

## HARMONISING HUMANITY WITH NATURE METAPHOR, THE PERSON, AND ART'S HIGHER MEANING

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**ABSTRACT:** Mythology, as we know, is at the heart of everything. This paper advances an argument for creating harmony among humanity, and with nature, by changing how we ‘world’ reality in modern mythologising. The connection between metaphor, the person, and art is proposed as key, since artmaking and admiring presents our most powerful way of creating a mythology. Metaphor is the unique form of meaning productivity, originating in nature’s ‘semiotic freedom’, which is fundamental to expressing human embodiment in a ‘world’. Symbol merely represents; but metaphor places us *in* the realm of the part-whole relation simultaneously with the becoming-being polarity. These are processes inherent in all life and emerging consciousness, hence ‘spiritual’ phenomena (in the most scientific sense), producing what Peirce claimed as the evolution of thought toward Reason. And, equally, the key processes in artmaking. Though high mathematics is metaphoric, revealed religion is essentially *symbolic*; and arguably the highest ‘spiritual’ expression is made, not even in philosophical discourse, but through Art. Linking meaning with valuing, I show where neuroscience is helpful, but hamstrung, in accounting for the primacy of metaphor in art. Benefits of Paul Ricoeur’s hermeneutic phenomenology and Max Scheler’s philosophical anthropology over Lakoff & Johnson’s more generalised ‘experientialist’ approach to metaphor are examined. Ricoeur’s account of “symbolism’s” confusion with metaphor here reveals that, to activate the ‘*re-productive*’ imagination, art must present a ‘proper’ metaphoric utterance (as does Schelling’s: T2024a & 2024b). This was distinguished from the ‘*productive*’ imagination’s merely reflective engagement with symbol and concept; and later argued to move us ‘beyond interpretation’ as Bradley (2009) suggests necessary, via Peircian semiotics (T2024c). Further detailed exploration here of this key relation between metaphor, the person, and art, hence reveals how philosophical anthropology provides the basis for re-empowering art to transcend Danto’s ‘artworld’. Making it thus capable of producing a realistic collectivising Spirit able to inspire the essential longer term humanistic ‘new deal’ with Nature, that is much needed to avert our possible extinction or descent into ‘posthuman’ mechanism.

**KEYWORDS:** Aesthetics; Lakoff & Johnson; Neuroscience; Metaphor; Peirce, Ricoeur; Schelling, Scheler; Symbol; Person

## INTRODUCTION

Mythology as we know is at the heart of everything.<sup>1</sup> This paper proposes creating harmony among humanity, and with nature, by changing how we ‘world’ reality in modern mythologising. And since artmaking and admiring present our most powerful ways of creating a mythology, I argue why the connection between metaphor, the person, and art is key.

Metaphor, applied optimally in Art, affords humanity the most profound access to what Michael Polanyi called the ‘tacit dimension’. I argue it does this on both the individual and collective level, by embodying the person-<->Person (self-<->Self) reciprocal relation. Art’s expression of *Spirit* – via *any* ‘object’-ive self-actualisation – hence has an important purchase on how *we* come to understand ourselves in relation to each other and the world. Its natural self-structuring elevation of consciousness essentially defines what it means to be human.

The ‘autopoietic’ morphogenesis of *all* meaning self-evidently consists of not only a part-whole relation, but simultaneously a becoming-being relation. These are the cosmological ‘spiritual’ phenomena via which Art uniquely merges knowledge with action – which makes Art the *ultimate* way of realising ‘immaterial’ phenomena in the ‘material’ world. Hence too human possibility; via what Max Scheler defines as a *Phenomenological* experience.

Sections 1 to 3 outline my argument for the relation between personhood and the primacy of metaphoric meaning in creating this unique experience. The later sections expand on this in more detail, showing why this is different to ordinary experience, and key to an *ethical* assessment of reality. Art is then argued to be our only possible means of harmonising humanity, and re-establishing the relation between human nature and Nature (hence ‘reality’), via the ‘practical sciences’ of aesthetics, ethics, and logic.

In this paper I will show firstly that, for humanity to obtain the highest benefit from the all-important *tacit* dimension, Art’s ‘objectivity’ must be understood in terms of acts of meaning and valuing. And *how* these are connected is key. The operative features of Art’s being-becoming/part-whole tacit dimensionality - intersubjectivity, metaphor, narrative ‘movement’ etc., - as Friedrich Schelling

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<sup>1</sup> MacIntyre 2007.

reveals, essentially define its *Principle* (T2024a).<sup>2</sup> Art ‘as principle’ is thus a *way of valuing* the world; in which what occurs in Nature is transcended *archetypally* via what must be understood as a ‘reproductive’ (rather than merely ‘productive’) Imagination.

However, since this principle was fragmented by historicisation, my aim here is to as thoroughly as possible reframe the important relation between Metaphor, the Person, and Art’s higher meaning-value which underscores it. This, I suggest, makes artmaking and admiring our best ways of understanding nature, the cosmos, and our relation to them in the ‘worlds’ we create. Better, as Schelling claims, than science or even philosophy.

Reviving humanity’s purchase on reality, by restoring the value of these connections, may be the only way of avoiding humanity’s self-destruction - in the combined collapse of civic humanism and the biosphere.

## I. MEANING AND VALUING

Philosophers throughout history have often noted the integral connection between aesthetics, ethics, and logic. This, as I have argued on several occasions, was lost in the historicisation of all three of these ‘normative’ (what Aristotle called ‘practical’) sciences (T2022, 2023). Due in large part to a coinciding fragmentation of the Art-Person ‘perfect sign’ double-unity. This gradually produced Art and Humanity’s joint ‘existential’ meaning crisis. The deterioration of what we, predominantly in western modernity, have construed as art or science - and indeed the human *telos* itself – thus very much reflects a related privation in *aesthetic* comportment. This, as many including F. W. Schelling, C. S. Peirce, and later philosophical anthropologist Max Scheler have shown, fundamentally affects how we perceive truth and understand “progress”.

Michael Polanyi, for instance, in *The Tacit Dimension* (1966), underscores why the implicit interconnection of these normative sciences is critical to *knowing* reality. ‘Thought’, he says, ‘can live only on grounds which we adopt in the service of a reality to which we submit’. Therefore, trying to *avoid* ‘the responsibility for shaping the beliefs which we accept as true’ is as absurd as ‘the existentialist claim of choosing our beliefs from zero’. Yet both troubling

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<sup>2</sup> T2024a = Trimarchi 2024a, etc.,

tendencies cohabit in today's 'artworld', thanks largely to Kant's aesthetic legacy - in particular: his 'doctrine of agreeableness' (T2022).

The path to obtaining higher meaning lies in accessing Reason via the tacit dimension. And re-associating art with the *normative* science of aesthetics returns this possibility. But because, as I have claimed, Art is a 'complexity science' (comparable to Biosemiotics), in no way does 'normativity' here suggest any teleological reductivism. Quite the opposite. Both Art and Humanity's autonomy rely equally with science's, on natural 'semiotic freedom'. Polanyi, for many years a prodigious scientist before turning to philosophy, recounts with dismay Stalinist Russia's narrowing of the pursuit of science for its own sake to concern for 'the problems of the current Five-Year Plan'. '[F]rom a socialist theory which derived its tremendous persuasive power from its claim to scientific certainty', he says, came a scientific outlook which appeared to have produced a mechanical conception of man and history in which there was no place for science itself... [denying]... altogether any intrinsic power to thought and thus ...any grounds for claiming freedom of thought'.<sup>3</sup>

We might well draw the same conclusions about art's twentieth century descent into what Arthur Danto described as the 'artworld' - with its theoretically fabricated 'democratisation' reducing it to a 'postmodern' permanent revolution of narrowed concerns with the present and 'familiar'. Arguably comparable "moral" motives and modes of attendance had by now cast 'the self' permanently adrift on a sea of subjectivity, as the tenor of the person-Person relation deteriorated with humanity's potential to totalise meaningfully. The conflicting limitations of our "normal" historicised subjective way of *universalising* meanings and values are apparent in Polanyi's description:<sup>4</sup>

The mechanical course of history was to bring universal justice. Scientific skepticism would trust only material necessity for achieving universal brotherhood. Skepticism and utopianism had thus fused into a new skeptical fanaticism. ...[O]ur whole civilization was pervaded by the dissonance of an extreme critical lucidity and an intense moral conscience, and ...this combination had generated both our tight-lipped modern revolutions and the tormented self-doubt of modern man

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<sup>3</sup> Michael Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension*. (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1983), p.3-4.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p.4. This same 'mechanisation' of art originated in the thinking of Hobbes, Descartes, and Newton, and the subjectivising of selfhood in early Christianity (T2022, 2023, 2024a).

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outside revolutionary movements.

Through such self-deceptions, both art and humanity's intrinsically autonomous way of valuing the world were reduced to moralising; constraining the imagination, channelling it into various dogmas, rather than liberating it. Kant's misconceived notion of 'universalising' – of drawing the particular into the universal (i.e., 'symbolising') - is evident in the reductive 'self-immolation of the mind' which Polanyi points to.

Metaphor however operates in the reverse, by 'drawing the universal into the particular', as Schelling says (T2024a). The vital significance of this fundamental distinction to the orientation of the human telos, is the subject of this paper. It will become apparent firstly by examining the necessity for *proper* metaphor in art-making (§2&3). Then in the reason this bears so heavily on *properly* reconnecting human life with spirit, in all acts of meaning and valuing, in *any* human endeavour (§4&5). For which some preparatory discussion on the coinciding teleology of Art and the Person will be helpful.

#### 1.1 *The Person, and the Spectre of Posthumanism*

The impacts of 'mechanism' (and similarly, 'literalism') on art reveal why neuroscience is hamstrung in helping us understand 'the structure' of our tacit knowing. As Polanyi says, the latter is composed of thought that is 'subsidiary' to the 'focal content of our thinking'. Thus, *how* we habitually attend to meaning and valuing mostly overrides the 'what'. This poses problems for the traditional 'mechanistic' model of the brain, often overlooked by posthumanists.

Thinking, says Polanyi, 'is not only necessarily intentional, as Brentano has taught: it is also necessarily fraught with the roots that it embodies. It has a *from-to* structure'<sup>5</sup> And Max Scheler reveals the significance of this natural, self-structuring 'narrative order' of thought to *the formation of the Person*. Which via the origins of our habit-taking relates both to personhood historically and the self socially. As Scheler says: 'All *primordial* comportment toward the world', though it is 'not precisely a "representational" one of perceiving', is nevertheless

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<sup>5</sup> Polanyi, *TD*, p. xviii.

‘a primordial emotional comportment of *value*-ception [Wertnehmung].’<sup>6</sup> For this reason, I will later try to dispel the illusory seduction produced by post-humanist mythology that, for instance, all too easily confuses AI’s potential *utility* with the *ends* of humanism (§5).

Humanism pursues the genuinely utopian *ideal* of a ‘human ecology’ grounded in the *real* world (ie., Nature, and ‘natural laws’). Post-humanism arguably yearns for a symbolic idealist ‘will to power’ escapist fantasy, becoming anti-humanist as ‘mechanism’ takes over – not just in actions but in thought. Medical innovation on the computer-brain interface, while possibly beneficial in some circumstances, presents a slippery slope for post-human delusions because not all meaning is ‘sensible’ or exclusively produced in the brain. While a mechanistic model of the brain has been surpassed in science, it still prevails in popular mythology. I have previously explained why modern ‘phantasy’ thrived under Kant and Hegel’s ill-conceived notion of the ‘*productive* imagination’, propelling a merely reflective symbolic mode of ‘universalising’ to dominance. And how by contrast, as Schelling reveals, the ancient Greek realistic ‘fantasy’ evident in their art provides a good example of the *reproductive* imagination at work (T2024a, 2024b). The latter underscores the brain’s complex plasticity (and, indeed, why Art is also ‘plastic’). Their fundamental difference – as that between humanism and posthumanism - is thus key to reframing the higher meaning of *proper* metaphor.

Schelling’s ‘dialectical aesthetics’ advances upon Kant’s reflective aesthetics because, contrary to Kant and Hegel, he shows why great art consists in *the merger* (not separation) of Beauty and Truth in our intellectual intuition. This, as previously argued, makes Art a greater ‘science of mind’ asset to human progress than any ‘cognitive arms race’ or Kurzweillian ‘singularity’ theory of the brain could afford us. But this requires understanding that Art’s *truly* unifying potential far outweighs the purely ‘symbolic capital’ attributed to it today - in what Pierre Bourdieu aptly called the ‘bad-faith economy’ of ‘the arts business’. Max Scheler’s anthropological phenomenology shows how to avoid confusing symbol with metaphor, and potential ‘post-human’ delusions, by helping us understand why

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<sup>6</sup> Max Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values*, trans. Manfred S. Frings and Richard L. Funk, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), p.197.

we perceive value-contents of objects in *both* inner and outer perception. It thus reveals inherent limitations on neuro-aesthetics and neuro-phenomenology to explain cognition of the tacit dimension, eg., via ‘image-schema’ detection.

Hence, while Mark Johnson and George Lakoff’s widely acknowledged work on metaphor revived its fundamental importance in our daily lives, I will propose an alternative philosophical anthropological approach to their ‘experientialism’ is needed, if we are to understand art’s *higher* meaning and ‘use-value’ to humanity. Not only is it a mistake, says Scheler, to think that we ‘perceive’ feelings and emotions as pictorial contents but ‘in the sphere of inner intuition’ (the “intuitive inward directedness,” affording us a ‘primordial attitude’) our way of obtaining meaning ‘is neither exclusively nor primarily one of perceiving but one of *value*-ceiving and *value*-feeling as well’.<sup>7</sup> This accounts for why we cannot ‘observe’ a feeling in our memory or imagination the same way that we can a picture. Cognition, says Scheler, cannot fail to ‘*disregard* the primary *cogiven* value-qualities of psychic experiences by suspending the experiencing acts of feeling which are necessarily bound up with such value-qualities’.

‘What is primary in *experiencing* life...’, therefore ‘must be secondary in *experienced* life’ because ‘perceiving belongs necessarily to comprehension’, whereas ‘*experiencing* life belongs to the act of *attention*'.<sup>8</sup> Hence a picture is *represented* in our memory and imagination, whereas a feeling is not ‘*re*-presented’ as such. This, given Schelling and Paul Ricoeur’s conceptions of the reproductive imagination, reveals why Kant and Hegel’s ‘standpoint of reflection’ has inured rational-choice theoretical aesthetic reasoning (through ‘experimentalism’) with a false, un-scientific, basis for understanding/judging art. Leading to an equally false belief that *AI* can make original art. There can be no algorithm for *genuine* art, because as Amatra Sen notes, any such formalisation ‘looks for “the kind of lucidity which destroys its subject”’.<sup>9</sup>

Scheler, like later hermeneutic phenomenologists Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Ricoeur, hence reinforces the importance of having a ‘*simultaneous* phenomenological grounding of both psychology and ethics’ in order to understand why theories of ethical values (and *aesthetic* values) based

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p.197-198

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p.198.

<sup>9</sup> Polanyi, *TD*, p.xi

in *assessments according to norms*, are flawed. Ethical and aesthetic normativity concerns not just *empirical* comprehension; it consists in *knowing*, not merely perceiving. And, as I will show, no formalistic theories, let alone those derived from observation of ‘image-schema’, can account for the independent, factual psychic experiences that lie behind our consciousness as yet un-processed by our cognition. This, I have argued, is why theoretical aesthetics (structuralist or poststructuralist) simply fails to realistically account for art’s meaning-value and the significance of *the Person* to Art - deferring instead to psychologism (and ‘personality’). Trying to *de-Personalise* knowledge, and find objectivity via personal detachment, as Polanyi too argues, is impossible.<sup>10</sup> In Sen’s words, ‘operations at a higher level cannot be accounted for by the laws governing its particulars forming a lower level’. Examination of the transformation of values in artmaking in §5 reveals why.

Schelling called our primordial *tacit* understanding the pre-conceptual consciousness of ‘un-prethinkable being’; and Art’s singular higher meaning Object hence an ‘*empirical* object’. Not in the ‘classical empirical’ sense, rather in line with Peirce and Scheler’s ‘radical empirical’ phenomenology. It is in this latter sense that the self-evident autopoietic emergence of meaning in natural processes, and what is ‘given’ to us in intuition, together provide the basis for metaphor’s primacy as the meaning-maker of art *par excellence*. Being an expression of our ontological relation to the real world, the metamorphosising action of appropriate metaphors in the right contexts – upturning lower-order values - allows us access to areas of our imagination that are otherwise inaccessible to other kinds of speculative thought. As we will see in §3, in this process we also immediately discern variation in *qualities* of meaning. We are thus simultaneously given access to reason both directionally and qualitatively, in an un-detached mode of thinking which is of unsurpassed value to us.

