# Three Gaps of Representation / Three Meanings of Transcendence


## Marina Ludwigs

**theludwigs@comhem.se**


In this essay, I would like to explore the idea of the multifaceted nature of transcendence that underlies symbolic representation in the form of language. It is commonly agreed that by creating a distinction between a sign and a referent, representation injects a discontinuity into our thinking. It introduces a gap between what is immediately present and what is possible, between an object and its imaginary recreation. It gives birth, in other words, to transcendence. What I would like to show, however, is that the nature of this transcendence is complex. It consists of three different types of transcendence that belong to three distinct cognitive domains that are unique to man and manifest three evolutionary milestones that have contributed to the emergence of the symbolic human species. Moreover, these three types of transcendence do not exist side by side, but inform and interpenetrate each other in intricate and abyssal ways, contributing to the paradoxical character of the linguistic sign and underlying some familiar inconsistencies and contradictions of our consciousness that, borrowing Gregory Bateson's term, I would like to refer to as the double-bind of freedom. Tracing the configurations and interplay of these three discontinuities will add to our originary understanding of the sacrificial nature of representation.

The first two of these gaps and their interrelation are succinctly elucidated in *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* by Martin Heidegger, who shows how they refer to two different ways of "going beyond" that are often confused or conflated. In other words, they manifest two distinct meanings of the term "transcendence." One of them is the transcendence that

can be considered the opposite of contingency. The contingent is what touches us, what pertains to us, that with which we are on the same footing, that which belongs to our kind and sort. The transcendent, on the contrary, is what is beyond all this as that which conditions it, as the unconditioned, but at the same time as the really unattainable, what exceeds us [das Überschwängliche]. Transcendence is stepping-over in the sense of lying beyond conditioned beings. (MFL 161)Heidegger uses the term "contingency" in the sense of "dependent on or conditioned by something else" or "subject to causality," meaning that the notion of the transcendence-that-is-the-opposite-of-contingency stems from our intuition about the necessity of the first cause, or an intuition that allows a theoretical possibility of a

discontinuity in any chain of causation. It corresponds to our sense that there are things we cannot "reach," by following back the succession of causes and effects to their origin, things that we group under the label of "the unconditioned" and that mark for us, as Heidegger says, the absolute difference between the creator and created. This is why he calls this sense of the transcendent "a *theological* conception of transcendence" (MFL 162).

I would like to further gloss this by evoking an overall sense of something being "out of reach," an overarching intuition of "the beyond." To this idea of transcendence belong things that we can represent to ourselves but cannot reach – neither in space (the other side of the world, Mars), nor in time (the past, the distant future). We cannot reach them, yet we constantly strive to reach them in an ongoing effortful striving that Heidegger calls *de-distancing* (removing the distance between ourselves and a desired object, bringing it near) and that constitutes our phenomenological project of survival–the "taking care" of the immediate and distant concerns about one's existence. Indeed, in looking after our interests, food, clothing, safety, we orient ourselves toward the future and make determinations as to what goals that are within or outside our reach. But the notion of "reach" is fluid itself: the phenomenological horizon of reachability is something that is steadily expanded with the progress of technology and its attendant growing arsenal of prosthetic devices, from (in a literal sense) mechanical arms, to airplanes, to telephones. The unreachable transcendent retreats, while the world of the contingent grows larger.

This idea of the transcendent is closely bound up with our kinesthetic sense–the dynamic corporeal consciousness of our movement and physical orientation. For Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, the kinesthetic sense of self-movement, which allows us to localize our movements and perceive their qualia is the main faculty that accounts for our notion of agency and our awareness of ourselves as free agents. This kinesthetic dimension of our existence is not incidental but definitive for who we are–animate (animated) forms engaged in self-movement.

Even though self-movement, according to Sheets-Johnstone, is not, strictly speaking, a phenomenon in the phenomenological sense–an object of or for consciousness–it is a kind of "ground zero" that brings to our awareness "a felt unfolding dynamic and in virtue of this dynamic, a felt overall kinetic quality" (PM 152), serving as the background of our sense of free agency. "Agents," she writes, those having the power to act–necessarily have a kinesthetic sense of their own movement" (PM 58). The notion of agency is related to the body's learned kinetic competence that Sheets-Johnstone describes as a "species-specific range of movement possibilities, a repertoire of what might be termed 'I cans'" (PM 70).

As an example of what she means by "species-specific," Sheets-Johnstone invites us to consider the difference between modern man and the Neanderthal. The latter's short, powerful, and stocky body is better adapted to thrusting and bludgeoning movements, while the former's lighter body with longer distal limb segments is more suitable for kicking or

hurling projectiles. Because, as Sheets-Johnstone argues, our thinking is thoroughly embodied, modern man's adaptation for the ballistic movement changed dramatically his perception of reality, creating a "certain spatial resonance with the experience of acting at a distance" (PM 36), which conjures up an illusion of alienation from his body and endows him with a radically improved capability for visualization and spatialization, leading ultimately to the phenomenon of detached cognition.

This is exactly the point made by Peter Gärdenfors, an evolutionary biologist. For Gärdenfors, the emergence of detached cognition is the first necessary (but not sufficient) adaptive step in the emergence of language. Primates are "incapable of detaching their thoughts from the current situation of choice and imagining the near future" (74), while people are capable of thinking and planning ahead because of their developed capacity for detached representation. Gärdenfors's example is keeping the fire alive, which presupposes several crucial instances of foresight and preparatory arrangements. The fire-keeper must have an understanding that nights are colder than days, that fire keeps one warm, that fire needs fuel, that fuel must be gathered in advance. Being more advanced on the evolutionary scale, this ability to anticipate and plan is enhanced and translated into an ability to make tools.

Making tools "requires being able to *remember* a series of actions in the right order. Tool making presupposes *purposeful* training. . . Imagining a finished axe does not require any language, but it does presuppose advanced *visualization*" (HBS 77). Just as Sheets-Johnstone, Gärdenfors believes that alienated thinking first comes on the scene with the emergence of ballistic skills, noting that the chimpanzee's inability to aim seems to be related to its inability to anticipate the results of its actions. Unlike chimps, people can aim, owing to a brain adaptation–"A kind of *simulator*. . . that quickly estimates what the *anticipated* result of the signals to the muscles will be. . . A calculation is made in the brain of what is about to happen in the arm and the result is sent back to the cerebellum, which adjusts the arm's continuing movement" (29). The importance of this skill is hard to overestimate. It allows the development of detached representation, which means conceptualizing action-at-a-distance, extrapolating own kinesthetic experience to remote objects (such as imputing "gravity" to inanimate nature). That is to say, the species that can aim and throw things and thus observe action-at-a-distance can develop an abstract concept of effective causality–something that animals possess only in a rudimentary sense.

