RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ETHOS AND MYTHOS IN THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THOUGHT

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Abstract- The construction and maintenance of the order of social life is examined with a view to understand its components in relationship to the rationalizations such life displays. Both the spirit of the age and its mythic narratives are supported, and in turn, support social institutions and organizations such as family, state and church, but more elementally, they return their audiences to the social activities that shelter us within the ambit of life and death. The rationality of living on in the face of death is questioned by experience, and responses that community members feel obliged to work within must address the conflicts between ideal perceptions of the world and the day to day travails of the worlding of that self-same world. These structures of culture include at least five characters in that they are sometimes excerpted from life, they contain non-rational assertions, they tend towards self-fulfilling prophecy, are interpreted as mere rules for living, and, finally, can be seen as shared and meaningful objects. A number of canonical sociological thinkers are interrogated along these lines.

Keywords- rationality, myth, ethos, lifeworld, morality

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Introduction

The dynamic of the spirit of its own time and the structural narratives through which institutions are formed and maintained by our beliefs in them holds the key to the balance of the forces of death and life in cultural organization. This 'ethos-mythos' is akin to a scale, its balances weighing the relative value of desire and contemplation, on the one side, and joy and contentment on the other. Desire and joy drive action forward, while the reflection and rest obtained through the other duet of ontologically colored 'moods' is just as necessary for the human drama to be made convincing to its most important audience; we who participate in and observe it in simultaneity. What issues from such a balancing of *vitae activa* and *contemplativa* is an existence that is shot through with both a sensibility obtaining of proportion and rationality, as much as with the sense of enchantedness and history. This duet is then sung at all levels of social reality, and underscores all attempts at either the further rationalizing or even rationalization of human life as well as the attempts to make it into more of an existential romance. It is certainly likely that institutionally; in the present day, the former is in almost complete ascendance over the latter, but there is also no doubt that myths drive the everyday inasmuch as they lie behind the facades of bureaucratic instrumentality. One need look no further than the 'myth of the state' to see that their is more than a family resemblance between rationality and the non-rational content of what are often supposed to be 'only' ancient narratives. At the very least, we use both aspects of the balancing dynamic of zeitgeist and allegorical history to understand both ourselves and others in the sphere of social action, publicly or intimately, politically or privately.

The Definitions Excerpted from Life

We need the history of the other to live with him, even if this is often partly imagined, however duly recorded by our predecessors: "To understand a person's motives it will not do to 'size up' his actions on the basis of a 'taking-stock' drawn from the context. Motivational understanding requires instead a certain amount of knowledge of the actor's past and future." [10]. This is the case for us as observers but also as interlocutors, because we cannot take for granted that the other is being completely transparent with us, or even if she is, there may be some future or yet latent ulteriority that neither we nor the other notices or can immediately fathom. We cannot be unduly suspicious, however, especially of routine activities and speech acts, as this would undermine the basis upon which interpretation is said to rest. We must take some sense of meaning for granted even if we do so in order to challenge it in the next moment of reflection. At the same time, we generally assume that the other as a self to herself knows what she is about, and does not need to engage in the circumlocution of doubt and attempted explication. The other is ideally presumed to *not* participate the quite the same vantage point regarding intentionality: "On the contrary, the actor takes for granted the meaning of his action: it is self-evident to him in the proper sense of the term.", Schutz

continues, though for the moment, in the balance of ethos-mythos, we also take as a given that the internal tension between the self-hood that seeks liberation as a form of desire and the adult self that plays a multiplicity, and perhaps also conflicting, role performances, has been struck, even if only momentarily: "If he asks himself what his motives were, he takes this self-evident meaning as his point of departure and then looks for past experiences which were relevant to his action or for future events toward which his action is conducive." [10]. If there are stumbling blocks just below the surface of the public visage of psyche, they will be overturned or overcome, and perhaps one must do the former to succeed in the latter. It is this form of life that the human sciences are most comfortable with investigating, even if, as Schutz periodically notes, we do not have the kind of immediate access to meaning or intentionality that thinkers such as Weber have apparently assumed. The process of *Verstehen* must always be in hand because the contexts where it is needed are always at hand.

Now, rationality as the underpin of the balance between desire and joy, contemplation and contentment, tends to understand intentionality as only an empirical problem, in other words, as a behavior that may in fact be measured. It is always most convenient for any set of scales to have a scalar content, for life to be red more and more on the ratio side of the balance rather than on that symbolic. Of course this itself presents a problem for a self that seeks to allay anomie and pursue its freedom through an ongoing and transitional self-understanding. Subjective alienation is often the result of a too close collusion with rational choices - whether or not these are directed to finite ends or absolute values - as the *only* means of attaining one's goals. The problem of anomie in the modern world is most clearly evidenced in societies where socialization practices are rigid yet where the concept of the individual is still present, such as Scandinavia rather than say, Japan, where a collectivist sense still prevails. Ironically, there is empirical data concerning the output of anomic social relations, and sometimes it takes a horrifying form, such as the murders of scores of children in Norway during the summer of 2011. These acts and others, as well as the cultural critique emanating from the Frankfurt school and its forebears such as Freud, "...have convinced some writers that science and scientific rationalism, far from being one form of life among many, may not even be a form of life." [6]. What then, would we call it, given that it is a practice and a series of behaviors that human beings participate in. The sense that rationality for its own sake excerpts itself from life is plausible, and indeed, we have been following this line of thought throughout our discussion, to see where it might lead. Even though we have seen that forms of rationality vary and that the rational has much within it that hails from non-rational sources, it is at least clear that, "The erroneous belief that only what can be rationally grasped or even only what can be proved in a scientific way constitutes the solid knowledge of mankind has disastrous consequences." (ibid:38). Yet we might well say the same for any kind of human experience translated into knowledge, know-how, or even wisdom, that could be taken for the whole story of humanity. No order of knowing can encompass this wholeness, and indeed, the concept of wholeness itself may be an existential red herring. If we follow the rationality of rule following, the coherency of the rules themselves, or yet the proficiency of a system's effectiveness of efficiency, we are left with much that falls outside any such analysis. This massive accumulation of tradition

