construed in history, tradition, projects, and so on). How we understand Being—how Being is revealed to us—is bound up with how we understand beings, world, and ourselves, where 'understanding' is never purely intellectual, but has to do with how we are in the world. We are 'within' a relational nexus (we *are* a relational nexus) that is always revealing its own dynamic shifts, tensions, and stops and starts. – The is an expedient I've used to indicate, in part, this hermeneutic ontology.

So, departing from Heidegger, how is the more primordial than Being? For it seems as though the cube—because the cube *is*, i.e., it *is* in *being*—must be bound up within the relational nexus of the meaning of Being, i.e., due to the hermeneutic circle, *within* our world.

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[161] Heidegger, "Language," *Poetry, Language, Thought*, p. 199.

The cube shares a structure with metaphor. Metaphors (§2.2) bring two (or more) things together on the hinge of what is common before releasing each to their own context, prioritizing neither similarity nor difference. This relational, resonant, and respectful process is at the heart of the ⬔. Not only is the cube itself, as used throughout my writing here, a metaphor, but it also *shows* the metaphoric relation (§2.47): the two contexts, the two projections, are together and yet distinct. —— This is the relation at the heart of Being.

Being 'is' a dynamic process of shifting and transformation. Beings relate to each other metaphorically: when beings encounter, they come together on the hinge of what is common between them: this is a kind of dialogue. The leaf that falls to the ground is both open and closed to the wind, to the ground, to the one who sees it.

Furthermore, I claim that Being opens in different ways, in and as different worlds: as different *Beings*. The difference at the heart of Being isn't only between being and being, or, as Heidegger argues, between Being and beings, it's primarily between Being and Being. This is how we have different worlds and different ontologies (§2.4). It's as though different Beings leap from a platform. Being 'is' and 'is not' itself. Being metaphorizes itself, but let's say that it *metaphorically 'is' itself*: that is, the disclosure happens differently everywhere in a 'fundamentally' non-'fundamental,' divergent sense—leaving space or room for encounters—and, *for us*, in our world or disclosure, this disclosure reveals itself as 'Being.'

Thus, the cube is bound up within a world, within a disclosure of Being. Yet, it *shows* that Being ought to be thought by way of, is characterized as, and is always already subsumed entirely by *metaphoric ontology*. The 'structure' (the 'release') of Being is metaphoric.

And yet, Being is not the fundament. 'Being' is how—what shall we call it – the mystery? the disclosure?—the disclosure discloses itself. When I say that it "metaphorically 'is' itself," "is" is a verb: Being metaphorically ''is' being, continually' itself. Being 'is' being itself (but not necessarily *as* 'Being'). But there's no core, no thing, no actual platform, no singular Being or way of Being, that metaphorizes: there's only metaphorizing. (Which provides another possible justification for the use of '~~Being~~.') Metaphoric events transpire and then there are worlds, one of which enables the thought of 'Being'; 'Being' is the theorization of this event from within a world.

'Is this all just a game with words? Or are you purporting to describe something that's *real*?' – Words are caught in the same play as other beings, thrown and released, drawn and concealed. – There's no way out. There's no outside. 'It' metaphorizes. 'It' metaphorizes Being, for us. What's real is that Beings 'are' and beings are: ⬔ .

'You're doing metaphysics!'

— And? I never said I was opposed to this. Actually, I don't think we or anyone can avoid this. The goal is to do metaphysics and philosophy in a way that's more responsive to our experience, and that gives more credence to our actual experience of things and world. (And what do you mean by 'metaphysics,' anyway? Certainly, you don't mean it in Heidegger's sense of the forgetting of Being!)

Let's put it this way. Every throw of Being, every disclosure of Being, reveals different relations. Here, as always, I speak from within my world. I speak of other throws and disclosures of 'Being,' and I said 'Being metaphorizes itself,' which show how I'm still using the vocabulary of 'Being.' *For us*, worlds appear as other disclosures of Being. This is metaphoric ontology. One sees things *this* way, or one sees them *that* way.

But let's return briefly to the Heideggerian issue of the *human* exclusivity of world and Being. For him, only *Dasein*, i.e., humans, open to world. This openness is closed to non-human animals (and certainly to stones).[162]

Heidegger, who thought humans and much more so profoundly, was lacking in his thinking of non-human beings, including animals. This isn't a problem merely at the edges of his, and our, thought, but permeates it through and through, for not only is his overt thematic treatment of non-human animals poor, but also his thinking of humans needs revision. If none of world, language, understanding, interpretation, attunement, meaning, or being-with are limited to humans, if Being 'is' not exclusively open to and for humans, if so many of his concepts aren't restricted to humans (which doesn't entail that they apply in the *same* way to all others as well), then much needs rethinking. For his key terms can no longer be framed in a binary way: 'on' for humans, 'off' for non-human animals.

We need to rethink those sites where Heidegger privileges humans and rethink them as they apply to non-human animals or plants: for example, being-with (being structurally open to other beings) is an ontological structure belonging to many beings. In short, a metaphoric ontology requires us to refine, diversify, and rethink Heidegger's key terms and assumptions.

2.52 To let metaphoric ontology affect our customary metaphysical habits requires that we be careful with how we understand the metaphoric structure of worlds.

For Zwicky, reductionism is partly the impulse and attempt to arrest the movement of a metaphor; instead of allowing two contexts to meet before being released each to each,

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[162] Despite Heidegger's provisos. Heidegger, *FCM*, e.g., p. 194, 211.

reductionism tries to pin down what is common between the two contexts: it tries to hypostatize what is common and treat it as "*basic metaphysical* stuff."[163] Reductionism tries to prioritize similarity over difference, which it takes as sameness or identity or objective reality.

We're adopting a reductionist framework if we insist that the cube is just a series of lines that creates an illusion of projection; if we insist on the priority of what the two projections have in common, we reduce the phenomena to similarity and deny difference. We thus guarantee and ground sameness and identity by neglecting the true phenomenal appearance, for the cube is actually *both* of its projections.

The cube metaphorically gestures to the way that Being 'is' disclosed: Being opens in different ways, like the cube that projects in two ways. When I claimed above that Being metaphorizes itself, it's reductionist to take Being as a basic metaphysical 'thing.' There's *no* fundamental Being disclosed in different ways. Rather, there's '*fundamentally*' difference and divergence. Within every 'is' whispers an 'is not.' – There are different disclosures disclosing themselves. Disclosures disclose other disclosures, but never reconcile.

Let's approach this problem from a different angle, and take a tree as an example. This tree can be approached in many ways. It shows different aspects to a biologist in the woods than to a physicist. A gardener sees it differently. And yet, these ways of approaching it are unified in its basic sense for us. However, it could also be encountered by someone in another world as an abode for spirits.

The reductionist move, which flattens the phenomena of the cube and takes it as a series of lines, would be to take the tree's similarity across worlds as indicative of a sameness. I'm taking 'this tree' as phenomenally appearing within different disclosures without grounding it in an objective, universal fundament. In fact, its appearing in one world is internally related to its appearing in other worlds. In other words, this tree could not *be* if it weren't also the possibility of being taken up differently. It 'is' and 'is not' 'this tree.'

The metaphoric structure of things means a being flashes into different ontologies—divergent Beings—which themselves flash out over all beings. In these different worlds, the thingness of the thing—e.g., that it *is* a tree—is up for grabs; it need not be individuated/ontologized *as* a thing in the way it is in our world (§2.5).

Instead of seeking an *essence* to the thing—a point at which to arrest all movement—we should instead see that the tree *gives* aspects differently and relationally in different

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[163] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH80. 'Hypostatization' is also a term used by from Zwicky: e.g., see *W&M*, LH62.

disclosures and thus becomes different: for, in a disclosure, the tree *is* the aspects given. Several wholes occupy—not the *same* space—space in common, temporarily (§2.10).[164]

A more sensitive type and style of response would seek not to identify or determine the foundations of things or worlds (e.g., what they *really* are), but would *attend* to things, to fit or resonate with the thing in question.

Metaphoric ontology speaks to the similarity and reverberations amongst things, but holds tight to their difference: to collapse difference is to enact a different kind of violence, borne from inattentiveness.

Nonetheless, things *always* resist their gathering: this is why the lines are always slack; this is why we can be pierced by *thisness*. Things call out to us, plead with us, to accept the display of other aspects. Attentiveness is to see that our concepts, our language, our perceptions and the gathering itself, aren't perfect — and could never be. — There are cracks through which all things bleed and grow.

— — Any explanation is held in place by its context of relations, which includes *this* explanation.
— I want the snake to eat its tail, but it cannot.

2.53 'How can there be better or worse ways of being responsive?'

What could we mean by 'progress'?

'To approach the truth of the situation. To get closer to how we should be.'

Well, in that case, I accept progress and it seems to align with Zwicky's definition of truth (§2.14): *"the asymptotic limit of sensitive attempts to be responsible to our actual experience of the world."*[165] Yet, I also accept that we don't all have the same experience of the world.

'But there's that relativism again. 'Progress' should capture a sense of movement and gain: it speaks to moving along a particular, better path.'

Yes, progress requires a criterion.

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[164] Understanding a successful metaphor (a key component of wisdom for Zwicky) *"has to do with the grasp of wholes that occupy the same space, yet are different"*; *W&M*, LH93. However, even the spaces that each disclosure discloses aren't the *same*, but diverge while sharing commonalities.
[165] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH102.

'And the criterion is technological advance, scientific discovery, or some such thing! You can't, in good faith, think that people who didn't even invent the wheel, for instance, are as advanced as us.'

— But what, really, is the wheel *for*?

Criteria—for 'progress,' arguments, and so on—don't extend outside their context and disclosure.

'If this is what you think, how could there be better and worse? How can your account differentiate between practices from other disclosures? For it's not simply that facts are in dispute; the basis for discussion isn't agreed upon! So, someone could come back and say that they pay attention to the phenomena in exactly the way you've described (e.g., §2.49): it's just a matter of a different way of seeing the world, and their way is just as legitimate as the other. How then can you differentiate? – What you need in order to distinguish is precisely what you've denied yourself: a criterion outside of various disclosures. Or, at least, a criterion from within a disclosure that can mediate other disclosures.'

There is an openness to encounter before any encounter. This is an opening from my being to other beings: being-with. This prior openness is a deep affirmation, a deep resonance between my being and others. It's an affirmation because it says 'Yes' to come what may: my being turns openly, affirmatively and in acknowledgement, towards all possible others.

From this openness, I enact a subsequent choice towards overall situations (though it may not be conscious but merely a reaction): I open and affirm *again*, or I close off and try to deny. The latter is *ressentiment*.[166]

Finally, there's an openness to responding to both our own responsiveness and the thing in question. Belonging to any responsiveness is a prior responding. We, therefore, have the opportunity to triply affirm phenomena.

Things can demand attention, and they can demand how that attention is to take form. From one perspective, this demand is antagonistic; from another, it's soothing. If you sense the call, you can either turn towards or away from it: you respect or slight it. But, let's disambiguate a term, for either way, you respect it. You respect the call insofar as you're an opening to it and it's able to appear; then, you respect it further (do it honour, so to speak) by turning towards it, or you slight it by turning away.

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[166] *Ressentiment*, though presented as denial, works by secret affirmation, along byways traced out by Nietzsche: *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 84–9.

All of this gestures to a way to evaluate claims. — Are they true to one's experience? – Do they triply affirm, triply respect, the phenomena? While we must slight some phenomena, we can do so respectfully. – Respect: not simply as a host welcoming a guest in, but also as a guest who needs to be welcomed in. We are both guest and host. – The house of being is not in us, not dependent on us: rather, we offer being(s) a kind of house: a place to gather. This doesn't mean they need us; we, like all beings, offer a crack through which others can shine. – Likewise, things gather us — they offer a place for us to be gathered and shine. Being is a multivariate fractured shining that doesn't depend on us. It traverses beings in resonant relations.

Therefore, a general ethical stance is one of respect. For one couldn't be without the world: the world and its things give a place to be.

None of this means that one must or should simply accept everything. Some things don't offer fruitful resonance. Some things or practices don't seem to fit. Some responses aren't respectful. Some practices are limiting.

Mass destruction is not respectful. Some ways of being occlude other ways; they deny them (i.e., they don't allow them to be, and deny that they even could exist). To think that your way is the only right way is to deny phenomena. To think that technological-capitalistic thinking can resolve our problems is to deny phenomena and perpetrate mass destruction: it occludes resonances and the possibilities of re-finding them. Yes, all ways occlude others— necessarily—but it's a question of greater or lesser violence, and the style of our respect and response. A good balance, as Zwicky puts it, is to "*allow communities of non-humans to shape us at least as much or more than we shape them.*"[167] Thus, we should be wary of *ressentiment* and metaphysics that overlook phenomena or resonant ecologies.

— But does this principle of respect reach outside all disclosures? ——— It *is* the basis of disclosures themselves. *How* it's understood is part of a disclosure. It is part of disclosures in that any disclosure involves openness and a way of adhering. — That's respect.

2.54 Meditation on one's death can open one to the worldness of one's world. It ruptures the immersion in the world (§2.4), for it makes various projects and their relations, including the for-the-sake-of-which, conspicuous. New possibilities, including possibilities of respectful response, become possible. Now, it's not only humans who reflect on or encounter their own or another's death, nor do humans encounter death *as such* (through any attempt, we're still there, surviving any such fantasy; §2.38). Nonetheless, meditation on one's death *is* transformative.

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[167] Jan Zwicky, "Wilderness and Agriculture," in *The Eye in the Thicket*, ed. Seán Virgo (Saskatoon: Thistledown Press, 2002), p. 187–97: see p. 193–4.

This meditation illuminates that being alive is an opening, a clearing, as thin as a knife's edge, such that experience is possible as it is, for us.

Death isn't outside of life; it permeates it in our experience of loss (and with every choice, we lose possibilities), so that we will say, "*Life will have been so short.*"[168] For death is etched into the structure of experience, marked in advance by irreplaceable loss. Each entity—in particular, those we love most[169]—traces its loss.

Nothing is ever fully present, for we're all relationally, constitutively, and temporally distended: we're constituted by relations (present and absent), different from all other things (for things are what they are through not being all others), in time (things are revealed in perspective through time). – This also means that nothing is ever fully absent. For we house the absent—wandering spirits—in one way or another.

Derrida and Wittgenstein are right: each death is the end of a world, of the world, each time.[170] Worlds aren't individualistic, though they're housed in individuals. The death of the individual isn't the death of the world, but it can feel that way: it's the death of a unique *site* of world.

No death is an *example* of death; just like no existence is an *example* of a situation of world. Death is the foreclosing of a clearing that was a *particular* clearing: *this* clearing is gone.

We can think towards our own death. Here, we're struck: struck by the incomprehensibility of nothingness. (One imagines it black, but death is not closing one's eyes.) It 'is' 'nothing.'

But not as negation: 'placed' outside the binary of being/nothing, death removes us from where even nothingness makes sense. Thus, it's outside the binary of negation/affirmation. Death is not that there's nothing there; it's that there is no there at all. – In another sense, death is not negation: for one's being carries on in those left living.

'But why dwell on death? — It makes it hard to get on with things!'

— Maybe that wouldn't be such a bad thing? For we re-evaluate what matters. – It can precipitate a transformation of one's self, a transformation of one's world.

2.55 Just as meditation on death can open transformative possibilities—through reflection on other possibilities for understanding world—so, too, can reflection on other orientations. On

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[168] E.g., Derrida, *The Beast & the Sovereign, Volume II*, p. 51; Derrida, *Aporias*, p 49.
[169] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH56.
[170] Derrida, *The Work of Mourning*, p. 95, 107, 115; Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, §6.431, p. 87.

ancient Greece, Walter Otto writes: "*[Athena] is the meaning and actuality of a complete and self-contained world […].*"[171]

In Otto's account, the role of the Greek gods is to show a way that beings are gathered: they say, "*Look at things like this*":[172] 'this is how things would be if *I* (Artemis, Aphrodite, Hermes) were the sole gatherer.'

But what is equally important is that they're *not* the sole gatherers, not "self-contained," for they're from a larger gathering of Greek gods. Because they show world colourations (§2.21) within the horizon of the Greek gods' world, even if "*each desires to fill, shape, and illumine the whole compass of human existence with his [sic] peculiar spirit,*"[173] they cannot do so.

Homeric gods were never supposed to be the final gods. The Greeks knew the Fates were spinning out the threads of their duration. This brought temporality into the core of the onto-theological domain.

The ancient Greek world contained a variety of world-colourations, and, more primordially, unforeseen possibilities, for, because the gods were fated, other gods were possible. The ancient Greek world promised and embraced the filling of the world *and* the downfall and succession of gods by other gods and other world-disclosures.

2.56 There's a polyphony of voices. Things don't clamour towards our light; things light us up. We clamour towards mutual co-lighting. If a world is an ocean, it laps on the shore: there are edges upon which it crashes. There are different oceans, different seas; there are eddies, wisps of other worlds. Things say, "*Look at things like this.*"

'But why should we accept this picture?'

— "*Look at things like this.*"

The principle of verification: Yes, statements often should be verifiable. Yet, verifiability, criteria, and methodologies derive their sense from their context. 'There are three ducks there.' Presumably we can check. But if this sentence occurs in a novel? It's not then meaningless. There's a kind of sense-making opened by the novel, and hence a way to see if it is (or could be) the case or not.

But what if we hear, 'There are gods in that tree?' How do we verify it? We ask she who said it; she can give reasons. '*I* don't see any gods there!' What does this tell us about *our* criteria? Is it the case, then, that *her* criteria (which necessarily go beyond her as an individual, for

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[171] Otto, *The Homeric Gods*, p. 60.
[172] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH38.
[173] Otto, *The Homeric Gods*, p. 160–1.

criteria are never confined to one person) are wrong? 'I don't see it!' – But does *she* have a way to verify her claim?

'So, you're painting a picture and then asking us—'*look at things like this*'—to see if the picture resonates as true?'

In a way. Some of the reasons for accepting the picture are within the picture itself. And yet, it isn't a picture or a *representation* of something. It's as though I'm gesturing towards mountain peaks,[174] or holding up a coloured transparency that reveals certain patterns in the things behind it.

– Not that there's anything wrong with the image of painting: it just depends on how we think about it.

2.57 We aren't bringers of light, the ones who light beings up. The picture is too simplistic: if we enable beings to be the beings they are (for us), then they do the same; that is, as we enable things to appear (e.g., as *created* things, *extended* things, or things to which we pay attention, and so on), so too they enable us to appear (e.g., as a privileged being in creation, as one who uses such and such, or as one who recognizes or pays attention to such and such, and so on) — which is not to say that these ways of appearing are the most responsive ways. But things and us are amenable to these ways of appearing. Furthermore, they enable how we enable them to appear (e.g., beings reveal *themselves* as beings that can be understood as created; and so on). – We're in a weave of us, things, and worlds.

All forms of living are mutually co-lit in a similar way: dogs encounter beings with their particular bodies; so too cats; so too sweet peas. Even stones co-light other beings through their encounters. There's a co-responsiveness among things. It's not we who bring light, for light comes from multiple sources. — "*In perceiving* this*ness, we respond to having been addressed. (In fact we are addressed all the time, but we don't always notice this.)*"[175]

As we call to beings, so they call to us. We meet—suspended, distended, attended, taken out *and* put back into ourselves—in an analogous way to what Heidegger calls world-projection: "*this occurrence of projection* carries *whoever is projecting* out and away from themselves *in a certain way [...;] in this being removed [...], what occurs is precisely a peculiar* turning toward themselves on the part of whoever is projecting."[176] This reaching out from ourselves, out towards the other and back again, has the structure of metaphor: a crossing-over. So, too, things *metaphorize* towards us: they, too, cross-over.

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[174] Hardy, "Mathematical Proof," p. 18, quoted in Zwicky, *W&M*, RH64. See §2.3.
[175] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH52.
[176] Heidegger, *FCM*, p. 363. See p. 362–5.

This crossing-over presupposes a distance; metaphors highlight commonalities by starting from difference and distance. – These metaphoric gestures respect contexts they never fully comprehend.

2.58 We *pay* (or don't *pay*) attention; we're in constant *exchange* with the world around us. – There's a transactional quality in my words.

Mauss initiated a discussion on the gift that was built on by others. The lineage I'm interested in travels through Mauss, Bataille, and Baudrillard. The following quote from Bataille, in the context of discussing and interpreting the northwestern Indigenous potlatch, shows one reading of 'the gift':

"*[The riches—the gift—are given by someone] to his [sic] rival for the purpose of humiliating, challenging and obligating him. The recipient has to erase the humiliation and take up the challenge; he must satisfy the* obligation *that was contracted by accepting. He can only reply, a short time later, by means of a new potlatch, more generous than the first: He must pay back with interest.*"[177]

In this lineage, the gift is a *challenge* that bestows an *obligation* to *reciprocate* (i.e., to offer a counter-gift) *after a time interval* and *with interest*. For Baudrillard, what makes the general political economy (the system of value; capitalism) so powerful is that it maintains unilateral control over giving (e.g., the giving of labour, wages, messages in the media, etc.)[178] through prevention of the return of a counter-gift, and thus prevention of an easing of one's indebtedness: i.e., the general political economy's condition is the active and ongoing exclusion of symbolic exchange (i.e., the form or logic of the gift).[179]

But, why should we accept the thesis on the gift? These thinkers have found a pervasive subterranean force that can be noticed. Socially and professionally, our lives are structured by how we respond to others, when, with what kind of rhythm, and so on. The one who doesn't reciprocate, who denies the mounting symbolic pressure, is the miser. When you buy a round of drinks or host a dinner party, you create or maintain reciprocity. Think of the one who won't allow you to reciprocate – who treats you but won't allow you to return the favour. Power is expressed not only by taking, but by giving: for it's a demonstration of excess and superfluity.

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[177] Georges Bataille, *The Accursed Share: Volume I*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Zone Books, 2007), p. 67–8; Bataille's emphasis.
[178] Jean Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, trans. Iain Hamilton Grant (California: Sage Publications Inc., 1995), p. 36–7.
[179] Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, p. 36. For an example, see Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, trans. Charles Levin (USA: Telos Press Ltd., 1981), p. 128.

So many popular and engaging narratives play with the relations of power inherent in giving: the challenge, the duel, the insult, but also the compliment, the display of affection, the extended hand, the smile, the gift, the present.[180] Responding to the gift appropriately in the right tempo saves face. Gestures *demand* response, and there are many strategies for dealing with the necessity for response. But, one cannot not respond: this itself is a response, and involves its own stakes.

I claim that the gift-form permeates not only human interaction, but responses of all kinds. Granted, how this plays out with non-human animals is often opaque, but this is true with humans, just to a different degree and in a different way. We respond to beings of all kinds all the time: we cannot help but respond.