Gärdenfors quotes Michael Tomasello, who says that people make sense of the world "in terms of intermediate and often hidden 'forces'" (HBS 44). He concedes that higher animals might have a very basic capacity for inner representation of events and simple thought processes, but it is only human beings that can form fully detached representations and are therefore capable of advanced planning and visualization and what he calls anticipatory cognition. We are capable of representing potential needs and planning for future needs, something that animals cannot do because they "seem to be incapable of detaching their

thoughts from the current situation of choice and imagining the near future" (HBS 74). A human being understands that, even though he feels warm and cozy at the moment, he must get up and collect firewood. Otherwise the fire will go out, which will lead to him becoming cold, not being able to cook his food, and allowing animals to come too close. At the same time, his realization has the modality of choice. He can choose to warm himself by the fire a bit longer.

Thus, anticipatory planning, advanced visualization of future consequences, conceptualization of possibilities and choice–all derive from the emergence of detached representation. What this implies is a developed faculty of intentionality and purposiveness (which also attaches itself to another useful adaptation–an expanded memory capable of encoding a series of correctly ordered actions). Therefore, my first claim is that intentionality in conjunction with detached cognition make it possible for us to develop the first concept of transcendence that corresponds to the feeling of "reaching beyond the contingent."

The above sense of transcendence is, according to Heidegger, sometimes used interchangeably (and in an uncritical fashion) with another meaning of transcendence that is distinct from it. This other meaning has to do with another basic intuition–that of crossing from the inside to the outside. In some sense, this is a more literal, more original definition of transcendence. He points out that the "verbal meaning comes from *transcendere* [Latin]: to surpass, step over, to cross over to" (MFL 160). This is also a "stepping-over" but with different connotations, having to do with scaling a barrier of some sort. If the other meaning captured the sense of transcendence in contradistinction to the contingent, this is

the transcendent in contradistinction to the immanent, the latter is what remains within, by which is meant that which is in the subject, within the soul, remaining in consciousness. What is outside the borders and encompassing wall of consciousness has then, spoken from the innermost yard of this consciousness, surpassed the enclosing wall and stands outside. Now insofar as this consciousness has cognition, it relates to what is outside, and so the transcendent as something on hand outside is, at the same time, that *which stands over against*.Here the subject is thought of as a sort of box with an interior, with the walls of a box, and with an exterior. Of course the crude view is not put forth that consciousness is in fact a box, but what is essential to the analogy and what belongs to the very conception of the transcendent is that a barrier between inner and outer must be crossed. This means that the inner is, first of all, really restricted by the barrier and must first break through it, must first remove the restrictions. (MFL 160)

Since transcendence, from this perspective, is a relationship between the inside and outside, "the relationship that somehow or other maintains a passageway between the interior and exterior of the box by leaping over or pressing through the wall of the box," its attendant problematic becomes the question of "how to explain the possibility of such a

passage" (161). In other words, insofar as we picture the world is an aggregate of adjacent or nested boxes, we need to have a model of how communication between these boxes is possible in some causal form of signal-sending. This line of questioning leads us towards a theory of knowledge. This is why Heidegger terms this conception of transcendence–the transcendence that is the opposite of immanence–*epistemological*.

This second type of gap, I would like to claim, is coterminous with the second important adaptation in the proto-human that paved the way for language. It is, what Peter Gärdenfors calls, the *theory of mind*. At some point, early hominids developed a theory of mind, that is to say, an ability to impute thoughts, emotions, and intentionality to other sentient beings, according to Gärdenfors. It has been argued by some primatologists that higher apes also have a theory of mind. That this is plausible is inferred from a claim that primates are capable of deception.

In one field observation, for example, a female baboon hid from the view of a dominant male in order to groom a lower-ranking male–something that the dominant male would have disallowed, had he known. In another example, a juvenile baboon male cried out without provocation, making his mother think that he had been assailed by an adult female in the vicinity (of a lower rank than herself). The mother chased away the other female, which resulted in the young baboon's acquiring access to the food that this female had left behind. In both of these cases, the baboons appeared to have intended conscious deception, but, as Gärdenfors objects, these claims do not pass the Occam razor criterion in that they assume a more elaborate explanation than necessary that tends to "humanize" primates, i.e. ascribe to them human thoughts and motivations. A true theory of mind implies an understanding of what the other has understood. But a more parsimonious explanation of the above experiments would be to credit higher animals with a so-called "behavioristic" cognitive model of their environment. That is to say, instead of representing to itself what the others think, the animal can learn by trial and error how they are going to react and adjust its behavior accordingly–in other words, the animal has the capability of learning new behaviors in response to other creatures' behavior but without constructing representations of their inner life.

Human beings, on the other hand, do form a theory of mind–and only after a certain age, at that. One of the experiments that demonstrates the fact of its later formation is described by Gärdenfors. In the course of it, young children are offered a closed tube-shaped candy container (Smarties). They are asked, "what is inside?". They all answer "Smarties," but when the lid is removed, they see that it contains pencils instead. They are then asked, "what will Bert (the boy who stayed outside) say?". The reply of the three-year-olds was "pencils," while that of the older children was "Smarties." The point of the experiment was to find out at what age children are capable of understanding what other people know and how they arrive at their knowledge. Being able to form a representation of other people's thoughts, feelings, and intentions is an important evolutionary event that might be

connected, as Gärdenfors and other cognitive scientists speculate, to the appearance of mirror neurons–a group of neurons that facilitate imitation, and, through it, empathy and learning.

A capacity for forming a theory of mind has to lie at the foundation of the notion of subjecthood. Another subject is someone we can observe and whose thoughts and feelings we can infer (either by analogy with our own or through empathetic co-experiencing), but we can never be sure of them. The other being will forever remain somewhat of a mystery to ourselves–a closed book, a black box–and this mystery will make itself felt as an unbridgeable distance between two subjectivities. We could summon the help of psychology or neural science, but the former will, at best, be a heuristic tool, while the latter will reveal the workings of the brain rather than the mind. While the functioning of the brain, or the "hardware," might be both relevant and instructive, it is ultimately a different category, an experiential one, into which we are inquiring. The infinite, the impossible distance between our minds and those of others is the second type of transcendence–the transcendence that is the opposite of immanence. What comes first–the idea of subjecthood or that of transcendence? For Heidegger, it is the latter. He writes: "transcendence is not an additional attribute I ascribe to a subject, but the question becomes whether the essence of subjectivity can be grasped, first and foremost, through a rightly understood transcendence" (MFL 161).

Despite Heidegger's labeling the second transcendence "epistemological," it is the melding of the two concepts of transcendence that allows us to conceive of interactions between objects in terms of causality, given that the relationship of cause and effect is implicated both in our kinesthetic sense of self-movement and the expectation of resistance. As mentioned, kinesthesia and the experience of agency are inextricably bound up with each other and with our experience of agency, hinging on the experience of our expenditure of muscular effort originating "from a sense of actively imitating movement itself" (PM 426). Not only are we sensitive to our own movement, according to Sheets-Johnstone, but our sensitivity functions also by being attuned to the feedback and dynamic modifications of our environment, including the movement of others.