Art, then, is not just ‘any’ cultural practice. Neither it nor personhood can be fragmented or manipulated as posthumanists might desire - and still retain *real* purpose. Though ‘purposeless’ in *poiesis* (artforms/works), the ‘purposiveness’ of Art (as principle) is propositional in *praxis*. *Naturalising* art thus means realigning it with a humanist teleology. Arran Gare argues that more recent work in

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p. xiii.

biosemiotics ‘removes any reason for not ascribing a *telos* to natural processes ...and clarifies Hegel’s insight(s)’ on human development. Human development must be seen as not only the function of natural processes, but as integrally connected to ‘natural laws’. And ethics should be concerned with humans ‘living in such a way that by advancing the *telos* of our culture we augment our own lives... and the conditions for further advancing culture’.<sup>11</sup>

Seen in this light, as an incubator for the *cultural telos*, Art provides grounds upon which to *define* person<->Person self-actualisation metaphorically. Not as illusory, internally focused ‘self-realisation’ or ‘self-legislation’ (via reflection); but as connected to the world in a more natural, meaningful way, via the tacit dimension of *Spirit*. A transformation detected only in the intellectual intuition; which Polanyi realised is what allows us to ‘know more than we can tell’; and which Max Scheler showed allows us to take ‘practical account’ of reality.<sup>12</sup>

*1.2 Art’s Pursuit of Reason (Beyond Perception and Language)*

The centrality of *Reason* to meaning and valuing, in art’s ontological teleology, is self-evident in C. S. Peirce’s preeminent pragmatic logic describing the passage of thought into action, in whose wake reality is best defined:<sup>13</sup>

“The elements of every concept enter into logical thought at the gate of perception and make their exit at the gate of purposive action; and whatever cannot show its passports at both those two gates is to be arrested as unauthorized by reason.”

This however reflects no more an absolutist conception of Reason than Schelling’s ‘empirical object’. Though he constructed his entire system of art around ‘the absolute’, Schelling rejects arguments about its existence as nonsensical, challenging Kant’s reaffirmation of Plato’s idea of perfection.<sup>14</sup> ‘Absolutes’ are a way of characterising the difficult idea of infinity. Of bracketing it out from entanglements with the phenomenology of perception; of relating valuing to meaning. The nonsensicality of ‘absolute existence’ is best illustrated

<sup>11</sup> Arran Gare, “The Centrality of Philosophical Anthropology to (A Future) Environmental Ethics.” *Cuadernos de bioetica: revista oficial de la Asociacion Espanola de Bioetica y Etica Medica* 27, 91, September (2016): 299-317, p.311-312.

<sup>12</sup> Polanyi, *TD*, p.4. ‘We know a person’s face... Yet we usually cannot tell how we recognize a face we know’.

<sup>13</sup> Vincent Potter, *Charles S Peirce: On Norms and Ideals* (Fordham University Press, 1997), p.129-130.

<sup>14</sup> As evident in Schelling’s *Naturphilosophie* (for more on Schelling’s ‘absolute’ see Nassar 2014).

by practical example, in the relation between subjectivity and objectivity described in Schelling's construction of artforms/works (T2024b).

For instance, Schelling's system reveals the '*why*' in what many critics intuit to be true about landscape painting; namely that some *are* much better than others - but such judgement appears to be justifiable only subjectively. The reason is this. Landscape painting is an artform *inherently limited* by the elements of light and space (whatever else is being depicted) – which are elements that can *only* be obtained *subjectively*. Due to the natural shimmering formlessness of any landscape, we cannot observe it precisely uniformly. Whereas we can (much more precisely) an animal or flower, or any 'still life' subject. Painting these depends therefore much more on *empirical* form – hence *objectivity*. We *share* appreciation of the latter's form *empirically*, but landscapes can *only* render beauty-truth meaning-value subjectively.

So how *can* we more objectively appreciate landscape paintings? The answer lies in Schelling's 'empirical object' (T2024a). The great landscape artist is concerned with the *empirical* truth of the subject *only as a 'covering'*, allowing a *higher* truth of its beauty to be revealed. It is here that Reason melds appreciation *between* observers, making more objective judgement possible. (The greater the truth, and more *reason-able* the *un-covering*, the greater the artwork).

Sections 1 and 2 below show that such objectivity is delivered optimally, via proper metaphor, through the power of the empirical object to muster *aspiration* to meaning beyond the 'covering' which form provides. Thus, being a *relativity* for contextualising any inquiry into reason or truth.<sup>15</sup> This is what makes *genuine* artistic endeavour a reasonable speculation about reality. As such, it involves a *search* for truth (by *proposition*), without being an intentional means of *determining* empirical truth categorically. The way art approaches any truth at all, is by productive reflexivity. Which makes it methodologically and phenomenologically a different form of speculation to either theoretical or experimental science, or philosophy.

Process philosophy however provides an avenue for allowing *all* artworks to

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<sup>15</sup> This, of course, is true too of painting anything. And of *any* artform (eg., see T2024b for how Schelling's 'absolute' explains the complexity of why only metaphor in architecture distinguishes it as art. Note the example of Turner's addition of a dab of paint depicting a buoy, adding metaphor to his 'Helvoetsluis' seascape).

be judged as exemplars of a unified principle, if approached similarly to Robert Rosen's work on anticipatory systems. As a 'systemic whole', Art as principle provides the 'absolute' for which any related objects are phenomenologically distinguishable as either art or not. Reasonable judgements can thus be made about whether any genuine attempt at art might be understood as good or bad, by attending to key constitutive processual 'affordances' (Whitehead's term) revealed in combining Schelling's system with Peircian semiotics and Scheler's hierarchy of values (T2024c).

Such judgements are neither structuralist nor poststructuralist, but concerned with the natural *self-structuring* of meaning arising from form/non-form interactions. We advance beyond Kant's 'doctrine of agreement', and any purely subjectivist account of meaning-value, by tracking the phenomenology of directional references in the semiosis of 'good' and 'bad' art. The former oriented toward higher meaning values, and the latter warranting only sustained attention to lower order values. A method for discerning how our attention is drawn to their *interaction*, and how a 'metamorphosis' of meaning productivity emerges through the gates of Reason (toward Peirce's 'concrete reasonableness'), is best explained by example.<sup>16</sup>

As demonstrated in T2024c, lower order values must be understood as *essential* for higher value meaning productivity, not opposed to it (see §5). It is their inversion which is key. The special 'affordances' creating this transformation, making artworks eligible for consideration as good or bad *exemplars* of Art's principle, are produced by its 'ontological properties'. These are fundamental 'movers' in Schelling's system of meaning, and 'drivers' in Scheler's system of valuing. They are evident anywhere meaning productivity is bound by Art's *Principle*. As Schelling argues, metaphor is primary among these. But it is *how* metaphors are employed among 'schematic' and 'allegoric' affordances (with narrative, metonymy, synecdoche, etc.,) which is important for understanding Art's *higher* meaning-value.<sup>17</sup>

My central argument that Art's pursuit of Reason is essentially as a way of *valuing* - while its *meaning* productivity traverses upwards along Schelling's

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<sup>16</sup> Several given in T2024c.

<sup>17</sup> Schelling's system is explained in T2024a (art in Principle) and 2024b (art in the Particular)

mythological categories toward ‘the metaphoric’ (T2024b) - is defended by reference to Scheler’s value-hierarchy (§4&5). This progression obtains objectively as an order of *meaning-values* in Scheler, Peirce, and Schelling’s converging ‘absolutes’.<sup>18</sup> Art’s ontological properties thus produce the higher meaning-value defining *modalities* of its unified principle – its meaning ‘-drivers’, ‘-markers’, and ‘-measures’ – unveiling an assessment methodology. This essentially maps how the forward-moving orientation of Schelling’s ‘mythological categories’ find agreement in the combined dynamic tensions of Peirce’s ‘diagrammatic thinking’ and Ricoeur’s ‘metaphorical utterance’ defining any genuinely *poetic* discourse. This paper details why such an approach, combining these and other philosophers’ insights, can surpass any ‘empirical’ neurological investigation. Though *how* neuroscience supports them is key to understanding the real alternative this presents to subjectivist theories of art.

Distinguishing ‘symbol’ from ‘metaphor’ is critical in such assessments, and this is therefore central to my argument here; but the historicisation of metaphor and its confusion with “symbolism” has obscured this. The reason I must emphasise this distinction regularly throughout is because, as McGilchrist argues, there is much confusion today about what metaphor is.<sup>19</sup> In neuroscientific

<sup>18</sup> How each theoretical framework contributes to the present paper’s central thesis is explained in T2024c.

<sup>19</sup> McGilchrist (2010: 51; citing research by Gloning, Gloning & Hoff, 1968, and Goldberg, 1990), describes two kinds of symbols. The kind that ‘is the focus or centre of an endless network of connotations’ and varies in strength in proportion to the array of *implicit* meanings it can convey (lending it depth and power). And the kind ‘exemplified by the red traffic light: its power lies in its use, and its use depends on a 1:1 mapping of the command “stop” onto the colour red, which precludes ambiguity and has to be explicit’. The first’s particular *propositional* kind of implicitness in its most powerful form produces what Paul Ricoeur defines as *proper* metaphor, which belongs to the realm of the right hemisphere. While the latter ‘symbolic function’, even at its most powerful, is still merely ‘*re-presentational*’, and belongs more to the realm of the left hemisphere. Though there is no clear line between them, these “symbolic” functions nevertheless consist in two opposing ‘worlding’ (*universalising*) orientations. How, in artistic expression, their application profoundly influences our attention to meaning, is self-evident in Schelling’s definition of art’s *Principle* and systemic categorisation (T2024a). It clearly demonstrates why Symbol and Metaphor cannot be confused, though they are today often still used interchangeably in common usage. This semantic problem partly stems from “symbolism’s” historical association with *the full spectrum* of meanings upon which those two ‘symbolic’ orientations rest. Aristotle helpfully divided the first kind of ‘symbol’ into different ‘classes’ of metaphor, but the word ‘metaphor’ remained for centuries tied to the *literal* use of ‘symbolism’ (in ancient rhetoric). In modernity, their blurred boundaries conceal these different *purposes*; especially, though not only, in artistic expression. This is deeply embroiled with the problem of how art *best* renders meaning implicitly, and distinguishing *perceiving* from knowing. Phenomenologically distinguishing ‘symbolic’ and ‘metaphoric’ orientations to *Reason* is explained by example in T2024c.

studies, for instance, the use of ‘bland, obvious or banal’ metaphors (ie ‘lexicalised’ or ‘ordinary’ metaphors) tend to find it is the *left* hemisphere which appreciates metaphor. While clichés like ‘babies are angels’ are indeed processed by the left hemisphere, something rather more poetic like ‘rain clouds are pregnant ghosts’ are processed by the right hemisphere. Thus, we only ‘retroductively’ understand metaphoric transparency by combining novelty with connecting two or more disparate ideas.

Schelling argues the dominant mode of attention to the world in ancient mythology was *metaphorical* (in archaic terms: ‘symbolic’), but in modern mythology *allegorical*. Schematic and allegoric features of artworks (which, when combined, progress toward *metaphoric* meaning) are in fact *symbolic* expressions in today’s terminology. But ‘symbol’ is often mistaken as ‘metaphor’ in much modern art-making, as well as speculative discourse; and Paul Ricoeur explains how this subtle but crucially important error occurred in philosophy (§2). Lakoff & Johnson occasionally, particularly in their earliest work, *Metaphors We Live By*, also confuse metaphor with symbol. And because my main aim here is to show how metaphor is best employed to elevate meaning in art, their more *generalised* use of it must therefore be differentiated (§3&4). Ricoeur’s hermeneutics and Aristotle’s insights explain why *processual affordances* hold the key to these discernments.

Notwithstanding this, Lakoff & Johnson’s work does counter related problems like *literalism*, which have dogged modern and postmodern art; and the logical empiricist grip on theoretical aesthetics. It challenges common ‘false, misleading, and dangerous’ tendencies to characterise ‘real truth’ as emphatically literal, while ‘embodied truth’ is considered fanciful. Even though no ‘adequate literal core’ for any abstract concept can anywhere be found to account for its ‘semantics and inference structure’. Literalism bolsters a narrow focus on ‘reference and truth conditions as the sole basis for meaning’, leading to misguided fundamentalist notions of certainty and absolute truth.<sup>20</sup> As well as the prevailing deconstructive postmodern arguments for why art *needn’t* be meaningful at all; being grudgingly granted so only by analogy ‘of art as a form of language’.<sup>21</sup> The

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<sup>20</sup> Mark Johnson, *The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding* (University of Chicago Press, 2008), p.280.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p.207.

language-centred view, says Johnson, regards no artform as ‘meaningful in its “proper sense”’, and even poetry is only regarded meaningful ‘to the extent it can be likened to prose’. Music only if considered ‘a type of language, with elements akin to words, phrases, and sentences, and with elements that refer beyond themselves to extramusical things, events, or ideas’.<sup>22</sup> And painting if reduced to ‘representational elements’, and so on. Schelling in fact argues *distinguishing* art from ‘language’ is necessary for understanding the particular form/non-form nexus in each different artform (T2024b).

Staunchly defending Dewey’s organic ‘body-mind’ connectionism, Lakoff & Johnson reaffirm analytical philosophy’s role in hindering ‘the best biology, psychology, cognitive neuroscience, and phenomenology research’ available on aesthetics entering public consciousness.<sup>23</sup> However, their ‘experientialist theory’ of meaning fails to take account of Peirce’s radical empiricism and its advance on James’ phenomenology and Dewey’s early strong allegiance to the latter’s nominalism. While noting Anglo-American philosophy’s overwhelming disregard for ‘this pragmatist tradition’, they appear to ignore fundamental disagreements between Peirce and James, and Peirce’s severe criticisms of Dewey’s *Art as Experience* (see T2023).

Paul Ricoeur, strongly influenced by Merleau-Ponty, offers a different view on Metaphor; revealing the advantages of adopting the Peircian/Schellingian perspective.<sup>24</sup> Though Dewey later came to appreciate Peirce’s ‘semiotic realism’, drawing attention to their differences (despite common allegiances to continuity theories) helps to explain why Peirce’s phenomenological approach better aligns with the unified conception of art in Schelling’s system. And thus why, despite *essentially* being ‘non-literalist’, Art pursues *Reason*. How the *metaphoric* morphogenesis of meaning transforms values becomes apparent in Peirce’s triadic ‘semiotic realism’ (subject->object->interpretant – see T2024c). And, combined with Ricoeur’s ‘tensions’, this reveals how reason *ontologically* defines Art’s principle, and why metaphor is our primary mode of ‘self-actualising’ higher meaning in *poetic* discourses.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p.207.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p.1.

<sup>24</sup> Notably neither Peirce, Schelling, or Scheler feature as influences in Lakoff and Johnson’s work.

Comparing Ricoeur with Lakoff & Johnson, as I now will, thus elucidates what specific character and application of metaphor achieves this ‘subject-objectivation’. Where their common ground lies, and how neuroscience supports it, is highlighted below.

## 2. THE PRIMACY OF METAPHOR

Giambattista Vico rejected Descartes’ notoriously dismissive merely ‘sensual’ characterisation of the imagination, claiming the value of the humanities lies in three historical and individual preconditions: the possession of imagination, memory, and the capacity to deploy metaphors (Gare 2023). Of course, these complementary attributes are equally valuable in the sciences; but as Paul Ricoeur reveals in *The Rule of Metaphor* (2003) the use of ‘proper metaphor’ in *poetic* discourse is *necessarily* different in both application and outcome. The *primordial* ‘natural laws’ which Vico claimed bonded Humanism to Art, via metaphor, though worn thin by positivistic materialism after Kant, re-surfaced in the early twentieth century. Albeit however as a renewed stylistic ‘Primitivism’, displacing normative aesthetics with ‘symbolic logic’ (T2023). This resulted from deterioration of the *meanings* of metaphor and aesthetics. Which essentially returned us to Descartes, and the Hobbesian/Newtonian paradigm reducing meaning itself to a sensory ‘state of motion’.<sup>25</sup> With neo-Darwinism, logical positivism, and analytical philosophy, the historicising of Art’s principle and concurrent ‘lexicalisation’ of metaphor was fuelled by an un-scientific *theoretical* aesthetics (T2022).