Response is wrapped up in the logic of the gift. *Ontological attention*[181] *is a counter-gift*, a return of the gift presented by the thing present to us: we stand face-to-face with the thing. We have strategies to deal with how things appear to us and how to respond to them, where slighting is a mode of response as well.

'But you seem to be ascribing agency to beings of all kinds!'

The point is not that I'm positing some agent in or behind things; I'm claiming that beings demand response, whether they're conscious or not. I'm proposing a different way of thinking about gift-logic, for we're always involved with response and responsibility. This is another way of saying that things call to us and we must respond.

We can be better or worse at responding to things. We can maintain or destroy relations through our choice of response, and because we're made up of our relations (§2.20), how we choose to foster or neglect these speaks to who we are, who we want to be, and how our world is.

— How we are with things reveals our character (§2.9).

2.59 In some ways, the world the totality of relations. If we counted all the relations, would we have a picture of the world? – Well, but do you think that, even if it could be done (an infinite task), your own stance in counting relations wouldn't enter the picture? The picture of the world as the totality of relations is *itself* something to which we'd relate.

If a world is a totality of relations, this totality fades into other totalities (other worlds), none ever fully total. There's no totality for all 'totalities' (§2.35).

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[180] Marcel Mauss, "Gift, Gift," in *The Logic of the Gift: Toward an Ethic of Generosity*, ed. Alan D. Schrift, trans. Koen Decoster (New York: Routledge, 1997): p. 28–32, wherein he shows the etymological connection in the word 'gift' between 'present' and 'poison.'

[181] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH52, LH55, LH 57–8, LH100.

Enworlded beings relate to things; they relate to wisps of worlds like punctures or openings in their world. Following a wisp is 'going through' an opening.

A world is a partial totality of relations, bleeding and growing into other partial totalities. A world is a *whole*, interacting and interlocking with other wholes. It's a mesh of relations, enmeshed with others.

2.60 It's wrong to think of a thing as just 'sitting there.' This is the case for several reasons.

Things are always part of a larger situation. The clock on my mantle is always 'active,' gesturing beyond itself, flinging one away from it back to the time reckoned for various tasks. The stone is trodden over as part of the path, enticing one along this route. Things are ready-to-hand before present-at-hand, the latter of which is a modification of the former (§2.4), and we encounter things from out of our thrown, projective, temporal world.

Things are never just 'sitting there' because they're always part of various throws and worlds; because all worlds and all things are relational (§2.59) and constituted by difference (§2.54), and because relations are always changing, things, too, are never inert. A stone resting on the path is there for other lifeforms. Each of these encounter the stone from out of their thrown, projective, temporal world.

For itself, this stone is withstanding, holding itself open to encountering other beings, open to this encounter and this attempted withstanding (§2.43). A stone opens temporally (§2.28) to come what may (i.e., possibilities) and to its own holding of its past. It finds itself in the midst of beings (§2.43). Therefore, the stone, too, opens its own thrown, projective, temporal world. This stone is in its own throw.

As its own throw, this stone also throws itself into other worlds. Things never just 'sit there' because they actively implicate themselves into the worlds of others. They call out. Thus, not only are things taken up projectively, things also give themselves projectively: i.e., they're thrown in a world and throw themselves into worlds. Things 'intrude' upon others.

And when things call out, they call to be heeded, attended, and responded to. Things offer the possibility of showing glimpses or flashes (to varying degrees) of their worlds; of what it would be like to be in a stony world (for example). They can pulse out and cover all things: "*That is* how much *it is possible to attend; that is how large complete attention would be*."[182] Things whisper or shout, hum or sing, buzz or boom.

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[182] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH57.

Things gesture across worlds. In this way, they're implicated in a meshwork of meaning, stretching through worlds.

Therefore, beings are actively and relationally involved with others, and are actively involved in withstanding and maintaining themselves. They can be taken as just 'sitting there' only if we do them violence and cut them off from their modes of being.

2.61 Wisps of world enter our world (§2.59). We never fully leave our world, but we sense possibilities of gestalt shifts and reorientation of the way we see and do things.

Each thing shows or suggests how things would be or are for them from their 'perspective.' Everything is related to everything else: this means that any thing can take on a 'central' role — we sense how it would be for all things to be oriented and gathered around *this*.

The sense that things have for us emerges from an attempted reconciliation of phenomena (§2.52). This reconciliation is attempted because, from out of our being, we gather things together: i.e., we're enworlded. We're beings who universalize and generalize. But particularities, different aspects, and wisps of worlds poke through.

2.62 'It almost seems as though, elsewhere in this text and despite your saying just now that we're beings who universalize and generalize, you deny the existence of universals. But, surely, this can't be right. For example, kinaesthetic structure applies to people across cultures. Human bodies can only do so much: they have a range of motion. Sure, there may be exceptions, but the point is that there's a general *range* within which possibilities are housed: this range is universal. So, if you're adverse to universals as necessary and sufficient conditions, why not think of them as describing *ranges* of possibilities?'

Let's discuss bodily activity through considering *tai chi*. It may be said that *tai chi*, as a practice, can apply universally to all human bodies. In response, I claim that what we call 'the universal' rides the wave of what is common (in this case, between human bodies — but, of course, not *all* human bodies). To get to this 'universal,' a particular person must express and figure it out for themselves in accordance with *tai chi* principles. — And yet, the 'universal' cannot ever really be said.

'Are you suggesting there's some kind of an enactive universalism that cannot be expressed? Is language the problem?'

— No. It's not language. Rather, the 'problem' (not a problem at all, really) has to do with the disclosure we inhabit, which is always a particular disclosure. Universals are rooted within particular disclosures, thus a particular relational web and a particular metaphysics. Universals gain their sense from this metaphysical, relational, differential context. Therefore, universals are universally true within particular disclosures.

'But that's gibberish! It's universally true that all humans have hearts.'

Let's suppose it is (– maybe we should say all humans have heart-like organs or supplements? — but the thrust of my point isn't that universal statements admit of exceptions). There's nothing necessitating that we think in these terms: 'human,' 'heart.'

'So, is your qualm with delineations? That we could think of humans as not restricted to skin, for instance, i.e., the border problem?'

No. It's not that simple.
It helps to see that concepts aren't just things in our heads that we lay over top of things. They're enactive: 'out there,' real, enmeshed with things (§2.44). – Thus, we're always in part also responding to concepts.

'But if you bring me a cadaver, set it down, I can cut it open and *show* you that there's a heart inside. I can repeat this with several different bodies. We'll all agree that all humans have hearts!'

Just because something is easy to agree with doesn't make it universally true; neither truth nor universals are determined solely by intersubjective agreement. Some statements may very well be easier to reach agreement on, and they may very well be true. But communication—reaching out across a gap—is never guaranteed and is never the conveyance of a nugget or some kind of core: for every truth, statement, aspect, or thing can and will be placed in different contexts and undergo particular shifts and changes, inextricably.

'Nonetheless, there's *a thing* (e.g., a human) *there,* right? There's an *X* that I don't create and that others can encounter.'

Yes. But this 'X' almost cannot be said. For *any* articulation we give, *any* perception we have, is contextual, relational, and differential. (Any *pre-* or *non-*articulation is *also* contextual and conceptual: in fact, concepts are 'pre-conceptual,' in the sense that they're implicit in our perception and experience.) '*But* there *is* a thing *here*.' – A thing here? But we needn't think in terms of things in this way.

'There's an X here' — you're already conceptualizing: you cannot help but do so. 'But there's *something* there!' — Yes.

'So, all humans have hearts?' Yes. But look at the grammar. (Look at grammar as though it were a symptom: not in the sense that it grounds a real condition, but in that it's linked with a gathering of being.) 'All humans have hearts.' – Why these delimitations? Why this

grammatical structure? Why 'have'? Why these concepts and why *this* way of looking at things? — Or, rather, why take *this* way as indicative of *the* way?

This addresses the second point: why we shouldn't think of universals as connected with ranges of possibilities. – A range, or fuzziness, doesn't change the fact that such a universal is universal within a given context, within a given disclosure.

We're beings who universalize and generalize. — This means that we 'universalize,' or generalize, *always within particular contexts*. – Universalizing in this sense takes on different colourations, where any universals ride the wave of what is common between particularities. For example, the concept of the colour red is a particular concept that's housed within particular disclosures, wrapped up in relationally differential, metaphysical webs (e.g., what's a colour, what's delineation, how does colour interact with things, etc.); it's also a particular concept for each person who thinks it, for it's derived from a finite engagement with experiences of red.

Our world makes particular expressions of universalizing and generalizing possible: we're beings who see what is common between particularities and contexts; it's in our world that these cohere into a particular gathering of the whole. Generalization is open to different degrees of reductionism.

There are no claims that are true everywhere. Not only because of changing conditions, borderline cases, and so on, but because of the different (and changing) worlds within which they appear.

'But — *why* are there different disclosures?'

This is an interesting question. Perhaps there are different disclosures because we have different interactions with different kinds of beings from different points of view with our respective and responsive bodily being. — To encounter an other—to encounter any thing at all—there must already be this difference. — But, then again, why *shouldn't* we think there'd be different disclosures? Why start from the assumption of sameness?

Does this mean that phenomena such as globalization (technologization, capitalism, the dominance of a small number of languages, etc.) indicate we're approaching a homogenization point of contexts, human groups, and hence disclosures? – No. While we're approaching homogenizations, contexts are always divergent and particular. – Let's not fall prey to hypostatization.

2.63 A tree *shows* how it is with it in its particularity: *Here I am*, here is how things are right now. This can penetrate through any (particular) universalizing we try to do.

A thing shows its particularity, its *this*ness which, suggestively, opens onto a wisp of world: "*Its* this*ness, then, cannot be fully articulable since any such articulation would require the articulation of a* complete *context, which in all cases is the world.*"[183]

"This*ness is the experience of a distinct thing in such a way that the resonant structure of the world sounds through it.*

"*Each* this *focusses that resonant structure in a distinct way. But the structure so focussed is— of course—always the same. There is only one world.*"[184]

The complete context for a *this* is a constellation, ringing out from *this*, reverberating in everything else: it shows a particular way that all things can be gathered. Granted, this gathering may reflect something about the one struck by the *this*ness (i.e., how, *for me*, things come together around *this*), but it *may* offer insight into how things come together *for this*. We may *start* to see how things are drawn in and push out from *this*.

But, hold on — how is there only one world? Doesn't this go against what I've been claiming? Yes, and no.[185] There's one 'world' in the sense that while there are different worlds, they each speak to the whole (each is a flash, encompassing all); they each speak to beings as a whole, for each world gathers things just so (§2.59).

But it's also not the case that there's one world. I'm proposing a divergent view of truth and worlds. While each world speaks to the whole, other worlds leave traces and have openings that gesture beyond themselves towards other ways that things can be gathered, globally. And no thing has access to beings as a whole except by way of their world.

As we saw, Zwicky writes of a "*resonant structure*."[186] This structure is made possible by a distinction between things, the way they're positioned and related in being-together; it's dynamic and transient, for it emerges and dissipates in new arrays. It's also an *internal* structure (§2.47), and doesn't have a centre outside (§1.98), if it has a centre at all. A resonant structure could be the same only so long as the world is the same.

2.64 Ontological attention is related to the concept of responsibility, because responsibility— being responsive—is intimately connected with paying attention: "*When we love a thing, we can experience our responsibility toward it as limitless (the size of the world). Responsibility is the trace, in us, of the pressure of the world that is focussed in a* this. *That is* how much *it is possible to attend; that is how large complete attention would be.*"[187] "*The ontology of*

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[183] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH53.
[184] ibid, LH55.
[185] Zwicky's use of "world" isn't the same as mine: see *W&M*, LH85.
[186] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH55, LH117.
[187] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH57.

thisness, of ontological attention and address, has the character of metaphor: its object is, and is not, everything."[188]

To pay ontological attention to something is to begin to let its way of being course through your veins. You're a host and a guest (§2.53), on the way to becoming a lover of a thing: the horse rider is a lover of horses, the pilot is a lover of planes, the poet is a lover of language — hoofs, clouds, words coursing through our veins.[189] To love is to see things differently, to let yourself be changed by the thing you love: the horse rider becomes horse, the pilot becomes plane, the poet becomes language. At the same time, the horse becomes rider, the plane becomes pilot, and language becomes poet.[190]

In all these exchanges, there are questions of violence, justice, and betrayal, for each becoming is violent, unjust, and betrays oneself and others—as is each non-becoming (though in different ways)—because no response can meet the full responsibility, the full attention, any particular demands, which betrays the other and oneself for we, too, are particularities.

To pay ontological attention to something is to pay tribute to it; one can pay tribute poorly or well.

2.65 'Ontological attention is all fine and good, as is paying attention to particularities, but the world just *is* composed of uniformity and constancy. Earlier, you said: "All space is the same, all time is the same, each atom is an atom. Forces act with uniformity and constancy. All is thrown into a massive indifference, blanketed in 'the same'" (§1.65). – But isn't what you're questioning or criticizing a description of how things *really are* as uncovered by science?'

It seems to me that contemporary physics is increasingly calling into question the idea of spatiotemporal uniformity in areas such as relativity theory, quantum mechanics, and superstring theory. And yet, there's still a dominant or common view that maintains and saves this uniformity: as example, Newtonian physics can be used on most scales with which humans are concerned. And even though space and time have been relativized (i.e., as spacetime) and aren't *absolute*, doesn't mean they aren't *uniform*; spacetime is relative to a perspective/an entity, but for each entity, space and time are uniform, i.e., space is the same and time is the same (setting aside extreme cases, e.g., black holes, and drastic changes in one's speed of travel). In other words, space and time depend on the frame of reference, yet I

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[188] ibid, LH55.
[189] To be precise, to "love" in this context means that one attends to and heeds the phenomena; that one cares about its use, one is precise in that use, and one cares about the relations involved. A horse rider might not 'love' horses; they might love what horse riding allows them to do. Nonetheless, they had to attend to horses, and love them in the sense of caring, attending, and tending to them. In other words, a lover of something loves a network of relations.
[190] The poet becomes language, language becomes poet — the poet becomes language entwined with things, language entwined with things becomes poet, the poet becomes these things, these things become poet.

encounter them *structurally the same* way as another does. In this picture, space and time don't really depend on other beings,[191] even while they're relative to each entity.

In general, seeing things under the rubric of uniformity, constancy, and sameness has been highly effective in securing ends we've had. Yet, every description, theory, and fact require a web of support to lend them comprehensibility (§2.29): a fact on its own is no fact at all. A fact needs the world out of which it emerges.

Are there *no other ways* to describe things? Are there no other gestalt shifts that could explain the same phenomena from different metaphysical starting points?

The basic experimental model isolates phenomena from webs of relations to isolate constants and variables so we can determine causes for general phenomena. But what has to be excluded for this? Can we shear enough off any given experimental subject such that we *actually* isolate one variable? Can we shear it of its relations, of its particularity?[192] Are explanations or deductions from an experiment applicable outside the experiment? How could *this* be tested? How is the experiment itself constituting a set of relations that allow phenomena to be a particular way?

I'm not denying that there may be regularities or repeatability in the world. Scientific research emerges from and uncovers facts within a particular disclosure (a world) with particular metaphysically-laden assumptions, yet this doesn't negate the aspects it picks up on (i.e., these aspects cannot, in good faith, simply be denied).

The question, however, is whether we do in experiments what we think we're doing, and whether analysis—isolating the smallest 'common denominator,' for instance—is the best way to think of things. What needs to be shorn off to claim 'sameness' or generality? The temptation is a reduction of all to a small palette of the *same* entities: elements. — Yes, we *can* see things this way.

2.66 Relatedly, we need to be careful with the words we use. It's not inconsequential to call a tree lumber or timber.[193] These aren't just ways of speaking. They show how things are revealed to us. And yet, prior to and enabling such interpretations are occasions when we call a tree a tree, where variations are mere deviations from the basis of 'tree.' A tree is a tree is a tree; each and every tree is a tree. A general fungibility and indifference reigns. So, responsibility involves attentiveness to words.

Concepts can be disrupted by paying attention to phenomena. They're ruptured by a thing's calling, which reveals a new conceptualness.

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[191] Setting aside warping.
[192] Is every atom of a given element *the same*?
[193] Or humans human resources or human capital.

We need responsive ways of speaking, attending, acting, and responding. Otherwise, our comportment may preclude a deeper relationality with things.

2.67 Agreeing to the terms then subsequently engaging in negotiation belongs to what Rancière calls the *police*. This circulation allows for the smooth operation of the police order which paradigmatically says, "*there is nothing to see here.*"[194] *Politics*, on the other hand, is the disruption of the established circulation and order of value, exchange, and aesthetics.[195] Politics disrupts the realm of the sensible (§2.24) and allows things to *appear* other than they have.

To agree that trees are resources, timber, lumber, and product is to already have agreed to too much. Trees can grab us, capture our attention, and reorient our conceptions. Attentive to this possibility, our words can disrupt the realm of the sensible for others.

I claim that the disruption of the realm of the sensible doesn't always begin with, nor is it restricted to, humans. — The world disrupts the world. In this auto-disruption, there are two (or more) worlds in one. *Auto*-disruption is always *hetero*-disruption.

Why not accept that truths and worlds can be reconciled or synthesized in a grand vision of truth? Even if there are regional contexts for truths, why not accept that they can be lain just so and fit together like a puzzle?

Because this view isn't consonant with phenomena. It reconciles difference by over-laying it with identity.[196] It presupposes we can come to a set of objective or meta terms of truth or agreement. – But the challenge that someone like Rancière puts forth is that politics precisely involves such terms. To assume that we can come to a consensus on terms is to already have excluded or denied politics, divergent ontologies, and hence rupture.

'But why not think that through discussion, familiarization, and so on, we could come to a reconciliation of divergent ontologies? Perhaps they describe the world differently, starting from different premises, but couldn't we still piece them all together: e.g., we think that X is Y, they think X is Z, and both views are acceptable.'

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[194] "'*Move along! There is nothing to see here!*' The police says that there is nothing to see on a road, that there is nothing to do but move along. It asserts that the space of circulating is nothing other than the space of circulation. Politics, in contrast, consists in transforming this space of 'moving-along' into a space for the appearance of a subject: i.e., the people, the workers, the citizens: It consists in refiguring the space, of what there is to do there, what is to be seen or named therein." (Jacques Rancière, "Ten Theses on Politics," par. 22, p. 9.)

[195] Rancière, *Dis-agreement*, p. 28–31.

[196] Gilles Deleuze, *Difference & Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), see in particular p. 42–50.

So, a kind of tolerant, multicultural view? Yes, this is one way to respond. But we need to be careful for the issue is that this response often implicitly understands groups, through individuals, to host *beliefs* or *interpretations* (which individuals 'have' in their heads and which lead to the enactment of customs and behaviours) that they use to understand reality, which we all agree is there: material that is atomistic, hard and solid, and so on. In other words, the picture is that we lay different interpretations over the same reality. This picture seems to legitimate other views, but actually sees them as legitimate only within the framework of reality *it* proposes and thus as beliefs or interpretations (§2.4). However, such a picture is, in its entirety, *an interpretation*, in the sense that it's a way of disclosing reality and a way that reality is disclosed for or from a particular disclosure.

There are better and worse ways to engage with divergent views. It doesn't seem that *"dragging […] understanding in its native costume into technocracy's court"*[197] or *"the isolated gypsy in the Tokyo Stock Exchange being asked to explain herself"*[198] are the most honest or responsible ways. A museum or anthropological mentality that thinks 'document these ways so that we have them before they change' isn't the most responsive way. "We aren't more advanced if we were to somehow catalogue various ways things are seen — if we indexed how the is (or could be) seen" (§1.52).

My divergent view (§2.63) tries to accord better with phenomena. It tries to take seriously that different ways of being are just that: different. There are different ontologies. Yes, we have no choice but to see them from within our own ontological understanding and metaphysics — it's unavoidable that we must do metaphysics. The question is how much we respect difference instead of subsuming it to an identity whose terms we dictate. We undertake a kind of onto-ethical methodological skepticism: where we *know* we haven't fully or adequately responded to the phenomena.

'But how does your view not fall prey to the same criticism you level towards multiculturalism or tolerance? After all, you also bring in metaphysical claims regarding the reality of being (as metaphoric, for instance).'

My claims aren't making assertions about *the* reality of the situation, but are rather gestures to assert the *multiplicity* of the situation, the multiplicity of disclosures. 'But this is still a picture of the structure of reality!' Yes, it is and I've expressed some reservations about this (e.g., §2.47, §2.52).

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[197] Tim Lilburn and Jan Zwicky, *Contemplation and Resistance: A Conversation* (Saskatoon: JackPine, 2003), p. 5.
[198] Jan Zwicky, "Dream Logic and the Politics of Interpretation," in *Alkibiades' Love: Essays in Philosophy* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015), p. 100.

Metaphoric ontology is a way to grapple with problems and questions that've emerged from a particular historical trajectory. It itself is posed as problem and question, not merely as response. Every response questions a question. — There's no final resting place.

2.68 The subjugation of difference by identity carries with it additional subjugation: binaries, where one side is favoured over the other (e.g., male/female). The line of a binary is effected by a disavowal: what characterizes the negative side is essential to the positive side (e.g., emotion over reason is ascribed to females — yet males constantly affirm their superiority through aggressivity).

To illustrate, Derrida shows that what we take as characteristic of writing, which is seen as inferior to the full presence of speech (i.e., the presence of the speaker in distinction from the absence of the writer), is essential to speech. Its deferral, iterability, and *différance* (i.e., differential deferral)—where each term refers to another term, deriving its sense from how it differs from them and, thus, its presence is always deferred—are indicative of speech never having had full presence.[199]

However, Derrida's move, as Lawlor traces out,[200] is not only an attempt at a Nietzschean revaluation of the binary, but, also, to show that the more originary sense of a binary is the 'negative' side: writing[201] is more originary than the split between writing/speech.

This revaluation cuts through attempts to maintain the alleged purity of a binary: as example of the latter, non-human animals are sacrificed in countless ways to *show* their inferiority to humans. They're 'shown' as closed to beings as such, open only to stimuli. The 'evidence,' then, justifies how we treat them.

For example, Heidegger marshals evidence without questioning the conditions under which such evidence can become evidence for the matter.[202] With that said, *any* behaviour of non-human animals validates Heidegger's interpretation because his interpretation underlies *all* behaviour (and 'behaviour' for him is always animalistic). He takes all non-human animals as ontologically the same: i.e., what Derrida calls, *l'animot*.[203]

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[199] Derrida, *Of Grammatology*.

[200] Leonard Lawlor, *This Is Not Sufficient: An Essay on Animality and Human Nature in Derrida* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), in particular p. 28–30.