and belief cannot be wished away or dismissed as irrational and therefore abnormative. We do not live within a clinic in the day to day. We also do not live by virtue of the specialized know-how that allows us to do a specific task and thence have the experience to pass that skill on to others. The cataloguing of action and intent is not truly an intellectual matter, but is more akin to a living apprenticeship. If we only attempt to rationalize ongoingness as a set of procedures - the right existential tool for the correct task of *erlebnis* - we immediately find ourselves in a world of speculative forms: "Proceeding in this manner many [intellectuals] have moved away from life into a realm of technical knowledge. They are no longer concerned with this or that culture or this or that person; they are concerned with ideas such as the idea of reality, or the idea of truth, or the idea of objectivity." (ibid:83). Ironically, in attempting to avoid the symbolic side of the structural balance of life and death, rationality has set up a system of abstractions that clearly participate in the pedigree of myth. It does so because of its pursuit of its own ulteriority, which is also an interiority that threatens to unmask the hiddenness of 'Nothing'. The mythic emperor, who himself is a figment of our abstracted imagination, has on the new clothes of rationality rather than enchantedness, but neither set were ever 'real' in the day to day sense of what is needed to live in reality. The concept of reality is not one of these needful necessities, nor is objectivity. But in raising the standard of thinking to a space where only a very few can engage in it, an intellectualist stance that is wholly concerned with rationality as it stands to reason in the doubling over of self-closure - the argument takes over dialogue, the neurochemistry takes over the talking cure, the technician is always the 'right man for the job' since all task are technical tasks, and so on - we succumb to a misreading of the balance struck between symbol and reason. There can be no further literary interpretation of the world, no further metaphor in such a misreading: "There is only the literature of a dead language." [8]. If we are to be 'with the dead in a dead language', to paraphrase Mussorgsky, we must accomplish more than a paleographic analysis. We must attempt to see through the eyes of those who once desired and once were contented, in other words, these predecessors who were like ourselves. Not that we can afford too strong of an abstraction that says to us that history does not alter the essence of humanity. The 'conversation of humankind' is also a fundamental risk-taking. We cannot as well assume that what interpretation that does take place is only in the service of the premature burial, whether it be of customs, traditions, narratives or myths themselves. It is dangerous to imagine that writing and poetry, drama and orality are only undertakers: "Literature is that through which a language dreams itself dead. It is, in its strict classical sense, a language from beyond the grave, that through which a language experiences the possibility of its own death, a way for a living language to play dead, to live itself as defunct." (ibid). The point here is that the dreaming of language can and does take we, the living, into the earshot of the tongues of the dead. This is precisely what is necessary if we are to overcome the quasi-soteriological suasion of instrumental rationality and the messiah of Reason alone.

Non-Rational Rationalities

There is, thus, no statement that is uttered either from this side or the far side of the grave that can be deemed outside of the scope of either metaphor or subsequent interpretation. Formula and tech-

nique are the closest to the living dead of non-language, however, these momentarily frozen paradigmata do not in themselves elude allusion. Rather they suffer from the illusion of stability within an historical flux that has seen even their constituent symbols shift as geometry, mathematic, or cosmology take into account the experience of the new: "A proposition can be paradoxical, counterintuitive or self-contradictory, but, in and by itself, it cannot be irrational. What can be rational or irrational is what one does with a proposition, for instance asserting it, denying it, entertaining it, using it as a premise in a logical derivation, etc. Thus to decide whether some belief is rational we need to know not only its content but also in which sense it is 'believed'." [12]. Not only are statements linked to belief through action or the professing of personal values that are then uplinked through social sanction to belief, they benefit or suffer from the use of many other kinds of variables emanating from institutional and organizational sources that have little to do, on the face of it, with either the content of belief or how one approaches them as a set of potential life-values. This makes it difficult to see the boundary between belief and fact, on the one hand, but also between the rational and the non-rational. It would be perhaps irrational to defend the idea that beliefs stand alone, with no one necessarily believing in them, but this might be as far as we could go here: "Distinguishing between 'mere beliefs' and 'objective information', the defenders of scientific rationalism tolerate the former but use laws, money, education, PR to put the latter in a privileged position." [6]. Since this is a calculated action based on the vested interests of the new ascendant division of labor and the social and professional classes and statuses that come with it, one could not say that such action was not rational. If one ventured to say that it was hypocritical, the value judgement contained within would be subject to the usual scrutiny. However may be the case, one could not say that this situation was a mere paradox, a coincidence of unknowing and unknowable forces that just happened to collide, or, more abstractly, a formal paradox in the logical sense. The logic of both belief and fact is internally valid. Its form is not so different that we make a distinction between them in any rational sense. Scientific processes betrays their historical links to those of non-rational worldviews, and indeed, have their sources in them. Their content may be shown to be rational, but what is this than to say that we *believe* it to be so and that it has attained a great value a prestige in our contemporary world. It is this *belief in the fact* that constitutes the paradox of the modern weltanschauung. Without recognizing the fact of the existence of such a belief, we turn the world-system in upon itself: "...as soon as we try to conceive the existing social order as a rational totality, we must include in it a paradoxical element which, without ceasing to be its internal constituent, functions as its symptom - subverts the very universal rational principle of this totality." [13]. Every movement that is made towards the new goal of objectivity is then sabotaged by the need for a faith in the new system. This faithful quality of factuality ever denies the fact, and all of the fact-making apparatuses that lie behind it and before it, any ultimate ability to become the objective arbiter of life. The desire to believe fully in something, an opinion, a value, a tradition or a fact, in fact constrains the concept of reason. We may strive to be reasonable about this conundrum, but we must be honest with ourselves insofar as we cannot guarantee our reason, just as we maintain the kernel of distrust regarding someone else's apparent reason, not to speak of their reasons or rationales: "We calculate

our interests, but this situation baffles us: As soon as we want to act reasonably we have to consider the *utility* of the our actions; utility implies an advantage, a maintenance or growth." [2]. It remains, in this way, all the more convenient to record our hopes and desires as being at least primarily about making life 'better', easing the drudgery of labor, for instance, or allowing more rapid and intimate communication amongst those separated by capital and market who would rather belong to one another in a more traditional form of community, dispersed families or even ethnicities and the like. There are ethical values that lie behind our utilitarian actions, but these are so important to us that they are repressed because if we fail with the full realization that we have failed ourselves in this deeper sense, that it might be more of a challenge to continue at all. We might all be risking melancholia, or, worse, we might have to admit to ourselves that depression is the inevitable outcome of failed or even exhausted desire, since both are on the side of death in any case. So our first glance becomes our only one, the surface tension of finding the right tools for the right job contains our focus, and we attend to all knowledge as if it can bear the exactitude and impression of know-how, or, if we keep this at a distance, then of the 'knowledge of acquaintance'. For us, the proof that we are on the right track is either material success of the completed task - it predicts its reproduction or fulfils its function in a larger system - or things go back to the way they were before the breach or interruption, much as Durkheim has commented about the goal of judgements within legal systems in organic solidarity. There is no irruption is this sequence of events, no need to probe the ethical problem of the uncanny or the distraught. But these other things do not disappear simply because we ignore them. Our immediate reaction to function and utility becomes habit enough that we can address the issue of declining repressive ability to a certain extent. We know, however, that immediacy is not the same thing as immanence, what is a beginning is not necessarily an origin, a cause not a source. Nevertheless, if we read of some function in historical use, some idea our ancestors have had that looks contemporary, we leap to this connection and forget the differences between our culture and theirs: "This first proof introduces a sort of *unconscious rationalization* which misleads a modern reader who is easily convinced of the usefulness of carbonates and other chemical fertilizers." suggests Bachelard, commenting upon the fate of ashes from agrarian bonfires [1]. No doubt there exists some kind of Marvin Harris for every Bachelard when it comes to the representation of historical dynamics and the purposes of action, what our predecessors *really* intended, and so on. The more important point is, however, those other cultures believe that the material forces and uses of living acts are secondary to those symbolic and mythic. If myth is a less than unconscious rationalization for earthly actions, its narratives containing various sanctions both prescriptive and proscriptive, our rational efforts to reproduce society and human life as it has been known until our own day did not run afoul of the problem of rationality for its *own* sake. Indeed, such historical rationalities often conflicted to the point of seeming irrationality, just as they may do today, when the stakes are far higher: "Given the intelligence and rationality of *Homo sapiens* and the scarcity of resources ands goods, it is rational for societies to develop their productive forces." [3]. Whatever evolutionary or ethological intelligence may be attributed to the doubly wise sub-species of genus Homo, the internality of production must contend with the interiority