Other Radical Enlightenment thinkers following Vico (including Herder, Schelling, Goethe, Schiller, Coleridge and many more) have instead supported *proper* Metaphor being at the core of meaning productivity in a unified conception of Art. But Kant’s *Critique of Judgement* (primarily) parted the waters submerging the disembodied Nature-oriented poetics inspired by Aristotle.<sup>26</sup> Thanks

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<sup>25</sup> A dominant philosophy of ‘emotivism’ open to manipulation developed from beliefs that meaning is a fluid ‘substance subject to inertia and entropy’ and impossible to be described unless deconstructed into parts (MacIntyre 2007). *Emotions* are thus, under the same paradigm, easily reduced via psychologism to experiential (and experimental) means to validate causation. Common experiences; what it means to be an individual in relation to any totality; and how to understand meaning and valuing through art, all then conform to the Kantian conviction art operates entirely in the ‘realm of the senses’.

<sup>26</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, (Wilder Publications USA, 2008).

nevertheless to those like Max Scheler developing philosophical anthropology, and later Ricoeur influenced by Maurice Merleau-Ponty developing hermeneutic phenomenology, the fact we are ‘metaphoric creatures’ (Lakoff & Johnson 1980) remains central to understanding Art. Therefore, situating Scheler and Ricoeur in this tradition is important.

Though mostly ignored by post- and more recent neo-Kantians (including champions of metaphor like Lakoff & Johnson), Schelling’s radical ‘process metaphysics’ of art and critical appropriation of Kant’s ‘reflective’ aesthetics reveals art as ‘complexity science’ (T2024a). Like Schelling, however, neither Peirce nor Scheler are recognised as philosophers of art despite their invaluable added perspectives. Ricoeur’s hermeneutics, elucidating the processual characteristics of ‘proper metaphor’, provides a bridge between these and other philosophers. Those like Heidegger, R. G. Collingwood (influenced by Croce), Susanne Langer (whose ideas on art are a development of philosophical anthropology), Ernst Cassirer (a neo-Kantian, who influenced Langer), A. N. Whitehead whose work has been largely ignored (not least for its relevance to art), Rudolph Arnheim, Pierre Bourdieu, and others who each bring important insights to Art ‘as principle’.

What essentially separates many philosophers are competing views on the source and manifestation of Art’s higher meaning; which has contributed to its misrepresentation and fragmentation. Both literal and non-literal misappropriations of metaphor bear this out. However, Schelling unequivocally made Art’s *ontological morphogenic* qualities central to his system, dispelling confusion.<sup>27</sup> The problem arises in the fact that *every* manifestation of symbol, on the continuum between the schematic and allegoric, *essentially* delivers assorted kinds of ‘*analogy*’. In art, we can indicate something is ‘*like*’ something else using various methods: similes in literature; figurative iconic features in painting; soundbites of rhythmic/melodic associations in music; or gestural fragments in dance. Or by employing various combinations of these essentially *schematic* features with allegoric or metaphoric affordances particular to each artform. Metaphor, however, indicates what something *is*. And *this essence is degraded* by

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<sup>27</sup> See T2024a and 2024b for explanation of Schelling’s three ‘mythological categories’: the schematic, allegoric, and metaphoric.

schematic fragmentation.

Therefore, metaphoric qualities in art are better distinguished by purpose, which Aristotle's division of different 'classes' of metaphor bears out. Ricoeur thus helpfully recasts these 'kinds' in terms of a simple division between *two modes of attention and discourse*: the *speculative* and *poetic*. The fundamental difficulty encountered by Lakoff & Johnson (among others), lies in discussing how we tend to orient ourselves toward meaning in these two different modes while keeping 'truth' and 'experience' in reasonable relation to each other. This is especially difficult when considering art because, as noted, judgements are usually made about the *sensual* experience of it.

Comparing the early John Dewey's 'experientialism' with Peirce's semiotic realism helps clarify how Schelling's system unifies Art *anthropologically* via metaphor (ie., 'purposefully'). Though both conceptions 'naturalise' meaning in experience, Dewey's tends to emphasise truth and meaning as a form of 'correspondence'. Whereas Peirce's emphasises meaning productivity as an ontological relation in natural semiosis in which understanding 'coherence' becomes critical.

It will be Ricoeur's search for a non-generic unity for the meanings of 'being' that returns us, via Scheler's anthropological phenomenology, to complexity theory and the metaphysical insights of Schelling and Peirce. Which will explain the relevance of emerging consciousness to Art. Ontology, says Ricoeur, is an impossible discourse and theology a futile one, because each originates in how we understand 'essence' (*ousia*). And we can only find resolution either in a *signification* of 'what is' (symbol) or '*entelechy*'.<sup>28</sup>

*Entelechy* means emergence or 'actualisation'. Hence comparing various theories of Mind will help to pave the way for understanding metaphor's higher meaning-value.

#### 2.1      *Interactive/Transactive vs Enactive Theories of Mind*

There are basically two approaches or models for understanding the

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<sup>28</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: The Creation of Meaning in Language*. (Routledge, 2003), p.317. Thus, 'the twinning of tautology and circumlocution, of empty universality and limited generalisation... all proceed from a common centre'. '*Entelechy*', in Pierre Aubenque's words, is the 'completion of what is given in the fulfilment of presence'.

phenomenon of Mind, leading to different emphases on meaning acquisition. The computational model based on a ‘symbolic thinking’ paradigm, and the biological organism model based on a ‘natural life’ paradigm. Each owes to the other certain reasonings vital in their own defence, so it is not a simple matter to drive a wedge between them.<sup>29</sup>

Of the three main schools of thought in cognitive science (cognitivist, emerging, and enactive), ‘cognitivism’ is widely criticised for being unable to properly account for the ‘de-centred’ subject. That is, the role ‘cognitive agents’ (or ‘active subjects’) play in shaping the world. The ‘emergence’ school promotes ‘connectionism’ as the optimal fit between system and environment, but the ‘enactive model’ is generally preferred for better taking account of the perception/action loop in meaning production.<sup>30</sup> Both these models agree on the ‘self-structuring’ that occurs in semiotic productivity which Schelling, Peirce, and later phenomenologists like Merleau-Ponty have elaborated the conditions for. Neuro-scientific explanations of meaning have moved far beyond what some post-Kantians attributed to ‘pure thought’ cognitivism. Yet important differences emerge in various interpretations on how we intuit analogical vs metaphorical discourses. What becomes clear is that ‘entelechy’ in *Art*’s higher meaning productivity is more than merely ‘patterning’ behaviour - as in the general aesthetic.

Lakoff & Johnson, like most, are highly critical of early cognitivists and strongly reject ‘representationalism’ (the ‘representational theory of mind’). Anand Rangarajan places them in the same sphere as Varela *et al* (in the ‘enactive’ school along with Rorty, Piaget, Maturana and others). However, their work is firmly grounded in linguistic cognitive approaches to metaphor, with Lakoff’s

<sup>29</sup> See I. Hipolito, and J. Martins, *Mind-life continuity: A qualitative study of conscious experience*. Progress in Biophysics and Molecular Biology, Vol.131, December 2017, pages 432-444. Comparing these approaches, they recommend we ‘move to an integrated or global perspective on mind where neither experience nor external mechanisms have the final word’.

<sup>30</sup> See Anand Rangarajan, Review of *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience*, by F. Varela, F. Thompson, E and Rosch, E, <https://philarchive.org/archive/RANBROv1>, 2020:1-33. [https://philarchive.org/rec/RANBRO?all\\_versions=1](https://philarchive.org/rec/RANBRO?all_versions=1) p.15. Problematically, they all lean towards the deconstruction of the self (or ‘no-self’) approach. Though ‘connectionism’ is also criticised by Varela *et al* for unclarity about the role of representations and inadequately accounting for self-organisation occurring with ‘structural coupling’ in organism-environment interactions, Rangarajan highlights the most relevant difficulties.

work leaning towards ‘the computational model’ of mind. The ‘enactive’ model best suits Ricoeur’s approach to entelechy because it more adequately reflects the ‘mutual specification’ that appears to operate between sensorimotor networks of organisms and their environment. Comparing these reveals why neuroscience can support some understandings of meaning ‘productivity’ but has inherent limitations when it comes to discerning ‘quality’.

Much of the evidence for the computational model is drawn from cognitive linguistic source-to-target mappings of neuronal schema (‘images’ represented by neuronal activation patterns) which determine the cognitive basis for meaning acquisition and discernment. Johnson describes his project as ‘an embodied, experientialist theory of meaning’ associated with Gallese and Lakoff’s idea of ‘cogs as the basic structures for extending sensorimotor meaning and inferences into abstract domains’.<sup>31</sup> Francisco Varela and Humberto Maturana have instead developed cognitive neuroscience more along the lines of the biological organism model, in attempts to explain how something new can emerge from nothing, transcending and transforming itself in the process.

Each offers differing explanations of what is involved here, while fundamentally agreeing the ‘body-mind’ is the ontologically inseparable generator of ‘aspects or abstractable dimensions’ of meaning either interactively or enactively.<sup>32</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s influential argument that the ‘lived’ body is a ‘*phenomenal*’ body, and thus ‘the situation from which our world and experience flows’, not only supports the fact that *all* meaning is embodied, but adds more weight to the ‘enactive’ model.<sup>33</sup> Phenomenology’s revival is now also supported by considerable neuro-scientific research arguably vindicating this approach, and Peirce’s belief that aesthetics can *only* be studied phenomenologically. However, Johnson’s ‘conceptual metaphor theory’ relies heavily on neuro-mapping the presence, formation, and directional action of ‘images’. And while this ‘interactive’ or ‘transactional’ *pictorial* reasoning still challenges the basic assumptions of contemporary analytic philosophy of language (upon which theoretical aesthetics is based), there are several drawbacks

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<sup>31</sup> Johnson, *MB*, p.274.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, p.274. ‘Interactive’ or ‘transactional’ according to Dewey; or ‘enactive’ according to Varela, Thompson, and Rosch.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, p.275.

necessitating a return to Ricoeur, Merleau-Ponty, and Peirce.

Unfortunately, Lakoff & Johnson's early research places *all* meaning generation at the feet of 'conceptual metaphor', which is very loosely defined in *Metaphors We Live By*.<sup>34</sup> Hence reinforcing Dewey's essentially 'transactive' theory of mind. And, though they advocate for looking beyond 'linguistic meaning' in art, their generalised linking of aesthetics with meaning production through embodied experience effectively prohibits discerning art from *the general aesthetic*.<sup>35</sup> Paul Ricoeur's more 'enactive' distinction between speculative and poetic discourse - born out in examination and extension of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* - shows instead why there are two fundamentally different *modes of thinking* involved here. This separates notions of "conceptual" metaphor from 'proper metaphor'. The latter is the key *ontological* property of all genuine artistic inquiry, separating art from the general aesthetic, by manifesting a unique 'ethical' intentionality which defines its primary concern for *higher meaning*.

#### 2.2 Poetic vs Speculative Discourse

Both science and philosophy are, of course, equally concerned with a search for meaning. But as Schelling argues, no discipline takes the same road or arrives at the same destination as Art. Ricoeur's *The Rule of Metaphor* examines why this is so, and how metaphorical and speculative discourses are often misunderstood to be categorically uniform. The source of this error lies in 'analogy':<sup>36</sup>

In poetics, analogy in the sense of 'proportion' is at the root of the fourth class of metaphor, which Aristotle termed metaphor 'by analogy' (or, in some translations, 'proportional' metaphor). To this day, some theorists do not hesitate to subsume metaphor and simile under the generic term of analogy, or to place the family of metaphor under this common heading.

Distinguishing between these in different kinds of speculation is a problem related to the becoming-being phenomenon, fundamental to art (T2024a).

This becomes clear from Aristotle's question in the *Categories* of 'What is being?' (*ousia*), which Ricoeur explains was subsequently actually 'said' in different ways. A transformation occurred in philosophy because *philosophical* speculation draws on both a univocity and plurivocity of expression, establishing relations of

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p.207.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, p.209.

<sup>36</sup> Ricoeur, *RM*, p.306-307.

reference between primary or secondary terms as referents. But these are ‘of a different order than the multiplicity of meaning produced by metaphorical utterance’.<sup>37</sup> In philosophical discourse, plurivocity ‘opens up’ the speculative field, hence: ‘The first term – *ousia* – places all the other terms in the realm of meaning outlined by the question: what is being?’<sup>38</sup> The linguistic structure of Greek ‘predisposed the notion of “being” to a philosophical vocation’, passed down in tradition to a series of meanings and philosophical principles which came to be thought of as “analogy”’.<sup>39</sup>

*Ousia* (essence), however, is something not easily defined in rational terms but more easily expressed in *poetic* discourse. As Ricoeur argues, this exposes the flawed *rapprochement* philosophers (eg., Pierre Aubenque) have pursued between ontology and dialectic. Dialectic presents a technique of questioning which can be applied to anything, without any concern for our ability to answer. But because we would not ask questions without the hope of answering them, it requires neutrality while guaranteeing no prospective resolution. The possibility of accomplishment, in the *dialectical ontology* unique to *poetic* discourse, thus rests upon the actual *incompletion* of a project. This *defines* the highest potency modality of Schelling’s ‘mythological categories’ – the ‘metaphoric’ (or, as Ricoeur specifies it, ‘*proper* metaphor’).

Ricoeur also shows what methods and disclosures *ontological* inquiry affords compared to other speculation. For instance, his distinction of ontology *from* theology both reveals the purpose of Schelling’s ‘absolute’ in Art, and why some like Heidegger reverted to an existentialist concept of ‘being’ to explain it. Essentially, *motion* is the reason that ontology is not a theology but ‘a dialectic of division and finitude’. If divinity is considered indivisible, it ‘cannot receive attribution and can give rise only to negations’. We make *significations* of ‘being’ nevertheless (eg., substance, quality, quantity, etc.,) applicable to ‘physical things’. Motion makes ‘the unity of being impossible in principle’; but it is divisible into ‘essence and accident’ – and hence a *dialectic ontology*.<sup>40</sup>

Notably, Schelling’s system of art signifies ‘being’ in terms of ‘essences’ and

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid, p.307.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, p.307.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, p.309. Ricoeur credits linguist Émile Benveniste for discovering this.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, p.316.

‘potences’. Motion is key because of the active nature of metaphor’s self-defining movement over a meaning threshold. The ‘dialectic of division and finitude’ produces art’s *semantic aim*, revealed in the artwork’s processual becoming: its unique way of disclosing ‘being’ as *a dialectic between the part and whole*. Importantly, as Ricoeur elucidates, predication is ‘based on *physical* dissociation introduced by motion’. In other words, the ‘materialisation’ of *disclosure* in art (its ‘real’) is a *process of predication*, of objectifying and then subjectifying the ‘immaterial’ (its ‘ideal’).

With this, Schelling’s dialectical indifference between limitation and necessity becomes the defining Principle of genuine poetic discourse (T2024a, 2024b). Our discovery of its phenomenology in the artwork’s meaning productivity, emerging between the real and ideal poles, consists in witnessing a morphogenic movement across the thresholds of Schelling’s three ‘mythological categories’ (schema -> allegory -> metaphor). This *transition* towards ‘the absolute’ - from lower to higher meaning values - thus defines Art’s principle as *ontologically* processual. Driven by the morphogenic properties of metaphor and its associated natural semiotic dialectical ontologies (eg., *narrative motion*).

The motion of *becoming*, the turning of possibles into actuals - the action that separates ontology from theology – also produces the archetype generator of meaning productivity via *the Person* (in the convergence of Schelling, Peirce, and Scheler’s ‘absolutes’).<sup>41</sup> Why it is *ontology*, not *theology*, that creates the normalising value relativity here, reflects how Vico or Herder regarded individual human self-actualisation relative to the whole of humanity. This is what makes the *aesthetic* ‘absolute’ *objective* and *directive*. The normative sciences - via our invention of ‘poetic discourse’ embodying the ‘perfect signification’ completing the circle of meaning productivity between Person, Nature, and History - thus situate us in the cosmos, directing the *Human Telos* toward *Reason*.

Art is therefore only *one* ‘Object’; always expressing the multifarious nuances of this self-actualising process via its many exemplars (artforms/works: ‘objects’).<sup>42</sup> Peirce’s *subject* -> *object* -> *interpretant* relationship is, writ large, precisely the same

<sup>41</sup> They are in fact the same ‘absolute’, but as shown in T2024c their different characterisation (hence ‘convergence’) can produce a method for discerning meaning-value in the art object’s ‘suspended second’.