I would like to re-conceive this two-way responsiveness to the self and to one's surroundings in the light of what I would like to call an *effort/resistance schema*, where resistance is understood as an attunement or sensitivity to the outside world, which is given to us as something permanent, something that stands in our way and resists our efforts to disturb or modify it. In fact, the notions of effort and resistance are cognitively indissociable from each other, since without the experience of the resisting milieu (including the experience of our own body perceived as a resisting object that is difficult to move), an effort would not feel like an effort, and a desire to achieve a goal that this effort was designed to bring about would not register as a desire, which has a built-in idea of a distance between a conception and its fulfillment. Instead we would be omnipotent beings with the power of instant

gratification.

Sheets-Johnstone argues that thinking is thoroughly embodied and self-movement is instrumental to the formation of causal thinking–it is "causally efficacious or informing in particular ways" (PM 158). As we engage in a goal-oriented behavior, an attempt to get nearer or effectuate a desired result is achieved through acts of physical exertion that overcome the resistance of the outside world. While our feeling of being free agents owe their existence to our ability to recreate requisite moves in an ordered and regular sequence, the exact order itself derives from our quantifying the experience of resistance. Causality is rendered phenomenologically meaningful by the transference of our awareness of the intentionality of effort onto other objects/ black boxes. Just as we purposefully expend our muscular effort, so do other beings: the connectivity of cause and effect rests with this intentionality, with the theory of mind anthropomorphizing the world around it by ascribing agency to substances and inanimate objects. We may engage our most careful calculations in producing the most thought-out strategies for achieving our goal–but the result is not guaranteed because there is always a suspicion that the world of resisting objects has a mind of its own that will prompt it to betray its recalcitrant side or engage in deception. Our best plans based on the most complete knowledge may be thwarted because we may never know what the interfering objects/obstacles "think," as it were. The theory of mind injects a gap in our seamless kinesthetic awareness of our environment and the theoretical continuity of our embodied thinking, introducing the element of uncertainty, which stems from our cognizance of clashing intentionalities. That Hume asserts causality is nothing more than "constant conjunction" attests to his intuition that the implicit concept of force that underlies the older metaphysical idea of cause as "necessary connection" contains a remnant of embodied intentionality, which his skeptical position of detached "natural attitude" must reject.

Heidegger, as well, recognizes that the conflation of the two transcendences is not simply a philosophical error but that they are entangled in profound and indissociable ways. For example, the idea of divinity is broader than simply that of the unconditioned. God is not only God-the-Creator but also the absolute Other, the latter being a concept which cannot be properly grasped without engaging epistemological transcendence.

Now both conceptions of transcendence, the epistemological and the theological, can be conjoined–something that has always happened and always recurs. For once the epistemological conception of transcendence is granted, whether expressly or implicitly, then a being is posited outside the subject, and it stands over against the latter. Among the beings posited opposite, however, is something which towers above everything, the cause of all. It is thus both something over against [the subject] and something which transcends all conditioned beings over against [the subject]. The transcendent, in this double sense, is the Eminent, the being that surpasses and exceeds all experience. So, inquiry into the possible constitution of the transcendent in the epistemological sense is bound up with inquiry into

the possibility of knowing the transcendent object in the theological sense. (MFL 162)I would like to diverge from this by proposing that it is, in fact, more natural to conjoin or entwine these ideas than to separate them. It is not possible to reach the Eminent Being because, as the absolutely Other, it cannot be known to us. At the same time, we cannot know it because it is unreachable as the absolutely unconditioned. Thus, both concepts are mutually implicated to a very intimate degree, together contributing to the notion of the Eminent–the absolutely Other and the absolutely exceeding.

The two transcendent experiences, constituted by the theoretical discontinuity between the phenomenologically immediate kinesthetics of effort of resistance and the ballistically disembodied system of representation, inform and complement each other's model of divinity. On the one hand, we have God who is the creator and originator, the rationally necessary source of the created universe to which everything points, the unconditioned ground for conditioned beings, the First Cause. On the other, there exists, in parallel to God-the-creator, the God of catastrophes and natural disasters, of plagues and desolation, surprises and unforeseen occurrences, the helmsman of destiny, God of prayers, supplication, and propitiation.

These two Gods touch us in different but mutually penetrating ways. We become conscious of objects outside our consciousness through the kinesthetics of effort and resistance, which brings us the knowledge of the phenomena that stand between us and our desire for gratification: substances we wade or squeeze through, things we bump into and walk around, the inhospitable elements that send us in search of protection, materials that resist being shaped to suit our needs. All of these fall under the category of necessity and jolt us into an awareness of the objective existence of something we might call "exteriority," which houses various "external" physical objects that make themselves felt and known by impinging upon our senses as appearances. In this way, an intuition that belongs to the realm of the intelligible makes itself known empirically through the phenomenological pre-understanding of cause and effect. In the reverse (and reciprocal) fashion, the intelligible pre-understanding of the outside allows us to conceive the notion of transcendence that exceeds the contingent. Namely, on its own terms, our phenomenological experience of effortful striving, of reaching out toward a goal does not take us out of the contingent or suggest the existence of a "beyond." But because we have an intelligible pre-understanding of the outside, we are capable of conceiving the unconditioned "beyond" of what impresses on us as the horizon of experience. Thus, in a symmetrical fashion, an empirical insight is achieved as a result of an intuition that is accessible intellectually.

But in talking about God, I am already getting ahead of myself, because the frame of reference in which the two Gods can be discerned already presupposes the third gap, which I have not mentioned yet–that between the center and periphery. This gap opens up when the final milestone on the way to language is established–that of joint attention. By "final," I do not mean the actual historical order of these adaptations. If anything, it represents

another aspect of the theory of mind–a level of the development of interpersonal skills that evinces a very sophisticated capacity for imitation. At this level, as Gärdenfors speculates, protohumans show themselves fully communication-ready both in understanding each other's intentions and developing declarative pointing (third-order attention). Citing research in the field, Gärdenfors concludes that apes neither point to nor hold up objects in order to direct other apes' attention to them. They do not take someone along with them to another place in order to show something nor actively offer something to someone, nor teach something intentionally to someone. What they possess is second-order attention or shared attention, i.e. one individual becoming aware of another paying attention to the same object. They are also capable of imperative pointing. Imperative pointing belongs to second-order intention: it requires some understanding of intentions and intends to make the addressee do something for the subject (something very young children do in order to draw the attention of an adult without understanding, in their turn, the adult's pointing). The child uses the adult as a tool for reaching its goal. While animals and young children can "attend to each other's attention" to some degree, people can "manipulate the attention of others" in that they can consciously intend the other to "jointly attend to the objects" (HBS 122-123).

Joint attention is communicated through declarative pointing, which thematizes the act of calling attention. The social aspect of attention-seeking itself is just as important as the goal of attaining the object, and this is why the ability to perform declarative pointing is considered third-order attention and is seen as a precursor to language. The schema for third-order attention is "I see that you see that I see X," as opposed to "I see that you see X," which is second-order attention. In making a given object X fully intersubjective, joint attention creates what Gärdenfors calls *consensual reality*. This is why joint attention heralds the advent of language. It indicates readiness for the "communicative sign function," insofar as "the subject intends for the act to stand for some action, object or event for an addressee, and for the addressee to appreciate this" (BM 5). Gärdenfors sees this as an example of *triadic mimesis* in the same sense signs are triadic for Peirce. It is important to point out, however, that, for Gärdenfors, triadic mimesis is not yet language. Language is the next step of symbolic mimesis that involves the principally new skills of conventionality and systematicity/ generativity. Nevertheless, joint attention is already triadic because it is the mechanism by which a young child learns language.