of a consciousness that, because of its very intelligence and its basis on both self-reflection and the observation of the world about us, seeks to master both self and world. This mastery is not necessarily that of a virtuoso, existential or otherwise, but is concerned with, first and foremost, the utility and pragmatic quality of all human activities. The difference between action and activity lies here, with the former being a general term that denotes all human behavior that can be observed, some of it even being measurable to a certain extent, and the latter connoting production, whether of internal development or external compulsion.

When activity and action are drawn together we see that what might well have been contradictory spheres of human interest ally themselves with each other. When this occurs, one inevitably has a powerful set of historical variables which tend to be long lasting. For example, "Religion and economy were delivered in one and the same movement from that which indebted them to one another: the former from profane calculation, the later from limits given from the outside." [2]. It is common to say that the means of production gave the impetus for religious practices to rationalize themselves, as well as providing the social sanction for religious beliefs to be rationalized when they were brought into contact wit the everyday. Yet it is perhaps equally the case that economic activities took on the guise of religious rituals - certain forms of sacrifice and feast for instance, or the redistribution of wealth - and it is this reciprocity that led to a symbiosis of historical forms. Church and State were in the beginning of the modern period certainly competitors, but as such, they borrowed heavily from one another the trappings and propaganda necessary for the social control of regional community loyalties. Almost all of the content used for such purposes, then as now, were non-rational fictions, rationalized to be rational. The 'new clothes' allegory is one again relevant here. Even so, the consequences of believing, or at least, publicly accepting, these fictions were real enough, and community loyalty, based on the actions of real persons turned into the activities of ideological preparation, production, and maintenance, carried on their shoulders the most profound of social movements, for better or worse. What is of the greatest interest along these lines is, however, the relationship between social variables that are transparently about the organization of society, political power, and symbolic crusades, and those that are supposedly about none of the above. Just as religion posits another world more real - or at least, more authentic - than this one, the economy 'itself' is held out to be somehow more real than the actions of individuals, however many are involved. Yet rationality *itself* may be said to have this predilection; the drive to construct a reality that is superior to the one that is generally known and lived in. In terms of discursive structures, this reality is not about being more ethical or about being more original, but simply about being more factually and empirically real. It is about being as nature is deemed to be, and indeed, one wonders if rational consciousness seeks, somewhat akin to Rousseauism, a return of that very consciousness to nature, and thus away from its own nature lodged in what is 'merely' human. One might venture to say as well that even Marx was not sufficiently suspicious of this movement in nineteenth century science. In describing and critiquing Einstein's model of the scientific process, Feyerabend notes that "The principles and concepts of theories are therefore entirely 'fictitious'. Yet they are supposed to describe a hidden but objective real world. It needs a strong faith, a deeply religious attitude, to believe in such a connec-

tion and tremendous creative efforts are required to establish it." [6]. There are no pure origins into which thought can create such worlds no matter how strong one's faith is, the experience and vision of faith itself comes from the local human contexts into which we are thrown. We may be more or less untouched by humanity at the moment of birth, but this state of utter dependence and mental incompetence could never be imagined as having any kind of intellectual or theoretical clarity.

It is reasonable to say, however, that what is contained in consciousness has such a diversity and luxury that contradictions do arise, that we can imagine spaces where the world is untouched by human action and betrays no evidence of our intention. We can even observe, be it at a distance, such spaces geographically and environmentally. But when it comes to our own interpretation and experience of what we do as human beings, there is no such vantage point. Reason itself holds within it both an internal arbiter and an apparent saboteur: "The vampire of reason, indeed, is but a ruse of reason itself, without which homo sapiens would never have emerged or, once evolved, would have languished for want of a spur or challenge." [3]. Perhaps this is overly optimistic, but the idea of challenge can be taken most loosely. Not all that is taken as a cultural catalyst rests on the ground of base experience; we do not pick their thorns up at random by treading into the new, and they do not dig into us as a spike does in one's side. Perhaps they also occur in the process of remaking ourselves, whether in the arts and architecture - some new technical problem must be solved, yes, but their remains also the problem of aesthetic harmony, according to whatever culture is creating the edifice, as well as the ultimate problem of whether this makes sense within a worldview which is shot through with the non-rational - economics or politics, etc., that requires of us a different understanding of what humanity can accomplish. Certainly, in the arena of global geopolitics, ethnic regionalism, and capital, there exists a moment that is rife with an existential challenge, a spur to consciousness to remake itself before consciousness itself succumbs to a fatal disaster. For at least ten millennia depending on the region, large scale sedentary societies worked all of their challenges into complex narratives of myth and belief. The cosmos became a cosmos through these worldviews, and human interest, though aggrandized in the manner James sarcastically notes, became thoroughly entranced with itself to the extent that what eventually came out the other end of this lengthy temporal reordering of both space and time was the sense that humanity was something utterly unique in the cosmos, and this much, at least, appears to be so. Thus religion 'proper' could be called both the warehouse and the half-way house of all agrarian ideas, whether they were philosophical or political, social or moral. They either found a home there, or were rehabilitated form some other hearth that had been rendered marginal, often trough violence, as with the Alexandrian library and its sects, but also through loss of communication, as with the 'repatriation' of Aristotle in the Middle Ages. The worldview encompassed by specific otherworldly beliefs fulfilled both social origins and destinies: "Religion is the satisfaction that a society gives to the use of excess resources, or rather their destruction. This is what gives religions their rich material aspect, which only ceases to be *conspicuous* when an emaciated spiritual life withdraws from labor a time that could have been employed in producing." [2]. The upward inclination of belief allows it to funnel what excessiveness