<sup>42</sup> Kai Hammermeister, *The German Aesthetic Tradition*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.74-75. The ontological question is answered by Schelling’s claim that ‘only one true work of art exists, namely, one objective manifestation of the infinity of the world, although this work of art exists in many different exemplars’.

as *the person* (1<sup>st</sup>) → *humanity* (2<sup>nd</sup>) → *art* (3<sup>rd</sup>) relation. They are hence two perfect signs converging on their suspended Object of (ethical) value-essence (see T2024c). Max Scheler's anthropological (or 'ethical') phenomenology explains these relations. His account of human Meaning and Valuing, combined with Iain McGilchrist's (2010) thesis, provides insights on pre- and post-cognised *valueception* that elude a mechanistic model of the brain (and 'cognitive arms race' evolutionary theories).

Metaphor - or, more precisely, 'metaphoric morphogenesis' - is thus Art's defining modality. But it is important to understand why analogy can never deliver the *highest* potency in poetic discourse. We need to, as Ricoeur says, 'master the difference between transcendental analogy and poetic resemblance' for two reasons. Firstly, to recognise the degenerating effect of Art's core meaning modalities being historicised.<sup>43</sup> And secondly to understand how to *phenomenologically* obtain the active subject-object *directional* properties of morphogenic semiosis governing *intentionality*. Discerning essential from accidental predication is key to both.

### 2.3 *Weakening Criteria for Essential Predication*

By distinguishing ontology and theology, Ricoeur concludes, the 'non-generic bond of being' can 'no longer owe anything to analogy as such'.<sup>44</sup> But a further weakening of analogy's predicative function gradually occurred, in the 'analogy of attribution'. This occurs when paronyms are inserted as an 'intermediate class' between homonyms and synonyms, between 'merely equivocal' and 'absolutely univocal' expressions, hence widening the gap and weakening the criteria for predication. Analogy is thus further still distinguishable from metaphor by the weakening precision of predication as movement 'from primordial... to derived predication and from essential... to accidental predication (which is paronymous)'.<sup>45</sup>

In fact, it was a change in the *meaning* of Aristotle's concept of analogy, turned by medieval philosophers into an ontological and theological *rapprochement*, that caused such a weakening of precision and is revealed in the misplaced effort of

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<sup>43</sup> See also T2022 and 2024a for how the archaic use of 'symbolic' was historicised.

<sup>44</sup> Ricoeur, *RM*, p.321.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*, p.312.

certain philosophical discourse. Analogy thus assumes a *transcendental* function and ‘never returns to poetry’, says Ricoeur, ‘but retains in regard to poetry the mark of the original divergence produced by the question, what is being?’<sup>46</sup> In this way too the mathematical notion of analogy evolves. But Ricoeur exposes the error of confusing numbers with proportions and misplacing proportional extensions in terms of numbers to non-homogenous terms; a tendency to subvert Aristotle’s conception which he decries befell philosophy: ‘Here again’, he says, ‘extension from a radically non-poetic pole occurs through the weakening of criteria’.<sup>47</sup> The final weakening of analogical criteria thus also led to the devaluation, by misappropriation, of *allegory*.

The same historicising effects produced the illusion art appeared to model philosophical thought processes. The misdirection of artistic inquiry (or, the deterioration of artistic *intentionality*) therefore has its roots in such tendencies to confuse poetic discourse with that in philosophy or theoretical science. Lakoff & Johnson (1980) thus give numerous examples of ‘scientific metaphors’ to support the argument that conceptual metaphor is ubiquitous in our lives. But they sometimes make the same category error. For instance, their ‘Big Bang metaphor’ is not metaphor but analogy. Which simply illustrates how easily these modalities can be confused in different discourses.

Schelling solves this problem by placing schematic, allegoric, and metaphoric expression on a meaning-value gradient (T2024b). As his system shows, in lower value artforms like ‘empiricist’ historical painting, analogy usually dominates. Lacking the same *potence* as proper metaphor (eg., in sculpture), this produces an inherent limitation. (Hence both artforms *and* artworks vary in potential meaning-value productivity). Neither metaphor nor allegory, however, can have *any* power without context or, more precisely, what Ricoeur calls ‘semantic pertinence and impertinence’. Like Schelling, Peirce, Aleksandr Voronsky and others, he argues it is only the strong ‘predicative’ intentionality of an artwork, and the avoidance of accidentality (or the selective use of it to *strengthen* semantic pertinence), which creates higher meaning potencies.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid, p.319.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, p.319.

<sup>48</sup> Following Schelling and Peirce, Voronsky (1998: 99-100) too argues that when unsatisfied with the boundary conditions of surrounding reality the genuine artist imagines ‘a life which is condensed, purified...

As Ricoeur says: 'It is the very opacity of primary attribution that suggests analogy'; which also creates clichés. Symbol is the active ingredient here, lacking as it does the genuinely *transparent* meaning of metaphor.<sup>49</sup> Even if a work's content benefits from simplicity/familiarity, the use of symbol or analogy creates distance or opacity. Picasso's *Guernica* and *The Weeping Woman* were poorly received at first for this reason. Only when a political association was made did they become popular (and their inherent 'distanciation' familiarised).

Once the distinction between 'speculative' and 'poetic' meaning is understood, the predicative strengths and weaknesses of the latter can be discerned in any artwork's phenomenology.

But since philosophy *invites* poetic discourse in the gaps where rational explanation fails, this inevitably draws a likeness between philosophy and art that benefits neither. The tendency to displace 'proportional analogy' with 'analogy of attribution' (demonstrable in mathematical, biological, and other categorisations), is what weakened *philosophy*'s regard by science. Modern logicians, more sensitive to these effects than medieval philosophers, decided this added up to 'an argument against analogy'. Thus, as Ricoeur says: 'The great text of *Metaphysics*... is turned against the philosopher and becomes the ultimate evidence of the unscientific character of metaphysics'.<sup>50</sup>

Underestimating the historicising impacts of these coinciding habitual misconceptualisations of 'worlding' has tended to sweep art's decline under the carpet with changing ideals from one ethos to the next. Schelling's conviction that the historical mythological degradation of art is a direct result of the

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*better than it is, and which is more like truth than the realest reality*'. This contextualises the 'predicative' act in line with Peirce's pragmatic maxim (and Schelling's claim regarding art's *inherent* 'collectivising intent'). To synthesise this reality, the artist omits what 'has no cognitive value, whatever is accidental' or familiar and uninteresting. Hence, by selecting out that which must be attended to in the artwork (its *object*) - though Art (the *Object*) must be *purposeless*, to enable autopoesis - an artist/aesthete *purposefully* searches for meaning (propositionally) with a specific intentionality which we find present in the artwork (T2024a). This 'prudence' distinguishes artmaking from artefact-making and art from the 'general aesthetic'. It is this *purpose* then that distinguishes *the role* of the artist and the aesthete in society. The artist, in Aristotle's terms is the 'geometer' of knowledge, the aesthete is the 'carpenter' for whom the artist's special knowledge is not required (T2022). Though both are habituated, in the end it is not knowledge but *action* - this predicative action - which counts toward deciding in which the requisite of knowledge should reside (Aristotle, *NE*, p.243). Possession of such prudent judgement defines the artist.

<sup>49</sup> Ricoeur, *RM*, p.313. McGilchrist, *ME*, p.470 n135.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid*, p.320-321.

deteriorating modality of metaphor is confirmed by Ricoeur's analysis. And Scheler, Arnheim, McGilchrist, Fred Polak, and many others' corroboration reinforces a strong *ontological* argument for art in contrast to Hegel's more 'stratified' historical account (T2023, 2024a).

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There are of course perfectly legitimate *common* uses of proper metaphor in both speculative and poetic discourses. For instance, using living metaphor to bring out new meanings or aspects of reality (eg., the metaphor of 'the sun', a heliotropic metaphor used often in metaphysical discourse, is uniquely paradigmatic of what is *both* 'sensibly' symbolic and metaphoric).<sup>51</sup> Other tropes effective in *both* discourses are worthy of mention here too, to illustrate their optimum use in each.

Metonymy and synecdoche, in ancient metaphysical rhetorical examples for instance, are constructed by a dialectic transfer from the inanimate to the animate. In *poetic* discourse they emerge from a 'logical analysis of the relations of connection and correlation' and are transformed, especially when *combined* with metaphor. 'With metaphor', says Ricoeur, 'the species belong no longer to the logical but to the ontological order'<sup>52</sup> They are particularly useful in art when a *catachresis* is needed to create new meanings, invent a new manner of questioning, or when language is in a state of semantic deficiency such as when we are 'lost for words'.<sup>53</sup> Note, however, it is their *morphogenic* semiotic productivity capable of suspending reality which is most valued here.

In summary, *poetic* normativity rests on Aristotle's conception of being/not being and his categorical ordering of actuality, praxis, poesis, and motion. Ricoeur's most important insight is recognising that the split between poetic and

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, p.341. Ricoeur (citing Philip Wheelwright): The sun regularly turns and hides so "...It follows that 'the orbit of the sun is the trajectory of metaphor'".

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, p.340. For more on the shifting historical relation between metaphor and these other main tropes, see *Metaphor, Metonymy, and Synecdoche Revis(it)ed*, Schofer, Peter; Rice, Donald in *Semiotica - Journal of the International Association for Semiotic Studies / Revue de l'Association Internationale de Sémiotique*, Volume 21 (1-2) - Jan 1, 1977. They argue Ricoeur 'reestablishes metaphor in its privileged position'.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, p.344. Though so too can metaphor. Schelling also reveals how 'catachresis' via these modalities offers potential to unblock stagnant practices and create innovation in the *non-verbal* arts. There is a fine line, however, in such novel inventions promoting meaning (turning on purpose and intentionality).

speculative discourses originates in the differences created between *morphology* and *predication* in these categories.

As these two related actions become more varied, says Ricoeur, they progressively weaken the point of origin – the point where they are linked in ‘primordial, essential predication’.<sup>54</sup> A correlation between the distinction of these modalities was made by medieval thinkers to the analogy of ‘being’. But ‘primordial, essential predication’ was held by Aristotle to have a synonymous sense. In other words, the sense in which predication is *primordially* (ie., *intuitively* or *ontologically*) an expression of that meaning which is ‘given’, became correlated with ‘being’. Thus, the sense of becoming was overlooked as the sense in which any ontological meaning could preside.

Morphology, the fundamental action and *meaning* of metaphor, was thus predisposed to be degraded by this confusion between being and becoming. Inevitably, substituting metaphor with symbol was normalised. How else could the most phenomenologically self-evident *ontological* property of art be subsequently so readily denied its fundamental status? Explicitly correlating the ‘various forms of predication – and hence Aristotle’s categories – to possible equivocation in regard to the first category, *ousia*’ de-naturalised Art (in *principle*), separating it from the Person-Nature-History nexus.<sup>55</sup> Because being and becoming were confounded, morphology - the fundamental expression and *action* of metaphor - was predisposed to a ‘mechanical’ separation of *these essences*. Which helped sever the inherent link between the *normative* (or ‘practical’) sciences - aesthetics, ethics, and logic - governing them. In turn separating Beauty from Truth (and Art from Society).<sup>56</sup>

Misconstruing the *multi*-dimensional dynamism of metaphor with the *two*-dimensional fixity of symbol would ultimately shift our primary attention in Art from ‘value’ to ‘fact’. And hence meaning to a state of arbitrariness ‘in motion’, attributable to the senses alone, with the now disconnected normative disciplines

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid, p.311.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, p.311. Ricoeur is referring to *Metaphysics* Z Aristotle’s ‘text par excellence on substance’.

<sup>56</sup> As noted in T2024a, all these separations invigorated the ‘modern mythology’ with the onset of Christianity. For an account of art’s disjuncture from society by the mid-twentieth century, see Williams 1960.

left to govern independently.<sup>57</sup> How else could *essential predication* - ‘the absolute’ becoming ‘objective’ (in Schelling’s terms) via *Metaphor* - be so easily replaced with subjectivity? And Art’s *ethical* phenomenology so easily overshadowed by emotivist moralising and the ‘will to power’?

### 3. ART’S MEANING-VALUE PRODUCTIVITY AND QUALITY

We can now begin to discern between *qualities* of meaning ‘entelechy’, that differentiate the use of *proper* metaphor in Art. Metaphor’s superiority to ‘concept’ and related meaning constructions, and why the ‘interactive/transactive’ theory of Mind does not adequately explain it, must be examined. In the process, the unique purchase art has on the *intuition* of meaning will become apparent in how it resolves the becoming-being problem via embodied motion, logic, and action. And the ‘truth’ of experience will be distinguished from *experientialism*.

Schelling and Peirce’s *metaphysical* developments of how meaning emerges from Nature autopoietically, with the benefit of Scheler’s anthropological phenomenology, informs how we obtain *values* intuitively. The Platonic and Kantian division between reason and sense falls away; because *all* values similarly emerge in our immanent interaction with the ‘givenness’ of an object which is not necessarily imbued with ‘picturelike content’. Values are of course shaped by interaction with our social and environmental habitus. Hence ‘moral’ facts (involving *the Person*) are also ‘facts of *non-formal*, not sensible intuition’; which explains why values are, like meanings, easily habituated. *Qualities* of meaning and valuing are thus intuitively linked.<sup>58</sup>

Intuition of ‘the given’ is not necessarily the recognition of a specific sign, as such, but rather of the *relation* between signs and among signs, objects and interpretants. For instance, in assessing the intentionality of *predication*, Ricoeur reveals that what we can intuit in both *analogical* and *metaphorical* discourse allows us to identify the point of departure whereupon the two expressions then part ways. This is because, as Aristotle says, ‘predication can be interpreted neither

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<sup>57</sup> Being open to manipulation, aesthetics and ethics were now prey to a dominant purely ‘symbolic logic’; which gave rise to consequentialism, reducing morality to moralising in both Art and Society (T2022; see also Voronksy 1998).

<sup>58</sup> As Polanyi (1966: xix) notes: ‘Since subsidiaries are used as we use our bodies, all novel thought is seen to be an existential commitment’ (‘subsidiaries’ being non-formal values, or ‘qualities’).

as the relation of element to set nor as the relation of part to whole'. It is 'an ultimate intuitive given, whose meaning moves from inherence to proportion and from proportion to proportionality'.<sup>59</sup>

If *relationality* itself effects predicatively intuited meaning productivity – given all values are relative - how then do we *judge* the quality of this morphology? And how does this confirm *proper* metaphor's primacy as the meaning-maker of art? The short answer to both questions is: as an expression of *our ontological relation to the real world*. The *autopoietic* emergence of meaning in metaphoric thinking involves a process of upward spiralling interaction between lower and higher order values in semiosis. This metamorphosing action (of *appropriate* metaphors *in the right contexts*) allows us access to areas of our imagination that are otherwise inaccessible to any other kind of speculative thought. Through art, we *immediately* discern variation in qualities of meaning and how they point to *Reason* in an un-detached mode of thinking, which is unavailable to other forms of speculation.

The *ontological* properties distinguishing *Poetic* from any other speculative inquiry/discourse – which with Scheler's insights we can now relate *biologically* to Aristotle's conception of essence (*ousia*) - as Ricoeur shows, appear in the nexus between *praxis* and *poiesis*. Their 'action' and 'making' affordances thus combine to produce predicatively intuited relational meaning in an artwork's *essences* and *potences* (T2024b). *Deliberation*, manifesting in the phenomenology of semiotic productivity separating the intentionality of 'making' (*poiesis*) from 'action' (*praxis*), is what distinguishes art from 'cultural artefact' (Aristotle 2011).

We can therefore map the 'given' intentional relations in any (cohesively whole) artwork/performance, by simply attending to its 'morphogenic' properties in the *praxis-poiesis* nexus. 'Polyphonic' narratives emerge from metaphor and its associated morphogenic modalities creating *depth* of meaning. This process occurs in all artforms and at all stages of poetic inquiry, discourse, and disclosure. Any *performative* disclosure is subject to the same relations and tensions involved here. Much confusion arises from not recognising that the 'performative' aspect of prudence (ie., the 'action' part of *any* artistic meaning productivity) is *not in conflict with* the 'making' part.<sup>60</sup> But because of this, we can tell the good

<sup>59</sup> Aristotle in Ricoeur, *RM*, p.311.

<sup>60</sup> Art and artefacts *share* these acts in common; but what *essentially* separates them is *purpose*. Art's purposelessness consists in the pursuit of Reason in *action*, but it is purposeful in the *making*. Artefact is

performance of music or theatre from the bad according to the cohesion of these same morphogenic properties.