[201] Or arche-writing. Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 56, 69, 71, 86, 97–8, 159, 166–7.

[202] Heidegger, *FCM*, p. 241–6, 250–2.

[203] In French, Derrida's coined word *l'animot* sounds exactly like the word for the plural of animal (*animaux*) yet while singularizing it (*le; l'*): we hear, jarringly, the singularization in the plural. In addition, while *animot* sounds like *animaux*, *l'animot* is spelled differently, so as to combine the words for animal (*animal*) and word (*mot*). Derrida's point is at least threefold. First, it draws our attention to the discrepancy between those in the Western tradition (e.g., Heidegger) who've consistently spoken of 'animals' (as one large category that lacks something in relation to humans) but who mean 'the animal' (and, thus, try to capture diverse kinds of beings from emu to whale under one concept). Second, it implies the suppressed violence and thus pain (*mal*, in French) done through the concept of 'the animal' as loss of singularity (*l'animal*, the singular animal, is subsumed within the pluralization as *l'animaux*,

Binaries reveal something about our thinking: conceptually, ontologically, and ethically. Reflect on what ours say about us (where the first term is prioritized over the second):

> male/female; white/racialized; cis-/transgender; form/content; form/matter; essence/accident; active/passive; strength/passivity; culture/nature; light/dark; white/black; dry/damp; life/death; straight/bent; human/animal; animal/plant; plant/the inanimate; organic/inorganic.[204]

In popular narratives and stories, light triumphs over dark. This is at play in how we think about conflicts, wars, and struggles, and peace, love, community, and inclusion. In fantasy narratives, for example, there are orcs — unlike us in key respects. This fantasy reveals our orientation towards enemies: our enemies embody the darkness that we, as light, must eradicate. We make our enemies orcs. (We throw out to the other what more originarily characterises ourselves: i.e., dehumanizing violence.) We thereby miss both how we and they are, exacerbating and extending indefinitely the need for conflict.

Stories codify our world, reinforce views, and enable us to see certain outlines while other possibilities can fall from our grasp.

Being responsive means responding to the stories we tell, the binaries that have been set up for us, and the implicit assumptions forming the backdrop of our behaviour. We need to call these into question when they occlude honest and sensitive ways of being and ways of responding to other beings.

2.69 There are many ways one can change the world. We can act *within* the world: rearrange entities and patterns of entities. We may have a certain aesthetic or ethical sense or ideal, for instance, according to which we try to rearrange such entities: we see a line and want to keep drawing it; we see an array and want other entities to continue it.

Or we act *upon* the world — not that one ever fully escapes the world, but this kind of action involves rethinking the terms of the world. It involves rethinking from things themselves, for these deny full adherence to the terms through which they're understood and thereby offer new ways of thinking. Thus, the world and things act *upon* you.

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and we thus cover over the suffix -*mal*). Third, it shows that 'the animal' is constructed as a word, a category that we who call ourselves humans have created. Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, p. 23–4, 31, 34, 37, 40–1, 47–8.

[204] Binary-based thinking is more complex. For example, in the nature/culture binary, while culture is taken as superior to nature, it's nonetheless the case that some cultures are taken as natural. These cultures can be regarded as superior precisely because they're natural. This is also why heterosexuality or cisnormativity are insisted on above others. – The binaries operate as a mesh, a net, with interlocking dependencies, interlocking valuations. At times, this net has been called the patriarchy.

We cannot actually separate the first and second ways of changing the world. Engaging with things *within* the world entails an engagement with the world itself, acting *upon* the world is in actuality to act within it, and the world acts *upon* you in both cases. Acts of interpretation cause changes on both levels, because they situate us in relation to our world. Gestalt shifts also occur on both levels. But, nonetheless, there's a difference of emphasis.

Acting *upon* the world *can* involve seeing things in a new way: a transformation of self and world.

Why should one change the world? – There could be a variety of reasons, and it's questionable whether one could even choose *not* to. – A question posed within *all* philosophy is how one should live. Even in the depths, perhaps *especially* in the depths, of the *Tractatus* or *Language, Truth and Logic*, the ethical question persists. Even in the midst of linguistic analysis, onto-ethical stances are taken.

Why should one change the world? – Because our world doesn't accord with how we should best be.

2.70 But if interpretation changes the world (§2.69), then why quote Marx: "*The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it*" (§1.69)?[205] If I'm challenging the dichotomy around which this quote hinges—interpretation vs. change—why use it?

Philosophy often offers ways of interpreting phenomena without noticing it changes the world it's in. Description is never neutral; it changes the world implicitly, subtly, deceptively, or slyly, or, in strengthening an understanding of the world (e.g., 'common sense'), it resists change. Yet, even resisting changes the world. There are no positions to which conservatism adds nothing new. — 'Do I dare disturb the universe?'; do I dare to think that I could not?

Thus, irresponsive description can occlude encounters with things themselves.

Even if one thinks philosophy *can* change the world, some think philosophy can act only *within* the world.

So, I'm issuing a call for philosophy that's cognizant of its power. A call for philosophy that yearns to offer new visions, because the old ones don't accord with the phenomena. And a call for philosophy that blooms as a kind of practice that cannot be determined in advance.

Philosophy is already a set of practices. Institutionally, philosophy is practiced in specific ways: enacted through bodily postures and activities (e.g., reading alone, conference presentations,

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[205] Marx, "Theses On Feuerbach," in *Selected Writings*, p. 173.

coursework, publications, online learning; etc.), within ranges of acceptable tone and style, within institutional structures and facilities tied to an ethics of business and the market, and bound up with discursive practices embedded in power-knowledge relations. However, for reasons that are becoming increasingly clear and pressing, the institutional model and its practices may not be sufficient.

2.71 Interpretation isn't a subjective understanding on top of a real material basis. Rather, the so-called 'real material basis' is itself intimately and inextricably bound up with a particular kind of interpretation. We tend to interpret 'interpretation' as something that originates with the subject and is subsequently used to understand facets of the objective, passive world.

Instead, following Heidegger, interpretation is a way of making explicit our understanding of things,[206] which is itself bound up with our understanding of Being:[207] interpretation teases out how beings appear for us. It makes our experience of beings explicit by refocusing how beings are disclosed for us. Interpretation, then, further discloses what's been disclosed.

Conflicting interpretations play out within (temporal, historical) horizons of meaning. How beings are unconcealed leaves open possibilities for interpretation.

Of course, it's possible for beings to appear in an interplay of subject/object and interpretation/real material basis; but this is one possibility amongst many — one way beings may appear for us. The phenomena can dictate new interpretive understandings. For example, metaphoric ontology (§2.51) throws open interpretive horizons without a reconciliatory real basis.

But none of this means that we're unilaterally assigning meanings to beings, or that there is no reality. We respond to beings that exist independently of us — they have their own worlds, 'live' their own 'lives.' Metaphoric ontology—which is a relational ontology—has to do with responding, in our world, to beings in their world.

With that said, interpreting isn't something we could hold back from because it's how we respond to our situation: we're interpretive beings. The interpretive structure of being is how we're thrown or struck and must take up beings in particular interpretive ways, even with and within a freeing range of possibilities for disagreement and further interpretation.

2.72 'But is the rock not there, outside all interpretation, outside all disclosures?'

What could that mean, outside all disclosures?

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[206] Heidegger, *B&T*, 148/188–9.
[207] ibid, 5/25.

'So, the rock wouldn't exist without humans?'

No. Disclosures aren't restricted to humans, or even living beings. They aren't restricted to the sensory. The rock itself discloses a world.

'But world, for Heidegger—whom you seem to, in very broad strokes, be following—is grounded in being-in-the-world: an essential-existential openness and relatedness to Being, with all the incumbent existential structures traced out in *Being and Time*. – Surely a stone isn't being-in-the-world!'

The way of being of a stone isn't the same as the way of being of, for instance, humans. A stone doesn't seem to have life, consciousness, awareness. But a stone expresses itself and that doesn't ultimately depend on our existence: the *way* that it shows up for us depends on our world, but so too our world depends on the way it shows up. That is, we're open to the being of the stone only because the stone is open to being for us.

There are many ways to understand and interpret this.

I've shown some difficulties with the concept of 'interpretation.' The same kind of problem presents itself in thinking of 'perspectives'; that is, the problem of the subject/object division. 'There are all these interpretations, all these perspectives, and so we need to find what's common, what we can all agree upon, to determine what constitutes the reality of the thing.' – So, we need to reduce the thing and ourselves to a play of commonality, which becomes identity. We don't see how this reduction is itself a particular way of approaching beings that we've taken up.

And so, while we can reach for these terms as ways to suggest a revaluation (interpretations over 'truth'; perspectives over 'the view from nowhere'), there's always a risk: that we'll be misunderstood as upholding the old binary. Rather, the goal is similar to deconstruction (§2.68): the revaluation is an attempt to implode the binary.[208] It's not just that we take 'perspective' up over and against 'reality' (understood as what has no perspective; i.e., the view from nowhere); rather, we see that the idea of *the real is precisely a perspectival view* and always has been. Perspective is the originary source of the perspective/real binary. What's real is found *through* perspective.

2.73 "*It is precisely the force and the efficiency of the system that regularly change transgressions into 'false exits.' Taking into account these effects of the system, one has nothing, from the inside where 'we are,' but the choice between two strategies:*

"*a. To attempt an exit and a deconstruction without changing terrain, by repeating what is*

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[208] Which needs to be indicated, e.g., arche-X, and then, presumably, moved away from, else we're stuck with the binary.

implicit in the founding concepts and the original problematic, by using against the edifice the instruments or stones available in the house, that is, equally, in language. Here, one risks ceaselessly confirming, consolidating, relifting (relever)*, at an always more certain depth, that which one allegedly deconstructs. The continuous process of making explicit, moving toward an opening, risks sinking into the autism [sic] of the closure.*

"b. To decide to change terrain, in a discontinuous and irruptive fashion, by brutally placing oneself outside, and by affirming an absolute break and difference. Without mentioning all the other forms of trompe-l'oeil *perspective in which such a displacement can be caught, thereby inhabiting more naively and more strictly than ever the inside one declares one has deserted, the simple practice of language ceaselessly reinstates the new terrain on the oldest ground. The effects of such a reinstatement or of such a blindness could be shown in numerous precise instances.*

"It goes without saying that these effects do not suffice to annul the necessity for a 'change of terrain.' It also goes without saying that the choice between these two forms of deconstruction cannot be simple and unique. A new writing must weave and interlace these two motifs of deconstruction. Which amounts to saying that one must speak several languages and produce several texts at once."[209]

— Is there a danger in my project of reintroducing colonizing logics? – I worry that there is. How? Well, insofar as we're inclined to think that an assertion that is truthful must be so universally, for everyone everywhere all the time. I introduce signposts, but I also claim that each disclosure is localized: I assert something universal that underpins all disclosures. But 'universals' ride the wave of what is common (§2.62). Let's not take 'disclosure' as some kind of a metaphysical thing or stuff that underpins different disclosures. Let's hold tight to metaphoric ontology.

As Zwicky reminds us, a metaphor depends on dynamism: it "*results from an over-riding of calcified gestures of thought by being.*"[210] For Zwicky, humans are characterized by three styles of response: technological, lyric, and domestic. While we yearn for lyric experience (§2.8), we're beings who must use language, tools, etc., and so we're also beings with technological, logical, and analytic experiences. The key, for Zwicky, isn't to deride our nature, but to 'come home' in the tension between our lyric and technological nature: we come home in what she calls the domestic.[211]

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[209] Jacques Derrida, "The Ends of Man," in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 135.
[210] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH8.
[211] Zwicky, *Lyric Philosophy*, LH19, LH126, LH132–8.

For Zwicky, metaphors result from wrestling with techno-linguistic modes to express lyric insights: this tension results in the domestic mode of expression that we call metaphor.[212]

While this is a kind of digression, it helps us here. The metaphoric can be part of the deconstructive strategy expressed by Derrida. Yet, it retains traces of ways of thinking from the master's house while revealing the house to be on shifting tectonic plates. Metaphoric ontology aims to re-situate older colonial logics within a framework that changes their 'essence,' and even if it carries traces of these logics, it does so on condition that it reveals the metaphoric as a deeper 'foundation' and hence a subterranean shaking under all foundational moves.

My other point is that metaphors calcify. Our minds latch on: with time, we take them as solid and foundational. Even 'metaphoric ontology' is susceptible to this.

Why, if this may re-introduce colonizing logics, stick to such paths? How can this be ethical? — It seems to me there is no 'pure' path, nor could there be. It's a question of better and worse, listening and response, solicitude and respect, and so this isn't defeatist but it demands vigilance.

Colonization happens on an enactive, ontological level. It insists on and imposes a set of ontological stories, ontological decisions, and refuses to hear other voices, other beings. Colonization 'knows' what things and world are and it says this (which can include multiculturalism). It speaks this louder and more forcefully than other voices can speak, which it denies anyway.

I'm offering space in my thinking for other voices. But colonizing logics are on the verge of being reinstated if one thinks that my way of thinking is foundational, necessary, or universal. My path offers a way to try to walk 'forward' from the site of ongoing colonial devastation. How much of this legacy my walking carries on isn't always easy for the one who walks to see.

2.74 A world is a kind of convergence of being (§2.63); the multiplicity of worlds is their divergence. Divergence means that things don't have a determinate meaning or identity, because determinacy would require something that pins and holds together all beings but that's not part of the world (else it couldn't guarantee determinacy across and despite the divergence of worlds). It would have to be outside it, holding it together (as a pin holds the butterfly to the board but is itself not part of the butterfly).[213] But there is no pin like this.

Divergence is what allows things to be different: to have different meanings, senses, and identities for different people (or life forms).

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[212] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH67.
[213] §1.98.

2.75 We sense divergence through the hinge of what is *common* (never the *same*). "Though the hinge—the hinge of what is common (§1.1)—is not on, or attached to, the outlines of things, it almost is" (§1.5). This shouldn't be taken literally. I'm not saying that outlines of things are more real or maintain their existence through all disclosures, or that things are 'touched' at the precise point of the hinge. Rather, things are, in general, 'touched' all over, from one gathering to the next.

So, in what sense are the outlines of things almost the hinge? A particular kind of gestalt shift is possible wherein 'what we currently see' is oriented differently (§2.1). Our usual way tends to gloss over things. But there's a way in which things reveal themselves, in a kind of global sense, more in their particular characters: things become more 'alive.'

— — — Mysticism, or many strands of it, doesn't start from 'somewhere else.' It's empirical, in its own way.

I'm not really advocating for mysticism (and all that this is bound up with: in its standard opposition to reason and its contextualization within particular historical religious traditions, e.g., Christianity); I'm just trying to gesture to how different disclosures touch the world, just so.[214] And that there's an experience from within our world where everything shifts, which reveals new facets. Not new facets of old things, but new facets of things themselves.

2.76 "Error is touching the world in a way in which it or we recoil" (§1.76).

This doesn't mean that error doesn't touch the world. Suppose I think that woman over there's Rosalyn, but she's actually a stranger. It'd be a poor account of things to say that my error doesn't touch the world. My error is an error precisely because it inhabits the space of things: I thought *her* silhouette resembled Rosalyn's; her hair is the same colour, and she holds herself just so.

'I'm not sure what you're getting at. First, it seemed you were suggesting only truth touches phenomena, so error was a failure to see what's there. Now, you seem to be suggesting that error too touches phenomena, as some kind of illusion deviating from a clearer picture.'

Error *is* "*a* failure *to see what* is there."[215] Yet, it's also, in its way, seeing what is there: it isn't an illusion, as though error were somehow a mist overtop of reality. Phenomena *can* lead us astray; but in being led astray, we're still being led. To see the stranger as Rosalyn is an error,

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[214] Though, really, there's no world that stands over and against its disclosure; hence, there's no distance that would allow it to be 'touched.' That a world is gathered in a particular way is another way of saying that the world *is*.

[215] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH25.

yet this error reveals something about the phenomena: that this stranger resembles Rosalyn in X and Y ways, that there is a resonance between this stranger and Rosalyn.

'But it almost sounds like you're saying we can never be wrong.'

Well, if that's what you're hearing, listen again. – To take this stranger as Rosalyn is wrong. It isn't borne out by the phenomena; and yet, it *is partially* borne out by the phenomena.

'Ok, but you picked two people who resemble one another in certain ways. What if I mistake someone who has nothing in common with Rosalyn for her? Or, better yet, what if I mistake a lamppost for her? Or even nothing at all — I've been up all night and I'm edgy, I think I see Rosalyn, but there's nothing there.'

Ok, let's take up your last example (for the others are still suggestive of similarity). – There's nothing in the surroundings that's similar to Rosalyn. Yet, perhaps we're concealing the problem with reference to surroundings. For in thinking this way we think ourselves as facing reality bound by skin. But we're also surrounded by thoughts. Maybe we were expecting Rosalyn or thinking idly about her; maybe we were doing nothing of the sort, yet Rosalyn is clearly someone with whom we're familiar. The particular situation *called for* the phenomena of mis-taking: something about the overall context *called forth* mistaking nothing for Rosalyn; the error is rooted in the overall situation. That you *think* Rosalyn may be there *is* phenomenal. Even if it's a wrongful projection, the projection is encountered, then determined to be false.

"Error has improper traction in the world" (§1.76). – Error *has* traction insofar as it's contextualized and understood *as* error.

Suppose at the moment when you think that Rosalyn is there but it's nothing, you exclaim— 'there's Rosalyn!'—and someone nearby who knows her says 'that's not her, there's no one there!' You were always wrong, even at the moment when you were partially tracking the phenomena, for that was never Rosalyn even though you took it as being her.

'My senses were deceiving me!'

What an odd reaction. 'No: I sensed what wasn't in fact there. I jumped to an unwarranted conclusion. I should use my reason and withhold my assent to what my senses tell me to be the case.' – But that's not remotely how things happen. You *could not* withhold your assent. You *didn't* jump to a conclusion; you were pulled right in. You sensed what was there, with your reason involved. Of course, you can change how you react to such a sensation, but the point I'm making is that neither your senses nor your reason are strictly deceiving you: they're showing something that is there. To deny this in favour of 'grasping the whole thing as it is'

(i.e., not as Rosalyn but as whatever it 'really' was) is to deny an aspect of the phenomena (§2.37).

Error isn't the only way phenomena is partly taken away from itself. There's also obfuscation: for example, the tyrant who just says so. The tyrant rules by fiat, overriding alternative perception. 'The rivulet *is* a river *because I say so*.'

To evaluate a claim, we cannot simply look at what someone says of their experience, nor simply what people do: phenomena can betray both. We must turn to the phenomena. Yes, this may involve turning to what someone says of their experience or what people do. But in the case of the tyrant, we may sense ill will: the rivulet cannot appear as a river. (There's no internal relation that allows for this possibility.)

Obviously, real cases will be more persuasive. Yet, while it may be difficult to see how, for example, spirits reside in a particular river, we could take steps towards seeing how this could be the case experientially: we can't take these same steps in the case of the tyrant, short of denying the phenomena. As we approach the claim in question, we see if and how it fits. Some claims don't fit. For example, some claims betray a reliance on ontological assumptions that don't do justice to the world (e.g., grounded in *ressentiment*) — they don't affirm the world *as it is*.

'This talk of spirits and gods doesn't fit!' — Are you sure you understand what's meant by 'spirits,' 'gods'?

2.77 Stones have worlds.

A stone resists; it holds open a space for itself. This stone is a maintaining of itself, even if it's losing parts of itself or it's nested in various ways (§2.43–§2.44). It withstands, which doesn't mean there is something beyond or behind the stone that withstands;[216] it means that the stone *is* this withstanding. Eventually, it succumbs. — Any opening to world can and will be destroyed.

'But you want me to think that a stone has a world…!'

"*Look at things like this.*"

'But…the racist says, Look at things like this! Or the one who's full of hatred. The mean, the depressed, the anxious! *Why* should we look at things like *that*!'

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[216] Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 26.

— Ok, first, I'll deal with the attunements in the second 'half' of your objection. Many of these aren't by choice: one is drawn into them (anxiety, depression). We can, perhaps we should, "*Look at things like this*" — without getting drawn in. When we see things 'like this,' we do so with one foot firmly planted in our world/self. Different attunements, even within the same world, if extreme or intense enough, can begin to show *how* things would be, how things could hang together, just so: they reveal coloured tatters of worlds. We can – perhaps *should* – look, but we *also* say 'no' to the draw. Why say 'no'? Because what we see, what we sense, isn't how we want to be in the world. (We could cast this in terms of *conatus* or power;[217] i.e., it might not be a question of error.)

Ethics is what we do when faced with such situations—our preliminary response—as well as (if we look) what we do when we see how things could be that way—our subsequent response. We respond as ethical, imaginative beings.

Conatus isn't always improved by fleeing from so-called 'negativities' and sticking to so-called 'positivities' (e.g., happiness, cheerfulness). We heed and attend to our situation, which isn't always pleasant. — To take pleasure as something sacrosanct is to deny swaths of phenomena. You can respect phenomena like *anger*. To struggle with it and fight against it exacerbates the situation. *Anger* needs to be heard: not to get rid of it (we don't heed 'negativities' to reach 'positivities'), but to understand, respect, see how it appears, respond sensitively to it, and feel how it's grounded in the core of our and others' being.

Let's return to the first 'half' of the objection: the racist, the one full of hatred, the mean. Going beyond the second 'half,' these dispositions don't only narrow down phenomena, they also deny them. I can heed the phenomena of racism, hatred, meanness, but I cannot accept how they colour the world through their denials and pettiness. Maybe, in some cases, I can understand rivalry, the identification of an enemy, struggle, and combat, but not hatred as petty, blatantly reductive, or consuming and raging, rooted in a desire to rid the world of its enemy. Hatred is wrapped in irresponsibility.

When we "*Look at things like this*," we do so without necessarily getting carried away.

2.78 If a thing wasn't open to being related, it wouldn't appear at all (and hence not be a thing). Beings are always already exposed to others. And yet, they also cover themselves over: beings are tricksters.

While beings keep some of themselves back, it is not as essence or core; their relatedness is constituted by the revealing-concealing interplay of aspects. This also means that a being isn't most itself for itself — a being isn't one hundred percent in itself, and subsequently gives off one hundred minus X to others; *a being is itself for others and with others*, it's constituted in

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[217] Spinoza, *Ethics*, Prop. VI–VIII, Part III, p. 91; Prop. XII, Part III, p. 94.

its relatedness to others, and hence is itself through reaching out beyond itself. This constitution includes faces it shows and ones it could show with further investigation. No being is transparent, nor fully present to itself.

Because beings surprise us, and because beings require us and others to be what they are, we can surprise ourselves: we don't know how we'd react in every situation. We may also think of ourselves in a given way, and yet others may see closer to the truth, for we cannot fully see ourselves.