there may be into a ritual violence that never turns on the actors themselves. Religion may be seen as a massive architecture of expelling the scapegoat; not any specific human being, nor even this or that idea, but of the energy that human community develops and engenders. It must be released before it consumes its own source, and the motion of this writhing cord of energy must be directed away from where it emanates. If the balance of myth and spirit, of timeless symbol and the signs of the present is to be maintained, whatever life-energy must be channeled away in a movement of *Aufheben*, leaving behind only the afterglow of *Ekstasis*: "All 'culture' is in a way a reaction-formation, an attempt to limit, canalize - to *cultivate* this imbalance, this traumatic kernel, this radical antagonism through which man cuts his umbilical cord with nature, with animal homeostasis." [13]. But surely culture only reacts to itself, as with its formation, the new sentience of the social contract, nature is already fully left behind. That is the radicality of this cord-cutting is the guarantor that organismic evolution in its natural process is left behind only once, or, if one still prefers Zizek's following interpretation that one dies 'only twice', then it is left behind twice; the first and the last time.

This is not a transition amongst other gradual or cultural shifts. This is more like the creation, the origin point of consciousness. At least, this is a manner in which we can slave our own doubts about what is left behind *in* us, rather than 'out there'. It is perhaps ironic that science adjusts itself to keep this *remanant* alive, albeit it in a test-tube environment. The irruptive and uncanny quality that must be back-read onto any animality that remains a part of us - the 'R-complex' in the brain-stem is often used as the ominous example of this, as it is said to house aggression and territoriality, and would therefore in part be responsible for our own self-destruction, the second death of the tandem as it were, that of the species as a whole - is also means of adjusting its presence. This presence of the radically alter, what should have been left behind, the 'thing that should not be', once again, and makes it into a non-thing, an absence of presence, an uncanniness that then and only then can be rectified with the symbolic order. It brings the alien into the human balance, for to be an animal is to be neither good nor evil, convivial nor terrifying. To be part of nature is to be guided by instincts, environment, symbiosis, imminent necessity. So the rationality of our remaining animality cuts both ways. It is either not there at all, as in most human science discourse, or it is there, percolating under the strata of humanity. However ancient these sediments are, animality is yet more ancient. However civil the sentiments are, the organism is yet uncivil. And so we must invert the rationalist model in order to once again tame our pre-savage breasts, and we do so by making the radicality of social contract into a symbol 'before its time': "It should be noted that this transition does not take place, as the realist explanation would have it, from reality to metaphor, but, in quite the opposite manner and in accord with the theory we are supporting, it proceeds from metaphors of subjective origin to an objective reality." [1]. This inversion has the added advantage of being able to reconstruct reality anew from *only* cultural origins, thereby leaving nature not only behind us, but away from us as well. We can feel that it was never actually a part of us, or we a part of it. The mythic side of the balance is also at work. Cosmogonical narratives from mechanical societies to our own reify the break from nature as if it never occurred, from the transformer beings of the North American North West rain-forest to Michelan-

gelo's Sistine ceiling, a creator never has to excerpt humanity from nature, because all of nature is first present and absent only is the image of the other-world in this one, of God in Man. This distinction within the non-rational content of belief is in fact a rational one. That is, to make ourselves 'our own thing', and further to construct ourselves a new a moral creature, a 'thing that *should* be', this time, can only further the distance from organismic 'naturality' and give us the breathing room we need to go about our affairs as human beings are able to.

The Categories' Self-Fulfilling Prophecies

This is not to say that humanity is always willing to let what is imagined as our subterranean nature go. We continue to be suspicious of others, needlessly territorial and aggressive, even in the most trivial contexts. But the social sciences as a whole have shown that we have no one, or no *Thing* - the recently absent Godhead, nature, the irrational, genetics, psychosis or shadowy diabolical forces - to blame but ourselves, society, parents, social institutions, media and what have you. Nature is on the balance scales within the category of mythos, nurture in the category of ethos. We cannot push this allocation of cultural resources too far, however: "The suggestions assume a sharp distinction between pure thought with its artificial categories of myth, or the poetic imagination, which grasps human life as a whole and gives it meaning. In this assumption, the critics overlook that the distinction is itself a rational distinction. They criticize rationality on the basis of categories which were introduced by reason in the first place." [6]. What emerges from this caveat is that both the categories we use to strike the balance of what we understand to be the deeper forces of the human condition, those directed towards life and death, can easily become, or perhaps were even *meant* to become, self-fulfilling prophecies. Both mythos and ethos are the result of repeated *Aufheben*. They preserve and uplift the conceptualizations that are in tension in human existence, but they do not destroy them. The archiphonemic quality of spirit and cosmogony, of the full presence of what is created and of the creation itself, are still parts of the language which contains the phonemes of the utterances which remain the basis of the social contract. Without communication, however grunt-like it may have been for our most distant predecessors, we could not have grunted our way along to what we have become. Perhaps we are yet doing so, at least in some contexts. If we have objected to the subjectitude of rationalized social organizations, we have brought ourselves along and into such a situation by the dialectic of the mirror and the turning away from what has been beheld. We are both the studied object and the student of objects. We know that students like to object to things, and we may even find them to be objectionable themselves. Yet we must continue to work in an intersubjective realm, and mere subjectivity and objectivity is not going to cover this new ground. The sociality of being in the world make the reality social, and what can be distinguished as a rational entity, human consciousness, as apart from the 'arationality' of nature cannot exist without either communication or community: "The 'subject' is no longer just the epistemological subject but is the human subject who, by means of a continual dialectic, thinks in terms of his situation, forms his categories in contact with his experience, and modifies his situation and this experience by the meaning he discovers in them. In particular, this subject is no longer alone." [9]. The reciprocity captured in such a