Discriminating between the *different kinds of prudence* required by each act is what separates the ‘making’ from the ‘crafting’. And clearly, in both, though knowledge and action merge differently (according to different essences and potencies), we can still discern qualities in their phenomenology. Considering how the ‘weakening of criteria’ affecting analogy and metaphor manifests in daily life can help to elucidate this. It provides an insight into how to understand the ‘truth’ of this ‘given’ in what Scheler calls a *phenomenological experience*. As we will now see, the sheer *ubiquity* of ‘metaphoric possibility’ in our world certainly influences how we perceive art’s power to move us beyond reflective toward self-*actualising* reality. But this is because of the *pervasiveness* of lower order meaning values in patterning behaviours (the ‘general aesthetic’). *Genuine* art can cultivate our ability to *discern* value in different qualities of morphogenic semiosis. But we can only *habituate* this by learning to intuitively favour proper metaphor in our experience.

### 3.1 ‘Experientialism’ vs *Higher Meaning*

Lakoff & Johnson’s influential book, *Metaphors We Live By*, has become the standard text for cognitive linguists and those interested in the psychology of language. But as Nerlich and Clarke point out, the enormous amount of research done in the nineteenth century, given metaphor had its roots in ancient rhetoric, is generally underappreciated.<sup>61</sup> This may account for some problems with this text (and Johnson’s later work *The Meaning of the Body*) going unnoticed.<sup>62</sup> Their

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purposeful in both, pursuing Reason (ends) *only bound to means* and not for its own sake. That which Design or Craft *borrow*, fall out of the one unified Principle of Art (not vice versa: there are not ‘many principles’ of art). This point leads to discerning Art as a *science* in its own right (see T2022: 290-293).

<sup>61</sup> B. Nerlich and D. D. Clarke, “Mind, meaning and metaphor: the philosophy and psychology of metaphor in 19th-century Germany.” *History of the Human Sciences* 14.2 (2001): 39–61. Before this text, however, in the twentieth century only Ivor A. Richards and Max Black’s reflections on metaphor published between 1930 and 1960, and Roman Jakobson’s papers on metaphor and metonymy (1950s-80s) rate a mention.

<sup>62</sup> *Metaphors We Live By* (1980) is clearly philosophically underdeveloped compared to Johnson’s *The Meaning of the Body* (2007), owing more to the *early* Dewey (before shifting from James’ to Peirce’s phenomenology). For instance, in the former concept is defined very loosely while later Johnson says: ‘We should think of conceptualising... [as an act]... rather than of concepts... [as quasi-

claimed scientifically ‘pragmatist’ attention to metaphor (distancing them from ‘romantic idealist’ tendencies which they say opposed reductionist science but denied any significance to science at all), nevertheless concedes to a particular neo-Kantian approach which hampered early phenomenologists after Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. An allegiance to the *productive* imagination of Hegel rather than the *reproductive* imagination of Schelling, and disregard of Peircian semiotics, underlies the evidently strong influence of the early Dewey and James’ nominalism (T2023). What emerges is an emphasis on experience as the *only* engine of imaginative productivity.

Their primary thesis thus advances an ‘experientialist synthesis’ which denies ‘that subjectivity and objectivity are our only choices’ in any account of truth.<sup>63</sup> While Peirce and Schelling’s views embrace the fundamental *importance* of both. Dewey’s influence underscores their qualified defence of phenomenology, yet unequivocal elevation of the ‘truth of experience’ (i.e., above *un*-experienced truth). And explains their focus on the most *generalised* definition of aesthetic experience as ‘not limited to the official art world’.<sup>64</sup> While that is of course self-evident, the tendency to regard the general aesthetic as *indistinct* from art - as necessarily of equal importance (lest we succumb to elitism) - diverts our attention from art’s higher meaning-value. And, I suggest, the proper use of metaphor in it.

Dewey’s essentially ‘interactive/transactive’ approach to meaning acquisition is reflected firstly in their linking metaphor inextricably to *all* human experience in our daily lives. However, the metaphors they determine we ‘live by’ are often simply allegories. Their emphasis on the importance of metaphor’s *functional* use-value is thus naturally prominent. Yet when metaphor’s capacity to reveal truth and higher meaning is examined, and we are reassured of its necessity for our

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things]... Conceptualizing involves recognizing distinctions within the flow of our experience.’ (p.88). This accounts for some, though not all, of the difficulties raised below.

<sup>63</sup> George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*. (The University of Chicago Press, 1980), p.192.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, p.236. See also Johnson, *MB*, p.212: ‘We need a Dewey for the twenty-first century... a philosophy that sees aesthetics as not just about art, beauty, and taste, but rather as about how human beings experience and make meaning. Instead of isolating the “aesthetic” as merely one autonomous dimension of experience, or merely one form of judgment, we must realise that aesthetics is about the conditions of experience as such, and art is a culmination of the possibility of meaning in experience’. This clearly conflates normative and theoretical aesthetics, confusing art’s association with each.

sense of *being* as humans, this is *always* tied to personal experience.<sup>65</sup> Their Kantian tendency to place such undue limits on the imagination falls back on what they say they fundamentally oppose: *literalism*.

Therefore implicit ‘orientational metaphors’ give us ‘a concept of spatial orientation; for example, HAPPY IS UP’ leading to literal expressions like ‘I’m feeling *up* today’.<sup>66</sup> And the infinite possibility of experience to give rise to metaphoric ubiquity becomes apparent.<sup>67</sup> Metaphors are instantly then naturally associated with values; both being deeply embedded in human cultures, yielding variations that respond to many different cultural experiences, creating a rich tapestry of ever-evolving expressions banked in our memories. Meaning is hence as *fluid* as our experience, but tied to associations of *experiential* truth which we individually and collectively adhere to (ie., according to Kant’s ‘doctrine of agreement’).

Consequently, again following Dewey’s early nominalist views, Lakoff & Johnson distinguish ‘*natural* experiences’ from ‘*interactional* experiences’. Specifying that *only* in the latter is meaning created through metaphor (recalling Kant’s notion of ‘adherent beauty’; and denying isolated humans can still create meaning metaphorically). People must therefore understand their experiences according to an ‘*experiential theory*’ because, as they insist (shunning Aristotle’s ‘essentialism’), ‘individual concepts are not solely defined in terms of inherent properties’.<sup>68</sup>

Hence, though they systematically establish the power of metaphor to ‘create reality rather than simply... give us a way of conceptualizing a preexisting reality’, difficulties arise in their application of an ‘emergent model’ of Mind.<sup>69</sup> The first one being that this ‘reality’ creation is entirely schematic in genesis. This is evident in Johnson’s problematic conflation of ‘concept’ and ‘metaphor’ as ‘conceptual metaphor’, which ultimately cannot contend with the becoming-being problem. In *Metaphors We Live By*, the definition of ‘concepts’ wavers

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid, p.19: ‘*In actuality we feel that no metaphor can ever be comprehended or even adequately represented independently of its experiential basis.*’ Authors’ emphasis.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, p.14.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, p.19.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, p.125. Though arguably true for *concepts*, this weakens their claim we are *primordially* ‘metaphoric creatures’.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, p.144.

between being ‘quasi-things’ and processes, whereas Johnson eventually corrects this in *The Meaning of the Body*, leaning to the latter.

In the first text, all common human experience is accounted for in schematically referenced nominalist meaning (eg., THE ARGUMENT IS WAR, the CHEMICAL, or the PUZZLE metaphors exemplify metaphor’s fundamental grip on reality). But *literal* meaning is thus tied to human experience in ways which do not quite do justice to the full potential of metaphor. Intuition then becomes merely a way of *identifying*, rather than *indwelling*, ‘coherent structures’.<sup>70</sup> Schema, elaborated into a list of ‘entailments’ forming experiential links, are computed as meaning. That is, a process of assimilating *simile* and *symbols* - by *analogy* - not metaphor at all.<sup>71</sup> Though they are at pains to *dispel* the idea that metaphor is ‘based on similarity’, their explanation suggests otherwise.<sup>72</sup>

For instance, *similarity* is clearly the operative function of “metaphor” in their ‘LOVE IS A COLLABORATIVE WORK OF ART’ example, *not* morphology. Our *experiences* are matched to obtain its meaning: ‘Each entailment... states a similarity that holds between certain types of love experiences, on the one hand, and certain types of experiences of collaborative works of art, on the other’.<sup>73</sup> The ‘parts’ (schema) are not intuited at the same time as the ‘whole’ (experience) but selected and sorted by our *productive* imagination (as in Hegel). Thus, the coherent similarities of these experiences, *once correlated*, create meaning. Moreover: ‘(M)etaphor by virtue of giving coherent structure to a range of our experiences, *creates similarities of a new kind*.<sup>74</sup>

Genuinely new meanings, according to Lakoff & Johnson, are thus obtained only by *matching* experiential components that form a coherent structure. The

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<sup>70</sup> ‘Indwelling’ is a term used by Polanyi (1966: 16-17), following Dilthey and Lipps, to more accurately describe metaphoric intuition.

<sup>71</sup> See Lakoff & Johnson, *ML*, p.244-245, though occurring elsewhere. The authors often appear to conflate the meanings of ‘concept’, ‘metaphor’ and ‘literality’. They list four ‘persistent fallacies’ about each, some of which appear reasonable, but on the whole are unconvincing. For example: ‘The first fallacy is that metaphor is a matter of words, not concepts’. Clearly, metaphors can be both literal and non-literal (and are *not* concepts). Literality and concept are conflated. Also: ‘The third is that all concepts are literal and that none can be metaphorical’. Concepts and metaphors are thus claimed to be two different things, except when they are ‘conceptual metaphor’. In fact, as Johnson rightly clarifies in the later publication, it is only the various processes of *conceptualising* which make them appear the same.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid*, p.149.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*, p.150.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid*, p.151.

problem, of course, is that this purely schematic way of constructing meaning does not accurately resemble how meaning productivity occurs in Nature. Their artificial division between ‘natural experiences’ and ‘interactional experiences’ forces them to identify case-specific exceptions to make the rule function. For instance, the ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor supposedly exhibits ‘natural kinds of activity (e.g., arguing) that are metaphorical in nature’. And ‘the CHEMICAL metaphor reveals... that our current way of dealing with problems is another kind of metaphorical activity’.<sup>75</sup> But the ‘natural/interactional’ distinction collapses in a misguided separation of natural and social semiotic productivity (which of course cannot be separated, as argued by Wheeler 2006: 31-32).

Associated difficulties emerge with other tropes. Their systematic method of categorising metaphors, metonymy, and synecdoche merely associates all their *lower-order symbolic use-value*. Emphasising their necessity in everyday life ignores any higher meaning productivity potential of each, as this approach unravels. For example, making ‘[c]ultural and religious symbolism... special cases of metonymy’ becomes problematic.<sup>76</sup> To explain ‘comprehending religious and cultural concepts’ a new category is made: ‘symbolic metonymies’ which are ‘grounded in our physical experience’. This suggests metonymies operate *differently* in our psyches (contradicting Dewey’s ‘body-mind’ thesis). Metaphor and metonymy must then be described as ‘different *kinds* of processes’, but how these are distinguished only compounds the initial error:<sup>77</sup>

Metaphor is principally a way of conceiving of one thing in terms of another, and its primary function is understanding. Metonymy... has primarily a referential function... [allowing us]... to use one entity to *stand for* another.

The problem is that both metaphor and metonymy, like all meaning modalities, are *referential*. Also, a *symbol* is something that ‘stands for’ or represents something else. Conceiving one thing ‘in terms of another’ is the same action. Metaphor involves a metamorphosis, which is an entirely different action. Thus, the cases of metonymy that do *not* operate strictly as symbols remains a mystery. In fact, metonymy emphasises *relationships* between things, and it is this aspect that

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid, p.144.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, p.40.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, p.36. Note ‘square’ brackets in all quotations are mine.

provides an added meaning dimension to their perceived purely symbolic function.

Bolstering weak definitions with special cases occurs with similar inconsistencies in the use of 'concept'. By and large we are told concepts represent *stages* (occasionally beginning-stages or end-stages) in the construction or realisation of metaphors and metonyms. But they often appear in examples as categorical *substitutions* for either. Similarly, we are told 'symbols' should be thought of essentially as two dimensional 'characters' or actors on the stage of meaning; but they too often stand in as metaphors or metonyms, making how they differ from concepts unclear.

Thus, though arguing they *differ* with 'comparison theorists', Lakoff & Johnson nevertheless posit metaphor's function based mainly on recognising coherent similarities, which can be 'isolated similarities' because metaphors primarily provide 'partial understanding of one kind of experience in terms of another'.<sup>78</sup> Unfortunately, this necessitates a categorical difference between '*objective*' and '*experiential*' similarities, with only the latter being associated with metaphor. Its *meaningfulness* can only then emerge from either '*experiential concurrence*' (experience concurring with a *pre-existing* metaphor eg., 'life is a gambling game'), or '*experiential similarity*' (where one's life experience *is like* another). This is apparently exclusively how metaphors create 'social realities' for us. But it fundamentally limits the 'truth' metaphor offers, that Art reveals.<sup>79</sup>

To demonstrate this, take for example how the "LIFE IS A STORY" metaphor is proposed to correspond with 'truth' in Shakespeare's quote: "LIFE'S... A TALE TOLD BY AN IDIOT".<sup>80</sup> The context, they suggest, is that (in any 'life story') we *naturally* tend to neglect our most salient experiences, interpreting them as 'signifying nothing' and essentially meaningless. The corresponding reason is, as Shakespeare's metaphor purportedly evokes, that 'in reality' we are 'constantly frustrated' by unattainable truth. So, it is foolish to expect we can reconcile the parts of our lives with the whole.

However, this quote from *Macbeth* is in a soliloquy which really attests to the folly of seeking permanence in life. Reflecting on his wife's death, Macbeth makes

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid, p.154.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. p.156.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, p.175.

several other *interrelated* metaphoric references. For example, to *Time*: ‘tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow creeps in this petty pace’. To *Light* (ie., understanding/impermanence): ‘all our yesterdays have lighted fools the way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle...’ (also: ‘walking shadow’). And to *Delusion* (ie., succumbing to hubris): ‘a poor player ...struts and frets ...heard no more ... an idiot, full of sound and fury’, and so on.

From these relationships we can form a quite different conclusion; for instance, that in life it is not quiet resignation to meaninglessness that is needed but rather circumspection. The ‘LIFE IS A STORY’ metaphor association drawn here is so general it borders on cliché. Its ‘correspondent truth’ is necessarily entirely subjective, which suits their purpose. In fact, this is what Ricoeur calls a degraded ‘lexicalised’ (or ‘dead’) metaphor, expressing merely two-dimensional *symbolic* meaning. The *real* ‘truth’ of Shakespeare’s ‘Life’s ...a tale’ metaphor arguably lies in the tension it creates with the others he employs in Macbeth’s soliloquy. Allegoric and metaphoric meanings are clearly being confused by Lakoff & Johnson here; with their subjective interpretation overshadowing possibly more salient objective truths evident in the text. They presuppose that *experiential concurrence/similarity* alone can check the passports of concepts entering/exiting the gates of perception/purposive action. When, as Peirce says, only *Reason* can.

Whichever interpretation of Shakespeare posited above is more accurate, it is clearly problematic to suggest metaphor accesses deeper truth merely by *matching subjective experiential coherences*. Notwithstanding allegiance to the later Wittgenstein’s ‘rejection of the picture theory of meaning’ and meaning’s relevance to context, Lakoff & Johnson’s belief in adherence to ‘one’s own conceptual system’ owes more to Kant’s ‘doctrine of agreement’.<sup>81</sup> Their own ‘experientialist synthesis’ thesis argues that only by *context* being universally understood can experiential meanings be shared and validated. But the above example reveals a reticence to consider the contextual presence of ‘objective similarities’ beyond a narrow focus, limiting deeper contemplative potential. The likes of which, evident in much of Shakespeare’s plays or Dostoevsky’s novels, Mikhail Bakhtin (1984) refers to as polyphonic ‘unpredeterminable’ truth –

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid, p.181-182.

characteristic of the ‘*proper* metaphoric’ utterance (which Ricoeur calls ‘equivocal’, as in *multi-dimensional*, meaning).

Peirce’s pragmatic maxim suggests an alternative phenomenological logic, which better accommodates the latter truth. That we move constantly in and out of subjective and objective reality; and though contexts shift, common truths emerge in the *reason* of the whole. Rejecting ‘objective similarities’ outright as Lakoff & Johnson do (in attempting to account for the complexity) simply places reason outside the realm of human conduct, making truth dependent entirely on *reflection* of our experience. But such reflection is not as real as *experiencing* itself.<sup>82</sup> Metaphors are bound by a *primordial* internal logic - a movement and temporal logic in particular - and our common intuition of *this* outweighs even experiences shared with others. Hence the true pragmatist argues, as Peirce did, that we can and must distinguish between what we admire - what ought to change our ends - and what we might simply call ‘affect’ (‘that silly science of esthetics, that tries to bring our enjoyment of sensuous beauty’).