An act of pointing is often coupled with a sound so that the child more markedly draws attention to the pointing. Among the first words that children learn are 'there' and 'look.' Conversely, if an adult points to a frog and the child sees what the adult is pointing to and reaches joint attention by shifting its gaze between the adult and the frog, the child will connect the word 'frog' with the perception of the object. (HBS 124)Even in immediate phenomenological terms, the discontinuity of the above act is directly apparent: an addressee of joint attention must switch his gaze (perhaps several times) between the object and the issuer of the sign. Considering that two key attributes of vision are directionality

and a relatively narrow focus, the forced oscillation of attention can be felt as disruptive.

In a figurative sense, oscillation makes itself felt in the vertiginous experience of self-consciousness. The fact that people are capable of fluent manipulation of each other's attention is more encompassing than the more narrowly understood "theory of mind." It bespeaks a high level of the evolution of social consciousness responsible for the emergence of I-consciousness and you-consciousness, as Gärdenfors theorizes. He discusses several possible sequences of events: that of self-consciousness preceding you-consciousness by extrapolating one's awareness of one's inner world to the other person; that of self-consciousness emerging out of joint attention and re-directing this attention to the self; and, finally, that of a direct intuition of you-consciousness through the advanced theory of mind leading to one becoming conscious of one's own consciousness.

He also considers Martin Buber's idea of I-You and I-it being the two basic units of understanding and relating to the world from which the ideas of "I" and "You" are formed by later detachment. Whatever the correct scenario, it is clear, however, that self-consciousness and you-consciousness are inextricably interconnected with each other. Gärdenfors quotes Paul Valéry's thought that "Consciousness needs a fictive other–an exteriority–it develops in developing that *alterity*" (HBS 126). Thus, the origin of language is intimately related to these two developed capacities: causal thinking with advanced planning which evolved from detached representation, on the one hand, and interpersonal awareness accompanying the enhanced theory of mind and joint attention, on the other. These unique attributes have contributed to the main function of language which consists in the fact that "language makes it possible to *co-operate about future goals*" (HBS 177) and is, in Gärdenfors' view, of paramount evolutionary importance.

Citing studies by other primatologists, Gärdenfors suggests that the behavior exhibited by the higher apes that what we characterize as imitation is not genuine imitation, but rather emulation. The difference is that imitation involves triadicity, while the kind of "imitation" that apes perform is, at best, dyadic. Gärdenfors characterizes this behavior as "do-as-I-do tasks," which involve the copying of bodily motions (action-level imitation) or the copying of the object of manipulation (object movement re-enactment), but not the bringing of the two together in an intentional act of mutual understanding. The important distinction between the above and human imitation is that primate emulation does not evince readiness for the communicative sign function–even if an ape can understand that "a bodily posture or motion can correspond to something else, like an object or action,. . . there is no attempt to communicate this 'something else' to another individual by means of the bodily motion" BMML 8). If any learning occurs as a result of dyadic mimesis, it is incidental. Real triadic mimesis takes place in a communicative, intersubjective context that engages third-order intentionality ("I know that you know that I know. . .") with regard to an object of converging attention of two or more participants.

A very similar point is made by Eric Gans in connection to his scenario of the origin of language. At an early evolutionary stage, pre-signifying imitation is directed at the other dyadically (or, as Gans says, horizontally); and, as such, is not supposed to be problematic: if "I imitate you successfully, I have no awareness of the limits of my gesture, which are imposed upon it from without" (SP 27). A great deal of imitative learning may take place in hunt situations, for example, when a younger and less experienced individual imitates the behavior of an older and more experienced one. As long as imitation intends the model, it is unproblematic. At the "early" stage of straightforward imitation, "the other is my model, but not yet my rival" (SP 18) and "the techniques of appropriation are subject to mimetic learning before there is any need to 'learn' the object of appropriation" (SP 23).

But at some point, imitation is bound to turn from the model to the object, which might, in all probability, be an object of some appetitive value in a narrow or broad sense of the term, such as a food item, shelter, or sexual partner. As Gans points out, "The evolution of higher animals has been driven by the difficulty of obtaining appetitive satisfaction, particularly food. If I serve as your model in the hunt, all will go well until your imitation reaches the point of reproducing my appropriative gesture toward the same object" (SP 16). In a standard situation of ecological pressure, a valuable resource is always more scarce than "the behaviors of the subject by which it may be appropriated" (SP 23). Once mimesis re-focuses on the appropriative goal of imitation and not only on the imitative act itself, the imitative behavior quickly becomes precarious, because both the model and the disciple turn themselves towards the same object and become rivals: "Put in geometric terms, the parallel lines of imitation must converge toward a unique object" (SP 20).

The convergence of imitative gestures gives birth to a conflictual situation, whereby the mimetic model stands in the way of the imitator's appropriating the object. The model becomes a hindrance while, at the same time, remaining a model. As a result, this contradiction initiates the so-called *pragmatic paradox*, "engendered when the mimetic relation to the other-mediator requires the impossible task of maintaining the latter as model while imitating his appropriate action toward a unique object. . . the mimetic model is both model and (potential) obstacle; it is at the moment when this contradiction prevents action that the human linguistic sign appears" (SP 20). In other words, the birth of the sign is constitutionally "traumatic": the sign emerges at the moment of crisis, perhaps even that of a threat of violence (the impending fight between the model and the disciple for the contested object). This is an important anthropological insight, something of which Gärdenfors's analysis and other, similar, models of the emergence of language by evolutionary biologists are insensitive. According to them, joint attention arises unproblematically as the culminating biological adaptation in a series of adaptations responding to the evolutionary pressure for more complex interactions and demonstrating a simple readiness for communication.

The emergence of the linguistic sign does not solve the pragmatic paradox but transforms it,

displacing the appearance of an obstacle from the model to the object. With language, the model is no longer a obstacle, because he now freely shares signs that are infinitely reproducible with the disciple rather than remain a rival in the pursuit of actual objects. The imitative action itself is, at this point, unhindered because "I can now continue to imitate the gesture of my model despite the pressure of an obstacle to appropriative action," but, at the same time, "Because the model does not disturb my signing behavior, it is the object that is perceived as the obstacle to its own appropriation; this is what we call sacrality" (SP 24). Only the sign is symbolically accessible, while the real object becomes off-limits to former rivals. As something that is structurally inaccessible, the object is perceived as both significant (with significance, as Gans explains, being a promise of the imaginary appetitive satisfaction) and desirable (a uniquely human category, having to do with our intentionality turning toward the unattainable). It is significant because it is desirable ("all desire is desire for significance" (EC 160)) and desirable because significant.