process overcomes the tension between experience and prejudice. Of course, it does so only momentarily, just as communication and meaning freeze the syntagmatic chain of differential signifiers in order to get the message 'across', to make certain of ongoing dialogue, while understanding that to think is also to be able to remain in the paradigmatic openness of a vertical horizon, the heights and depths of which we can know without ever knowing their limits. This understanding which is self-understanding is hermeneutic in character, as it involves interpretation and the construction of meaningful ambiguity. It is of the world and in it, but it is not directly about the world nor is it from it: "We understand only when we think in concepts. But sensory reality is not made to enter the framework of our concepts spontaneously and buy itself. It resists, and, in order to make it confirm, we have to do some violence to it, we have to submit it to all kinds of laborious operations that alter it so that the mind can assimilate it. However, we never completely succeed in triumphing over its resistance." [5]. Quite apart from the residual ambiguity that is left behind when we settle on a meaning, there is the equivocity of ongoing human contexts that give the lie to our attempted interpretive stability. Perhaps it is better said this way; that what is interpretive is never interpreted, that is, can never be considered finished in the full sense of a past or a disclosure that will always remain previous to the present process of continuous interpretation. One might object that this process is part of subjectivity, and thus it can be closed off if meaning becomes shared or accedes to some other kind of authority than individuated human experience or even tradition. But this is not quite as neat a distinction as it appears. We might aspire to construct an objective meaning, one that stands apart from the process of interpretation and is stable, but in so doing, we must once again encounter it 'on the way back down', so to speak, it does not rest atop an archiphonemic escarpment. If it only did so, there would be no way in which to understand it. It would have no communicative powers. Even the Logos does not rest. The Word as imagined in mythic narrative but also as present as part of the interiority of being and thus as an aspect of ethos is becomes meaningful precisely due to its ability to be interpreted and perhaps even applied to various human contexts. The Logos is an historical vehicle for Being to enter the world as it is. Historical humanity attempts to understand this entrance through ritual action, and forms social groups and communities of belief, but also of mundane tasks and social networks, around the sense that 'these others' actually are not so much an embodiment of otherness per se, because they do in fact, or in fancy, share our beliefs and value certain things the 'same' way as we. In creating these contexts, however theatrical - and all social life is an ongoing performance of interpreted scripts and restaged tableaux - we "...attribute objective meaning also to certain ideal objectivities, such as signs and expressions. In so doing, we mean to say that these ideal objectivities are meaningful and intelligible in their own right regardless of whether anyone is thinking of them, regardless of whether anyone is using them." [10]. This process not only helps to assuage the problem of otherness as it is encountered in quotidian spaces - it ameliorates the sense of confrontation we might have in each social encounter, it makes the other human and ourselves estranged just enough so that the other does not *confront* us but rather accepts our presence and is willing to ask questions of us - but perhaps more abstractly, it eases our consciousness regarding its own mortality. If there are ideas, structures, even

things in the object realm which have some kind of stability, which participate in their own way in a kind of immortality, all is not yet lost to us as a form of life which persists specifically due to its reflective consciousness and its interaction with the world: "This ordering is accomplished in a synthesis of recognition. The synthesis of recognition takes the lived experience that is to be classified, refers it back to the schemes on hand, and fixes its specific essence. The lived experience is thus brought back to an objectification already on hand within the store of experience and identified with this objectification." (ibid:83). The ultimate goal of such a synthesis is not so much to unite lived experience of subjects with one another, although this is its demonstrably empirical result in terms of human action and communication, but to unite we the present living with our predecessors and with our successors. Objectification in its phenomenological sense means to have history as one of its own. It seeks to unite presence with absence. We are the living present of meaningfulness, but we know that meaning did not originate with our presence. Most of us also hope for a better future for our children, and thus are caring, if not exactly 'concernful' in the existential sense, about what meanings can be made in the present so that hose who follow us will not only know our travails and thus hopefully be able to learn from them without repeating them, but also to know that we really did try after all, and were not just deadwood drifting along in the flow of the random rivers of human history.

It is *this* aspiration that makes meaning meaningful. It must not only have some staying power as against the corrosive vicissitudes of history, but it should have some influence over those we sire and then, with poignancy and regret, but also with pride and confidence, cast into the flux of the world as it is. The world as it has been must still, somehow, be present in this world. How this is accomplished is by transforming what may be only an analogy into what we wish to be homologous, to have the same actual structure and not merely a resemblance, however familial. We do not want to overdo this, of course, as the ethics of living vicariously through one's children are at the very least, dubious. But the sentiments that reside in what culture and world as it has been cannot be simply dismissed, though each successive generation needs also to reinterpret them according to their own lights, and the ever-changing landscape of social history. Even so, the manner in which this is best accomplished is more akin to the supposedly 'primitive' notions of non-rational connections - sympathy and contagion, for instance - than any rational or yet further, rationalized, reconstruction of *in situ* ideas, painstakingly excavated by a philosophical archaeology. Rather, we subsist and attempt to manipulate the relationship "...between the principles of magic and those of the association of ideas: to the law of magic - *things that have once been in contact remain united* - corresponds association by contiguity, just as association by resemblance corresponds quite precisely to the *attractio similium* of magic: *like produces like*." [4]. Parents and children, lovers and friends, perhaps disengaged through social forces but remaining within a sentimental and achronous bond, form a link that participates in synchronicity rather than in causality. One does not entirely fall out of love, even if it is only an imagined history that is still beloved, and no real living person fits the description of these pasts. Children are still children, even if their imagined prodigality never reappears at our front door. Subjectively, we iterate these connections and subject them to the

objectifying force of an *Aufheben* that preserves their character while transforming their function and appearance in the world: "Hence the same governing principles: here the subjective association of ideas, there the objective association of facts; here the fortuitous or supposedly fortuitous connections of ideas, there the causal connections of phenomena." (ibid). This uplink is itself mostly magical, as there is no rational means of suggesting to ourselves that it is our imaginations alone which produce the object realm. Our feelings, albeit strongly felt especially if they themselves are linked to a wider sense of worldview which includes the moralizing tendencies of contexts which both create and assuage internecine conflict and threaten in-group solidarity, cannot be denied by simply clearing a lighted space of being and forgetting that we are beings and that we live on in a world of beings, meanings and otherness. The forgetting of history which Nietzsche exhorts is not the same as the forgetting of the task of history. The old god of morality is not the same as the necessity for ethics, or at least, the community of Being as the worlding of worlds associated through non-rational means. We realize, rather with a start, that magic recoils against it user, for after all, magic, in distinguishing itself from religion, is a mere tool to be used to accomplish finite goals. It is a form of *Zweckrationales Handeln* and cannot by itself generate a worldview. If we are married to the idea that we need to use it to keep connected with others whom we imagine we need to be ourselves, to continue to live, then "...sometimes we feel responsible for a thing without any conscious decision on our part this sentiment is, of course, the so-called sentiment of 'irrational' unfounded guilt, well known in psychoanalysis: the 'excessive', 'inexplicable' guilt which masks the psychic reality of an unconscious desire." [13]. Equally so, the 'psychic' reality is but one take on what is 'actually' going on. It may not be confounded with others' views, nor may it be founded upon them. It cannot be in principle 'unfounded', because we are either rationalizing a desire that has no merit in terms of either social sanction or even an otherworldly morality, which Freud was so fond of pointing out was the construction of these would-be neuroses, the delusion of irrationality *par excellence*. Yet part of this rationalization is also, and equally so, an attempt by the adult self to reconcile its rational need for liberation with the demands of the day, that is, the rationalizations of everyday life and of institutions. It is thus an attempt to acknowledge the desire on the grounds that, while it is not unfounded and has itself a source - however libidinally potent or neurotic does not matter here - it is not itself its own source, and must confront, or be confronted by, the reality of its 'host' living on more or less unassailed so it too can live on insulated by the public rationality of the adult self. This self, as we have already seen, is itself and in turn insulated by rationality and is assumed to be innocent, no matter how much its own interiority of social conscience mazy indict it. We do, in other words, know when we are transgressing. We are no longer children, and we do not behave as such, or if we do, we castigate ourselves in some degree and do not assume that the world should have 'gone my way' and no other.