Highlighting metaphor’s ubiquity in our experience can easily deflect its greater usefulness, which consists rather in its *quality* of metaphoric morphogenesis (as with metonymy, synecdoche, and narrative). While helpful in making us aware of how we *create* all meaning through the body; for recognising *why* these tropes are directional, ontological meaning generators; Lakoff & Johnson’s approach to phenomenology (based on Dewey’s ‘Principle of Continuity’) lacks the capacity of Peirce’s and Schelling’s to conceive of imaginative meaning *re-productivity* beyond direct experience. And hence cannot account for *higher* meaning. As Kant wrote, the senses don’t err – not because they always judge correctly – but ‘because they do not judge at all’.<sup>83</sup> Therein lies the main problem with this ‘standpoint of reflection’ (T2023a). And, as shown below, the constraints it places on the imagination cannot be explained away by simply overlaying Kant’s and Hegel’s transcendentalism with a neuroscientific explanation for ‘cognitive experientialism’. Using ‘sensorimotor processes’ for understanding ‘abstract concepts’, tying *Reason* exclusively to ‘structures of our perceptual and motor capacities’, as Lakoff & Johnson do, has its own inherent

<sup>82</sup> As Scheler says, ‘What is primary in *experiencing* life... must be secondary in *experienced* life’.

<sup>83</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*. Translated by Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis, Indiana 46244-0937: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1996), p.293.

limitations.

Johnson argues the question of the human will can only be resolved by ‘cognitive neuroscience and its insistence on the embodiment of mind’, with one disclaimer: as long as it ‘doesn’t make a shambles of our notions of moral responsibility’.<sup>84</sup> But how can it not, when a purely cognitivist neuroscientific approach to meaning views the brain as a ‘machine for thinking’; and, in such a paradigm, ‘ethics’ are entirely malleable? Several other difficulties corner Lakoff & Johnson into extreme positions, as Bowers (2008) also points out.<sup>85</sup> Most problematically, while arguing reason and emotion are inextricably intertwined, Johnson nevertheless claims reason is ‘disembodied’ and emotion ‘embodied’. Under their rubric, reason must be disconnected from spirit (following Hegel’s synthesis of the mechanical with Spirit).<sup>86</sup> But as Scheler shows (§4), human spirituality *is* indeed embodied - just as art must be, to be meaningful.

Some of the above-mentioned problems pertaining to experientialism in art are later resolved by Johnson in *The Meaning of the Body* (2008), for instance by better explaining ‘conceptualising’ as a process. But others persist, which I will return to in highlighting the benefits of Ricoeur’s insights. Elevating artistic contemplation toward multi-dimensional *proper* metaphoric meaning, beyond explicit, two-dimensional meaning, requires more than reflection. It demands rendering the experience of movement, time, and space with an associated logic that produces ‘morphogenic’ *transparency*. A proposition neuroscience supports; though not without qualifications which, once again, Lakoff & Johnson help to draw our attention to.

### 3.2 ‘Body-Mind’ Phenomenology: Movement, Action, Logic

Lakoff & Johnson’s application of neuroscience to understanding art suffers somewhat from their ‘experientialism’; but its employment in defence of the ‘body-mind’ thesis has considerable merit. Neuroscientific studies are indeed helpful in revealing the movement-action-logic linkage, which connects metaphor to us ontologically. These key features are central to the role qualities

<sup>84</sup> Lakoff & Johnson, *ML*, p.12-13.

<sup>85</sup> C. A. Bowers, “Why the George Lakoff and Mark Johnson Theory of Metaphor Is Inadequate for Addressing Cultural Issues Related to the Ecological Crises.” *The Trumpeter*, 24 3 (2008): 136-150.

<sup>86</sup> Lakoff & Johnson, *ML*, p.14.

and feelings play in all meaning production. They form part of the ontology of intersubjectivity, and are prerequisite phenomenological determinants for any higher meaning production through art. Cognitive scientists like Yaakov Stern characterise these as ‘supramodal’ and ‘intermodal’ processes, in which visual and motor proprioceptive information exchange, and other pattern matching/coordination, take place. All patterns of feeling perception, such as ‘vitality affects’, produce ‘contours’ that cut across our sensory capacities to produce cross-modal patterns of perception. These are ‘kinetic’ properties which (unlike emotions, says Johnson) draw on common primordial experiences of ‘flow’ and ‘development’.<sup>87</sup> The ‘continuity of experience’ theses conceived somewhat differently by Dewey, James, and Peirce, are thus well supported.

But whatever conclusions may be drawn from neural mappings, I suggest they offer nothing we don’t already know about metaphor’s implicit higher meaning production capabilities via these key features. They cannot descriptively supersede Schelling’s simple qualitative ‘enactive’ phenomenological tracing of these presences in artworks (see T2024b); limiting the value of this corroborative evidence in burgeoning fields like neuro-aesthetics and neuro-phenomenology. What’s more, the latter are apt to lead us astray because not all meaning originates in the brain. As Iain McGilchrist, Martin Doidge and others have shown more recently, the outdated ‘mechanistic model’ of the brain was inadequate to explain its complex plasticity. And Max Scheler’s denial of any dependency of the brain on psychic processes - because this contravenes ‘self-subsistency of the person as center of act-executions’ – is vindicated.<sup>88</sup> Bringing to light key differences in approaching our experience of meaning-value productivity and quality.

Though Lakoff & Johnson certainly suggest ways metaphors give rise to higher meaning; matching coherences between experiences of ‘*conventional*’ metaphors we ‘live by’ and ‘*non-conventional*’ ones countering these, simply cannot

<sup>87</sup> Johnson, *MB*, p.43 (see also, p.27-28): As Johnson says, this prefigures even ‘our experience of before, nows, and afters’, which are in fact products of reflection. Thus, ‘the qualitative flow of events... [produces]... the contours of our lived experience’.

<sup>88</sup> Parvis Emad, ‘Person, Death, and World’ in *Max Scheler (1874-1928) Centennial Essays*: 58-84 ed. Manfred S. Frings (Martinus Nijhof/The Hague/1974), 75. Science cannot ‘pass judgement on matters as delicate as the dependency between psychic processes and the brains. No decision can be reached regarding this dependency either experimentally, or through observation, since experimentation and observation involve the executions of acts by the person... Neurologists and psychologists must remember that “observable psychic facts are different from spiritual acts, and depend on these acts to be what they are”’.

account for *how values are transformed* in this purported interplay between the familiar and unfamiliar. Even though reason is also inextricably ‘tied to feelings’ according to their theory, our only access to these is via ‘interactional experience’. No place is given to entelechy to explain *psychic* processes; therefore imagination (being *productive*, rather than *reproductive* in this model) can grow only from ‘pre-existing patterns’. And though Johnson’s ‘*Embodied Theory of Meaning*’ broadly follows on from natural philosophy, claims such as that genuine novelty ‘remains unresolved in philosophy and science’ because there is no ‘radical’ freedom, show disregard for advances in biosemiotics.<sup>89</sup>

Despite Johnson’s reaffirmed ‘connectionism’ in his later work *The Meaning of the Body* showing signs of moving closer toward philosophical anthropology, there are still notable differences with Scheler, Schelling, or Peirce’s approaches to meaning productivity. The latter ground this in Nature ‘cosmologically’. Johnson links it to *biological* conditioning, being ‘horizontally transcendental’ in the social sphere. So, while recognising that the self-structuring semiotics of immanent meaning productivity is embodied and ‘naturalistic’, and ‘not the constructions of a disembodied mind’, his case unfolds by constructing a supposedly ‘rigid dichotomy between two fundamentally different kinds of meaning: (1) descriptive (cognitive)... and (2) emotive (noncognitive) meaning’. His attempt to explain why ‘emotive meaning’ is fallaciously thought to have no empirical validity, is then forced to get behind a notion that must align feelings with non-propositional or non-directed meanings.<sup>90</sup>

If body-mind entelechy is real, then there can be no such rigid dichotomy between ‘cognition’ and ‘non-cognition’. So, pitting non-propositional and propositional meanings in opposition oversimplifies the complexity. (And unfortunately, neural-mapping cannot come to the rescue here). Characterising feelings as ‘non-propositional’ or ‘non-directional’, in order to try and privilege emotions, simply denies their objective *as well as* subjective nature. Thus, the justified suggestion that ‘there is no cognition without emotion, even though we

<sup>89</sup> cf., Hoffmeyer’s ‘semiotic freedom’ (Wheeler 2006).

<sup>90</sup> Johnson, *MB*, p.9-10. This commitment to a transactive model underwrites his rejection of what he calls the ‘strategic means philosophers use to retain exclusive focus on the conceptual/propositional [a notable conflation] as the only meaning that mattered’ (cf. Kauffman & Gare 2015, p.7: Whitehead’s and my later argument on propositions).

are often unaware of the emotional aspects of our thinking' loses its moorings. On one hand, *cognitively* acquiring meaning is argued to depend upon the 'ability to *experience* feelings and emotions'. But their 'conceptual/propositional' meaning is purportedly *ultimately* derived from *non-cognitive* experiential meaning acquisition. (For instance, in prelinguistic infants and children where, as Johnson says, we find 'vast stretches of embodied meaning that are not conceptual and propositional in character, even though they will later make propositional thinking possible').<sup>91</sup>

The problem with aligning emotions exclusively with 'noncognition', and then associating *this* with artistic sensibility, is that it misappropriates the essential differences between poetic and speculative discourses. And elevates the lower order biological (or 'human'/'vital') values above Spirit. Johnson however presents good arguments for why such spirit exists. For instance, in the fact that art must necessarily be an *embodied* practice; and that its fragmentation follows that of *the Person* in modernity, with a misguided tendency to think of meaning as no longer human in origin.<sup>92</sup> Which neuro-scientific studies more shed light on.

For instance, Shaun Gallagher's work on nonconscious body processes, as Johnson explains, shows how our '*body schema*' hides from view. Essentially by operating 'below the level of self-referential intentionality... [using]... a set of tacit performances – preconscious, subpersonal processes that play a dynamic role in governing posture and movement'. This 'focal disappearance' suggests why we have developed literal 'dualistic metaphors' to act against our perception of mind-body unity (reinforcing this illusion).<sup>93</sup> And according to Johnson accounts for notions of (vertical) 'transcendence' arising in our language and philosophies, which Drew Leder assigns to the influence of positivism on what has become *habitual* intentionality directed toward 'a disembodied mind'.<sup>94</sup>

Abstracting meaning from the body like this of course reflects posthuman fragmenting/mechanistic tendencies in much postmodern 'art'.<sup>95</sup> This act of 'the self-effacement of the ecstatic body', says Leder, of "freeing oneself" from the

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid, p.9. See also Meltzoff and Moore (1995).

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, p.15.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid, p.57.

<sup>94</sup> Note Johnson's opposition to 'vertical' transcendence is at odds with notions of a supervening ego, but also Scheler's hierarchy of values.

<sup>95</sup> Johnson, *MB*, p.3.

body takes on a positive valuation'; which Iain McGilchrist describes as the self-delusory tendency of left hemisphere specialisation. Johnson illustrates the absurdity of this 'illusion of disembodied meaning' using Billy Collins' poem *Purity*.<sup>96</sup> In it the creative process is described as shedding clothing, then physical body parts, until the poet sits as a skeleton at a typewriter.

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Understanding how the body 'hides' from us, moving into the background of our meaning creation without us noticing how it makes experience appear seamless, however also reveals why Art's *implicit* intentionality emerges from what Merleau-Ponty calls 'the obscure zone'. And despite Johnson's inadequate approach to 'propositional thinking' (which Peircian semiotics better explains), the neuroscience of hidden intentionality alluded to above exposes the inseparable morphogenic features of *movement* and *logic* which, through their relation to *action*, unveil art's intentionality - via their perfect-sign natural embodied-ness in *the Person*. Their affordances are key to linking meaning with valuing in Schelling's system because they produce phenomenological meaning markers unbeholden to problematic 'correspondence' theories of truth separating 'objective' and 'subjective' concurrence/similarity. I am limited here to merely suggesting how these features help to distinguish *predicative metaphoric qualities* via Art's key meaning-making modalities, identifying meaning gradients that are 'value-impregnated'.

Firstly, as noted, it is in movement that we acquire the immanent meaning of 'things'/ideas relative to their real and ideal polarities oscillating between 'subject' and 'object' (T2024b, 2024c). Dewey (in *Experience and Nature*) and Merleau-Ponty (in *Phenomenology of Perception*) show that it is subjects and objects abstracted from the interactive process of experience out of which *people and 'things'* emerge - rather than emergence of a transcendental supervening ego. Even though *the Person* is not a 'thingly' object, we are never really separated from 'things', Johnson agrees, because '[t]here is no split of the self and other in the

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid, p.6. 'Ah, if only mind could float free of its carnal entanglements, Thinking pure thoughts of things certain, eternal, and good.'

primacy of our experience'.<sup>97</sup> Art however *produces* that 'split' via what Schelling called the '*reproductive* imagination', moving us beyond reflection. In his three stages of consciousness, this self-other 'boundary condition' is what is transcended, and is the necessary precursor for Art's ultimate unifying potential (T2024a).

Our *recognition* of movement in art is obviously linked to bodily movement habits associated with meaningful imaginings. Like temporality for example (unique to humans, given our developed sense of history), such primordial intuition forms the basis upon which our bodily movements, and those of external objects, become essential for meaning production. Movement is a key condition for our sense of what the world is - of 'being' and 'becoming' in it - informing our understanding of Action. From our earliest experience of embodied movement, we develop the Logic and meaning of being 'contained' within a world. Lakoff & Johnson suggest the 'container metaphor' is produced from our relation to something other (eg., the self's relation to the world). Likewise, our own bodies are 'containers' in which a very real sense of limitation becomes meaningful in relation to necessity.<sup>98</sup> And since the meaning of our bodily movement is tied to that of other things, certain recurring animated 'structures and patterns' develop habitually in our thought processes as 'image schemas' eg., as SOURCE-PATH-GOAL, UP-DOWN (verticality), and so on.<sup>99</sup>

Johnson describes four recurring dimensions of all bodily movements - tension, linearity, amplitude, and projection - whose variations and interrelationships direct all meaning productivity in art. These natural 'qualitative parameters of movement' create the dynamics and synthesis of meaning (differently in different artforms).<sup>100</sup> Given the Art-Person double unity, art's many possible subjects - via this singular Object, its 'one objective manifestation of the infinity of the world' (Schelling 1989) - are thus always

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid, p.20-21. As Schelling argues, it occurs in the stages of consciousness.

<sup>98</sup> They do not make this Limitation-Necessity association with Schelling's philosophy.

<sup>99</sup> Their terminology used below is comparable with what I have replaced it with in T2024c to describe Peirce's 'diagrammatic thinking', to suggest an alternative hermeneutics.

<sup>100</sup> See Johnson, *MB*, p.24., for linkages between these dynamic syntheses, and cf. Schelling's identification of their importance in each of his artform categories. As noted in T2022, it is mistaken to think features like balance, proportion, emphasis, variety, movement, rhythm, and harmony etc., can produce 'many principles' of art. These are in fact all *meaning-related qualities* of Art's unified Principle.

*essentially related to* ‘creatures who have bodies like ours and move in environments like ours’. Because only humans make art, and we only make it for humans (see §4). Even Still Life paintings or sculptures, where these dynamics must be present to enliven them, are therefore fundamentally related to *the Person*.<sup>101</sup>

Movement hence creates such basic criteria for our perception of meaning via these dimensions that ‘formalisms’ have appeared, rebadging these natural qualities as theoretical ‘aesthetic’ laws - but unconnected to ethics and logic (creating confusion regarding ‘realism vs naturalism’). This has ultimately led to a loss of understanding that *all* higher meaning production is qualitative, and hence in fact *non-formal*. While non-formal values are *experienced* subjectively, they also produce *objective* reality. Such multi-dimensional qualities drive the subject-objectification dynamism inherent in metaphoric or narrative movement (to a lesser degree in other tropes). Through them, our thoughts morph from one point of understanding into another. The ‘differential’ or bridging over a boundary threshold by these affordances produces meaning. And the extent and qualities of that differential are what produce *variation* in meaning. As Johnson says, there is a processual continuity between these ‘immanent meanings’ and our understanding of them extending beyond subjectivity: ‘They are qualities in the world as much as they are in us... experienced and shared by other people’ sharing our *Umwelt*.<sup>102</sup>

How do we *know* that we each do not possess a purely subjective experience of the world? Because qualities we *understand in common* like curved, twisted, diagonal, vertical, zig-zag, straight, circular, and so on ‘get their meaning *primordially* from our bodily postures, our bodily movements, and the logic of those movements’.<sup>103</sup> Our registration of these different states, this ‘perceivable difference’ in our *thinking*, makes all metaphoric meaning real. It is ‘not merely a fictional description... [rather]... an embodied process of the felt movement [differential] of our thinking’ occurring in Time.<sup>104</sup> This same Logic is common to all humans, and though perceived differently, most animals as well. That is why, to varying degrees, we ‘understand’ each other in encounters. Our *Umwelt*

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<sup>101</sup> This is fully argued in T2024a and 2024b.