In turning away from itself, a thing becomes itself.

2.79 Perhaps you'd wish to use Occam's Razor to simplify my picture, but it's not clear what "simplify" means here: maybe the picture of singular being is 'simpler' for us, but is it if it drifts from experience which favours a relational, contextual, and multi-layered multiplicity?

'But—to use a theological example—one God is simpler than many gods.'

Based on what criteria? In a general sense, what makes an option simpler than another? We almost want to say: the simpler path is simpler! But that, of course, doesn't say anything.

Simplicity needs something further to motivate or clarify it, perhaps a pre-determined, untheorized aesthetic or practical sense we have.

But maybe having multiple perspectives is simpler; maybe multiplicity is simpler than unity, the many simpler than the one. – Simpler how? Maybe it 'saves' the phenomena in fewer steps, with fewer corollaries. – But then we also need to ask why simplicity should be our goal, anyway. What evidence do we have that a simpler explanation is more likely to be true or accurate?

2.80 Philosophy doesn't try to make us a home nor does it try to disrupt our home; rather, it heeds how our home changes. Our homes change whether we want them to or not.

Philosophy attends to the world because the world calls and interpolates the philosopher; they've been summoned to respond to the glimmer of things. Their character is at stake, for character is determined by responsivity.

But one doesn't become a philosopher; one philosophizes for a while.

2.81 The first step is to learn how to listen to listening, how to attend to attending, for listening cannot be determined in advance. This can't be emphasized enough: if you *know* what respect is, you've already shown that you don't.

Ethics quintessentially involves uncertainty.

We listen to things, we listen to the world. We listen to ourselves, as listener, being listened to. We listen to listening.

Listening calls for reorientation, for it opens to itself as to the openness of a question (§2.40).

2.82 In a sense, we're returning to our senses and empirical experience, but we must become attuned to how perception is shaped by our metaphysics and framework for understanding. If, for instance, we perceive things through the filter of causation, understood as efficient cause,[218] or if we perceive things as self-contained, things show themselves in a particular way.

'Ok, but it sort of seems like you're saying: check the phenomena — but when I do this, I don't see stones, for example, as the kind of thing that could have a world. I cannot make sense of this even if I withhold dissent and do as you say: I look at things *that* way. You can't simply hide behind claims that I'm not listening deeply enough, that I'm not attending properly. If you want me to understand, with all your provisos about attending and criteria and arguments and reasons set aside for now, *you need to provide reasons*: the onus is on *you to show how* your claim could be the case.'

— What is a world? It's our relation to the whole (not the totality). It's that wherein beings are related together. It's an opening before consciousness or perception, for it's their condition of possibility; we must be openness before we can be conscious or perceptive, which are both intentional (i.e., consciousness of… or perception of…). The world is an opening for us so long as our body is maintained as an inter-permeable membrane or boundary with an environment (§2.43, §2.77): so long as we are a coalescence of forces.

These a stone has.

A stone is related to the whole of beings which it lets be as the beings they are. This means that a stone stands within the clearing of its relations, i.e., in relation to the whole; these relations make it what it is and others what they are. This doesn't necessarily mean that it's open to beings consciously or perceptually; rather, it lets beings be such that they can encounter, impact, or influence the stone, and it them. The way the stone lets beings be isn't the same way that, for instance, we let beings be or an ostrich lets beings be.

'But the stone is entirely and essentially *closed* to all encounters!'

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[218] Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 7.

The stone is impactable and influenceable, and, in general, resists through its encounters: it seeks to maintain its integrity (which, we recall, is nested; §2.44). The stone ongoingly stands-forth in the midst of beings.

'But why think it has a relation to beings as a whole?'

For Heidegger, *Dasein* encounters 'beings as a whole' through fundamental attunements (angst, profound boredom, etc.).[219] Are stones fundamentally attuned? What do we mean by attunement? Attunement is how an entity is attuned to beings: one *finds oneself* in the midst of beings as a whole, which is distinct from comprehending it: "*[H]ow should we who are essentially finite make the whole of beings totally accessible in itself and also for us? […] In the end an essential distinction prevails between comprehending the whole of beings in themselves and finding oneself […] in the midst of beings as a whole. […] [B]eing attuned, in which we 'are' one way or another and which determines us through and through, lets us find ourselves among beings as a whole.*"[220] Relating to 'beings as a whole' isn't about relating to each individual being, but about being open to any given being, open to all beings. 'Beings as a whole' isn't a mass of beings just sitting there; 'beings as a whole' is a relational structuration of beings.

Of course, the way a stone 'finds itself' is different from the way *Dasein* does; 'finding itself' doesn't necessitate reflexivity, but rather gestures to the 'perspective' of the stone. The stone finds itself in the midst of beings as a whole, thrown there, with the possibility of encountering any being. For early Heidegger, the aforementioned attunements reveal that *Dasein* is always metaphysical;[221] the stone, too, is open to 'beings as a whole,' beyond its immediate surroundings, insofar as it's relationally open to involvement with other entities.

2.83 Let me put forward something I'll call the *Principle of Phenomenological Charity*. Its cousin is the Principle of Charity, where we try to be as charitable as possible to a position by giving it the benefit of the doubt. The Principle of Phenomenological Charity is an attempt to see things in the way that they were proposed *phenomenologically*; it is to give a position the benefit of the doubt not just by giving the position the strongest reasons or interpretation you can conceive, but by rooting it in a phenomenological, experiential perspective: in other words, you see how things would look if things were the way it says they are/could be, and then, you see how—and *if*—things fit. This principle is needed because claims are rooted phenomenologically, in our lived experience of being in the truth (the clearing).

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[219] Martin Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?" in *Pathmarks*, trans. David Farrell Krell, p. 86–90; Heidegger, *FCM*, p. 59, 138–9, 162, 272, 282–4.

[220] Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?," p. 86–7.

[221] ibid, p. 93–6.

Let's take Mill's principle, which says that (most) every saying has some truth and some falsity,[222] out of context. We say that every response has some truth and some falsity (i.e., it responds well in some ways and poorly in others). Here, we arrive at a motivation for the Principle of Phenomenological Charity, for every gesture, saying, and response comes out of an adherence to things as they are.

This principle isn't something to just think about but to embody. All views, in one way or another, (at least partly) respect phenomena. More: *there are many views that respect most of the phenomena*.

To begin to see this is, itself, to begin to *respect the phenomena as they are*; it's to *pay respect* to the myriad ways of being that *are*.

2.84 There's no position outside the game: we're always observing from particular places in particular contexts, and there's no way to step outside to some 'neutral' position (a little more objective and shorn of particularity).

Things always carry traces of aspects we haven't grasped (§2.82), which means aspects escape us. The idea of a God that guarantees totalizability is an attempt to seal off this leak, this essential leakage. Following Derrida, this God is the centre that's ultimately outside the structure of creation (§1.98); God guarantees totalization only by escaping it. The dam of our finitude is plugged by the infinitude of God, but at the cost of positing God *as* the essential leakage, i.e., that which escapes (§2.74).

This perspective that's not a perspective (because, as God, it's all possible perspective) would have to accomplish a *total* 'perceiving' of, relating to, 'knowing,' and grounding of *all* things: it'd have to be 'sensing'/relating to all things at all times such that all is always contained and conserved (omniscience, omnipresence) and given sense (omnisensical) (§2.35). But the problem is not just that we're wrong to think we could know, value, or manage *everything* (even in theory, even through the concept of an omniscient God, even in general terms). The problem is that we still think there's *an everything* at all.

A desire for this kind of view (which emerges in certain frameworks of objectivity, even those based on statistical probability) reveals a ghostal lineage to God as leakage, a denial of my

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[222] *"But there is a commoner case than either of these; when the conflicting doctrines, instead of being one true and the other false, share the truth between them; and the nonconforming opinion is needed to supply the remainder of the truth, of which the received doctrine embodies only a part. Popular opinions, on subjects not palpable to sense, are often true, but seldom or never the whole truth."* John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty: and Other Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 52. And: *"though the silenced opinion be an error, it may, and very commonly does, contain a portion of truth; and since the general or prevailing opinion on any subject is rarely or never the whole truth, it is only by the collision of adverse opinions that the remainder of the truth has any chance of being supplied"* (p. 59).

thesis on worlds, and a desire for a position outside positionality. Worlds are wholes, and there is no totality above and inclusive of them all.

2.85 The idea of neutrality is revealed to be its opposite: it's to take up a position and perspective.

Neutrality doesn't escape the game, but is a move within it. Consider a situation where skipping your turn would be against the rules of a game. In this case, it may indicate a 'step back': I'm no longer interested in playing this game. But we don't thereby escape all play: this move steps back in another game (e.g., the negotiation over whether or not to play). The game we were playing included the possibility of quitting or committing infractions, for games always involve, and create, implicitly, exceptions and infractions.

The 'view from nowhere'—a position of no-position—is an imaginative leap in which we shear our perspective. The resultant 'perspective' is none-too-human, and, for this reason, all-too-human. It seeks to do the impossible: negate our experience, the condition of its conception. It seeks what will remain and outlast our finitude, our demise; it's founded on our death or disappearance and attempts to set up a field we can reach outside of ourselves and our mortality.[223]

The 'objective' 'view from nowhere' is nowhere humans could dwell, and yet, it's precisely part of human dwelling: this is a sleight of hand, a move made within the context of play. It's a way of play intended to secure against future moves and plays; it attempts to arrest its own flux: "*The center is at the center of the totality, and yet, since the center does not belong to the totality (is not part of the totality), the totality* has its center elsewhere. *[…] The concept of centered structure is in fact the concept of a freeplay based on a fundamental ground, a freeplay which is constituted upon a fundamental immobility and a reassuring certitude, which is itself beyond the reach of the freeplay.*"[224]

'But you've spoken at length about the possibilities of imagining that which you aren't. How is this different?'

With imagination (§2.6), one is perspectivally oneself. From there, one can begin to 'see,' in a sense, what other perspectives are. It is in heeding other perspectives that we come to see how things are. For them and for us. But we cannot open to our own negation, to a negation of all particular perspectives that somehow amounts to the positing of an all-perspective. Being-in-the-world cannot open to a disclosure-that's-not-a-disclosure outside or beyond all disclosures. Any such 'disclosure' is merely a fantasy within a particular disclosure, a desire based on a particular onto-theological principle (§2.84).

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[223] Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, p. 160.
[224] Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," p. 915–6. See §1.98.

2.86 There's an analogous problem to that of neutrality in using practicality to ground a situation. 'Why do you draw maps this way?' 'Because they reflect our needs and wants.' While this isn't wrong *per se*, it glosses too quickly. If we take ourselves as confronted by facts that we assemble or organize in line with our values, as though we're self-directing or self-starting, then we've taken our will or freedom out of play (i.e., directing the play from afar). However, it's also wrong to say we have no choice and that the context completely *demands* how things are to be, as though the situation itself is what's out of play.

Rather, we, in and with and as part of the context, make choices and decisions; we interact dialogically with the world. Practical aims are part of the world.

'Why do you draw maps this way?' – Any reason I provide is a description of what I already do. But remember! Descriptions aren't *neutral*. They *explain* the situation; they explain why I do what I do. They're tautological (in a broad sense). Good reasons make sense within a context.

2.87 "*This is simply what I do.*"[225]
'Why do you drive on the right side?'
'Why do you eat with utensils instead of your hands?'
'Why do you investigate nature through scientific experiment?'

Eventually, we hit bedrock: 'this is simply what *we* do.' I may give reasons, but eventually they move in a circle.

'But you jump from cultural contingencies to scientific investigation!'

Any practice—broadly construed—is a 'cultural contingency.' We want to say scientific investigation isn't a group practice; but it is.

We want to say that scientific investigation constantly touches the world, whereas the side we drive on or how we eat is convention; while we have reasons for the latter, alternate ways work just as well. But this isn't right, for we're always 'touching' the world, even with what we call a 'cultural contingency.' To eat with utensils isn't superfluous, an arbitrary exertion of our collective will; it's intertwined with a whole metaphysics of food, relating to an array of things, such as our body, how we eat, how we divide the day, where and how we sit and with whom. The world speaks to us and we respond in particular ways.

'This is simply what we do' doesn't mean what we do is right. We're called, we're put in question, such that we ourselves can question. Our questioning is a response, but an answer

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[225] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §217, p. 91.

doesn't annul a question: it questions the question. It asks, 'is this sufficient?' — There are other ways to answer. There are other ways to do things.

This insufficiency is the condition of meaning. Meaning leaps across the gap, the rift, the schism between things (§2.23). Meaning is when things fit together (§2.12, §2.43), commonality based in difference; meaning beckons across the divide (§2.20), without ever healing it. (Contrary to the fantasies of full communication, full transparency, a dialectic reconciliation.) Thus, meaning is a way of relating to what's lost and not part of you: what's dissipating and vulnerable (§2.7).

Because of frailty, we project continuity: "*Passive synthesis is of [this] latter kind: it constitutes our habit of living, our expectation that 'it' will continue, that one of the two elements will appear after the other [like the pairing of tick-tock], thereby assuring the perpetuation of our case.*"[226]

"*Hence the psycho-analytic school could venture the assertion that at bottom no one believes in his own death [sic], or, to put the same thing in another way, that in the unconscious every one of us is convinced of his own immortality.*"[227]

"*'What is the most wondrous thing in the world?' asks Yama, the Lord of Death. His son, Yudhiṣthira, answers, 'The most wondrous thing in the world is that all around us people can be dying and we don't believe it can happen to us.'*"[228]

These quotes apply beyond ourselves, for we project a continuity beyond ourselves, too (and): to those we love, the shape of the world with which we're familiar, certain ideals, and so on. This continuity allows us to get on with our day, but at a cost: we drive quickly because we ignore the frailty of things. If we were struck by this frailty, we'd get on with our day, but differently. You must change your life.[229]

Things have meaning because they're cracked, held to the fire, burning within. When we project continuity, we long to secure ourselves from pain, loss, and death. But though this effort emerges from being rooted in love and frailty, we isolate ourselves from the source: we cover the frailty which covers love and the sense of meaningfulness. To love is to lose (§2.7) — not in the future, for love is to already have lost what you love.

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[226] Deleuze, *Difference & Repetition*, p. 74.
[227] Freud, "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death," cited in Derrida, *The Beast & the Sovereign, Volume II*, Sixth Session, p. 157.
[228] Quote from Evan Thompson, *Waking, Dreaming, Being: Self and Consciousness in Neuroscience, Meditation, and Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), p. 274. From the *Mahabharata*, Vana Parva, Yaksha Prashna, s. CCCXI; cited without reference in Joan Halifax, *Being with Dying: Cultivating Compassion and Fearlessness in the Presence of Death* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 2008), p. 6; partially quoted in Thompson, *Waking, Dreaming, Being*.
[229] Rilke, "Archaic Torso of Apollo," in *Translations from the Poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke*, p. 181, cited in Zwicky, *Lyric Philosophy*, RH219.

"When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy. / When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight."[230]

'What we do' emerges in part from a responsive engagement with love and loss, and is itself always open to further response.

2.88 Attending to something means you're slighting something else. — We can't respond to everything that calls.

Though we may tell ourselves stories to heal and harmonize existence, and though gods to cooperate, the gods also war amongst each other: you cannot satisfy them all.

"How would you ever justify the fact that you sacrifice all the cats in the world to the cat that you feed at home every day for years, whereas other cats die of hunger at every instant?"[231]

This doesn't mean you shouldn't attend to that to which you're attending, nor that you could even always know what (or that) you're slighting. But it does mean that being attentive and responsive means attending to attending.

> It's not that Oedipus should've had more information in his situation. His responsibility stems from what he had done. 'He had no way of knowing what he did!' It doesn't matter. He did it. We put credence in intentions, in what someone 'meant' to do; but Oedipus *did* something horrendous. He feels responsible, reprehensible, in a way that responsibility isn't beholden to what he has in his control.

> The Dene are Indigenous peoples in the Great Bear Lake area in Canada's Northwest Territories. During World War II, they were employed to mine uranium on their land without knowing for what it was being used. Some time after the war, they learned that this uranium had gone into the atomic bombs that were dropped on Japan. In response, they sent a delegation on a boat trip to Japan to try to make amends to the Japanese *on behalf of their land*. Even though they never knew the purpose of the mining, they apologized for the use their land had been put to and their involvement in it. They apologized on behalf of themselves, their people, their land.[232]

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[230] Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1998), p. 29.

[231] Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death and Literature in Secret*, trans. David Wills (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), p. 71.

[232] Peter Blow, director, *Village of Widows: The Story of the Sahtu Dene and the Atomic Bomb*, Lindum Films, 1999, 52 min; Julie Salverson, *Lines of Flight: An Atomic Memoir* (Hamilton, ON: Wolsak and Wynn Publishers Ltd., 2016); Peter C. Van Wyck, *The Highway of the Atom* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), p. 38–49, 160, 180–8, 204; Canada-Déline Uranium Table, *Final*

In both cases, we sense a different sense of responsibility, one that doesn't adhere to what is or should be in one's control. We often do—nay, we always do—wrong without knowing — we always slight others. We can apologize for situations out of our control, on behalf of our land, as though we're responsible for our relations; or, rather, our responsibility is, and can be, constituted only by our relatedness: we precisely *are* our relations.

Responsibility involves responding to calls regarding how it is we should respond: i.e., responsibility involves being responsive to responsibility; we *are* a responsibility to responsibility. This means that we cannot know in advance what it means to respond, let alone to respond adequately.

2.89 Another form of living may appear irresponsive to us, for it may appear as though it isn't responding to those aspects we see.

There are different worlds. This doesn't preclude, but is the condition of communication.[233] Communication rides the wave of what is common.

We live our metaphysics. For each world, metaphysics informs how other metaphysics are seen; a more responsive metaphysics is better. — My view isn't meta-metaphysical, it's just metaphysical, for every metaphysics deals with other metaphysics.

'Other forms of living may appear irresponsive.' This means all of the following (to varying degrees): they *are* irresponsive; they *seem* irresponsive; they *are* responsive *for* that form of living; they *seem* responsive *for* that form of living. (— *Also,* they may *be* or *seem* irresponsive *for* them; *and be* or *seem partly* responsive for us). In what sense things appear irresponsive will inform what form our response takes.

2.90 Much of my text speaks to *variations on world*. Thingly, stone, living, plant, non-human animal, and human; colourizations, wisps, fragments, and non-totalizable wholes; a disclosure of beings as a whole and beings as beings; the fit of meaning; and resistance, maintenance, encounterability, orientability, and response. Worlds interlock, overlap, and diverge.

2.91 Openness precedes security or identity because worlds and things can never be hermetically sealed. There's a prior precariousness or vulnerability to things. Against their efforts to maintain themselves, they're already pulled out of themselves into uncontrollable relations. This is essential to any world or thing (otherwise the 'thing,' the X, would be closed in on itself, unplaceable in any other disclosure, and hence, because it would be unable to

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Report: Concerning Health and Environmental Issues Related to the Port Radium Mine, August 2005; Dene First Nation of Déline, *They Never Told Us These Things*, July 1998.

[233] See the discussion of meaning in §2.87.

encounter others, it would lack even a disclosure it could call its own). A thing *is* its openness, and it *is because of* its openness.

This openness of things enables communicability and meaning. For one trying to *secure* against loss, this openness may be interpreted as violent. And in attempting to secure against it, the violence is projected outwards.

This doesn't mean that we won't or shouldn't identify or secure things — I don't think we could stop if we wanted to; it's a question of how we think of identification and security.

2.92 We try to secure what's evident. Non-evident evidence emerges only by imploding what's evident.

Appeal to the self-evident doesn't solve anything. First, phenomena can always show new aspects. Second, self-evidence grounds particular forms of living but it doesn't resonate in the same way across different contexts and different forms of living. There may be reasons for self-evidentness, why one's spade's turned, but the reasons and the turning of the spade are context-dependent, which is the context of the disclosure. One cannot induce a vision of a disclosure in another, but one can point to phenomena in ways such that commonalities may be seen across differences.

We can show others why things are a particular way for us: 'Look at things this way.' 'Yes, I can see how X is obvious, self-evident, for you.'

2.93 The gods war amongst each other: this phrase illuminates not only how we ordinarily think—e.g., what we take as evident—but also points us toward new possibilities. Metaphors refocus not only one term, but also the other (§2.2).

Relatedly, it's insufficient to close this book and say, 'I understand,' for you haven't understood understanding if you take it to mean simply 'intellectually' surmounting or passing through something; understanding isn't being able to recite something. To understand is to feel a resonance, to see how things could be and are this way — not descriptively, but transformatively, for understanding refocuses us. Understanding is being seized, feeling its fingers around you. — We're not tourists here.

That the gods war amongst each other reveals an openness—a violence (§2.91)—before, as well as continuing long after, attempts to constitute security and identity. That the gods war amongst each other doesn't simply deny a unity to the onto-theological: it denies a unity to the selfsame, identical human. This is because that the gods war amongst each other isn't something external that sometimes impinges upon the human realm. Rather, the gods reveal fragments of overlapping and inconsistent worlds — worlds in tension with one another. A human is never an entity that's independent of the constitution of a world and only

subsequently attached to one: humans are *being-in-the-world*: they're constituted in their openness to their world. Humans become caught in the sway of the to and fro rocking of worlds. — Ethics responds from our primordial woundedness: our inability to be a singular or contained entity.

2.94 We grasp for security with our stories of social, technological, scientific, and even individual (developmental) progress: we tell ourselves these stories that subtend practical comportment (§2.87). But they're ruptured because the gods war amongst each other (§2.21, §2.49), for there's no unitary standard for measuring progress (§2.53).

In providing answers regarding what things are *for* and how we fit in, these stories answer questions about the meaning of being. This means, more primordially, these stories have addressed the mystery of being.

When stories lose traction, we're faced again with the mystery of being. This is a unique opportunity. But this mystery isn't properly addressed when Heidegger speaks of the mystery of Being and beings.[234] Nor is it properly addressed when we ask stale, prefabricated questions: what's (our) existence *for*? what's the *point* of (my) existence? These questions too quickly band-aid or dress up the way we were before (teleology, use-value): in *Robinson Crusoe*, the protagonist sits on the beach and wonders: "*What is this earth and sea of which I have seen so much, whence is it produced, and what am I, and all the other creatures, wild and tame, human and brutal, whence are we?*"[235]

In the face of the one God, we were all called to a path of development: the same path for all (where variations are modulations of the universal). Every human had this possibility, which unfolded in a particular way, guaranteed by the Creator: the soul turned from deviance and creation towards its Creator and proper *telic* unfolding: guilt, sin, repentance, and rebirth. Now, with the absence of the one God, the path changes, but continues in our accounts of unitary progress.