To understand these notions in originary terms, we need to grasp that neither desirability nor significance is something "private" that belongs to inner experience. They come into existence on the public scene of representation–a "virtual reality" or "public imaginary," as it were, that originates with the appearance of language. The scene, as the name suggests, is asymmetrically differentiated into the center and periphery. On the periphery, former rivals become equal participants that freely emit linguistic signs. But the center is occupied by the contested object that, insofar as it is absolutely untouchable, acquires the status of the sacred, both in the sense of being highly prized and taboo, at the same time, that is to say, desirable and forbidden to everyone in equal measure on the scene of representation.

Thus, as Gans says, the two relationships to the object on the part of the participants are established–the significant and the interpersonal–whereby, "However powerful the sacred valorization of the object-in-itself, the sacred can only function as a hypostasis of, and a mask for, the interpersonal category of the significant" (EC 23). This configuration has "transform[ed] irrevocably the nature of . . . consciousness," because, as Gans explains, "the purely individual scene of perception is now transformed into the communal scene of representation, … which is reproduced in the mind of each participant as the origin of what we may call his *desiring imagination*" (EC 26). But since the object is "*necessarily* inaccessible," this desiring imagination is "essentially paradoxical," since it "permits each individual to imagine himself as alone acceding to it" (EC 27). And this is the crux of the paradox, since this desire is constitutionally unrealizable. The object could be possessed only in one's imagination.

The desiring image is paradoxical not because the *others* would prevent its realization but because the self, insofar as it desires, remains on the (imaginary) scene of representation and not on the (real) scene where the object is situated. The image, even if it represents a wholly possible *future* fulfillment, cannot represent a *real* fulfillment because its conception is possible only under conditions of nonfulfillment. The member of the original community

cannot possess the desired object, because his desire arises only when the object is not possessed. (EC 28)Thus the sign could be said to signify its own impossibility.

The paradoxical structure of the linguistic sign contains within itself all three transcendences already mentioned. The distance between the contingent "now" and the noncontingent "beyond" that cannot be reached is the very gap opened up by representation that is born with the "mimetic act [freeing] itself from "instinctive" or nonreflective dependency on its model" so that "In the mimesis of the object, the subject is not copying another's gesture, but representing the object itself" (SP 25). A representation is not only "separate" from the self that is here and now, but it creates a type of breach that the self longs to close. It is always "ahead" of the desiring imagination as a destination point towards which its intentionality is oriented in what Gans describes as "the sign's desiring prolongation toward the center" (OT 103). The experience of prolongation is temporal, in character with the temporal component of intentionality being the primordial temporality of the appropriative gesture before it is aborted at the moment of origin. According to Generative Anthropology, the "memory" of the this unrestricted prolongation infuses the narrative form. "The narrative element is provided by the presignifying temporality of the gesture, that is, by what has been abolished by its conversion into a sign," while the very "'story' the gesture wants to tell is one of successful appropriation" (OT 105). The impossibility of appropriation constructs the first kind of transcendence that we know as the deferral of the sign.

In the linguistic context, however, the sign is detemporalized by aborting the prehuman appetitive gesture, which results in replacing the desiring relationship with the one of thematization. Anticipatory cognition makes it possible for the mind to posit something–an imaginary situation, state of affairs, invented technology–vis-à-vis itself as an object of contemplation. In Peirce's classification, the ability for simple, nonreflective representation, making something present in our minds, is connected to the first category of cognitive experience, that of *feeling*. His example is of imagining something elemental, like a color patch.

Let us suppose [a person] is thinking of nothing but a red color. . . Perhaps, when he gets tired of the red, he will change to some other color; . . . but if he does so, it will be in the play of fancy without any reason and without compulsion. This is about as near as may be to a state of mind in which something is present, without compulsion and without reason; it is called *Feeling*. Except in a half-waking hour, nobody really is in the state of feeling, pure and simple. But whenever we are awake, something is present to the mind, and what is present, without reference to any compulsion or reason, is feeling. (WIS 4)The second transcendence–that which frames our sense of the "outside" and is the opposite of immanence–is the difference inherent in the act of imitation that has become aware of the antagonistic relationship between the two emitters of the sign. The "outside" is the content of consciousness of the resentful mimetic double. "What is primarily deferred/differentiated

in language is the conflict potentially aroused by the fact that the subject and his model both occupy the same position with regard to the object" (SP 30). The imitating consciousness which possesses the theory of mind can recognize the conflict of interests that causes the model to become an obstacle to the disciple. However, the kind of obstacle constituted by another intelligence is not a physical obstacle. It is not a chair that can be moved out of the way, nor a natural exigency that can be obviated by calculation, because, unlike a physical object, a rival intelligence is unpredictable and incalculable. As such, it must be reasoned with, and language thus emerges as the ethical solution to the intractable problem of mimetic desire. Linguistically, this transcendence is related to the notion of difference.

For Peirce, this distance creates the second fundamental cognitive experience–that of *action–reaction* (what I earlier called *resistance*–an awareness of something unbidden and intrusive that encroaches on the territorial autonomy of one's own calculable phenomenological horizon). The example he gives is that of interference. The person in the first example who was inwardly focused on the experience of contemplating color is suddenly disturbed by a loud noise of a train whistle.

At the instance it begins, he is startled. He instinctively tries to get away; his hands go to his ears. It is not so much that it is unpleasing, but it forces itself so upon him. The instinctive resistance is a necessary part of it: the man would not be sensible his will was borne down, if he had no self-assertion to be borne down. It is the same when we exert ourselves against outer resistance; except for that resistance we should not have anything upon which to exercise strength. This sense of acting and of being acted upon, which is our sense of the reality of things,–both of outward things and ourselves,–may be called the sense of Reaction. It does not reside in any one Feeling; it comes upon the breaking of one feeling by another feeling. It essentially involves two things acting upon one another. (WIS 4-5)Thus, a recognition of an impending reaction from another intelligent (that is to say unpredictable) being with a convergent desire intimates a threat of violence and thus prompts an ethical solution to the contentious and potentially explosive situation. But social contract ethics requires another intervening meta-intelligence that will serve as the arbiter of ethical situations, the underwriter of contracts, and the guarantor of peace. As Generative Anthropology demonstrates, the third presence, which was originally the appetitive focus of joint attention, is transformed into God. God constitutionally arises with the birth of the scene of representation. Gans writes: "The origin of the idea of God must be scenic because God appears to human beings as a center of attention consciously distinct from themselves" (OT 37). This conscious distinction is the third transcendence that constitutes the difference between the center and periphery. The emergence of the sacred center introduces differentiation. What was, at the first instance of the renunciation of the appetitive object, the sacred untouchable now becomes transformed into the center of authority that cements the signifying system. The meaning of the sign has to be settled "from without," "objectively," as it were–it cannot "come to designate metaphorically whatever appears to

the individual sign-user to resemble in its essentials the original referent of the sign. Some subsistent signified must be defined to which the sign as such can universally refer. This signified, conceived not as a mental construct but as a being, is what we call God" (OT 40). Thus the emerged central adjudicating presence establishes, in linguistic terms, the transcendental signified.