We do not, then, operate from the standpoint of unfounded expectations and suffer blindly in the unknowing light of the 'why' of bad conscience. All them ore so, if we are still loyal to the 'archaic' morality of agrarian godhead, guilt is something that is well-defined. It even resonates in the modern legal system, and everyone knows what it means to be guilty of something, even if one has not ac-

complished the act. As Durkheim long ago reminded us, the suasion of social facts is far greater than our individual capacity to counter it directly. Instead, we find ways to adapt: "If there is within us, running through the space we inhabit, a movement of energy that we use, but that is not reducible to its utility (which we are impelled by reason to seek), we can disregard it, but we can also adapt our activity to its completion outside of us." [2]. We can also externalize both the process and outcomes of founding our ethical relation to our actions. Entire institutionally dominated edifices of moral suasion have been founded on this function; to alleviate the problem of self-reflection that tends toward ethical contemplation, and thence tends toward the melancholic or the revolutionary. The former are not dangerous, except to themselves, but the latter are, by definition, threats to the wider social order. No matter how non-rational the content of the worldviews expressed or rhetorically championed by such sets of institutions are, its due process and normative rituals tend to be exceedingly rational, even rationalized. The rationality of major religions demands that the wholeness of life be considered in its ambit, and this form of rationality does not lessen itself by attempting to understand the subjective realm of value while at the same time promoting the shared values of belief: "Thus the church was not only on the right track when measuring reality by human concerns but it was considerably more rational than some modern scientists and philosophers who draw a sharp distinction between facts and values and then take it for granted that the only way of arriving at facts and, therefore, reality, is to accept the *values* of science." [6]. Not that belief in itself is a guarantor or the reality that any particular person, ethnicity, gender or age-group may inhabit over the life-course. We need to ask, 'whose reality?', and why such rationalized institutions housing non-rational beliefs continue to be extant in a period where we notoriously accept the products of science but shun its methods. Indeed, much of the traditional 'Sunday-School' content of religious worldsystems is also shunned, and perhaps it is because the methods of science are not so much disquieting to us in terms of their anonymity and apparent motion away from human interest, but because they shed light on things we do not need to know in the everyday ongoingness of social reality. The social fact is carries far more authority than the scientific one, but neither kind of fact inhabits the world of fable or allegory. Thus hardly anyone recons on finding the physical remains of Noah's Ark in the ancient territory of the Ur-Arut civilization, nor do we expect that whales swallow persons, and if they did, that they survive intact. We are content to explain away sleepy, sated dens of lions as being disinterested in easy prey who might wander into their lair, and that sometimes flash floods cover the desert with radical waves of water. The assumed allegorical character of scripture is itself one of the fundamental signs of rationalism, but this character was noted from the very beginning, and is not a function of a 'modern' reading of any kind of archaic text. Even so, it may be at least partially true that "...surviving religions have tended to conform to the Marxist characterization of them as opiates of the people, being generally preemptive of social conflicts while eschewing unduly irrational beliefs about the world they perforce inhabit." [3]. Nonetheless, it is equally clear that religious suasion may be used to mobilize violence, and what would appear to the modern mind-set as 'irrational' beliefs rhetorically urging persons onward to their deaths with promises of unearthly paradises which await the martyr. Either way, through

adaptation to the mundane routines of rationalized and technologically influenced society, or in reaction thereto, "...the human ability to cooperate rationally and to behave altruistically under moral restraints permits group selection to develop among human societies..." (ibid:76). These 'restraints' operate both in an hortatory manner as prescriptions for ethical action, as well as, and sometimes simultaneously depending on our reflection upon them, in a cautionary way, as proscriptions. They urge us to do or not do after the principles of shalt and shalt not. But action and principle cannot be too closely identified, for if so, the sense that one must come to one's own conclusion based on prior experience and the changing world around one is muted, in other words, ethics itself begins to become a way of enforcing only rules rather than a mode of being in the world as it occurs to us. A social or political life then becomes virtually impossible due to the fear of offending the guardians of these rules, as if the everyday had become some kind of moral autocracy: "The same thing happens with ethical life when one tries to bind it to previously given laws (whether of reason or religion), such that it is ethical only to the extent that these laws are realized." [11]. The realization of something stable and familiar in the unstable and the strange is a process of metaphor and interpretation, and very much not a procedure of the application of laws or rules. It is most often not rational, but it does not have to contain non-rational elements, as if it were a species of 'magical' thinking and thus subject to rational disdain. This integrative thinking is, rather a way of making our experience into that which is worthy of judging the objectivity of a reality that confronts us with its massive self, a singularity which never weakens in its resistance to our attempts to make it into a world we can be entirely comfortable within. It does not want us to own it, and thus we must "...integrate the rules of morality with the laws of psychology! Then the fire which was consuming us suddenly enlightens us. The haphazard passion becomes the deliberate passion. Love becomes family; fire becomes hearth and home." [1]. In order to avoid the problem of becoming only an object, we subject the objection of the world to our transient and experiential presence to rules of our own making. They are worldly, yes, but they are not 'of' the world in any objective sense.