To wedge open possibilities, to open us to the multitude of gods, and to better address the mystery of being, we turn towards what Heidegger calls *being-towards-death*—for death has a way of *exposing* us to our situation, a situation of the tenuousness of ourselves *and* others— and his notion of *the clearing*, which speaks to the temporary and temporal opening, lighting up, and revealing of things around us in a 'space' of responsivity and mutual clearing.

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[234] On the "*wonder of all wonders:* that *beings* are" see Heidegger, "Postscript to 'What is Metaphysics?'," in *Pathmarks*, trans. William McNeill, p. 234. On the enigmatic — "*What is more enigmatic: that beings are, or that Being 'is'? Or does even this reflection fail to bring us close to that enigma which has occurred with the Being of beings?*" — see Heidegger, "Introduction to 'What is Metaphysics?'," in *Pathmarks*, trans. Walter Kaufmann, p. 290. On the mystery of "*the concealing of what is concealed as a whole, of beings as such, i.e., the mystery*" see Heidegger, "On the Essence of Truth," p. 148–51 and also "Letter on 'Humanism'," p. 253, 255.
[235] Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (London: Arcturus Publishing Limited, 2013), p. 91, "June 28."

The mystery of being isn't just that things are, that they are the things they are, or that there is 'isness' at all, though it does involve these. The mysteriousness is our placedness in this vastness, where things are connecting-diverging, in their mutual exposures and exposing, decaying and transforming, shining and seducing from their placedness—i.e., in their meaningfulness—in the midst of the warring of the gods; the mysteriousness is that Beings flash out (§2.51, §2.52) — that there 'are' 'isnesses.' The mysteriousness is the standing forth of things. It's that we come to think we *know* how to be here.

2.95 The gods war amongst each other: this means there are other arrangements of world and things. We can turn to things themselves and ask them how would things be if the gods war amongst each other?

Going back to things themselves is *powerful*. – Power and authority are bound up with relations to and interpretations of phenomena. Nietzsche noticed that naming things and expressing relations is central to power.[236] Baudrillard described how the system of value and signs, of capital (i.e., a system of relations), holds power through unilateral giving, for relations of giving express relations of power.[237] Particular relations with things, informed by metaphysics, are then expressed when we relate to others.

Why were Indigenous languages and cultures in places like Canada seen by settlers as threats? Why was the heterodoxy that crystallized around witches in the Middle Ages seen as a threat? Why was the Church concerned with heathens? —— In part, because these offered alternate loci of power, alternate ways of relating to things (of naming things, relating to the land, giving, receiving, exchange, and devoutness): they offered alternate interpretations, metaphysics, and ontologies.

Through an authority, such as the state, interpretations can be locked down with the threat of physical violence.[238] Through the system of value, capital, and signs, power and interpretations have been secured.

My text can be understood as a call to (re)claim power through relating to things themselves.

Different words, dispositions, practices, and relations can be enough to bring forth the wrath of authority, for they challenge it. Authority is often sensitive in a way not indicative of strength, but of weakness: "*As a community grows in power, it ceases to take the offence of the individual quite so seriously [....] 'What do I care about my parasites', it could say, 'let them*

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[236] Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 12.
[237] Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, p. 36–7, 40, 42–3.
[238] Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, trans. and ed. H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 78–9.

live and flourish: I am strong enough for all that!'"[239] — But faced with challenges, there's no choice but to respond (within the structure of gift-logic and the *challenge* (§2.58)) — the question is *how* they do so.

What is silenced in the consolidation of power is never just human voices, but also things themselves. This isn't just violence*: it's ontological violence, ontological devastation.*

2.96 That the gods war amongst each other means knowledge can have no universals and there are no grounds for absolute certainty — of prime importance to philosophy: a 'point' to hold things together just so.

When our concern ceases to be laying all things out on a grid in line with non-contradiction (e.g., only one thing can be in one place at any given time), we open a new horizon for philosophy; not epistemology in service of technological mastery, but rather divergent ontologies. Not seeking one principle to unify disparity itself; even now we think of pluralities or pluralism within a singular principled frame (e.g., tolerance). That the gods war amongst each other means that there is no single rule, criterion, or argumentative form.

'The gods war amongst each other' is a depth charge. – If set right, it'll show how atheism too is beholden to the principle of God. Another way to put this is that an onto-theological principle doesn't need God *per se*. For the typical atheist, the world is still singular, unified, and held together such that universal knowledge is guaranteed, absolute certainty is coherent (even if unattainable), and all can be mapped on the non-contradictive grid.

Religious ontologies run deeper than the godhead.

We err in thinking all things in our galaxy revolve around the sun. We forget that forces also implicate the sun, that the active/passive dichotomy is distributed throughout the galaxy, that the sun is not the metaphysical centre we once thought it was. This was a projection of our metaphysics, a way to ground our onto-theology, an insistence on the absolute centre and guarantor of meaning, which also grounds our onto-ethics (§2.19) and onto-politics.

We have a long history of longing for authoritarianism.

We have a long history of combating doubt, chaos, contradiction, superstition, and anarchy, calling these evil, reconciling all voices into one (the recession of polyphony). We wanted a stake to secure the specimen. But I'm *not* calling for a reversal where we would value doubt, chaos, contradiction, etc., for these are *created* by a particular orientation; they're shadows with which our onto-ethical authoritarianism *had* to wrestle, for they're caricatures of competing ways of being. If the sleep of reason produces monsters, it's not when sleep lets

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[239] Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 47, 48.

down its guard; it's reason *as* sleep — reason itself produces monsters. Not *ex nihilo*: for it gathers them together, monstrously, from various sources, hideously repainting them.

The war against disorder, against darkness, can never end. Lightness, as we think it, *is* precisely a war: lightness is inextricably implanted within the dark/light binary, linked to the evil/good binary. We strive to eradicate evil and produce it at the same time.

2.97 We have another image of orbits in the transition from the Erinyes to the Eumenides in Aeschylus:[240] the image of the *polis* as the centre around which individuals move. Feminine earth deities become bound to masculine Olympian ones, and the idea of retributive justice that's buried deep in land and blood is replaced by a social justice embodied in the courthouse.

This centralization resonates with the drive we have towards onto-ethical authoritarianism. There's a supplanting of one religious ontology by another — one onto-ethics by another; and an onto-ethics is always also an onto-politics, onto-theology, onto-epistemology, and so on. The subjugating, assimilating, or negotiating of one onto-theology with or by another is a relatively common occurrence: Titans and Olympians, many gods in the Old Testament, Hinduism and the Buddha.

— But who's this 'we' I'm talking about? Not everyone has longed for authoritarianism. There are other positions, often brutally repressed, oppressed, suppressed. Nonetheless, we see dominant, authoritarian positions stretching back into 'our' past, even where those who longed for it often knew not what they did.

The 'true way' has always required heretics; it must say 'no, not that.'

The transition from the Erinyes to the Eumenides is 'progress' for one in a particular lineage.

2.98 Following a kind of thread, a story of consolidation, we leap to one of those key thinkers who also looked back to the Greeks: Freud. Freud helps plant the seeds for a revolution in rethinking humans: he opens the clear rational subject to the darkness of the unconscious.

The fascinating thing is that while he opens the way for an array of forces that constitute and pull the subject apart, he nonetheless maintains the subject as the centre around which these forces dance.[241] This awakens us to the pull of gods who war amongst each other, but at the cost of secularizing and binding them to the internal world of a subject. As internalized, they're distinguished from objective reality (fantasy/reality, internal/external); an imbalance of forces can also be treated (e.g., by bringing metaphoric, imagic displacements to words,

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[240] Aeschylus, "The Furies," in *The Oresteia Trilogy*.
[241] It's as though he subjugates Nietzschean insights to the selfsame subject.

thereby taming them[242]). Thus, when something is wrong, it's something wrong with *you*: a psychologist or therapist can help you return to your self as an ideal, quasi-stabilized or balanced subject. And while I don't doubt there are subtle, alternate readings to the account I've given, I'm painting a broad way we pick this up.

Freud traces many ruptures back to childhood trauma, further encapsulating forces within an identical subject who develops a life story through organismic development. The Oedipal Complex revolves around the dramatic triangulation of mother-father-child. As Deleuze and Guattari point out: "*what a grotesque error to think that the unconscious-as-child is acquainted only with daddy-mommy, and that it doesn't know 'in its own way' that its father has a boss who is not a father's father, or moreover that its father himself is a boss who is not a father.*"[243] "*A child never confines himself [sic] to playing house, to playing only at being daddy-and-mommy. He also plays at being a magician, a cowboy, a cop or a robber, a train, a little car.*"[244] The child and parents are always open beyond the confines of any triangulation or internalization, for they're open dramatically to beings that call out and gods that war.

Deleuze and Guattari point out that the break between Freud and Jung is partly rooted in Jung's refusal to link everything to the Oedipal Complex. Instead, Jung's theory leads to archetypes: not just mother-father-child, but also magician, sorcerer, demon, and so on.[245] – And yet, even the archetype theory, while expanding past Freud's constrictions, is still constricted: the collective unconscious speaks of a universal patterning and formation of our psyche.[246] (The same holds true for Joseph Campbell who, while opening us to the riches of myth, religion, and other traditions, puts all these voices around the centre of a psychoanalytic subject.[247])

That the gods war amongst each other doesn't mean that they do so psychologically, i.e., within our psyche; gods and world don't reside within the human subject. Instead, the gods can tear this subject open and leave its entrails scattered among the branches and leaves. As being-in-the-world, we're *exposed*.

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[242] Sigmund Freud, "The Interpretation of Dreams," in *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, eds. Vincent B. Leitch, William E. Cain, Laurie Finke, and Barbara Johnson, trans. James Strachey (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2001), p. 923–6.

[243] Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, p. 97.

[244] ibid, p. 46.

[245] See §1.98. Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, p. 46.

[246] Carl Jung, "The Concept of the Collective Unconscious," in *The Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Part I: Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, vol. 9, part 1, eds. Gerhard Adler, Michael Fordham, William McGuire, and Herbert Read, trans. R.F.C. Hull (New York: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 42–4.

[247] Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (New York: Princeton University Press, 1973); *Primitive Mythology: The Masks of God* (New York: Penguin Books, 1976); *Oriental Mythology: The Masks of God* (New York: Penguin Books, 1976); *Occidental Mythology: The Masks of God* (New York: Penguin Books, 1976); *Creative Mythology: The Masks of God* (New York, Penguin Books, 1976).

2.99 This problem of tethering—the galaxy to the sun, the gods to the *polis*, psychic forces to the subject—is the problem of reductionism: diverse phenomena are pulled back to a central principle or point.

— Are atoms and quarks the *best* way to explain the phenomena? For we need to ask: what *are* the phenomena in question? Let's take, as example, the claim that this coffee is a particular arrangement of chemicals and, thus, atoms. Well, no, that's *not* what this coffee *is*: this misses something fundamental about the coffee. Is the sun a series of gases and atomic particles? Well, those are aspects of it, but not what the sun *is*. We avoid reductive interpretations of the sun or the coffee, for they *are* in this way, but they also *are not*.

— What about the self? Is the self an *atomistic* subject? This, too, is reductive: it misses something fundamental about the relationality of the self, the way the self is open *before* itself: temporally, historically, relationally. What these show is our need—i.e., our felt sense that we need—to ground entities in the smallest possible universal building blocks on top of which everything else (e.g., diversity) is based: i.e., difference emergent upon identity, change on stability, particularity from universality.

— But what about the idea that at the core of our being is pure awareness, and this is what we really are: this is our kernel, our core?

Well, could there be such a 'thing'? If consciousness is always consciousness *of* something (i.e., intentionality),[248] then so, too, awareness is always awareness *of* something.

Perhaps we could infer pure awareness from its effects or 'process': we could seek either the condition of possibility for intentionality, or what various instances of intentionality have in common. However, in doing so, we take what is common between instances or experiences and reduce it to some kind of basic 'stuff.'

Even if we grant that there might be pure awareness, we would need to ask what it is: is it a thing, a set of relations, or something else? For if we're always aware of something, if we're always open in our being to other beings, and if we're always open to temporality, wouldn't it make more sense if it is a set of relations and not some thing? For it's always indebted to some other thing, aware of, open to, or related to something else. Awareness is always both conditioned (by others) and conditioning (others). Therefore, awareness is never pure (i.e., unconditioned), and even if we found a pure awareness (through abstraction), for it to be awareness it'd still be relational, and it wouldn't by itself encapsulate what it is to be aware or be a self, for as abstracted it'd miss too much of the phenomena. Awareness isn't a core, but, as embodied, it's something that's *throughout* and extending beyond our being.

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[248] Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, trans. Dorion Cairns (Norwell, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999), p. 33.

Would we say that (pure) awareness is permanent/enduring or temporary? If it's a set of relations, it'd be temporary: relations, as essential to it, aren't static or settled. Nonetheless, it could be enduring, perhaps not in specificity (because of shifting relations), but in some other way: for example, if we posited something like 'energy' as underlying specific manifestations of itself. However, here again we'd be taking 'energy' as a reduction of 'what is common' between various contexts. In addition, this 'energetic' awareness would change so drastically with the loss and changing nature of its relations that it wouldn't mean much to insist on it enduring. Instead, awareness is temporary through and through: the self is a concrescence or cohesion of forces that exists so long as the forces are related in this way. Let's call this *opening-while-holding-back*.

2.100

2.101 Sometimes, we think of five tastes (sweet, salty, sour, bitter, umami — or spicy). But is this how we taste? Or are we picking commonalities—for example: between white, balsamic, and other vinegars, white wine, lemon, orange, pineapple—and ossifying them as basic things (e.g., sourness)? Yes, these things are sour, but is that the whole, *basic* story? – And it's not a matter of refining categories (e.g., vinegar-sour, citrus-sour), but of questioning this method or habit. Even if these are all sour, why think this is essential? Even if sourness is one vector upon which to think through connections, why insist on its fundamentalness or priority; why not *let* different entities reveal commonalities and differences?

Why think philosophy should always or predominantly seek regularity for anticipating experience[249] (i.e., for practical goals)? Why not think that what is empirical or experienced cannot always be shown or applied universally or generally?

The anticipation of experience provides safety and security, and enables a redirection of attention and energy towards other projects, but at the risk of missing particularities. Missing phenomena undermines safety and security, for we're particular beings who interact with particular others. We even forget that the goal of amassing knowledge and predictability isn't a precursor to our aims and goals, but is an expression of them. We forget that beings can be approached in many ways other than from the orientation of our technological enframed way of being (§1.106).

2.102 The charge of 'nihilist' to my writing would be unfounded. The term would be an accusation: that I'm defiling the tradition and advocating for everything it's tried to bolster

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[249] Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum*, trans. William Wood and Joseph Devey (La Vergne, TN: Kessinger Publishing, 1844, 2009), par. 117, p. 49; par. 124, p. 54. Bacon refers to his method as the interpretation of nature (in distinction from the anticipation of nature), but the interpretation of nature is just an anticipation by another name: par. 26, p. 8. A.J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1952), p. 49–50, 97–9, 101, 120, 151.

against: chaos, superstition, evil, and so on. But this objection misses that its warnings are—as suggested above (§2.96)—shadows cast by our tradition's own hands. Our tradition throws 'nihilist' out in front in anticipatory, defensive strategy (we anticipate experience by creating and curtailing our own).

It should be clear that I reject simple binaries such as rational/irrational, progressive/nihilistic, and culture/nature. There are many ways of reasoning and kinds of responsivity, there are many understandings of progress, and there are many contexts. The facile claim of 'nihilist' claims to know what the cube is and that outside *that* cube is nothingness.

Our usual ways of thinking are rooted in disenchantment. This comes from a long historico-theo-philosophical process involving the gradual withdrawal and chasing of spirits from immanence to transcendence. Disenchantment is this draining from the world, leaving mechanical laws, causal explanations, dead matter, and a world rent into fact/value. The divine is pushed to the world's limits, or beyond: to the start of the Big Bang or the end that is to come, and the interiority of heart and soul.

Because spirits had to be banished to set this up—and we could point to various historical nexuses, Luther and the early Enlightenment, for one—its discourse is established through drawing outlines of what it opposes: for example, banishment is eased by encoding spirits as ghosts. This lets us speak of a 'ghost of a ghost': rational discourse is haunted by its own denials, negations, and projections. Like Rubin's vase, rational thought is internally related to and marked by superstitious thought — the other it draws in drawing itself. Therefore, nihilism is always close, which rational thought sees just 'beyond' itself.

Our ways of thinking can't be challenged by an embrace of chaos, superstition, nihilism, or overt authoritarianism such as fascism. These are projections or responses generated by disenchantment.

2.103 Seeing that the gods war amongst each other—even as *possibility*—is a metaphoric undertaking, for it involves a shift where, on the hinge of what is common, we see that it fits just so.

Of course, saying an idea involves a metaphoric undertaking doesn't deny its reality or mean it's fictive. We have this impression because we translate metaphor as part of the metaphor/literal binary grounded in the imaginary/real binary. Zwicky shows that metaphoric phenomena are broader than this: metaphors aren't exclusively literary, for they point to ontological truths, including through their form (X is and is not Y).

And yet, metaphors do rely on a contrast with literalness, understood as calcified thought. This literalness isn't the binary opposite of metaphor: the literal is derivative insofar as it's the calcification of metaphoric relations. Metaphor and the literal are both real, and their

distinction is one of degree: literality's metaphoricity can be revived through certain gestures — as in the following case, where, in drawing our attention to the loss of metaphor, the metaphor is partially revived: "*[A metaphor] dies when it enters a language-game [….] Nothing is rescued from familiarity by its gestures; we are not struck by a similarity of aspects. ('The eye's lid.')*"[250]

In a metaphor, there is both the revealing of commonality (X is Y) *as well as* the revealing of difference (X is not Y): and, so, the metaphysics implied by the statement 'the gods war amongst each other' are also *not* the case because we remain in our world. Our world is *not* that world. And *yet*, our world *is* open to transformation, and metaphors *can* be transformative (§2.2).

Our way of doing things isn't final, even if it may appear this way. — This insight can, if it comes with sufficient force, be transformative: *things needn't be this way.*

2.104 Good imagination, like good art, sees how it is for another. We don't simply 'imagine,' if we think of 'imagine,' like 'metaphor,' as merely fictitious. We *see* how it is (how it could be) for another. Seeing in this way is a response to the other. Good imagination tarries with wisps of worlds that trail possibilities after them.

How do we know when imagining or art is 'good'? It isn't when it accurately represents something. Rather, it's when it opens or joins with a world within which we can temporarily be.

"*'A reader lives a thousand lives before he [sic] dies,' said Jojen. 'The man who never reads lives only one.'*"[251] — This quote from *Game of Thrones* captures something about reading or experiencing art. In the novel, Bran is learning that he's able to enter other lifeforms (crows, trees, wolves) in other historical times, even though, when he does the latter, he can only observe but not speak. Likewise, the novel series puts us in different character perspectives, with chapters delineated by these shifts. In other words, Bran's ability to change perspectives is precisely what we're doing as we read the series or, more generally, when we experience art: we see how things are (how things could be) from various perspectives, through various transformations.

Near the beginning of his famous essay, Nagel asks about transposing himself into a bat.[252] He points to limitations: "*Our own experience provides the basic material for our imagination, whose range is therefore limited. It will not help to try to imagine that one has webbing on one's arms, which enables one to fly around at dusk and dawn catching insects in one's mouth […]. Insofar as I can imagine this (which is not very far), it tells me only what it would be like for*

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[250] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH22.
[251] See §1.104. Martin, *A Dance with Dragons*, p. 490, chapter 34.
[252] Thomas Nagel, "What Is It Like to Be a Bat?," *The Philosophical Review* 83.4 (1974): p. 435–50.

me *to behave as a bat behaves. But that is not the question. I want to know what it is like for a* bat *to be a bat.*"[253] Without going into Nagel's specific conclusions, what I wish to draw to our attention is his methodological concern: the limits of imagination.

Imagination sees things differently. Like any way of seeing, it can be wrong. And there are indeed methodological concerns. But notice that we cannot stop imagining. When Heidegger implicitly answers that we cannot transpose ourselves into non-human animals because there's no 'there' for them (no *Da*), he's employing an imaginary — a poor one in my view. That is, he imagines that there's no access and he imagines a poorness in world (§2.11).

But when we allow ourselves to encounter the alterity of a particular non-human animal (which includes its commonalities with us), we cannot but be struck by it. Here's another form of living, wrapped in its own mysteries. To either pretend to renounce any imagination or to imagine too effortlessly is to harm the phenomenon. Thus, while Nagel raises some good points warning against the latter, one shouldn't subsequently be driven to the former.[254]

Any act of imagination involves a risk, but so too does any communication or relation. We cannot avoid relating or communicating, just as we cannot avoid imagining. How we pick up this fact shows something about who we are.

2.105 When we experience good imagination and good art, we do so with one foot in our world. This doesn't mean we're the centre around which different ideas revolve. Nor is our world some *thing* or medium within which we're stuck; the world is a kind of relationality prior and subsequent to any particular relation. The world is always open, essentially exposed to other worlds. The tatters of various worlds interlace for brief intervals now and then before being released each to each. This is decentring.

When an utterance or gesture is made—and before then, when a way of being is being—it's already outside its own context, inside multiple others: every gesture is instantly sited/cited within various contexts within which it occurs. This isn't incidental, for gestures are intentionally made for others in different contexts, which can never be controlled. Gestures are also perceivable by other others, not the intendent recipient. Communication is never certain or guaranteed. And this isn't because gestures must leave their source and enter a space of uncertainty; rather, uncertainty is constitutive of them, and the 'source' is never the absolute origin nor transparent/certain: a gesture pre-emptively leaps across the gap between things, necessarily, and is already responding to them. There's no private language.[255]

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[253] ibid, p. 439.
[254] Nagel speculatively proposes that we move beyond imagination (p. 449): "*This should be regarded as a challenge to form new concepts and devise a new method—an objective phenomenology not dependent on empathy or the imagination*." He thereby falls into the former mistake (i.e., pretending to renounce imagination), for an 'objective phenomenology' would still require imagination.
[255] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §243–315, p. 95–111, but, in particular, see §243, p. 95; §256, p. 98; §269, p. 101.

The sense of a gesture is how it means within a given context; it cannot mean (nor be) without one. Gestures traverse two contexts. And since gestures always have the other built into them, so to speak, the context for a gesture is always also a context *in-between* entities: its 'source' is the ever-changing *in-between*. This means one cannot fully control or anticipate one's own gestures, for they always enter innumerable in-betweens, and are never fully predictable even within the intended in-between. – When a gesture is made, it has this structure of loss built into it. – Every gesture is a promise.

It's therefore entirely necessary that we fail insofar as we dream of purity.