Peirce connects this configuration of center and periphery (with the center having emerged as the adjudicating middle) to the structure of governing, rule, or law and calls this third state of consciousness *thinking*. He continues the story of the previous example by adding that the man who heard the loud train whistle now wants to escape by the door. But as soon as he opens the door, the sound disappears. When he shuts the door, on the contrary, the sound comes back again. He tries this several times with the same result.

He is now in a third state of mind: he is *Thinking*. That is, he is aware of learning, or of going through a process by which a phenomenon is found to be governed by a rule, or has a general knowable way of behaving. He finds that one action is the means, or middle, for bringing about another result. This third state of mind is entirely different from the other two. In the second there was only a sense of brute force; now there is a sense of government by a general rule. In Reaction only two things are involved; but in government there is a third thing which is a means to an end. The very word *means* signifies something which is the middle between two others. Moreover, this third state of mind, of Thought, is a sense of learning, and learning is the means by which we pass from ignorance to knowledge. As the most rudimentary sense of Reaction involves two states of Feeling, so it will be found that the most rudimentary Thought involves three states of Feeling. (WIS 5).It is the third transcendence that creates the experience of "real time" coterminous with the emergence of scene of representation. Scenicity implies performativity. Signs, even written signs, are potentially performable. In unconscious remembrance of the original presignifying mimetic gesture, the sign retains its active and dynamic quality: "it can do things with words." The performative is fundamentally "now." It cannot be postponed, stored or retrieved, but it possesses a power of actualization. In an important linguistic sense, every linguistic (spoken) utterance can be seen as a performative, because its function is to address another speaker who must respond to it within a certain phenomenologically appropriate period of time. He cannot respond to being spoken to after two hours, for example. In this sense, an utterance directed at someone can be said to be performative: it effectuates a response. As we know, it is psychologically very difficult to withhold a response on being addressed. In fact, every intentionally withheld response has the function of an utterance: "I am ignoring you demonstratively."

One could say, in general, that occupying a position on the scene of representation as a language speaker, a social being, and an agent implies being involved in an interactive mode of communication. What this actually implies is being perpetually "on call," perpetually interpellated by the central other(1) to whom language has arrogated the

structural position of divinity and absolute authority.

Another condition of temporality which this scenic arrangement brings into existence is the irreversibility (or the arrow) of time. The performative emission of the linguistic sign is an event. A reciprocal act of uttering and understanding that it facilitates is irreversible–it cannot be taken back. The sacred central authority serves the role of the central witness and is invested with the responsibility of the chronicler that will record for posterity all the speech acts that have ever been performed. As the focal point of joint attention, it has also the function of a coordinating authority or central dispatcher towards whom the participants are turned in the stand-by mode of anticipation or with whom they can periodically check in. It could even serve as the primary clock that harmonizes the participants' movements via a beat signal (as in the command, "on the count of three we lift the piano," directed at an imaginary time-keeping center). With all the participants' actions synchronized, the system behaves as one coherent whole, reminding, in suggestive ways, of the model of time irreversibility in thermodynamics.

Thus, Ilya Prigogine, a proponent of the connection between time's arrow and far-from-equilibrium thermodynamic states, connects the directionality of time with a process that is begun by a probabilistic event away from an equilibrium, which consists in a gradual increase of coupled particles. The forward direction of time can be distinguished from the opposite one by the formation of more and more correlations in the system and the retention and growth of information, order, and complexity, so that the flow of time corresponds to the flow of correlations. This is intriguingly congruent with the idea of performativity that appears with the sign–that of two or more individuals *coordinating* their actions about *future* goals by way of the sacred center and thus creating a flow of time. It is also compatible with the view of society as a system of constantly growing complexity and information and Peirce's reminder that the thirdness of thinking involves the constant accretion of knowledge and the irreversibility of the passing of ignorance into knowledge.

Finally, I would like to clarify the paradoxical situation of the double bind of freedom that arises through the interference of the three transcendences. As Gans reminds us, "freedom is born with the sign. Like the birth of verticality from horizontality, the birth of freedom from necessity is another statement of the paradox of originary signification" (SP 24). The sign can be emitted freely because the "mimetic act [has freed] itself from 'instinctive' or nonreflective dependency on its model" (SP 25). But with liberation from instinct comes the problematic of choice. The question of "what to do?" becomes the central question for a free being who possesses the capacity for advanced planning and representation. However, since representation straddles the chasms of three infinities (reaching beyond, being outside of oneself, and acceding to the sacred center), any answer to this question is self-contradictory and ultimately unsatisfying, as I will demonstrate with a couple of examples.

To continue with the example of causality that is connected to our kinesthetic sense of effort

and resistance, thinking about an occurrence in terms of causes and effects always involves an expectation and search for law-like regularities. After all, analyzing a sequence of causes and effects is only useful if we are to expect repeatability and a predictable outcome. In other words, we endeavor to know where and how to apply our effort and what sort of resistance we can count on. Becoming proficient in our calculations and ability to predict future events inevitably leads to the language of mastery (such as in the phrase of "mastering the episodic *tremenda* of recurring world events" (WM 26) with which Hans Blumenberg describes man's striving to control his hostile environment). The discourse of mastery is applicable both to the discussion of law-like regularities as well as that of kinesthesia. There is an underlying ambiguity in the idea of laws of nature, which refers to naturally occurring regularities in physical reality yet evokes moral law–the imperative modality that commands obedience rather than comments on the state of the world. The concept of lawful regularities in the material world together with its underlying causal logic encodes the kinesthetic dimension of primal animatedness–the awareness of one's corporeal powers under the guise of one's repertoire of "I cans" raised to a level of abstraction as the physical law propagated by causally efficacious forces. We cannot clearly see why the kinesthetic language of effort and resistance is permeated with allusions to mastery unless we realize that our project of successful and competent navigating of the physical universe by bridging the first and second transcendence with the help of causal thinking is from the beginning "hijacked" by the social dimension of the third transcendence.

The idea of mastery is a mimetic idea. We encounter it already in Girard. The disciple's bowing down before the model is paradigmatic–described by Girard as the case of the disciples' admiring the model's indifference interpreted as a sign of self-sufficiency: "The indifferent person always seems to possess that radiant self-mastery which we all seek . . . He is God" (DDN 107). Generative Anthropology views mastery as the model's bid to arrogate the position of centrality. The "rhetoric [of mastery] is claimed to emanate from the center itself as the source of language. The master of hierarchical society is not afraid to speak from the place of the central being, just as the original 'big-man' was not afraid to usurp the central role in distributive ritual" (SP 175). The central position is occupied illegitimately, with the "human occupant of the center . . . always a usurper of its originary being" (SP 175). But the originary being is God, and so the position of mastery is the usurpation of the position of God, which is structurally impossible. Hegel's situating the birth of self-consciousness in the master-slave dialectic is a sound anthropological intuition, according to Gans. Hegel postulates that self-consciousness emerges in a battle for recognition. Two individuals engage in a battle to compel recognition, out of which the loser emerges with self-consciousness (the same as the power of representation, in this case). It is finally "the fear of death that makes the slave realize the difference between soul and body, spirit and flesh, which is to say between representation and reality" (CLR CCLXXIII). For Hegel, it is only the slave that attains to self-consciousness after he travels the road of fear and trembling toward visualizing his untimely demise at the hand of the master and decides to concede defeat in order to save his life, thus granting superiority to the master. But Gans

considers this asymmetric configuration to be too absolute. Either “the ‘master’ becomes God” (which is impossible) or the juxtaposition “is contingent and oscillating, and the human participants are engaged in the reciprocal exchange that is the model of moral interaction” (CLR CCLXXIII).