Their Function as Rules

What is the character of these rules, which are at once not entirely rationally constructed while at the same time being functionaries of forms of social rationalization? The social contract is our origin point, but it is a point which partakes equally of both ethos - it has a spiritual significance for human beings and suggests that we participate in a being which is greater than ourselves alone; it gives us the air of existence and puts us beyond the ken of mere subsistence and instinct - and mythos - its historical origin can never be known, and its archaeological traces are subject to interpretation of the most speculative kind. All of this is beside the point that we recognize that there is a beginning, just as there is a birth in order for their to be a death, and all of us who are born must accept this fact as human beings. It is in this way that the rule of life transmits its soul to rules which are used for living: "All several men need to do is love together and be associated with the same task for some rudimentary rules and a beginning of law to emerge from their life in common. Looking at things in this way, one gets the feeling that man has immense resources. One need only go back to that very

widespread idea that reason is rare, and one could show that in one sense it is everywhere in men." [9]. It is commonplace in sociology and anthropology, as ell as in their offspring disciplines to recognize that values not only construct the facts of existence, but maintain them over time. In order for social change to occur, the idols of values must become hollow. No monument to any social order can be made to topple without this preliminary step. If the statuary of statutes represent the teeth of social sanction, our reservation about them produce in them the caveats of cavities, leading eventually to their downfall: "...belief, far from being an 'intimate', purely mental state, is always materialized in our effective social activity: belief supports the fantasy which regulates social reality." [13]. Indeed, this is the usual distinction between belief and opinion. The 'mere' individuation of belief does not cover the degrees necessary for shared meaning to take on the vestments of the enlightenment person, and become invested in him or her. No one is concerned about opinions, and their content tends toward the trivial. But belief is entirely another matter, and, for better or worse, its contradictions and conflicts occupy much public and political discourse. Humanity needed to focus on a specific manner of living in order to generate an architecture to which beliefs concerning the meaning of life could adorn themselves. No doubt these can also be stripped away in times of radical change, where activity and action belie beliefs. This kind of historical moment is momentous enough in itself, but gives forth a more profound process by which one can actually observe what it means to construct a society: "A chaos began, where, in the most contrary ways, everything became equally possible. Society's unity was maintained owing to the unquestioned importance and success of the dominant activity. In this uncertainty, the temptations of the past easily survived their invalidation." [2]. Just as the promise and premise of revolutionary processes are only ever approached, and never delivered in their complete and idealized form, reconstructing society entails that we witness again its construction. Not from the ground up, but, by preserving some of both its roots and its foliage, social change takes on the character of the dialectic. Its *Aufheben* is simply its own memory of itself. Whether these take on the guise of 'temptations' or distractions from 'dominant' activity or not is context dependent. There are also themes in the history of society that occupy both categories of action-oriented rationality. It may be quite rational, or at least functional, to evaporate the steam of social tension by walking away from the labor of subsistence into the circus or festival, trading the rituals of the mundane for those of the structural inversion of the carnival. There is also the problem of public normativity and private dissension, but on the ground, this tends to look morel like a somewhat abstracted ethical problem than one that affects the day to day. One of the most obvious example concerns the loyalty of the margins in any society that has centers of power. The centrifugal force of institutional suasion may not be enough to ensure subalterns of their continuing support. That this support comes and goes is evidence of the bleeding of historical and social categories, in the sense that what has survived from the past may continue to be either a dominant norm or temptation away form those same norms. The simple following of rules is no evidence for belief in either the efficacy of those rules in maintaining or moving towards their goals - social control, for instance, or patriotism or, apart from the existence of the record of norms, the social 'rulebook' which is in fact mostly unwritten, the rules

themselves as somehow sacrosanct or as signs of the other world, or yet further, as signs that the rulers of this world know what they are doing and are, in fact, in control.

Rationality is the scion of the ability to follow rules. No specific set of rules may be evoked, of course, but the sense that one has a task and one can accomplish it in the bets possible manner only by following this or that set of rules is strong in organic societies. One even notes its presence in intimate situations, and the plethora of self-help books that speak of courtship ritual and sexuality over the course of the past century and a half is further evidence that one's desires may, at least in one's imagination, be approached more rapidly through rule-following. Ultimately, we may even come to believe that this is the most rational manner of living a life: "To be rational in the formal sense again means to follow a certain procedure. Hardnosed empiricists regard it as irrational to retain views plainly in conflict with experiment while hardnosed theoreticians smile at the irrationality of those who revise basic principles at every flicker of the evidence." [6]. We have already seen where this 'smile' leads, and it is surely due to our sense that we desire the evidence of a continued existence after empirical and organic death that we are vigilant for any 'flicker' of life, any sign that this might be so. We know that history allows for this kind of unexpected and even uncanny shift in perception in life. What was impossible for our predecessors is routine for us in much the same manner as what was plausible and contained within the worldviews of our ancestors is either nonsense or indeed, itself uncanny in our world. If this is so in life, why might it not so be in death? If the social order is mutable, cannot the order of existence, given that it too is immensely and immanently social, be able to be changed as well? It is an ongoing aporia that social reality appears to be so massive and yet also so fragile, and that we, as social animals in the strictest sense are given to seek freedom within the unfree boundaries of sanction and duty: "The subject who thinks he can avoid this paradox and really have a free choice is the *psychotic* subject, one who retains a kind of distance from the symbolic order - who is not rally caught up in the signifying network." [13].

Conclusion: Spirit and Myth Approached as Objects

Even so, there is some room for creativity and imagination in almost all social formations and, however gradual the ensuing social change may be, however fractal and unrecognizable its angles may appear to be, it is the ability to imagine difference that is the impetus history needs to complete its own being in the world. One would like to argue that such imaginative thoughts and acts that may follow from them are the only way in which society can, ironically, *reproduce* itself: "Creative ideas and projects which assist society's chances of survival in the realm of necessity tend to be fostered by the powerful interest which inhabit that realm. It is not only societies, but institutions and cultural movements within them, which are obliged to reproduce themselves..." [3]. Indeed, the tension between our usual notions of what is creative, productive, and new, and what is 'merely' a reproduction, the same 'old' thing and a copy of someone else's creativity participate in the general paradox of social existence, especially when its organicity includes a strong and ascendant concept of the individual. There is contained in this guise of the aporetic a further tension, one of either happiness or melancholia juxtaposed with the routine or the otiose, sometimes respectively, and sometimes coincidentally or in simultaneity: "This

joy cannot explained objectively. It is an indication of a specific affective power. In this way is explained the joy of rubbing, cleaning, furbishing, and polishing that could not be adequately explained by the meticulous care taken by certain housewives." [1]. Perhaps *renewal* is the key concept here, as what was beginning to appear old is made new again. This constitutes a creation of the more from the less, and is also a reminder that "...certain structures or sets of events cannot be identified as exclusively material or cultural in character." [3] as, through the renewal what was fast becoming more of a material, with lessening cultural significance or social status, or yet even material or commodity value, is made to re-enter all of these realms in an almost prodigal manner. In spite of Bachelard's odd example, it is clear that the 'taking care of one's things' is a powerful metaphor for how one goes about the affairs of one's life. If the 'meticulous' personality is also at risk for neurosis, they maintain their link with the symbolic order, they avoid going 'all the way', as it were, becoming psychotic, by providing society with its own history, a rejuvenated sensibility that all that has been solid can remain so, at least for the time being, and not be immediately forsaken to the thin air of a finitude which itself mimics the fragility of human mortality.