2.106 Technological enframing (§1.106) is a way that beings call and draw us into reductionism. Technology is a broader phenomenon that isn't essentially reductive.[256] It becomes reductive when we take its way of engaging and responding to the world as the only or best way, when the world appears solely as technological problem: when it provides us with a prior way of knowing how to respond. For Heidegger, the way things call to us in technological enframing occludes our role in the presencing of things.[257] I also claim it occludes the role of things in their and our appearing. Technology, and its mode of response, isn't just a way of approaching things, but is a way that things are taken up metaphysically.

We bracket off so many aspects of our experience: death, dreams, non-human animals, plants, the worlds of things, the worlds of others, our temporality and projection, poetic thinking, *this*ness, and experiences that leak around the edges of a managerial-capitalist-technological society, bolstered by various rigid binaries, overseen by a *cosmic reduction*: a reduction of the many gods to a unitary, onto-theological principle.[258] And, then, we're surprised when phenomena double-back on themselves, catch us off guard, reveal a rupture, a suppression, a repression. These surprising episodes, however and unfortunately, merely appear to us as problems, frustrations, obstacles to overcome and assimilate through being technologically addressed, experiences to anticipate better. It rarely occurs to us that problems run deeper: to our denial of phenomena.

We turn away from things, the importance of which is difficult to emphasize, for the world is precisely a series of turning-towards. Of course, even our turning-away is a way of turning-towards insofar as we always let things be as the things they are. But things are called into (or call themselves into) question — they ask to be refocused.

There's no technological solution to the 'problem' of respect, where respect lets particularities, gathering all things, shine forth. Respect cannot be determined in advance; it

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[256] Zwicky, *Lyric Philosophy*, LH121, LH123, LH147.
[257] Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 27.
[258] How we understand 'simplicity' (§2.79) is onto-theological.

cannot be managed. — We enter the world as we enter a house into which we've been invited. Things wrap us in their clearing. Respect is to acknowledge this situation.

This doesn't mean we should simply respect situations as we find them. We're thrown into a stage of technology, capitalism, colonializations, and other violences. We also aren't trying to return to some ideal, violent-free state prior to ourselves. Rather, we're trying to respect things on their own terms, acknowledging that violences aren't simply or primarily historical events, but are ongoing ways we're entangled within relations; there's a need to attend to and mitigate such violences (without being violent towards violence).

We don't respect things as though we are not, were not, or will not be here (i.e., from the point of view of our disappearance, our death); we respect them as the entangled, thrown, relational beings we are (i.e., from the point of view of our appearance, our way of being), for we too are here, welcoming things into this home.

There is no prior way of knowing how to respond.

2.107 Things open to each other *metaphorically*. This means that things open to each other across a distance that's 'bridged' metaphorically. Distance is essential. Communication is only ever temporary, contextual, relational, fleeting, and like a miracle. Not because it surmounts all odds or requires supernatural intervention, for it's common, but because two things, differently enworlded, turn to face each other. In the pile of leaves blowing in the winds, a connection is made for a while.

Uexküll was close to many of these thoughts, but he held that there must be something that holds the various divergences together: there must be Nature that guarantees and ensures commensurability.[259] So, the world of the owl, interlocked with the world of the mouse, interlocked with the world of the insect — are all held together in a big picture view of Nature, which is, of course, a stone's throw from God. God is the *deus ex machina* that guarantees commensurability (and hence full visibility, communicability, meaning and transference: full confessionality — fully stripped, fully naked, fully seen).

Without, and despite, this centre and guarantee, *meta pherein* carries beyond, across, over towards the other and back, without reducing itself or the other in the transference. Thus, we're going to spend the next layer thinking through the onto-theological dimension of our existence. For our conception of a unitary onto-theological principle prevents us from grasping metaphoric ontology, where there's a divergence of principles.

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[259] "*And yet, all these different environments are fostered and borne along by the One that is inaccessible to all environments forever. Forever unknowable behind all of the worlds it produces, the subject—Nature—conceals itself.*" Uexküll, *A Foray into the Worlds and Animals and Humans*, p. 135.

Things can't actually be reduced because they shine from themselves. Like suns without fixed orbits, they shine and affect others around them. Unlike individual atoms, they shine as constellations, tracing throughout their relations. They call one another, seductively. This shining is a way of crossing gaps and gathering things temporarily: all things are related to all other things, in part because all things are gathered for each thing.[260] All things are situated in arrays, reverberating out from each thing in a nonlinear, non-reducible, and ultimately unknowable way (there's no full transparency from an onto-theological whole).

Loss is stitched into the nature of things. Things shine only because they're burning off themselves, diminishing, exhausting themselves. They lose and find themselves in others. Things shine, never fully foreseeing their meteorite, their supernova.

2.108 If there were a onto which the fit, if there were a non-metaphoric cube under the metaphoric cube, or a stable, secure, identical, and absolute cube under the variable, particular, differing, and perspectival cube, then there would have to be an outside to all disclosures.

There'd have to be this outside for a cube to be put overtop of the other cube like clothing. But 'things' aren't there, waiting to be stripped to their core to display their essence. Interpretation is never to clothe the naked truth nor to strip clothing off to get at this truth: as though science were a process of tearing at clothes.[261] As though the most important thing is nudity and not seductions of clothing. As though nudity were fully nude itself and not another seduction.[262] As though science thought it could reveal full desire (or its lack) through its arsenal. As though what's key to our interactions is unabashed staring at the stripped and stretched — "*When the evening is spread out against the sky / Like a patient etherised upon a table*":[263] the non-seductive, flat, thereness of any given thing.

The spreading board onto which butterflies are pinned isn't just an instance: it's symptomatic. There's a violence, a fastening to (fascination with) the linear grid, a revealing, un-concealing, dis-covering, un-veiling, disrobing, forced bareness to the 'thing' (the butterfly) — that is, a certain 'derived' visibility, a certain gendering at play. The patriarchal, onto-ethical orientation to beings is bound with an exposed passivity — but also, paradoxically, the concealing of "*the alternating rhythm of erection and detumescence that the male is* unable to dissimulate *in the face-to-face of copulation […]*."[264]

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[260] Though, a thing in one world may not be 'a thing' in another (§2.5).

[261] See Derrida on Descartes and his discussion of the intelligible qualities of wax. Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, p. 73.

[262] Jean Baudrillard, *Seduction*, trans. Brian Singer (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1990), p. 33.

[263] T.S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," in *The Waste Land and Other Poems* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), p. 9, lines 2-3.

[264] Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, p. 61, emphasis added.

Things seduce one another. When a bird dances for a potential mate, it's not using this seduction as a tool to clothe naked ambition; this seduction *is* its 'naked' ambition. That is, seduction is not a clothing or dissimulation. Seduction isn't an accidental feature covering the essence of mating, breeding, copulating, joining, binding, bonding. Seduction isn't exclusively intentional nor restricted to organisms: the bird can seduce before it starts its dance; a rock can draw us in. Seduction is a nod to the discrepancy between things; it's an acknowledgement and a responding to the similarity *and* difference of things.

Things seduce not only other things, but spaces between them. Things speak in seduction. Seduction means shining. Shining is not only a reaching out, but also a receding back.

'I get it: this is just a metaphoric way of speaking.'

 — What does that mean, '*just* a metaphoric way of speaking'? – It *is* a metaphoric way of speaking, but *not* 'just.'

> *Listen. If I have known beauty*
> *let's say I came to it*
> *asking*[265]

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[265] Phyllis Webb, from "Some Final Questions," in *Selected Poems: The Vision Tree*, ed. Sharon Thesen (Burnaby, BC: Talonbooks, 1998), p. 107.

III

Lyric thought is a kind of ontological seismic exploration
and metaphors are charges set by the seismic crew.
A good metaphor lets us see more deeply
than a weak one.[266]

A metaphor is like a depth charge[267]

3.1 ("*Nature loves to hide.*"[268] — Gods are everywhere. —)

IN THE BEGINNING, was a continuation.

Deities and spirits — they all hid. All things were blanketed and, *as though* magnetically, were pointed to the centre.

Gods have tried to push through at the peripheries; at the margins, they've been caught sight of in the corner of an eye.

They aren't the same gods throughout time — undoubtedly, they've changed: they're supplanted, cast out, forgotten.

Gods don't die, for they remain immortal, even though they may fade.

Now, some of us are starting to be able to notice at the edges a new arrangement of gods.

3.2 Worlds tend to have a *prismatic god*.

The god reflects light in a particular way (but not just light nor the visual) so that our world shows itself. The relational, referential context of 'world' is harboured by the god.

There are competing prismatics. The prismatic gods, each in their world, say, 'Look at things this way,' and one may temporarily gain the upper hand. But, ultimately, our prismatic god resecures our world.

The competing prismatics are enabled by what I've elsewhere called a metaphoric structure (X is and is not Y). Things are seen through *this* prism or *that* one: they are refocused, and we notice similarities and differences against an ultimate irreducibility.

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[266] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH44.
[267] Jan Zwicky, "Mathematical Analogy and Metaphorical Insight," in *Alkibiades' Love: Essays in Philosophy* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015), p. 130.
[268] Heraclitus, fr. 39, in *A Presocratics Reader*, p. 34.

3.3 Battling gods create holes in the world.

The prismatic god patches some of these to keep the world together, but never to keep others out. Thus, the god gives us our world and is open to receive others.

We focus on the world, which is patched over, or we focus on the holes. In this way, we pay tribute to our prismatic god: as giver or receiver.

This is one way to metaphorically envision a transformation of the world. (Depending on how we pay tribute, the Necker cube shows a different face.)

Our prismatic god constantly patches the holes. This can make the world *appear* as a sphere, a globe. The gathering, in a sense, is orbital.

3.4 IN THE BEGINNING, prismatic gods emerged.

They came forth like shoots in spring.

They're loyal: to human, animal, plant, or lifeform groups. In each case, they open a world that *appears* spherical. Each group has its own prismatic god.

It's a veritable polytheistic array.

3.5 To be in the midst of such groups, for example in a forest, is to be in the midst of a community—perhaps a cacophony—of gods. Being in a forest can precipitate a transformation because it's a place where the holes in the world are pronounced (§3.3).

Yet, while I've spoken of possibilities within and of our world, I haven't spoken of paying tribute to other prismatic gods. We may call them *spiritualities*.

3.6 The transformation of the world occurs along lines I've been discussing. We pay tribute to our prismatic god (§3.3), or to another (§3.5).

However adept we become at seeing how things are under one or the other's auspices, we can never see both ways at once: we always slight all other gods.

We may leap between two gods to whom we pay tribute—perhaps we even set up communication between them—but we can never unify them.

3.7 *Intensities*, *intensity spirits*, dwell in particular things. These spirits are how one is drawn into a *this*. They're *attendants* of prismatic gods.

Each particularity radiates in its own way. This radiance is a call to a broader community, a deepening relationality. Intensities radiate more brightly when they have more of themselves to give: they spread themselves out across worlds.

— Why call them intensities? This is the name for how we envision a step back from the character of a particular *this*. We see the power in a particular thing, and can even at times show this across a divide. What's animating or inhabiting the thing is an intensity spirit who radiates out into other worlds.

3.8 Not every tree calls to us or seems to have an attendant spirit. But *this* tree calls to me, differently from how others call. We mutually beckon, in some ways akin to romance or amicability.

It beckons, draws a sentence out, calls it forth.
In its context, a word calls.

— Spirits dance everywhere in our midst.

3.9 An entity's intensity is how it's powerfully in the world and how it exceeds its boundaries.

An intensity spirit, which draws us into *this*, has its own character (which at times could be a personality).

When I speak of spirits, I *don't* mean spirit opposed to matter. There isn't substance animated by a living or supernatural force. Nor are spirits an otherworldly, immaterial substance. A spirit (which can offer a glimpse onto another prismatic god) isn't simply a being: the spirit suggests and shows how things would be, how Being would be, if we would or could "*Look at things like this.*" – Spirits lead us towards the pluralization of Being (§2.51).

— How could spirits be personalities if they are not beings? Spirits lend themselves to this: they can appear as a being, only to dissolve into a way of Being when approached; there's a gestalt shift in which they can be seen either way. Spirits, which can be encountered as phenomena, are more originarily ways phenomena appear.

This tree's spirit expresses its character. It has its own traits: perhaps it's wily, reticent, gentle, or abrasive. It reaches out to us, just as we reach out to it.

3.10 Spirits dwell in places. They draw us in.

"*Look at things like* this": a spirit opens a way of seeing. A wisp of world, a tear in our world.

When the tear increases in intensity, when it becomes global, then the spirit opens onto a prismatic god.

(Spirits open onto intensities, which can open onto prismatic gods.)

3.11 While a prismatic god helps maintain a projection of the cube: , an intensity challenges the way we see the cube, suggesting other ways.

Other entities have prisms and intensities.

When a stone calls to us we might say that *this* stone, *this* being, is an *intensity*. – The flash of other prismatic gods can appear as spirits.

How things are for the stone involves how things gather for it within its group in a world under the sway of a prismatic god.

3.12 The intensity of *this* tree, bound with its god, isn't *just* an intensity (as though an intensity is an intensity is an intensity); rather, it's a *particular* intensity. *This* tree *explodes* for us.

A tree, too, encounters intensities: pools of water, rich or barren soil, sunlight streaming or rain pouring down.

The gods are those who orient us, where 'us' is whatever entity is in question. Every entity opens to intensities, spirits, and divinities.

3.13 When I say *this* tree is an intensity, that, becoming global, opens onto a prismatic god (§3.10), I don't mean *this* tree *is* a prismatic god. Selves are not gods. Rather, the tree (or a self) 'has' or is 'looked after by' a prismatic god.

This god is in the background, stitching the world, which includes one's self. It's part of the orbital gathering of the god.

While an individual entity can have its own attendant spirit, which draws others into an intensity, the prismatic god is not the god of or for an individual. The prismatic god is the god of *a group*. Although individuals can be intense, they're intense within a group. (We don't always notice this for beings we aren't used to seeing in a group.)

Intensities, spirits, gods cut across the way we usually think of an individual thing, leaping across boundaries, shifting our understanding. Deities aren't wed to one particular thing as this thing: they wander, blend, and shift. A tree may have a spirit, but so may a meadow, or

some 'thing' we may not think of as a thing: this meadow and this tree taken together; or just the lower part of this tree.

3.14 Spirits make demands, call, and whisper among us. We open to them as a sign of respect. – But there are dangers. It can be like staring into an abyss, one into which we fall towards an other.

There's a danger in getting pulled over, becoming *fully* other — not that one world becomes another, but one's self becomes other. (One never leaves one's world; but one's world can be torn asunder.)

There's also a danger in slighting the gods (Creon). Answering a call feels good, like a rhythm maintain its beat or a rhyme arriving through air.

We feel the meaningfulness around us.

3.15 New possibilities for thought and action open only in encounters with other particular things. Otherwise, we can be lulled by our prismatic god — which doesn't mean we're resigned, lazy, or relaxed. Being lulled can manifest as intense activity, frenetic decision-making rushing towards deadlines. Being lulled is to be wedded to our horizon, without heeding dalliances.

Creativity, which includes philosophy, comes through encounters with particular things.

3.16 Gods, paradoxically, both grant *and* are expressions of the sense of our world. They both keep the world together and are within the world.

Gods never come from only ourselves. They come from and express a history of decisions.

Gods are equiprimordial with world. Even 'no gods' is a variation on gods.

When we're drawn into things, we're drawn (knowingly or not) towards an onto-theology. We may sense a spirit, and even dance with it — that is, we let ourselves be enchanted. — A thing has a world to offer.

Things, too, cross into our world, for we, too, have a world to offer. Things always go beyond themselves: attendants can be *messengers*. — All things are promiscuous.

3.17 How well we pay tribute is shown in our openness to things as they jut forth.

Although we can pay tribute to our prismatic god and ignore other prismatic holes (§3.3), this isn't as strictly devotional to our god as we may think. The world is created and maintained by the opening of such holes.

Paying tribute is to acknowledge not only the patching over but also the opening of holes.

> Speech is comprised of words and silences.
> Awareness is comprised of waking and dreaming.

3.18 While the story I'm tracing in this layer does provide a kind of quasi-transcendental account (a historic-typologic-ontological account), gods are equiprimordial with world and things.

Gods explode from the margins, like maggots surfacing through a corpse. — The margins are everywhere, not just at the limits of the universe: they subtend every thing, every appearance.

Gods come from the shadows, and yet seem to have always been already here.

3.19 The account I'm putting forth is *like* a world, a world that contains a polyverse, a world that is not one. Metaphoric ontology: the multitude of worlds, the springing forth of gods, the flash without source of Being. This worlding of worlds—this proliferation—is itself from connections and collisions between our world and others: our prismatic god reveals itself, and the cube reveals itself, *within* our world. *Our* prismatic god reveals itself from out of itself — I want the snake to eat its tail.

3.20 Gods swarm amongst each other and amongst all things — many or most of them, never detected nor detectable by us.

Spirits and gods aren't full positivities. Intensities are a kind of differential, a charge, held between two or more things. Things themselves are charged, held between other things (§2.20). An intensity, then, is a particularly charged charge. Any positivity gods have is by virtue of their emergence from difference.

– When you perceive a charge, it's always charged relative to you.

3.21 Charges leap in various ways: uniquely, as intensities; globally, as prismatic gods. They can also leap across the sky of our prismatic god's horizon. I've written of the Greek gods described by Otto (§2.21); these fit into my quasi-typology of gods.

Global, Homeric-style gods exist *within* the prismatic god's realm. If the prismatic god *seems* to create a sphere (§3.3), this type of god seems to fill it all the way. Filling it, the world takes on a given colour. As distinct from prismatic gods, I call these *spectrum gods*.

An intensity become global becomes or leads to a spectrum and not a prismatic god when the emphasis is more on how the god *fills up* the world, and not on how it offers a *different world*: it *colours* the world.

When the charge of an intensity offers a glimpse of how it can become global (i.e., as spectrum or prismatic), then we've encountered what I've called a *wisp of world*.

— A charge is itself like a metaphor, for it gathers and leaps across, clearing the air.

— In what sense is this *whole layer like a metaphor*?
It's like a depth charge. Differentials *can* be explosive. They can be revelatory.

3.22 Intensities can draw us under the sway of a prismatic god: metaphors can *grab* us.

A metaphoric ontology is a polytheistic array. This array is polymondial — wide open to meaningfulness that exceeds human meaning.

In this sense, metaphors are the sign that no god is all-powerful: any world opens to other worlds.

3.23 At times, the gods toss us on their seas, stormy from wars, conflict, and seductions.

At other times, they harbour and shelter us, break the water.

Strength is facing the situation: it may leave us standing, it may bring us to our knees, but we face it. To face it is to honour (some of) the gods.

Honouring the gods grants us their favour. – Not a simple reward, nor the promise of a material or spiritual gift, nor the promise of an easy life, here or in the supposed hereafter. Instead, they bestow a glowing.

Though we can't honour all the gods, we can honour some.

3.24 Gods can be jealous.

Our prismatic god has amassed an army of devotees blind to the calls of other gods. We may think we're living well in restricting our love to one.

The One has placed a strong demand on us. But we can become aware of what swarms around the margins, the outskirts.

To pay tribute only to one's prismatic god is to disregard the clamour, to disregard the holes. Usually, you don't gain a god's favour by disregarding other gods. For gods don't only war, they also cooperate.

The gods—*these* gods, these emergent gods—have *no* interest in being the One, in eradicating all others.

3.25 Gods show possibilities for transformation. The holes let us question our allegiance, our faith. They let us see the work of the prismatic god, who hides in its labour. In becoming aware of the holes, we become aware of the prismatics and the prismatic god — we become aware of its work.

(The way the prismatic god hides is how the One came to be; for its self-effacing carries the shadow of the One.)

– Where we'd thought we heard one song, now we hear many.

Rather than stop up our ears, tied to the mast of the ship, we hear the many calls.

3.26 And yet, gods often call quietly. Like a brook, they whisper and rustle.

It's like the holes affect the pressure, the draw of the wind; we hear it flit around the opening.

Gods are shy, and we have ways of blocking the sound: billboards, walls, thoughts. We rewrite phenomena in the image of the One. – It takes a lot for us to see otherwise.

3.27 Seeing otherwise lets a thing stand forth in its intensity and prismatics. This is not to become a follower of another god, but to pay tribute and respects.

Then, things shine more crisply in our world. Their power and beauty is the way they surge forth towards us and pull back towards their world.

Out of the mist, attendant spirits emerge and ring you about. While the prismatic god keeps watch, it doesn't fully see, for full visibility is not possible. The panopticon—divine or physical—works on condition of the seeming eradication of other worlds.

To experience the shining of a thing is to share in its intensity.

3.28 Things are devotional: "*They are leaning out for love. And they will lean that way forever.*"[269] So, too, they lean in loss. Beings are exposed to connection and failure.

Things are devotional in how they thrust forth under the auspices of prismatic gods and intensities, and open to things and worlds. They give and risk themselves, calling out a quiet tune. They are openings and opened-to. They are opening-while-holding-back (§2.99).

Things open to us, and also retreat: we tend to see *wisps* of worlds, not worlds in full.

3.29 Gods and spirits are innumerable. There are always new ones to encounter.

How we approach them affects how they show up.

3.30 What do prismatic gods do? They contribute a sense of continuity and coherence. They make the world seem smooth.

Without the prismatic god, our world would collapse into a plethora of voices. We would dissolve into a pure whipping about of calls. Instead, our selves, our world, and things concresce and relate internally.

The god holds and binds us, as bodied, in our group. Our world, our togetherness, is bound with a god, for they're equiprimordial (§3.16).

The god patches holes from others. Not to the point of seamless unity, but to the point of allowing a being, in its group, to be in its world.

3.31 An engrouped thing has its own prismatics. But it's not that the fuller, truer thing is over there, receding beyond or outside our grasp; a thing is how it's disclosed for itself, but also how it's disclosed for others. A thing is itself in each and every disclosure, and never contains all disclosures of itself within its own.

When I say a thing shows and recedes (§2.108), this means for others, but always also for itself.

3.32 Speaking well of a thing invokes several deities. For it involves not only attending to the spirits of a thing, but also attending to the spirits of language.

Words emerge from engagements with things. When we attend to a thing, if we're affected profoundly, words initially disperse. They re-gather at the edges, darting as they shift and form new arrangements. Arrays of words may come forth, like buzzing attendant spirits,

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[269] Leonard Cohen, "Suzanne," in *Stranger Music* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1994), p. 96.

dazzling us, till they fall into place. Here, the attendant spirits of words and things give each other favour for this moment: language shimmers in its duet with things.

And even if a thing doesn't speak to us, language can still dazzle us with its spirits.