My claim is that representation creates three kinds of oscillation. Because of three transcendences, the subject finds himself split along three axes, as it were. He is both here-and-now and there-and-then, as his anticipatory cognition can take him across the span of imaginary space and time. He is also himself and the other. He can inhabit the position of another or “other” himself to himself because he possesses the theory of mind and can put himself (cannot help doing so) in another’s shoes. He is also continually oscillating between the imaginary positions of master and slave, both as he imagines himself in control of the sacred central being and then retreats from its possession. (The three ways of “straddling” transcendence correspond to the three attributes of God–those of omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence).

The doubleness of oscillation both constitutes and affects our ambivalence toward the construct of natural law. As mentioned before, cause and effect are inseparable from the ideas of the theological and epistemological transcendence. The ideas of the unconditioned, on the one hand, and the outside, on the other, in their phenomenological-kinesthetic incarnation of effort and resistance are inextricably bound up with the way we think about causes and effects. But causes and effects, as also mentioned, must be repeatable to be useful. They must occur in regular patterns. And this is where we need God as the guarantor of physical regularities. Without a central figure of absolute authority who is in charge of the universe, any notion of lawful regularity is impossible. Who is to say that a regularity observed by us today will continue to be valid tomorrow, unless someone or something is to guarantee it? Inductive thinking is inseparable from the idea of a contract secured by a sacred central being that oversees it. A contract, in its turn, raises the possibility of inclusion or exclusion in connection with the question of whether God’s laws are transparent. If laws exist, they must be knowable, and if we are to discern them, we must be on God’s side, or have, in some sense, a direct line to God, which implies inclusion. We must either be included by God into the circle of the elect to whom God’s laws are to be disclosed. Or else we identify with God.

It stands to reason that the discourse of scientific progress is the discourse of mastery. As we advance in our knowledge and understanding of the physical universe, we “tame” nature while we “master” its laws, making it retreat in defeat. The ultimate taming of our environment is possible under the condition of complete determinism of universal laws. If the universe is 100% deterministic and knowable, we can imagine ourselves, Laplace’s demon-like, having attained to uncurbed domination, full competence, and unconditional command of its laws. But our victory would be short-lived and deceptive because we would immediately realize that such a position of complete mastery is untenable. Because we

double ourselves as the other, the dominance over all being would imply the dominance over ourselves, which would make our position of mastery unfeasible. At the same time, being in the position of the omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent subject in the deterministic universe would foreclose temporality, render anticipatory cognition meaningless, and obviate the necessity for advanced planning. The human condition of "being ahead of oneself" (Heidegger) would be impossible to fulfill because there would be no "ahead" to strategize and prepare for. Thus the theoretical mastery of deterministic acumen is at cross-purposes with the empirical mastery of practical proficiency.

And yet the kinesthetic experience of temporality and uncertainty do exist. Omnipotence is structurally unattainable because the subject is always outstripped and outmaneuvered by resistance, which I earlier considered in kinesthetic terms but which can also be framed mimetically, as a hypostatization of the performative, interactive relationship with the other on the scene of representation. The resistance of the surrounding world is the absolute existential given which embodies different conceptualizations of our fear and mistrust of the inscrutable other. It can be encountered in Gans's paradigmatic example where the desired object can be said to resist being appropriated by the desiring subject, insofar as it reminds him of a risk that his appropriative action might be violently contested by other desiring subjects. But it could just as well be the resistance of physical reality, that is to say, the threat of impending natural disasters and our flawed knowledge of lawful regularities to foresee and contain them–the ignorance and apprehension that we personify as a mischievous demiurge who refuses to divulge his secrets or, on the contrary, as a benevolent creator of the ordered and rational universe who presents us with laws that are unchanging, reliable, and intelligible. Resistance, when seen through the mimetic lens, manifests itself as a form of exclusion, whether human or divine. Even as a purely physical hindrance to be overcome, it is unavoidably tinged with the mimetic, signifying a foreign intelligence that always precedes us and must always be factored in as an unknown, perhaps hostile, agent who wants to exclude us. Insofar as the performative linguistic form builds on inclusion, this inclusion is, in its turn, predicated on destabilizing exclusion, which, by being always ahead, engenders the paradoxical situation of representation in which the sign signifies its own impossibility. These shifting, entangled, and irreconcilable points of view make the idea of determinism appear, in turn, desirable and repulsive to us, while revealing how the concept of laws of nature seems to bridge the three transcendences yet fails to do so.

Another example of an ambivalent construct that came into existence to tame the three gaps of representation is that of destiny. Destiny has a double face. On the one hand, destiny is a predetermined course of events that has been decreed for one by some higher power or authority. One cannot escape or outwit one's destiny; what has been destined must take place. In this sense, destiny is the abandonment of control to some foreign agency, and as such, it is antithetical to freedom. On the other hand, destiny can also be understood in the sense of providence. Having a destiny would then intimate a special relationship with God; it

would imply that God is watching over one, sustaining one, and giving one guidance; it would also mean being set apart from the rest, being chosen for a special task. This connotation of destiny would even lead to the idea of being a master of one's destiny, which would seem a contradiction in terms, for how can one be a master of what is given? But what could be designated by this expression is the act of sharing the central position with God and thus being in harmony with Him, of the same mind as Him, favored by Him, invited into his sanctum sanctorum.

The same logic is operative here as with laws of nature, in that the subject can make his destiny work for him, liberate him instead of enslave him, on the condition that he arrogates to himself the sacred center. In this case, destiny will be understood as something special that distinguishes just him, as his own path, proper to him, that opens up and belongs to him personally so that he can take possession of his future. Again, we can see here the clash between the competing attempts to close up different gaps. To begin with, having a destiny thrust upon one heals the transcendence that is the opposite of immanence, opened up by the theory of mind. The reason for this is that having a future selected for us relieves us of the bondage, the heavy burden inflicted on us by of randomness. Not knowing what is in store for one can be experienced as a debilitating constraint. Therefore, having one's future assured and all obstacles and unpleasant surprises removed can be, on the other hand, very liberating. But if the future is chosen for us, we cannot freely plan in advance, which forecloses our freedom of choice and blocks us from projecting and actualizing our existential possibilities (just as in the previous example of determinism). Yet can we be said to be really free given that we can plan freely? That would also be problematic because planning our future course of action and deciding what is the right thing to do would cause us to fall back on two alternatives–succumb to mimetic contagion or abdicate our authority to determinism. Thus, any approach to making informed decisions about charting our future is problematic: it may offer us certainty in one respect but open up abyssal vistas in another.