<sup>102</sup> Johnson, *MB*, p.25.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid*, p.26. Emphasis added.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid*, p.95-96.

may be different, but our ‘container’ movements are comparatively very similar.

Humans however possess a *special* temporal ‘Logic’; because the movement of time becomes a *phenomenological* reality, derived from bodily movement experienced over long periods (felt as history). Temporal *movement-logic* quality thus exists in all ‘acts’, combining the qualities of tension, linearity, amplitude, and projection (ie., Johnson’s ‘MOVING TIME Metaphor’). And there is a temporal quality to *our perception* of all things and acts (‘MOVING OBSERVER Metaphor’). Some metaphors, like these, become ‘primary’ in our collective and individual experience, others remain ‘secondary’ - which accounts for cultural variations. The *directional* motion of morphogenic semiosis encountered in metaphoric/narrative meaning is described by Johnson in terms of ‘source’ and ‘target’ domains. But I have elsewhere suggested an alternative descriptive hermeneutics (T2024b, 2024c).

Metaphors (and any associated morphogenic modalities) are thus bound by determinable logic. Movement/temporal logic which, along with spatial logic (essential in painting and sculpture for instance), are inextricably linked. Also, every metaphor (since it contains narrative) has its own *internal logic*.<sup>105</sup> While our understanding of all these is derived in part from *common* experience, Johnson claims there are some ‘natural metaphors’. This ‘special category’, I suggest, is in fact merely the higher order of *proper* metaphor. That is, any metaphor affording a primary *higher* meaning/value bond between individuals and collectives, making our reasoned world *more real* than our reflective experience of it, overriding personal experience. Wherein ‘objective similarities’ *cannot* be discounted. In Scheler’s terms, proper metaphors produce a ‘phenomenological experience’ of the Art-Person double-unity (approaching Schelling’s ‘empirical object’, or Peirce’s ‘concrete reasonableness’).

The neurological and phenomenological evidence for relationships governing our early habits is thus melded. Our first intersubjective experience of the ‘motion/container metaphor’ is pre-natal, and the intimate connection between the self and other from birth prefigures development of ‘common sense’.<sup>106</sup> Shared understanding is exhibited in a kind of ‘proto-conversation’ whereupon a

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<sup>105</sup> The ‘internal logic’ of symbol is instead *univocal* (merely two-dimensional, unidirectional, and schematic).

<sup>106</sup> Johnson, *MB*, p.38. See Meltzoff & Moore (1995).

dialogue ensues of ‘back-and-forth, highly nuanced, mutual pursuit of shared meaning’ (ie., *indwelling*). The same evidently primordial habitual process in which open-ended self-reproducing *hypotheses* occur in increasingly sophisticated aesthetic interaction. The ‘hermeneutic spiral’ of lower to higher meaning transformation thus arises from our intuitive habits *of forming propositions in search of Reason*. This ‘intersubjective coupling’ is at the ‘core of every human consciousness... an immediate, un rational, unverbalized, conceptless, totally atheoretical potential for rapport of the self with another’s mind’.<sup>107</sup> And, as Johnson says, at this ‘primordial level’ it is not primarily inferential but ‘directly grasped’.<sup>108</sup>

Therefore, intersubjectivity is an ‘ontological property’ of the *Principle* of art, producing its ‘materiality’. And *Reason* the ground of any proper metaphor optimally re-producing it meaningfully (‘immaterially’). Without both, the writ large triadic link between individuals, humanity, and art cannot exist. Nor could we distinguish art from the general aesthetic. Intersubjectivity accounts for the origins of our primordial ‘totalising’ intuition, and is also the basis for empathy. But, as Allan Young, Iain McGilchrist and others show, this propensity of ‘brains being affected by (or adapting to) other brains’, in the social (and natural) phenomenon of ‘swarming’ where dominance surfaces, may be shaped in prosocial or antisocial directions.<sup>109</sup> Reason alone defines intersubjectivity’s intentional, directional *meaningfulness* - as I will next argue – via human *Spirit*; which accounts for Art’s implicit ‘collectivising intent’.

Neurophenomenological research on mirror-neuronal activity thus indeed corroborates why the same shared understanding exists in *the propositions* we make in art.<sup>110</sup> Such activity is *both* open ended *and* ‘algebraically’ conclusive, says Johnson; offering ‘*disclosure*’ in allegorically obtained ‘*necessary conclusions*’. All predication hence (whether essential *or* accidental) concerns ‘a question of affordances’, governed by ‘the most primordial ontological distinction’ in our

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<sup>107</sup> Colwyn Trevarthen cited in *Ibid*, p.39.

<sup>108</sup> Johnson, *MB*, p.39.

<sup>109</sup> Young (2012) describes the emergence of ‘empathic cruelty’.

<sup>110</sup> See Evan Thompson, “Life and Mind: From Autopoiesis to Neurophenomenology.” in *Emergence and Embodiment: New Essays on Second-Order Systems Theory*. Edited by Bruce Clarke, Mark B. N. Hansen, Barbara Herrnstein Smith and E. Roy Weintraub (New York, USA: Duke University Press, 2009), 77-93.

*Umwelt*: that between *the self* and *Other*.<sup>111</sup> *Ontologies* are not built upon a ‘mind-independent’ world; so what we *take* as ‘reality’ depends on this question of *affordances*. A. N. Whitehead’s ‘occasions’ of possible patterns as forms of definiteness, supporting Peirce’s logic that necessary conclusions can be drawn from diagrammatic analogies of hypotheses (T2024c).<sup>112</sup> The latter forms part of my examination in T2024c into a method for how we can *objectively* draw the same conclusions about the higher meaning value of *any* artwork, by combining Peircian semiotics with Schelling’s system and Scheler’s hierarchy of values.

Here, however, lies the greater neurological significance of McGilchrist’s brain lateralisation theory to Art. The right hemisphere’s essential difference to the left, he argues, is that it ‘pays attention to the Other, whatever it is that exists apart from ourselves, with which it sees itself in profound relation’.<sup>113</sup> The ‘contextual versus abstract distinction’ upon which intersubjective reality relies, ‘is illustrated by the different use of symbols by each hemisphere’; and *only* ‘the right hemisphere’s capacity to understand metaphor’. The right hemisphere alone processes embodied meaning, and hence that kind of “symbolism” which is the ‘focus or centre of an endless network of connotations which ramify through our physical and mental, personal and cultural, experience in life, literature and art’. Metaphor’s *strength* thus lies ‘...in direct proportion to the power it has to convey an array of implicit meanings, which need to remain implicit to be powerful’.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>111</sup> Johnson, *MB*, p.40.

<sup>112</sup> Stuart A. Kauffman, and Arran E. Gare, “Beyond Descartes and Newton: Recovering life and humanity.” *Progress in Biophysics and Molecular Biology* XXX, (2015): 1-26, p.7: ‘Whitehead’s notion of possible patterns as forms of definiteness and their transformations complements Peirce’s semiotic interpretation of mathematics... the science which draws necessary conclusions from exclusively hypothetical states of things... where a hypothesis is “a proposition imagined to be strictly true of an ideal state of things”... Necessary conclusions are drawn by mathematicians through the use of diagrams which function as analogies to such hypotheses’.

<sup>113</sup> Iain McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), p.93.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid, p146. Hence the essential difference between art and cultural artefact. The lower order ‘symbol’ of which artefacts are generally made – eg., religious icons, or political propaganda posters, or indeed any ‘conceptual art’, etc., - lie in the realm of the left hemisphere. On the other hand, says McGilchrist: ‘The right temporal region appears to be essential for the integration of two seemingly unrelated concepts into a meaningful metaphoric expression’ (p.146) – ie., proper Metaphor. Cultural artefacts thus play on *familiarity*: ‘[T]he left hemisphere pays attention to the virtual world that it has created, which is self-consistent, but self-contained, ultimately disconnected from the Other, making it powerful, but ultimately only able to

Its meaning value to artmaking hence emerges in Scheler's hierarchy of values, becoming apparent in the key *phenomenological* distinction between Spirit and Life.

#### 4. PROPER METAPHOR VS CONCEPT (SPIRIT VS LIFE)

*"There is a gentle thought that often springs to life in me, because it speaks of you."*

Dante Alighieri

Intersubjectivity is one of Art's ontological properties. Schelling's philosophical framework for art advances on Eduard Hanslick's 'famous' and 'controversial' argument (according to Johnson) that 'the meaning of... "musical ideas" stems primarily from "audible changes of strength, motion, and proportion"'. These natural qualitative influences on meaning-making are in fact metaphorical qualities, originating in the 'general aesthetic'; and our reception of them as we grow is not abandoned or transcended but extended and built upon.<sup>115</sup> Schelling's system however explains both why they are ontological and how they produce *variations* of meaning. He describes similar processual affordances in *all* artforms but associates them with the productivity of *consciousness*, taking us beyond conceptual 'patterning' behaviours (T2024b).

The fundamental difference between proper metaphor and concept is like that between Spirit and Life. Concepts express the biological reality of humanity, but as I will now show only proper metaphor can express spirit. According to Max Scheler, Spirit and Life are two mutually exclusive ideas because spirit 'cannot be reduced to a psychological characteristic of man'.<sup>116</sup> Artistic intentionality disclosing 'the real' (in Schelling's system) thus does not point to human psychology but 'spiritual being', which Scheler defines as our 'spiritual reality'.<sup>117</sup>

[S]pirituality must be viewed as that form of reality "which points beyond itself to

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operate on, and to know, itself" (p.93). However, this is complicated by the fact that '...clichéd metaphorical or non-literal expressions' are also dealt with by the left hemisphere. But 'for such an expression', says McGilchrist, 'it is seeing the literal meaning of the hackneyed phrase that refreshes it, that requires insight (a bit like seeing a joke), and therefore in this case the non-salient (unfamiliar, because non-clichéd) meaning gets to be processed in the right hemisphere' (p.147).

<sup>115</sup> Johnson, *MB*, p.45.

<sup>116</sup> Emad, "Person, Death, World", p.60.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid*, p.60.

something other than itself...". The immediate implication of this "pointing beyond", this "transcending", is that Spirit is the condition for the possibility of psychology in general. Therefore, it cannot be regarded as a product of evolution traceable in biological realities.

This notion of Spirit surpasses Hegel's because in it *the Person* is a 'changeable constant in time', and *cannot* be historicised as Hegel would have it. Aesthetic privation and a diminution of *the Self* originates in *biological* determinism – the biological, psychological, or anthropological 'objectification' of life - because the processes of Nature are only *essentially* spiritual (ie., in essences and potencies). However, in the Person, Spirit 'does not come automatically... It must be guided!'. And Art is our *ultimate* means of 'pointing beyond' - hence *guiding* spirit. As previously argued, during a *phenomenological experience* humans turn away from the sensory world and 'bracket off' what is accidental (natural), focusing instead on *the essential* nature of things (T2024a, 2024b). It is this deliberative attention to 'spirit' that allows us to *indwell* in Reason. Which is why Scheler's definition of 'phenomenological experience' is a fundamental criterion for distinguishing Art from non-Art.

Scheler's metaphysics of Spirit thus returns us to Aristotle's category of *praxis* (action), confirming it is predominantly *Spirit* which drives our *higher* artistic intentionality/productivity. But it is the '*ideative*' aspects of our actions that produce objectifiable meaning, via metaphor. Only this elevates the Person, because Spirit is 'essentially capable to suspend reality... to... detach and liberate man from organic reality'. The Person is a 'finite manifestation of Spirit... marked primarily by the factual detachment from the body'.<sup>118</sup> We must therefore put aside Lakoff and Johnson's generalist approach to metaphor and, as I will later in this section, look to Ricoeur's 'tensions' for how to develop a hermeneutics of art moving us 'beyond interpretation'.

To fully appreciate the significance of this Spirit-Life polarity to meaning productivity in art, related perspectives on Experience; on Truth; and on Thinking and Imaging, that help distinguish poetic and speculative discourse, require further elaboration. Firstly, let us consider the relation between deliberation and choice in the phenomenology of 'action'. As Aristotle says, the

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid, p.63. We can understand 'person' (life) as the limit case of 'Person' (spirit). And 'Person' as the limit case of the Nature (life)-History (spirit) nexus.

relation between the *habitual* nature of choice and the qualifying ‘correct reason’ of deliberation must not be confused. Because ‘what is chosen is a certain longing, marked by deliberation, for something that is up to us’. We always long for something ‘*in accord with our deliberation*’.<sup>119</sup> Choosing is an act of willing governed by a pre-felt intention. This will explain why the ontological property of intersubjectivity – which grounds artistic self->Other intentionality to reality – makes the *phenomenological experience* the main self-defining criterion of Art’s *Principle*.

#### 4.1      *A Phenomenological Experience*

Anthropological phenomenology offers understanding of how to perceive value-contents of objects in *both* inner and outer perception, surpassing reliance on experientialism to explain ‘cognition’. As Scheler says, our habit-taking (or ‘*preferring*’) in all cases is driven by how we intuit values in the most powerfully fundamental ways. Roger L. Funk shows how Scheler’s account of values and all human action are fundamentally connected, and why the strict correlation between the foundation of person and world means that there is no value-indifferent world in the pursuance of acts of cognition, loving, hating and so on. So too in our attendance to art. Art requires us to intuit values which are ‘*nearer to absolute*’ and ‘entirely out of the sphere of “judgement” or “deliberation”’; that is, as ‘*a confirmation, but not a proof*’ of reality - via what Scheler calls a ‘*phenomenal detachment*’.<sup>120</sup> This distinguishes phenomenological experience from all other experience, hence how we link purpose and action in art-making/admiring is important.

Firstly, the objects of deliberation cannot be confused with the objects of *choice*; the latter being already determined prior to any accidental *deliberation*. Secondly, we only deliberate over things we might *doubt*, which ‘come about through us’ (ie., experientially).<sup>121</sup> And there is ‘more doubt in the case of the arts’, as Aristotle says, because of their essentially *propositional* nature. But, in the making of *Art* as opposed to artefacts, the *making* and *action* parts (intentions) can be distinguished. The latter involve acts of ‘precision and self-sufficiency’ (ie., crafting) which we

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<sup>119</sup> Aristotle, *NE*, p.50 emphasis added.

<sup>120</sup> Scheler, *FE*, p.88-89.

<sup>121</sup> Aristotle, *NE*, p.48.

have less doubts about. But *Art-making* (and indeed admiring) demands greater deliberation from an *active* subject, because it involves *more* doubt. How something will turn out (in the making) and what exactly that something is (in its admiring) remains indeterminate for the most part. The more so the greater the artwork. Hence, an active subject is needed to ‘*complete*’ the work, which explains Art’s purposefully purposeless intersubjective orientation to truth.<sup>122</sup>

The false habitual subtle merger of deliberation with choice, engineered by positivistic materialism (as modernity advanced), eludes many into thinking art does not really seek truth. Art is a search for truth, but not in any conventional sense of truth seeking as a definitive act *bound* by a system of thought, or by actions and effects. Rather, as a way of valuing - through phenomenological experience. Purpose and action are thus implicitly linked *propositionally*, not via effects or affects.

As Funk says, value-goals are what ‘define the field of possible purposes’ that anthropological phenomenology identifies as ‘[u]nderlying the realm of adopted purposes, chosen actions, [which are] the constellation of experienced conative impulses’<sup>123</sup> (They are thus ideally expressed *metaphorically*). Furthermore, *concrete* purposes do not arise from nothing, nor can they be confused with ‘experienced feeling-states of pleasure and pain’ occurring during our interaction with any ‘milieu of action’ *producing* purposes. Such effects ‘at best... serve only to limit the adoption of purposes’. Therefore, we can identify clear differences between the effects/affects of *technologies of action* (eg., produced by brushstrokes in a painting), and the phenomenological *intentionality* of purpose embodied in any genuine art object.