The practice of this kind of rationality is more objective and balanced, more loyal to ratio-symbolic life and its interest in both spirit and symbol than either the theories that emanate solely from contemplation, or the stasis that is the hallmark of contentment. From the latter, the balance receives its stability, just as from the former, it receives its solidity. It is the depths of both modes of being, one towards life and the other toward death, that allow the portability of both ethos and mythos in the manner that the concept of the sacred appears to transport itself across major historical boundaries. At length, all of this bases itself upon the praxis of the existential process: "Devoting oneself entirely to 'theoretical pursuits' presupposes 'practical knowledge' - the guiding force of reason in human action and behavior. This is what really constitutes 'reason', its power or its impotence. It is not simply a faculty one has, but something to be cultivated." [7]. It is no different with faith. Neither kind of rationality, the oneself-directed and interested in the processes of becoming human in the light of the world and of other human beings, the second other-directed in the ontological sense of learning what it is to be human in the light of spirit and even nature, appears to us of whole cloth, and neither can be completed only by living our own lives. Both reason and faith are also played out in larger social settings such as institutions, and find their homes both ethos and mythos depending upon the uses to which they are put. But these uses alone still did not guarantee an exeunt from the ambiguity of the human condition: "Religion in general answered the desire that man always had to find himself, to regain an intimacy that was always strangely lost. But the mistake of all religion is always to give man a contradictory answer: *an external form of intimacy.*" [2]. Thus it is that we are turned outward only to find that the response we imagine we seek lies beyond the desire for its closure and security. If we then are turned inward by this estrangement, we find we are ever farther from the truth of things, as part of our faith, the will to believe in spite of contradictory responses and lack of empirical experience - lack of reason but necessarily not one of rationality, an absence of proof but not necessarily of evidence - carries us forward and our imagination then is enough to feel that this motion is directed aright. This dynamic, the compelling

lack of understanding which permits both curiosity and imagination to enter the world scene and alter its course, also impels us to rush forward while learning to maintain our balance; both between ourselves and our social conscience, and between the symbolic orders of myth and the spirit of the age. It is this dynamic then that constitutes our experience of both, and it can be hypostasized so that we begin to feel a part of the narrative of humanity, as well as being held within the spirit of what it may mean to be human in the present day: "Metaphysical consciousness has no other objects than those of experience: this world, other people, human history, truth, culture. But instead of taking them as all settled, as consequences with no premises, as if they were self-evident, it rediscovers their fundamental strangeness to me and the miracle of their appearing" [9]. It is equally important to expect that what we imagine to be the case will be incorrect, or at least, altered in some small aspect away from our expectations. Not only is this more empirically sound, if one feels the need to deduce, but it is also more rational, as it has the weight of previous evidence, from almost all kinds of human events, on its side. No form of knowledge that does not participate in the ongoing dynamic of keeping the balance of ratio-symbolic life alive, and only through a movement can this be accomplished, as the torus of existence is narrow and tautly strung along its circumference. All human knowledge must thus participate in the practice of putting it into practice, as well as not allowing it to become merely a rule or a dogma. If it is so that any person requires that such "... relevant knowledge must constantly reintegrate theoretical knowledge into the practical knowledge of his everyday life, so also a culture based on science cannot survive unless rationalizing the apparatus of civilization is not an end in itself; but makes possible a life to which one can say 'yes.'". [7]. No ritual, function, know-how, technique or skill addresses itself only to the task present to hand. For what is within immediacy is immanency, and it is this adjoining sphere of existence that makes what is present have *presence*. Immanency is the presence of the present precisely because it motions us to peer ahead of ourselves and our works to their future meaning: "In the end, all practice suggests what points beyond it." [7].

Notes

i. Dialogue itself, if held to both rational or rationalized content let alone a logical format cannot shed further light on the matter at hand. Argument in the strict rational sense, where one builds a premise and defends it, lacks the humane and contextual sensibilit8ies established by tradition, narrative, and the authenticity of risking the self through the other in hermeneutical dialogue. We require more than argument, "For now we are dealing not merely with intellectual matters, but with feelings, faith, empathy and many other agencies not yet catalogized and named by rationalists." [6].

ii. Blackburn continues by recognizing that autochthonous productive suasion may be only as great, or not as great, as the sensibility that one can take these necessities form others through military aggressions and conquests, and that this line of thinking can be seen as equally rational given the local variables at large. [3].

iii. One proverbial example is the idea that the King represented the rationalized symbol of a larger group, the one was seen to be in the many quite literally, and this idea is clearly of religious origin: "...the State as the rational totality exists effectively only in so far as it is embodied in the inert presence of the King's body: the King, in his non-rational, biologically determined presence, 'is' the State, it is in his

body that he State achieves its effectiveness." [13]. Of course, the body is no longer thought of as an 'in itself', and bears symbolic orders that are far from being biologistically inclined and sourced.

iv. Later on, Schutz returns to this process by noting its universal quality: "All cultural objectifications can, therefore, be interpreted in a twofold manner. One interpretation treats them as completely constituted objectifications as they exist for us the interpreters, either now as contemporaries in the present, or as coming later in history." [10]. The second one involves the idea of a fixed and more or less ahistorical interpretation that has shed, as it were, the interpretive process. These 'ideals' supposedly also shed light on the 'minds who created them' and give us the sense that the ideals 'themselves' then have an ability to act ahistorically. However pretentious this may be, it is of prime importance for a human consciousness that seeks not merely to make history but to have a history, to understand itself as having been somewhere and accomplished something, and thus that living-on towards death is not simply a vain pursuit, nor is it in itself in vain.

v. We have already had occasion to mention Feyerabend on the use of oracles, and Bataille also uses this an example, but expands its rationality to take into account a larger and more generally public, or even cosmic role, for example in Tibet: "An official oracles designates the province and inquiries are conducted concerning children born within a period of time corresponding with the death of the late Dalai Lama. The decisive sign is the recognition of an object that was used in the previous incarnation..." [2].

vi. Feyerabend adds that such principles of reason or morality are themselves built into a specific time and place, and thus could not truly be considered as qualitatively different from ethics in any case: "Separating facts, values, and rationality is of course an artifice. Facts are constituted by procedures that contain values, values change under the impact of facts and principles of reasoning assume a certain world order...." [6].

vii. "Subordinate classes may evince strong loyalty to the social order and, therefore, endorse its defense, but in doing so they are victims of ruling-class mystification and are really acting against their own interest. Hence loyalty to the state is more of an aberration to be accounted for in terms of class relations than a persistent and independent mainspring of history." [3]. With such an example, one could read subaltern loyalty as either a temptation away from authentic interest and hence existence, or as mere normative behavior with no real authenticity within its action. One might also then suggest that distraction and temptation are labels entirely relative to, in this case, the social location of those analyzing the situation.

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