We are faced with ambivalence about our own choices and desires on an everyday basis, which is reflected in many insights about human nature, including those by literary theorists. For example, Peter Brooks in *Reading for the Plot* argues that readers both desire and resist the sense of narrative closure. This makes sense in light of the previous observations about the clash between our competing desires for closing different transcendences. On the one hand, having a neat closure to a narrative is intellectually satisfying. It gives an outlet to our desire for narrative prolongation and affords us a sense of mastery over the act of reading and meaning-making. On the other hand, paradoxically, having made sense of the plot and tucked away all loose ends has the effect of impoverishing the world, thwarting our desire for unlimited possibilities and having the opposite effect–that of frustrating our sense of mastery (because, by drastically cutting down on future possibilities, we impinge on our own faculty of agency).

One last brief example is the phrase, attributed to Groucho Marx: "I don't want to belong to

any club that will have me as a member." Here, the same paradox is in operation. I want to belong to a group that is highly exclusive and has a claim on mastery because it shares the sacred center with God. But they can only be exclusive, by definition, if they exclude me, resigning me to my slave position. Which means that if they decide to include me, then they cannot really be exclusive, and I do not want to be a part of them. This situation demonstrated how a shifting perspective between the self and the other makes the master perspective structurally unstable.

These examples are meant to demonstrate how the clash between different compartments of consciousness, theoretical, practical, and interpersonal, organized around different transcendences, is the source of ambivalence in our desires and motivations. The important insight of Generative Anthropology, in this connection, is the nature of the representational structure of the mimetic/pragmatic paradox. What GA reveals is that representation is not a feature of individual consciousness. It is not a private intellectual capacity we each carry separately in our heads that serves as the basis of subjectivity. Neither is it something purely abstract and spatial but also interpersonal and desiring. Having added the gratuitous third dimension to its previous dyadic indexical form, the linguistic sign has detached itself from its "hard-wired" appetitive context and became voluntary, burdening the human being with the problematic of freedom. Because of the distances that have opened up between here-and-now and there-and-then, on the one hand, and self and other, on the other, man-the-emitter-of-signs can represent himself as a free agent with a free will. But the freedom of signing is constitutionally subtended by the constraint of the scene of representation with its ethical contract, which limits and undermines it.

If I consciously and freely decide that at such-and-such time I will do such-and-such thing, my decision takes place on the scene of representation and, due to me "othering" myself, becomes a binding contract between me and myself. The sacred indwells the "must" that holds me to my pledge. So when the appointed time arrives and I do as decided, the "me" of the contract who has made the decision is free and masterful, while the "myself" who has been told what to do is unfree. If I do not do as I have planned, it is the "myself," the incarnation of some vice, such as indolence, that has the upper hand, while the "me" has succumbed, slave-like, to the irresistible force of depravity. In either case, "I" cannot win. (This may explain an instinctual predilection for being spontaneous and resistance to long-term planning in many people). To sum up, my claim is that representation has the price of a basic incompatibility of its three dimensions that goes on creating double-bind situations when we try to represent to ourselves our future actions. Perhaps this basic incompatibility is reflective of the intrinsic incompatibility between being both an intelligent and mimetic being.

## Abbreviations

BM — *Bodily Mimesis as the "Missing Link" in Human Cognitive Evolution* by Jordan Zlatev, Tomas Persson, and Peter Gärdenfors
BT — *Being and Time* by Martin Heidegger
DD — *Daniel Deronda* by George Eliot
DDN — *Deceit, Desire and the Novel* by René Girard
EC — *The End of Culture* by Eric Gans
HBS — *How Homo Became Sapiens* by Peter Gärdenfors
MFL — *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* by Martin Heidegger
OC — *Oldowan Culture and the Evolution of Anticipatory Cognition* by Peter Gärdenfors and Mathias Osvath
OT — *Originary Thinking* by Eric Gans
PM — *The Primacy of Movement* by Maxine Sheets-Johnstone
RG — *What Is a Sign?* by Charles Sanders Peirce
SP — *Signs of Paradox* by Eric Gans
WM — *Work on Myth* by Hans Blumenberg

## Notes

1. In the specific usage of this term by Louis Althusser, which seems particularly appropriate here (see "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Lenin and philosophy, and other essays*). (back)

## Works Cited

Althusser, Louis. *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays*. Tr. Ben Brewster. New York : Monthly Review Press, 1971.

Austin, J. L. *How to do Things With Words*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1962.

Blumenberg, Hans. *Work on Myth*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: The MIT Press, 1985.

Derrida, Jacques. "Faith and Knowledge." *Acts of Religion*. Ed. Gil Anidjar. New York: Routledge, 2002.

Gans, Eric. *The End of Culture: Toward a Generative Anthropology*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1985.

—. *Originary Thinking: Elements of Generative Anthropology*. Stanford, California: Stanford

University Press, 1993.

—. “Hegel’s Master and Slave.” *Chronicles of Love and Resentment* 273 (19 October 2002). 10 June 2009. <http://anthropoetics.ucla.edu/views/vw273.htm>

—. *Signs of Paradox: Irony, Resentment, and Other Mimetic Structures*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1997.

Gärdenfors, Peter. *How Homo Became Sapiens: On the Evolution of Thinking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Girard, René. *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*. Trans. Yvonne Freccero. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1965.

—. *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*. Trans. James G. Williams. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2001.

—. *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*. Trans. Stephen Bann and Michael Metter. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1978.

—. *Violence and the Sacred*. Trans. Patrick Gregory. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1977.

Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time*. Trans. Joan Stambaugh. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996.

—. *The Essence of Human Freedom*. Trans. Ted Sadler. London: Continuum, 2002.

—. *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*. Trans. Michael Heim. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992.

Hume, David. *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*. Ed. Tom L. Beauchamp, Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

—. *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*. Ed. Tom L. Beauchamp, Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

—. *A Treatise of Human Nature*. Kitchener, Ontario, Canada: Bartoche Books, 1999.

Levinas, Emmanuel. *Totality and Infinity: an Essay on Exteriority*. Trans. Alphonso Lingis. Pittsburgh, Penn.: Duquesne University Press, 1969.

Osvath, Mathias, and Peter Gärdenfors. “Oldowan Culture and the Evolution of Anticipatory Cognition.” *Lund University Cognitive Studies* 122. (2005). 25 August

2007.*http://www.lucs.lu.se/ftp/pub/LUCS_Studies/LUCS122.pdf*. Peirce, Charles Sanders. “What Is a Sign?” *The Essential Peirce*. Ed. Nathan Houser et al. Vol. 2. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992-1998.

Sheets-Johnstone, Maxine. *The Primacy of Movement*. Philadelphia, PA, USA: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1999.

Zlatev, Jordan, Tomas Persson, and Peter Gärdenfors. “Bodily Mimesis as ‘the Missing Link’ in Human Cognitive Evolution.” *Lund University Cognitive Studies* 121. (2005). 25 August 2007.*http://project.sol.lu.se/sedsu/publications/LUCS%20121%20-%202005%20-%20Bodily%20Mimesis-missing%20link.pdf*.