3.33 Though the prismatic god attempts to stitch some of the holes in its world, the world can never be a perfect globe. Holes emerge constantly, and in being 'smoothed out' (§3.30), kinks, loops, and folds are merely concealed.

The globe takes its apparent shape only because of the pushes and pulls of various tensions.

3.34 The prismatic gods don't just mend a world in three-dimensional space: instead, a world always extends in numerous overlapping dimensionalities, for it incorporates and is an incorporation of divergent spatial and temporal (including historical) dimensions. Things fit together irreconcilably, which causes perturbations in each world.

Worlds aren't separate planets drifting either together or apart in space. Instead, to catch a wisp of world, to encounter another world, is for our *supposed* globe ◯ to morph, almost as though to the shape of an infinity sign, with the intersection in the middle of the sign representing a hole in the world (∞). However, one's own globe appears larger, so the sign would have to be redone in a lopsided way, one side bigger than the other.

But to catch a wisp of world is for our globe to protrude in one place, without the symmetry delineated by the ∞ sign — like a bubble linked to another: ◯. Or like a protrusion inwards ◯ ◯ where one can sense that if the hole were to grow to full proportions ◯ — if one were to *fully* 'see things like this' (an impossibility) — the inward protrusion would reach the 'walls' of one's own globe and fully replace it. As mentioned, getting too close to the holes, plunging into the other's world, risks losing one's own (§3.14).

But, more accurately, holes are already occurring on *multiple* fronts, at *multiple* points — ◯ ◯ ◯ — where each protrusion itself reiterates, uniquely, this interplay from different perspectives each time (i.e., irreconcilably, not in 3D space).

—— Yes, the globe is just an image, and probably a bad one at that. Being isn't round, as per Parmenides.[270] Let's dispense with this image, for a world is not a globe, not a sphere (§1.54).

[270] Parmenides, fr. 8, in *A Presocratics Reader*, p. 48.

3.35 Worlds are never fully reconciled. There is no prismatic god for all prismatic gods: no Zeus, no ultimate gathering.

This is one reason why the image of a 'prismatic god' isn't perfect: there is no pure white light broken into component parts (i.e., a prism); instead, Being pulses into and as different prisms, with unique light for each world. Being doesn't pulse from a centre or spot outside a world; it pulses immanently, everywhere at once. The idea of Being as pure white light is a trick played after the fact, for we infer and assume this existed, but Being only 'exists' prismatized; Being only 'exists' as pulsed prismatics.

There is no Olympus, a place where gods hang around and know each other; instead, there are deities who have never met, never heard of each other, and who will never meet. There is no neutral meeting place in which they *could* meet; they must meet in one another's territory or in some new temporary place. (Though gods aren't the gods they once were once they drift into another world.)

While some gods are more powerful and intense than others, this isn't always known beforehand. There is no pre-delineated hierarchy of gods.

There is also no place like Olympus in another, more fundamental, sense: for there is no universal shared space at all. For there to be a universal shared space, either it'd need to be disclosed outside all disclosures (i.e., a disclosure-that's-not-a-disclosure, which is impossible; §2.43, §2.72, §2.85); it'd need to have its own disclosure (which it doesn't, for space and time are necessary for and a part of every disclosure, each which has its own spatiotemporality); or we'd need to reduce particular instantiations of space to a universal one. The gods are inhabitants on irreconcilable planes, with their own spatiotemporality (§2.10); a universal shared space is a mere utopia, a dream of the One.

Gods are neither omniscient, omnipresent, nor omnipotent. These are impossible because there is no pole around which all knowledge, presence, or power could turn.
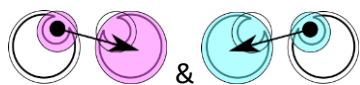
3.36 In order to meet, gods can create a temporary *space of appearance*: i.e., a space within which they can appear to one another.

This space is a temporary 'place' or site 'between' two worlds, and yet, it's also 'within' *both* worlds. It isn't a place, for it recedes like a spark.

This placeless 'place' is *not* a utopia. Rather, it's like a swing bridge—a metaphoric hinge— swinging across difference, toward what is common. In this temporary 'place,' 'between' two worlds, respective gods meet.

Both worlds are open to this 'place.' If we picture glimpsing a wisp of world as an inwards protrusion (§3.34), we'd have to see this occurring in and for both worlds: & . While not strictly mirrored (for there is no symmetry, no commensurability), there's a repetition that isn't a repetition: a repetition within difference, not within identity, not of the same.

3.37 The gods aren't in command or control. There are at least three ways this is the case. Firstly, gods don't render choices deterministic, even though they contribute to and maintain the horizon in which these take place.

Secondly, gods aren't omniscient, omnipresent, or omnipotent, nor could they be (§3.35). Because they can never seal off their worlds from invasion or embrace (seduction and warfare), they're pulled and collide into spaces of appearance. Gods are *incommensurably commensurable*.

Thirdly, gods are relational: they are as they are, differentially (§3.20). This means they are what they are due to relations with others. When prisms meet, prismatic gods change.

3.38 Why, in part, might this story of many gods seem odd to us? Many of us are used to the story of the One (§3.24). But, also, we think there's an essential connection between existence and humans (or thinking and being — what Meillassoux calls correlationism[271]). This form of anthropocentrism binds all things to humans for the granting of their 'full' being (really, for their being at all), and thereby errs on the side of irreconcilable difference (only humans have onto-theology, and perhaps even ontology) over and above similarities between humans and all other beings.

It's true that gods are incommensurable. Yet, they're also incommensurably commensurable. This means that gods aren't pure difference without similarity; gods and worlds are originarily different, yet with similarities, points in common, and points of contact. We might call this resonance.

Resonance speaks to the way that harmonies and overtones are produced from a situation in which there's distance and differences as well as similarities that aren't reduced to sameness.[272]

3.39 Gods don't give things a structure of endurance or persistence. They don't guarantee a thing's or world's durability.

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[271] Quentin Meillassoux, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency*, trans. Ray Brassier (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), p. 5.
[272] Zwicky, *Lyric Philosophy*, LH33–4; *W&M*, LH37, LH47.

Gods can disappear. They can be forgotten or their worlds can disappear, leaving them no place to be.

Even if gods are immortal, they aren't eternal.

3.40 Questions emerge from the space opened by others.

These questions can result from and encourage a meeting of worlds; they open a space of appearances wherein your world is put in question.

3.41 The god of a pack of dogs is different from ours.

A space of appearance is a bridge that does and undoes itself: the reaching out, crossing-over, and return to itself carries appearances over and returns with those of another.

3.42 The intensity, not to be confused with activity, of certain non-human animals can move us: it can pierce into, and send ripples throughout, our world.

Non-human animals punch or reveal a hole in our world—a path in a forest, a plunge in the ocean—with which we aren't, and never could be, entirely familiar.

The mysteriousness of the other means we never lay bare their world, and yet there's an opening that opens elsewhere and otherwise.

3.43 A stone brings an opening that opens elsewhere and otherwise.

The stone's particles bring openings; the rocky path brings an opening.

The stone as intensity is disclosed and opens for this pack of dogs, for this tree through its roots, for other things around it. It opens to these.

3.44 Scale is secondary to disclosure. For scale is already within a prismatic, and when scale entails a different disclosure (e.g., the stone's atoms), then we've looped back to the precedence of disclosure. The rock shows, through its being, its interconnection with atoms as well as the path it helps constitute. We must grapple with the question of scale within our prismatics.

The question of disclosure is more radical. But we can sense other possible prismatics only from within our own. Many of us think that subtending the practices, words, and behaviour of the other is the same world. – This is *how* effective our prismatic god can be at patching up our world.

The space of appearances appears within both worlds (§3.36). Prismatic gods patch it over so it appears like a regular appearance, which, of course, it is.

3.45 When I imply that the prismatic god creates the world as an apparent 'bubble' that encompasses *all things* (§3.2, §3.16, §3.30, §3.33), I don't mean 'all things' cumulatively, as in all entities lumped together. Rather, I mean there is a receptivity to all things—to each and every thing, to any thing, to whatever may present itself, come what may—wherein each and every thing *can* enter a realm of sensibility (§2.82).

So many of the confusions that appear to threaten my account come from thought that is oriented by the One: that which supposedly unifies all time, all space, as the wherein whereby all things, cumulatively, are counted, arrayed, and reconciled on a universal plane to constitute a totality. The One is the superglue that guarantees knowledge, truth, ethics, reason, and the self.

We used to call the One 'God': many still do. But now, the One has dissipated, and its spirit permeates our practices and perceptions everywhere.

It is *our* ether.

3.46 IN THE BEGINNING, was *another* continuation.

The prismatic gods fell like seeds, they fell like rain. They fell from trees or clouds, from flowers or mushrooms.

Their lineage and history are somewhat subterranean. For all over, beings have encountered the One and its violent force, yet there's always been resistance: other deities, dreams, visions.

The first several meteors came. The One began to quiver, fragment and fracture, for it couldn't hold everything together: knowledge, time, power (omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence), truth, ethics, reason, selves.

3.47 *This account* of the prismatic gods *comes from within a horizon of the lineage of the One*, from a tradition and an onto-theology. Though this account seems to be universal, an account of all other accounts, this is what it's trying not to be!

In other words, my account of the prismatic gods carries its own meteorite: not just for some futural moment, but the Fates are already spinning. Not from on high, or outside; the Fates are embedded in every moment of the story, winding and unwinding the threads.

Being 'is' prismatic. This doesn't mean that Being—supposedly unitary, independent, originary—subsequently prismaticizes; the two are inextricable (§3.35).

3.48 Poetic thinking, which can include metaphoric thinking, seeks intensities by becoming intense.

This thinking summons intensities and deities to ride on for its expression, through which it tries to justly address other intensities.

The poetic is necessary, for nature (and culture) loves to hide.[273] Our prismatic god can appear supreme. The poetic *trains attentiveness*, not through rote exercise, but already in the heat of battle; already, practice is the real thing. The poetic is *ethical*.

Poetic thinking attends to calcifications, and gazes beyond.

3.49   — *Once upon a time*, there were two farmers. While they were ploughing their fields, a stranger walked down the path separating the two. She caught their eye with her magnificently coloured hat and twinkle in her eye.

Later, the farmers were chatting after a hard day. One said to the other: 'Do you recall the stranger who passed by? What a striking red hat she had…' The other replied: 'I do recall a stranger—there was only one—but she most certainly did not have a red hat on; the hat was black.'

The first furrowed his brow: 'I think perhaps you've had too much sun. As clear as day, her hat was red.' The second, dumbfounded: 'I think it's you who has had too much: her hat was definitely black!'

And on it went, they got increasingly agitated, and were about to come to blows when, finally, a small spirit came to them upon a twilight breeze: 'Farmers, you are both right and both wrong: her hat was red, her hat was black. In one way, it was red; in the other, it was black.

'And this is what she does: she walks along, between beings, with a twinkle in her eye, and her hat of many colours.'[274]

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[273] Heraclitus, fr. 39, in *A Presocratics Reader*, p. 34.
[274] Inspired by Eshu: Allison Sellers and Joel E. Tishken, "The Place of Èṣù in the Yorùbá Pantheon," in *Èṣù: Yoruba God, Power, and the Imaginative Frontiers*, ed. Toyin Falola (Durham, North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 2013), p. 48–9; Donald Cosentino, "Who is that Fellow in the Many-Colored Cap? Transformations of Eshu in Old and New World Mythologies," *The Journal of American Folklore* 100.397 (Jul.–Sep. 1987): p. 262.

3.50 The multicoloured-hatted god—the *stranger god*—is a trickster.

She, like Being, shows 'many colours': .

But there are several pitfalls here, as with any comparison.

First, Being isn't as simple as two colours: there are infinite colours. And colours are metaphoric: there are infinite dispersals.

Second, there isn't one entity, one being, underlying all appearances. The trickster god is an image of an essential duplicity—or, rather, multiplicity, multiduplicity—at the core of occurrence. — This is ultimately the trickster's greatest trick: *she makes it appear as though all appearances are emanations from one central figure*. (This is the trick that the prismatic gods play in leading us to think of Being as a pure white light; §3.35.)

Third, it isn't that, at first, both farmers got only a portion of the story and then, at the end, got the whole account; rather, the farmers each had a whole story earlier, too. Imagine, for instance, that by the end they were still arguing and only we knew the story of the stranger god. — The stranger god is *our* explanation: the farmers each see things from their world — just as we see the red-black combination from ours. In other words, 'red-black' is just another 'colour.' (To understand this point, note we aren't discussing empirical reality; the colours represent different worlds.)

We know *that* there are other worlds — without ever knowing *how* they are *fully*.

3.51 The stranger god is the deity of the .

So why, if there's no unitary entity underlying appearances, do both of these images—the stranger god and the —seem to have exactly this: a unity at their core?

Well, what is it that the supposed unitary entity represents? Beings as a whole. But more specifically, the fact that beings as a whole appear in vastly different ways. But there's no 'beings as a whole' as an entity or set of entities outside appearance. — This is the paradox, the metaphoric ontology, the giving and gathering, the Being of beings as a whole, to which this account gestures. "*So in the awareness of one is always the shadow of the loss of the other.*"[275]

The stranger's hat is a different colour for this bird, that raccoon, that stone.

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[275] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH56, and see §1.6, §2.6, and §3.6.

The stranger god who walks between our fields gathers the fields together, gathers the hat in its many colours, gathers the farmers, this bird, that raccoon, that stone — gathers up their gods, the earth, the sky, gathers it all up in the twinkle of an eye — releases it all with every blink, an image like a speck of crystalline dust.[276] The stranger is a metaphor for 'It' which metaphorizes itself, which 'is' metaphorizing, itself (§2.51), which prismaticizes, itself (§3.35, §3.47).

And the stranger, who comes from and lives elsewhere, is nonetheless also *here*, welcomed, always in the heart of things; a hole or opening, balanced in the precipice between disclosures and disclosing.

And yet, the stranger god, who purports to point beyond the prismatic god, is *nonetheless* a reclaiming by the prismatic god of that which points beyond it.

3.52 From out of a bush emerges a spirit — *this* bush, far from the city.

This enormous tree in the neighbour's yard commands attention. It radiates out, reminds us of the reaches of sky. It's absurd to think it's owned by someone.

The deer stand silently, ears up, as they move through twilight streets: intensity behind their eyes.

— The stranger god walks many paths at once. We see the red hat.

3.53 The prismatic gods show an array of colours. We notice, watch, enjoy, and take them in.

The colours dance, in their appearance from an inescapable darkness. It almost strikes us as a kind of colour.

The prismatic gods, each and every one, open realms that are transpierced by openness and hence by closedness: Heidegger calls this unconcealing.

Taking in the colours, drinking them in, is to take and drink in the darkness — to enjoy the interplay.

3.54 Thinking of our death leads us, in some ways, to the brink of our world—*any* world—yet it's nested into our world by our prismatic god. Death isn't a hole like other holes (§3.3); it's a darkness, metaphorically speaking (§3.53).

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[276] The *Geviert*: the fourfold (i.e., earth, sky, mortals, and divinities): Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," p. 147–51, 155–6; Heidegger, "The Thing," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, p. 176–7; Heidegger, "Language," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, p. 197.

The god of death doesn't say, "*Look at things like this*." It says, Look!

(Look! bounces back like an echo.)

Death is the complete loss of an opening of world.

We house those we lose in our world as *ghosts*. Ghosts are absences: they haunt from outskirts and bordercrossings — their presence is as essential as their presumed absence. For the deaths of others, the god does say, "*Look at things like this*." Ghosts, too, say this: the *this*ness, a structure of emplaced loss; the void can resonate out to all things.

Crossing-over like crossing the river Styx.

Ghosts are present absences, the unburied dead.

A being needn't be dead or gone for a ghost or haunting, for us to house their being.

— Ghosts are more numerous than we tend to notice.

3.55 We're pulled into attunements and dispositions (§2.77), into different colourations of being (e.g., in a group; on our own; taken by love; taken by rage): things pull us this way and that.

Dispositions come over us. – The experience of spectrum gods (§3.21).

Even if the god of war calls us to anger this doesn't mean we must succumb. – We must slight (at least some of) the gods.

– Ghosts are like spectrum gods, for they open a vista *within* the prismatic god's sway; they're like spirits, in that they draw you in. They can 'colour' the whole.

3.56 Allow me to sketch a bit of a typology of onto-theological possibilities within a world:[277]

Onto-theological polytheism:
- A group can have both spectrum and prismatic gods (the ancient Greeks).
- Without a prismatic god, the spectrum gods could share a family resemblance with each other—i.e., a kind of close, common lineage—which, from my account, we treat *as if* it were a prismatic god.

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[277] I set aside countless permutations to draw this outline out: for example, complications posed by trinitarian or pantheistic conceptions.

- A group can be without spectrum gods: for example, there are many intensity spirits, with or without a prismatic god (again, there may be only a family resemblance which we call a prismatic god).
- (Ancestors take on various forms, ranging from ghosts, to intensity spirits, to spectrum gods.)

Onto-theological monotheism:
- A group may fit this category when it's without spectrum gods and intensity spirits. Here, the group has its own, one god.

We can also consider onto-theological possibilities outside one's world.
- (Local-) globalized monotheism: A monotheistic group insists *other* groups don't have spectrum gods, prismatic gods, or intensity spirits.
- (Local-) globalized polytheism: A polytheistic group insists *other* groups are devoid of spirits and gods.
- (Local-) monotheism or polytheism: A monotheistic or polytheistic group is open to there being other gods for other groups.

3.57 When a tree explodes *for us* (§3.12)—when its particularity, its intensity, crosses-over the divide—its prismatic god calls to ours, and each shows openings in the other's world. To some degree and for a flash, we *become* the tree and it *becomes* us — it becomes me. Intensities are contagious.

Of course, differences aren't overcome, yet we share in being.

Such an encounter, in its transience, reminds us of mortality and finitude. This is how the call of a raven can make you feel full and empty, for you turn into its resonance chamber, for its beauty limns and plumbs its shape that vanishes — and your shape, too.

3.58 Intensities 'remember' if you slight them. Things reach out and call for us, and these voices determine who and how we are, for we determine our character in response – which determines what and how other things are. We're composed of relations. Such that slighting things slights sides of ourself.

Response happens at a primal level, and so it isn't the case that we're mostly faced with things that we, in the moment, then choose how to respond to; we respond and show who we are before we choose our next step, though reflection may allow us to change.

Self-cultivation goes deeper than we tend to think.

3.59 Though our world is a prismatics of relations, this doesn't mean the prismatic god is a centre from which relations emanate. A world is gathered *everywhere*, not from a centre.

Prismatic relations include relations to our prismatic god. How the god appears depends on it and the group. Metaphors have included friend, lover, mother, father, royalty, and ancestor.

3.60 Gods bind and gather beings, letting beings be the beings they are (§3.30). They emerge with and work to clear the clearing for a group (§3.16). The onto-theological is an expression of how beings appear — as a whole and gathered together (§3.16). Thus, the onto-theological is an aspect of ontology.

The onto-theological grants and expresses the way of being of a disclosure (§3.16). Over time, the worlds within which particular gods came to prominence change, and, if the world can't support them, they become a remnant of it.

Gods don't die: though immortal, they aren't eternal (§3.1, §3.39). It's not that they're forgotten (§3.1, §3.39); it's that the context—the world—within which they thrived and derived power has changed: it no longer supports them (in part, because they no longer support it).

Because the world has changed, even if gods were recalled, they wouldn't be the same as they were before. Gods, like everything, change. Thus, while not mortals, they face a death-like fate: abandoned by a world that can no longer support them, they slip into obscurity.

And yet, it's possible to learn something about gods, even if they're abandoned.

3.61 "*Look at things like this.*" — We can emphasize many parts of this phrase (*things; this; like; look*); there are many ways to say it. It says: look at things this way. Or, look at things like you look at this. Look at things like this looks at them. Or, look at things that are like this.

3.62 We're prone to the illusion that the stranger god is one figure — that there's a single truth about the colour of the god's hat (§3.50). Therefore, if the stranger god is noticed at all, we tend to take the polytheism (the array of colours) as encapsulated by the monotheism of the one stranger god (§3.51). (This case would add to our typology in §3.56: we could call it a polytheistic monotheism.)

However, my writing doesn't lead to monotheism. Instead, it's as though there's polytheism within monotheism (the above), punctured through and through by another polytheism (holes gesturing beyond). However, ultimately, the first polytheism isn't actually within a monotheism (§3.50).

— Here and throughout, I'm implying that our old onto-theological principle—the One—has been punctured by things themselves and is losing its sway.

One way to read this layer is as a way out from the One, where the One is re-contextualized within a larger picture where monotheism doesn't hold the day: for the prismatic god is only one god; the One is also only one.

3.63 There's a plethora of intensity spirits. 'Intensity,' as concept, is what is common between contexts: it's not a basic metaphysical thing. – Each spirit is a *particular* spirit.

Spirits appear in your world only if your world is ready to support them – not necessarily in a way that's *consistent* with the whole world—worlds are never wholly consistent—but in a way that's *receptive*.

3.64 A world can become receptive, in part, through our actions. Not that we can reshape an entire world, but we can, through, for example, ontological attention, foster the conditions whereby a spirit could feel welcome.

I'm not speaking primarily of ontic means in preparing for an arrival. Rather, a *practice* of ontological attention—attunement, orientation, and sensitivity—can be transformative. Ontological attention gives space for beings to appear. It *gives* space for a transformation between beings open to each other. — This is a first step.

3.65 On the other hand, adherence to a world of uniform—even if relativized—space, time, forces, and atoms is adherence to a world of the One.

The concept of the universe is indicative of the One.

While things don't need to be reduced for the One, the reduction helps neutralize spirits.

3.66 This reduction goes hand in hand with a kind of conceptual atomism: the reduction of things to a handful of concepts (e.g., Kant). This conceptual net is in service of the One: all nodes gathered towards one point used to tie the net as a whole.

This net stabilized things. Its holes were small enough to pass off intensities as minor blips.

3.67 — — *But*—let's imagine—*if God is dead*, then the One is that who carries around, around its neck, the ghost of God, the ghost of its father. God haunts all that we do, perceive, and think: thus, even if God is dead, He still lives on (§3.54).

Death isn't final. We die before and live after.

I don't think we ever noticed that God is dead. A madman who announces this[278] can easily be denounced; evidence can show the opposite. And so, through the fog, the One carries on.

3.68 The One is the great leveller: all is made the same—all bows the same—before the One; the One ensures uniformity in non-human nature and, equally, in us through common and good sense.[279]

This One, however, isn't *part* of the binary one/many; rather, it rules this through and through. The One is *both* the one *and* the many, for the many, the all, gain their sense in reference to the One.[280]

The One rules over all such binaries. This is why a mere revaluation of values—if, say, we value matter equally to or more than form—is insufficient because the suture of the binary is sewn by the One.

3.69 But, *now*, the One is being overthrown by these new gods, which includes the prismatic gods. It's *not* the case that the One was actually a prismatic god; *even if* that's how it may begin to appear to us, now or in future, we must respect the phenomenon as it appears, which as historical, always also involves how it *appeared*. The One was the One; this isn't a trick.

On the other hand, the stranger god *is* a trickster god: the hat appears in many colours and we're tricked into holding on to one.

The prismatic god has an effect *similar* to that of the One, yet, they're *not* the One. But they help us see that the One was always a particularized, localized god.

The One is still here; there are many who still align with it.

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[278] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Joyful Wisdom*, trans. Thomas Common (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1960), §125, p. 167–9. See also Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Penguin Books, 1969), p. 41.

[279] Common and good sense ensure that identity and sameness penetrate into each person: "*Good sense determines the contribution of the faculties in each case, while common sense contributes the form of the Same*" (Deleuze, *Difference & Repetition*, p. 134). See p. 131–7.

[280] While there are some commonalities between how I and Plotinus use the term (Plotinus, *The Essential Plotinus*, ed. and trans. Elmer O'Brien, S.J. (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1978), p. 68, 73–88, 92, 96–100, 102, 106–8, 170–4), my use of 'the One' isn't tied to an emanationist metaphysics. While the One is a kind of *a priori for us*, i.e., for our particular disclosure, it isn't an *a priori* outside this. The One, as I use it, is generally a presupposition of *our* way of being: i.e., that all things must have a unitary principle. This principle is, in line with Plotinus, prior to things, Soul, Intellect, and even Being (i.e., in the sense that Being, for us, must be one (i.e., non-metaphoric)), and it is the Good. The One explains and 'emanates' multiplicity (i.e., in the sense that, for us, the many or the multiple derives from the One). As with Plotinus, for us, weakness results and increases as we descend from the principle itself. My use, however, is different because for me 'the One' is always connected to particular disclosures.

– But, *perhaps*, just maybe, *we only act as though* the One were here. — Perhaps, just maybe, we can dare to begin to declare the event that is *the death of the One*.

3.70 Uranus was castrated, Cronus was banished, and both were replaced as the central gods in Greek mythology. Zeus knew his time was limited, spun out by the Fates. — What we have now, with the One, is in some subtle ways similar to the Greeks; however, *our* onto-theological principle doesn't have any testes to cut off nor can it be sent to Tartarus or any other place for imprisonment.

Nietzsche declared the death of God. I now declare *the death of the One*, who grew so lonely in the death of its other (i.e., God), who subjugated and forced into hiding all others who were not one.

A tale not of amalgamation (§2.97). These others aren't children of the One; there's a different lineage. They're different luminosities that have been shaped, though not irreparably, by the One. They aren't the many opposed to the one; they're different loci, different ways of being.

3.71 The One is a son of God—of the whole complex of God including, for example, the Trinity—and it supplanted the latter, in the long mythological lineage of sons supplanting fathers. Like any child raised by a father, the One is its father transformed.

The Christian God was supplanted by the One: the god of science, atheists, agnostics, and, now, even the religious. (— The One holds sway over those who *have beliefs* in God.)

If God is dead, as Nietzsche declared, we're trying to work through His corpse, and surface like maggots. It's as though God died and was supplanted by, and lives on as, a corpse (the One) — as though the son of God is His own death. As though the corpse is "*spread out against the sky*."[281] And yet, faced with this, all things gather around. But, unlike at a funeral, things are in disarray, people sitting and standing, facing every which way. The open casket is not in front: it's everywhere. — Even in death, the corpse gathers all to it.

3.72 Gods are immortal, but always passing away, passing by.

On the nihilism he predicted, Nietzsche wrote: "*What I relate is the history of the next two centuries*"[282] – that is, approximately to the year 2100. In some respects, his predictions have

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[281] Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," p. 9, lines 2-3. See §2.108.

[282] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, ed. Walter Kaufmann, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), p. 3. See also Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p. 119: "*morality will be* destroyed *by the will to truth's becoming-conscious-of-itself: that great drama in*

rung true. My writing here suggests an end to nihilism. – But the always unfinished and impossible work of mourning,[283] the funeral procession, the cries of 'but, now, life will have no meaning!,' the letting be of acceptance, and a kind of moving on — these will continue to play out.

(Meanwhile, some people will gather pieces back as though to reassemble the One.)

Gods are immortal even if not eternal: the world is on its way to no longer supporting the One.

3.73 The centre is not one; the centre is not many. The centre cannot hold,[284] it never could: the centre *is* not. – There isn't even a void at the centre, for there is no place in which a void could be central.

The stranger god never stays and no one gets to know her: she's always a guest.

—— Once upon a time, a woman saw both sides of the stranger's hat: 'So! Your hat's both red and black!'

The god's head bows: 'Alas, you've seen my trick,' she says mournfully, turns and walks away.

A man nearby, on the other side of the path, says: 'Hey, did you see that stranger's hat? It was two colours!'

'Incredible, isn't it?'

'Yes! Green *and* white!'

3.74 One can become intimate with other gods, but it's usually one's prismatic god (if there is one; §3.56) with whom one is most intimate.

But other gods may come to prominence with never a mention of the god who's closest.

3.75 The prismatic god, the stranger god, the hinge — these don't represent a structuralism that instantiates itself everywhere for all worlds; they're a sensitive and responsive way of understanding other disclosures always from *within* a *particular* disclosure. We uncover a particularism (another's world in its consistency and coherence; §3.16, §3.30) by way of a

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a hundred acts reserved for Europe in the next two centuries, the most terrible, most questionable drama but perhaps also the one most rich in hope…."
[283] Derrida, *The Work of Mourning*, p. 143, 159, 218, 221, 238.
[284] Yeats, "The Second Coming," p. 40, line 3.

universalism (prismatic god), emergent from our particularism (our world), which seeks to undo its own tendency to universalism (the snake eats its tail).

3.76 There are clearly better and worse ways to respond to phenomena and there can, of course, be disagreements about this. But an error seems to need a shared disclosure or an isomorphic language-game (e.g., that of mathematics).

And yet, there's a kind of *fundamental error* or *fundamental mistake*. If responsibility is an attempt to respond adequately to phenomena, which includes responses by others, then omitting a sufficient attempt to see how others encounter phenomena is an error (i.e., it mistakes what's there) and a bad way of responding.

(If you revisit §2.76, you'll see that an error such as a fundamental error is grounded in phenomena; yet, as error, it's only partially grounded.)

3.77 A way of responding that isn't *surprised* by phenomena is a bad way. – This may seem to place a high demand on encounter: but it's actually the opposite — it removes a burden: one relaxes, abates tension, and lets phenomena jut forth.

A stone demonstrates its power in being open. Power isn't something behind things, acting through them, but rather *is* them, as they jut forth into uncertain reception.

3.78 Do stones, 'inanimate objects,' have spirit? – Not in the sense of *spiritus* (breath). Nor in the sense of spirit opposed to matter (§3.9). And yet, all beings are enworlded with a prismatic god, and so can be accompanied by attendant spirits.

— Animation or animacy needn't be thought of as motion or change in spatial location, nor as *animus* (breath); animacy can be thought of as the dynamism of particular appearance reaching out and withdrawing. A form of communication: contexts encounter on the hinge of what is common before releasing each to each.

The metaphoric communication of particular dynamic intensities is animacy.

3.79 Stones have gods, and stones have spirits.

Not all stones leap out for us. But some call us in with their intensity.

3.80 Sensitivity drives and orients the activity of thinking that we've been attempting throughout this text. Through these words.

> "*Language is a skin: I rub my language against the other. It is as if I had words instead of fingers, or fingers at the tip of my words.*

My language trembles with desire."[285]

So, too, my behaviour is a skin; my gestures, tone, glances – my inhalation, other senses, thoughts that go out to meet phenomena, and other forms of attentiveness — these are all skins, sensitive skins, rubbing against and touched by the other. Reaching out is sensitivity, for we at once sense, make-sense, and *respond* to our world.

"What are you sad about?

that all my desire goes
out to the impossibly
beautiful"[286]

3.81 'But I just *can't believe* in these gods.'

— You're right: they're *unbelievable*. – It's time we transitioned from *believing* in gods to *inhabiting* their realms.

But why *this* particular picture? Because it's both general and particular. General, because it leaves much open (it tries to lead to other pictures – historical, contemporary, futural). Particular, because I stand here, and see that a way is opening for us such that we can move forward: a new faithful awe to worlds around us amidst an inherent multiplicity. 'Principles,' gods, worlds, and things.

3.82 We can be drawn so strongly into the intensity of a tree or stone that we *overflow* in response. This can be called a religious or spiritual experience, an experience of the sacred — terms that don't quite capture it. We turn towards—we praise—*this* particular tree, *this* particular stone.

'Isn't that nature worship?' – This objection often relies on the nature/spirit binary. As I've emphasized, the prismatic panoply isn't exactly comprised of beings or kinds of substance, and isn't 'over and above' or 'behind' phenomena.

In a sense, spirits are *with* beings, *around* beings, *localized*: a being *has* a spirit. And yet, strictly speaking, gods, spirits, and ghosts aren't beings. They're ways of being: a resonating and communicating between beings.

Reverence is a reasonable response.

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[285] Roland Barthes, *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 2010), p. 73, line break added.
[286] Webb, from "Some Final Questions," in *The Vision Tree*, p. 101.

3.83 A ghost resides in a local landscape, a particular grove or an object, even a star (e.g., as an ancestor; §3.56). The same is true of other spirits. In such cases, the prismatic god for a being has let the other god/spirit/ghost in: through loss in struggle, cooperation and friendship, indifference or being caught unaware.

These dalliances may not be suitable for the being in question: it may be unbecoming for this stone to house a ghost. And yet, the stone has let the ghost in. This may be a kind of error (§3.76), a weakness. Or it may not.

We feel uncanny in particular places. This doesn't mean that there's a ghost inhabiting it, but it may; maybe a ghost just passed. — I'm not speaking superstitiously, abdicating reason for unbridled passion or unreason: I'm speaking of a feeling we get, a wave of goosebumps, a way that things show themselves: a melancholy, a dis-ease, something of that ilk.

3.84 We're always in the midst of tug-o'-wars between gods, spirits, ghosts. We're always essentially metaphysical: extending into and beyond our prismatic god's world, shining into others.

We're seized by metaphysics, for we're seized by the metaphorism of Being. — The world trembles into place: metaphysics is a spasm of Being, of metaphoric Being.

3.85 Paradoxically, metaphoric Being is part of our metaphysics: it comes from how we're gripped, onto-theologically. – It's an attempt to speak quasi-universally while undermining this; in its trace of universality, it reveals a ghostal lineage with the One.

The view from nowhere, the 'position' of the One, is utopic and reveals specific desires. These desires manifest our understanding of self, world, things, and social being: for example, the last is taken as the masses or the people, entities formed by shearing particularity.

A change in onto-theology implies changes to self, world, things, and social being.

3.86 An onto-theological change also entails a change in needs, wants, values: the practical. Therefore, the practical is always devotional: it enacts devotion to the onto-theological, not in a way that the 'devout' would usually call religious, but in a way that appeals to—shows deference to—the onto-theological as guiding principle. (Which doesn't rule out resistance to the principle.)

Of course, the onto-theological isn't *a* principle. Even with the One, the question of the onto-theological is never settled, nor reduced to one. There are always schisms, re-interpretations, struggles, alternate paths. Instead of calling it *a* principle, it may be best to call it 'the onto-theological,' where the singular isn't intended to denote a singular unified 'thing.'

3.87 If the practical is devotional, it's such that we can never be sure if our devotion is good. It's never 'sufficient' or 'good enough,' and certainly not 'perfect.'

Sports is often taken as a model for ethics: rule-based enforcement, pure visibility, arbiters aiming for pure objectivity through multiple angles available through instant replay, carefully measured symmetrical lines over the playing field, and winners established through a points-based system.

But ethics isn't a game or competition. Ethics is an encounter between you and things, with no pre-set rules, pure visibility, full arbiter, symmetry, winners, or points. And yet, there *are* rules (continuously established within an encounter); visibility (some visibility, some obfuscation from different points of view); evaluation (no pure arbiter); a bridge—i.e., a space of appearances between you and the other—setting up not symmetry but instead an encounter through what is common; and there are, finally, better and worse ways to be.

3.88 How you respond shows your character. Essentially, this includes how you respond to the inescapable fact of slighting the gods, i.e., that you *cannot* adequately respond. We *must* respond to the fact that our response is inadequate.

To throw up your hands and proclaim that since there's no perfect response, there's no point in bettering yourself is a poor way to respond. To deceive yourself into thinking you've responded adequately, or to think you can adequately placate all who were slighted, are poor ways to respond. – Not that we should live in fear, wishing we had eyes on the back of our head so to speak, but that we should live upright in the knowledge of inadequacy. Perhaps, then, we asymptotically approach its opposite.

At stake is your character, your relations. Your character is *with* others, but it's always *yours*.

3.89 Seeing how things make sense for another, how their actions emerge from a context (§3.76)—from a set of relations—is a form of wisdom.[287]

It's to see 'if I were this, I may also act like that.' – Which doesn't mean the action is right.

Every action is devotional, which doesn't necessarily mean one pays respects well.

3.90 The One gave things the appearance of convergence. Objectivity—its expressions, practices, institutions—are devotional. The One and God are catholic: *kata-holos*, about the whole — they found the 'uni-verse.' They aim for one world (one space, one time, all things

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[287] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH60, LH89, LH93–4, LH98, LH116.

divisible into universal atoms: just as the world is reflected in universal subjects (the one in the many), and vice versa (the many in the one)).

The universe and its converts.

But the world of the universe couldn't be hermetically sealed; it constantly bolstered itself against an outside: chaos, superstitions, primitives. It mustered a series of devotional techniques to identify, detect, contain, ward off, and even multiply deviances both inside and out, for it knew there were competing forces, even competing worlds.

It closed an eye and wielded the cross. This continues, even when the cross is crossed-out.

3.91 The One was always a trick,[288] insofar as it was always not merely forgettable (§3.60) but losable (and hence always lovable). Gods don't die, yet they become lost, irreparably (§3.60). – They're always becoming lost, even when most prominent.

The One was, and is, real; *tricks are real*. It was a trick, for it promised impossible things. It expressed, generated, and harnessed an incredible desire: to make the world and all things *one* and *the same*.

3.92 Under the One, much seems unimportant and inconsequential; experience becomes flattened and interchangeable. It seems the only way to get excited, make your mark, or demonstrate your individuality and uniqueness is to seek out experiences others haven't had due to an investment not everyone can afford.

The One is an expression of what Nietzsche calls slave morality: a race to the bottom, the common, the same, the secure, the stable, the guaranteed. The One is both the expression of a people's disposition as well as part of the explanation of this disposition. It is symptom and cause: these intertwine together.

Nietzsche's slave morality isn't merely an ethical proposition or an ethical proposition backed by an ontological claim (will-to-power); it's onto-ethical.[289]

3.93 Opposing this flattening, we heed beings in their particularity.

Metaphoric structure respects particularities in different contexts. It's the shape of what we do when we use our imagination and see things differently.

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[288] Compare §3.69.
[289] Deleuze, *Difference & Repetition*: Deleuze illustrates this through thermodynamics, common sense, and the basic sensibility in how we perceive any given thing.

The stranger god: a god of imagination, transformation and carrying-across. It's as though, in a flash, you see her hat as red, black, then red.

The gods war amongst and cooperate with each other, while the stranger god tiptoes and dashes on the side.

3.94 Imagination opens to a kind of haunting. Not ghosts that long to be buried (§3.54), but ghostal lines of afterimage (you 'see' how the cube looked before). A transformation is a haunting.

When you see the hat as red, black, then red – it's not quite the same red as before; it's as though it's seen through a different prism. And though it's easier to see black again, we never see them at the same time.

3.95 Paying respects to various spirits, intensities, gods, and ghosts gains favours from them (§3.23). Not magically or in a capitalistic sense—'God looks out for those who are his servants'—but relationally: you improve your relations.

For adherents of the One, relations are reduced to human relations. As example, the 'potlatch'[290] is seen as threatening (or 'worrisome') because it expresses social relations and human power (structured through gift relations); other-than-human relations are explained away as human ones.

But more accurately, for adherents of the One, relations are reduced to subjective/objective relations between humans and creation (even if spontaneous and without creator). To take seriously something like spirits, intensities, gods, and ghosts is already a threat, insofar as one is disturbing the core of the One: humans, 'creation,' objectivity.

Conversely, we give and receive from *things themselves* (§2.58) and, paying respects to things, we slight the One. (A meteorite crashes against the One.)

3.96 The (pre-)history of the One can be documented in a line that's never straight, but that, through its meanderings, lets us detect an overall sense: from Uranus, Cronus, and Zeus, to Yahweh, the Christian God, and Allah, and to the decisions made through Plato and Aristotle, the empiricists and rationalists, Kant and Hegel, into liberalism, science, contemporary philosophy, atheisms, politics, and religions.

The way of least resistance is to follow the thrust of decisions that have already been made, caught in a river of relations.

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[290] See Reddekop, "Thinking Across Worlds," p. 162–3 (fn 109) on the problems with using "potlatch" as a singular term to denote a range of different ceremonial practices. See also E. Richard Atleo (Umeek), *Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), p. 3.

— You pay respects to the river of your relations, but this doesn't mean you can't change its course.

3.97 Gods were buried, interned in the earth, but now others come forth like shoots in the spring.

This is a compost pile: with worms and maggots, fungi and bacteria.

Spirits fill the forest like fragrance from unseen flowers under the leaves.

3.98 Gods were buried, interned in the mind, the brain, subjected to subject, but now others entice us out, zipping along the hairs on your arm, wafting through the forest, crossing the sky like a shooting star.

The world is so full of spirits that many have nothing to do with us.

3.99 Little spirits whisk about so quickly you may be inclined to see them as the same: one origin of reductionism.

Intensities wax, wane, and change in intensity.

3.100

3.101 A philosophical attitude is one that—to differing degrees—opens to the voices and spaces of others. It doesn't take for granted what it's doing.

Sensitivity is an openness that I've called questioning. It's an embodied openness to come what may.

Sensitivity and philosophy are devotional ways of being; and, in the way I'm talking about, explicitly so.

3.102 The nihilist is one who follows the consequences of abandonment in a disenchanted world in a particular way: they bemoan (or celebrate) the loss of centre, guarantor, the moral compass, and single source, origin, and final resting place.

Yet, they don't usually bemoan (or celebrate) the loss of the One, for if they acknowledged *this* loss, they'd be closer to my position. They say, 'now there is no meaning!' as though there's a void. But this black hole, around which all orients — this is the shadow of the One. The gravity or *gravitas* of the nihilist's longing plunges them into orbiting the One, for the One

draws them in. They oscillate between meaninglessness, and auto-production or practically-oriented meaning.

But with the loss of the One, there's no central spot that would or could ever bestow meaning (objective or subjective — in either case, centring and privileging humans). Meaning emerges from particular things in their worlds in communication with other things in their worlds.

The nihilist emerges from a particular historical, onto-theological trajectory.

3.103 'Is *this* account—of spirits, intensities, gods, and ghosts—fictive? Is it true?'

It's true, for it's an attempt, asymptotically, to approach our actual experience of the world: a *sensitive* attempt.[291]

Our actual experience, as revealed by the possibility of transformations, is between worlds. There's a kind of miraculous opening, an opportunity now, in our world that enables us to approach a specific other world — which isn't really other, but is inherent to ours (§1.1).

This layer has worked towards an onto-theological transformation to get closer to this other, phenomenological transformation.

I'm trying to open the path of a decision.

3.104 Imagination, not as fiction but as way of seeing,[292] is required to open to other possibilities.

What I've imagined and sensed here, my account, isn't the end-all-and-be-all. It's a lily pad from which we can jump.

Imaginings, like dreams, emerge from a particular horizon: the world of our prismatic god. They aren't locked into an individual subject, unoriented by prismatics — for every individual, every subject, is oriented and opened by prismatics.

3.105 The advent of a spirit, the appearance of an intensity — these are attempts at communication. They're ways that something other shows itself to and for us.

The world is always a crossing-over, a going-outside-itself, insofar as spaces of appearance are formed to 'house' encounters between gods and spirits (§3.36). These spaces always appear inside and outside each respective world.

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[291] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH102.
[292] Zwicky, *W&M*, LH25, LH60, LH62–3, LH114.

3.106 A cosmic reduction ('all things are susceptible to…') is a curse wrought by the One (§1.106).

All things are susceptible to singular principles, principles 'made' by us; all things are confined, refined, defined, and ultimately subjected to the One. This susceptibility is a subjugation of all things to our world. — The One has always been localized and particular, even, and especially, as it spreads.

– The second Zarathustra entreated you to be a *creator* of values. A third Zarathustra, if there were to be one, would entice you to be a *responder* to value, to the sparks between beings inside encounters.

3.107 I've spoken of different layers of gods:
- a tentative overarching prismatic god—implicit, hidden (§3.74), projected as family resemblance (§3.56)—at best, building bridges between beings;
- a world, shown differently by each spectrum god;
- holes from spirits and ghosts, each able to show how things could be globally (*THIS*), as each points towards other prismatics; and
- a stranger god, casting the trick of a unified centre, but who lives in the flashes of beings and being.

Each god foretells its doom, downfall, and succession. For each god, as god, holds up and is held up by a world; yet, when they no longer fit and are no longer held up, the god lives on, but not in the same way. Even the Fates, the *Moirai*, meet an end. – All gods, while immortal, aren't eternal (§3.39).

Yet, for now, they're young; they've barely emerged: let them step forth from the shadows.

3.108 The meteorites that pierce the One have come from the myriad things that dance their rhythms; holes shine like maggots of light. Funeral bells can be heard in the myriad calls of seduction that pierce the darkness.

I speak of an intermediary; I speak of a transition. If the One wore the ghost of God (§3.67), my vision wears the ghost of One.

Every incarnation is haunted by the graves it never leaves behind. But these ghosts are never excesses or additions — they're constitutive and essential.

This vision is a sensitive *attempt* to respond to *our* situation, to swim in the stream of our relations.

We should love seduction: for this is how we shine.

This is what I believe:
'That I am I.'
'That my soul is a dark forest.'
' That my known self will never be more than a little clearing in the forest.'

'That gods, strange gods, come forth from the forest
into the clearing of my known self, and then go back.'
'That I must have the courage to let them come and go.'[293]

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[293] D.H. Lawrence, "Benjamin Franklin," in *Studies in Classic American Literature*, ed. Ezra Greenspan, Lindeth Vasey, and John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 26.

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