Effects are only *related to action through influence*. They don’t belong to ‘the experienced phenomenal unity of action’ - which is *immediately* experienced. Influences include ‘the situation and the object; the content of means; deliberation, resolve, and choice; certain movements; kinesthetic feelings; and the experience of executing or performing’. As Funk explains, because of this:

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<sup>122</sup> This is why an artist/aesthete must be, in Aristotle’s terms, a ‘serious person’ who deliberates about ends over means (and values over facts). This puts accidentality in art-making into perspective (see T2024b, 2024c).

<sup>123</sup> Roger Funk, “Thought, Values, and Action” in *Max Scheler (1874-1928): Centennial Essays*. Translated by Daniel Liderbach. Editors Max Scheler and Manfred S Frings. 58-84 (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1974), p.54.

'Effects, understood as the successes and failures of attempts to realize certain states of affairs, cannot determine in any fashion the field of possible purposes.' And, simply mimicking effects/affects to produce novelty without Reason reveals a concern for 'means' alone (ie., materials, technologies, techniques) *misconstrued* as ends. Only by *moving through* these toward ends can meaningful disclosure be reached.

What grounds the act in reality, then, in any genuine attempt at artmaking, is *the artist's* own embodiment as a person. Likewise for the admirer. Firstly, because 'it is of course the person who acts: the person, and not, say, the ego, for the ego is the object of differentiated perception that cannot act or "direct its body"'. It is only through 'the lived body that the person has a milieu of action with here and there, as well as temporal dimensions of past, present and future'. And secondly because any *ethical* value-experience – which thus *necessarily* involves the Person as *the bearer* of goods – cannot be substituted by *technologies* of action (effects/affects) whose *attributes* are presupposed as the basic value. That would constitute false attribution.

Therefore, our value-ception of any 'reality' an artwork produces is fundamentally driven by our habitual *preferring* involving *the Person* (more precisely, the Art-Person *Object*). And since, as we saw earlier, intuition is not reducible to sensorimotor patterns, neuroscience cannot adequately account for how values are transformed in art via 'effects' and 'affects'. If anything, sensorimotor mapping might tend to confirm false attribution. Scheler's recognition of the *primordial* nature of value-ception was overlooked by association psychology, and neuro-imaging techniques shed little light on it. McGilchrist's theory, being fundamentally phenomenological in explaining *intentionality* however, does offer a psychological challenge to 'mechanistic' neuroscience. Which I believe corroborates the linking of Scheler's system of valuing with Schelling's system of meaning productivity in art (T2023, 2024c).

To 'reconstruct' the Person's connection with Art as principle, means reappraising how 'ethical intentionality' is understood and 'in-formed' in the art object itself. Today's 'artworld' actively fragments this relation, often reducing the self to individual 'person-ality' affects and art's *Object* to effects. As Scheler notes, there is a long history - including theorists like Spinoza, Descartes, and Leibniz - of being unable to identify the whole of the emotional life and its

givenness in truth - because of not properly distinguishing between 'complexes of sensations' and 'feelings', or 'loving' and 'hating', as *ultimate* and *original* in spirit. And, on the other hand, not realising that values themselves are *not* ultimate and irreducible phenomena. Such misconceptions of intentional feeling and its relation to the lived body were not recognised as neglectful of 'the irreducibility of the emotional life' to effects/affects until the beginning of the nineteenth century (with Kant and Tetens).<sup>124</sup>

Kant nevertheless placed limitations on understanding and how we attend to the physical world that implied physical reality is merely a 'mental construction' contrived to explain the 'contents of consciousness'. Primary among such contents were sensations.<sup>125</sup> And this, says Scheler, led to an incorrect perception that values 'are supposed to be "subjective appearances," which, "strictly speaking," are only the names of changing states (sensible feelings) of the lived body'.<sup>126</sup> His aesthetics thus developed from a 'standpoint of reflection'. Like Peirce, Scheler realised instead that only *phenomenological* investigation could remedy this. In phenomenology, says Scheler, one must be aware that the distinction between the individual and environment is not the same as that between the 'ego' and the 'outer world', nor that between 'inner' and 'outer' perception, because all of us have both a 'psychic' and 'physical' reality.<sup>127</sup>

Because Kant did not distinguish physical reality as a proper set of phenomena where sensory 'excitations' have an established foundation, *pictorial* representations of this reality were instead attributed as a *psychic* phenomenon. That is, as 'given' in inner perception. Johnson recognises this fault; but in adopting Dewey's belief that *all* knowledge is necessarily *reflected in and by* experience, tries to explain inner perception by linking all cognition to sensorimotor activity and codifiable schematic patterns. But clearly the latter cannot 'picture' value relations.<sup>128</sup> Hence our implicit acts of disclosure in

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<sup>124</sup> Scheler, *FE*, p.263.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid*, p.151.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid*, p.156.

<sup>127</sup> Scheler describes an order of the entire realm of entities in our experience, expressing the appropriate correlates of this 'psychophysically indifferent unity of acts', as between: (1) person and world, (2) lived body and environment, (3) ego and outer world, (4) body as thing and inanimate body, and (5) soul and body-ego.

<sup>128</sup> Lakoff & Johnson appear to neglect Scheler's philosophical anthropology, and its challenge to Dewey's reflective experientialism.

artmaking - our ultimate common means of 'bracketing off' *accidental* qualities, to approach an 'absolute' nature of reality – are reduced to transactive valuing. Art is our highest form of what Scheler calls 'Ideation', because of its power to address the seamlessness of our 'inner' and 'outer' body awareness of values.

Avoiding aesthetic 'representationalism', Scheler's system of valuing hence offers the best phenomenological 'measure' of Schelling's and Peirce's *directional* guides for higher order aesthetic habit-taking. The *Person* being the essential Object (the final secondness) in Peirce's semiotic triad upon which all higher meaning intentionality in great art is predicated. And, according to Schelling's mythological order, when transported by a metaphoric morphogenesis whose context is profoundly felt, we experience a genuinely new sense of 'knowing' that is not merely representative. We experience it as a sense of *longing*, on a deeper level; by the long-felt dimensions of time and space and how we move as a 'person' in them, compared to how *our actions* move or are executed *in* them. And we share this knowledgeable relation to 'sense' with other persons.

Our combined cognitive and primordially intuitive body awareness of qualities hence habitually produce psychic effects applicable to Art's higher meaning (eg., *Gestalts*); and their orientation toward truth and beauty is consistently felt and communicable between individuals. Neither *physiological* nor *psycho-physical* factors govern this 'knowledge', only the values we intuit *phenomenologically*. And these values are *objectifiable*; they can be compared and judged just as acts can be. I have elsewhere demonstrated how they correspond with relational, qualitative, directional meaning under a proposed assessment methodology (T2024c).

Unlike concepts, *metaphoric truth* thus offers something more: phenomenological confirmation of *Mind* emergence. Kant's great insight was that 'the spirit (*Geist*) in an aesthetic sense... [is]... the life-giving principle of mind (*Gemüt*)'. But, as Scheler says, 'the metaphor of life comes to the fore [when] imagination and understanding engage'. They assume 'a task assigned by the Ideas of reason, to which no concept is equal'.

#### 4.2 *Metaphoric vs Conceptual 'Truth'*

As Paul Ricoeur argues, where conceptual understanding fails 'imagination still has the power of "presenting" (*Darstellung*) the Idea'; and this 'forces conceptual

thought to *think more*.<sup>129</sup> Being able to conceptualise in fact *requires* metaphor to *enliven* ideas. It requires, as Schelling too argues, the productive imagination to become *reproductive*. Thus, according to George Taylor (2006: 74), Ricoeur also places the imagination firmly in the realm of the utopian exploration of possibility, whereas for Spinoza it was ‘a matter of illusion’ and for Pascal sophistry.

Only *proper* metaphor (not ordinary metaphor), however, can profoundly vivify any ‘constituted language’ to make artistic inquiry more than the merely arbitrary communication of ideas. Only it can optimise our capacity to imagine and engage with the other in self-actualising interactivity and mutual understanding. Ordinary metaphor’s power to represent things in a state of activity makes it art’s highest ‘mythological category’, because only ‘movement toward the metaphorical’ offers a metamorphosis of enduring replenishment of possibility. But there is a gradient here. And art’s unique power to *actualise* - to merge action with knowledge and ‘in-form’ becoming *without* assigning fixity to the state of being - is only made possible by Metaphor’s pluviosity.

Accordingly, Ricoeur’s theory of tensions (see T2024c) reveals a split reference between the *spiritual* and *sensual* orders of meaning where the ‘metaphorical utterance... [is]... carried ultimately by the cupola *is*’. Thus: ‘Being-as means being *and* not being’; and art, via metaphor, is our *only* means of properly expressing this universalising. It makes ‘a concept of *truth* other than the concept of *truth-verification*, the correlative of our ordinary concept of reality’, which Ricoeur suggests is the *real* truth art seeks and ‘is best placed to search for’.<sup>130</sup> Therefore, to restore proper metaphor to the centre of artistic activity is ‘to restore to the fine word *invent* its twofold sense of both discovery and creation’. Ricoeur’s account of imagination, unlike Kant and Hegel’s *productive* imagination, is thus ‘connected with an ontology... [requiring]... revision not only of our concept of reality but also of our concept of truth’:<sup>131</sup>

No longer is truth defined in terms of “adequation,” a conformity between judgment and existing reality, because the disclosure of new reality has more to do

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<sup>129</sup> Ricoeur, *RM*, p.358.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid*, p.361.

<sup>131</sup> G. H. Taylor, “Ricoeur’s Philosophy of Imagination.” *Journal of French Philosophy*, 16 1- 2, (Spring-Fall 2006): 93-104, p.98.

with a concept of truth as *manifestation*.

As Taylor adds, Ricoeur's view of the imagination 'takes a very different stance' to the Kantian standpoint of reflection. 'It alerts us', he says, 'to disclosure of reality that is both available and yet to come'.<sup>132</sup> It unfolds 'the logic of discovery itself' while recognising the 'kernel of opacity' in the transposition that defies analysis, in that passage of movement from becoming to being (Merleau-Ponty's *obscure zone*). As Schelling realised, this can only be effectively understood by contemplating the real and the ideal in a directly meditative rather than *comparatively* representational way. Thus, to achieve balance in all the different aspects of artmaking, one must reconceive the balance between 'productive' and 'reproductive' aspects of the imagination. Both Schelling and Ricoeur use the word *disclosure* to elicit a sense of truth-telling and completion, without invoking the absolute finality of certainty. But they also recognise a line between the 'good' and 'pathological' use of our imaginative productivity must be drawn. On the one hand, says Taylor, in Ricoeur 'the space provided by the "nowhere" provides us a freedom from determinism' between those theories of the productive imagination which treat consciousness 'as merely the consequence of our biology' or as 'apparently closed theories of linguistic meaning such as Chomsky's'. On the other, he reaffirms that for any humanist utopian sensibility to persist, there *must be* a role for judgement.

The 'concept of truth as *manifestation*' in Ricoeur's hermeneutic phenomenology then – as in Schelling, Peirce, Scheler or Merleau-Ponty – offers a *dialectical* method for judging what stands as art, non-art, or anti-art. As Ricoeur says: "We must always decide between the false witness and the truthful one for there is no manifestation... without the threat of a false testimony, and without the decision that separates the sign from the idol."<sup>133</sup> The problem today is that 'metaphorical truth' is caught in 'an insurmountable antinomy' where the ontological vehemence of poetic utterance is opposed on a 'field of a verificationist concept of truth, itself bound up with a positivist concept of reality'.<sup>134</sup>

Notably, both Aristotle (in *Metaphysics*) and Schelling (in *The Philosophy of Art*)

<sup>132</sup> Ibid, p.98-99.

<sup>133</sup> Ricoeur in Ibid, p.74.

<sup>134</sup> Ricoeur, *RM*, p.362.

use the words ‘potency’ and ‘actuality’ analogously. Clearly, both are associated with *movement*, at the core of the *poesis/praxis* nexus distinguishing art from artefacts (T2022). And, as Ricoeur suggests, we can only try to interpret ‘the formula “signifying things in act”’ in an exploratory, non-dogmatic fashion, ‘by questioning instead of asserting’. This is the only way we can approach Art’s ‘absolute objectivity’: *propositionally*. Because the intentionality of *purposelessness* that must accompany *poesis* is fundamentally linked to the very question the principle of art poses in every artwork. Hence propositional ‘purpose’ is another key ontological feature of art.

Ricoeur’s theory of tensions and split reference, standing alongside Peirce’s ‘semiotic realism’ applied to Schelling’s system, offers another way to think about the apparent paradox of the ‘becoming-being’ cupola.<sup>135</sup> Poetry, as Ricoeur argues, in this split (via metaphor) ‘articulates and preserves the experience of belonging that places man in discourse and discourse in being’.<sup>136</sup> Prose, or any other form of speculation however, even if it ‘bases its work upon the dynamism of metaphorical utterance’, can only *interpret* this truth within its own sphere of meaning. A conceptual *distanciation* occurs; ostensibly due to the splitting of reference and redescription of reality when reflected and rearticulated (represented) in speculations. Using Peirce’s activity of signs, we can track its emergence, and reasons for it; in what I have referred to as Ricoeur’s ‘second ontology’, or Peirce’s *Suspended Second* (essentially, suspending subjectivity).<sup>137</sup>

Speculative thinking can be tracked and described neurologically. But as suggested, how the *propositional* movement, logic, and action of Art’s meaning modalities, in this becoming-being split, advance an artwork’s ‘sense’ through an order of values cannot. Neural mappings only track such ‘action’ as patterns of ‘image schema’ (ie., symbols, or, concept fragments), which are pictorial and hence must be *interpreted* nominally. But ‘sense’ can be *reasoned* from the essence of acts, and thus *valued*. To illustrate this point, it is helpful to return briefly to Peirce and James’ different phenomenological approaches before clarifying these

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<sup>135</sup> See T2024c.

<sup>136</sup> Ricoeur, *RM*, p.370. As Ricoeur says, poetry climbs ‘back up the slope that language descends when dead metaphors are laid to rest in the herbaria’. Heidegger too argues poetry awakens ‘the largest view’ by bringing ‘the word... forth from its inception... [making]... World appear in all things’ (p.335-336).

<sup>137</sup> See T2024c for detailed explanation of this.

nuances between ‘thinking’ and ‘imaging’, and what models most benefit understanding the ‘truth’ of Art.

#### 4.3 *Thinking vs Imaging*

Nominalists prefer to focus on concepts embedded in propositions rather than distinguish between the meaning *completed* by the assertion. Without the latter, in the *necessarily open-ended* propositional role of Art, one is left in limbo. As Richard Prawat argues, William James welcomed Peirce’s pragmatic maxim because his functional nominalist misunderstanding of it allowed attribution of action itself to the ultimate end governing any belief. Thus, for James, experience was the end in itself, whereas for Peirce a proposition could be open without necessarily circumventing any movement toward reason (T2023). In fact, Peirce’s maxim insists that ‘the meaning or significance of a proposition... lies in the tangible outcomes with which it is associated’.<sup>138</sup> Since not just *any* proposition (without ‘ends’) can be admitted as serious or meaningful, neither can a concept on its own. It is merely *re-presentational*.

The original Greek meaning of metaphor describes an act that carries us over a meaning threshold. The extent or ‘depth’ of this passage depends entirely on the quality and transparency of how we obtain its directedness. We often have the sense that, by virtue of the natural operation of *Gestalts*, the merely felt presence of any *movement*, *action*, and *logic* yields higher meaning. But closer inspection of these three features in any artwork may reveal the passage of meaning toward *reason* is lacking key affordances in their nexus. Where do we find the phenomenological evidence for this?

Firstly, consider the neurological evidence for ‘thought flows’. Johnson describes how, though through habit we don’t notice, thought *flows* from one ‘resting place’ to another, releasing felt patterns and qualities. There is a distinct directional impetus (or ‘intentionality’) in this felt sense of thinking:<sup>139</sup>

If you start out with an if-thought, then a then-thought must soon follow, completing the passage from one place to another on the metaphorical path of your thinking. The if aspect of your thought (as in the previous sentence) creates a felt

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<sup>138</sup> Richard Prawat, “The Nominalism Versus Realism Debate: Towards a Philosophical Rather than a Political Resolution,” *Educational Theory*, Vol. 53, no.3, Summer 2003, 275-311, p.288.

<sup>139</sup> Johnson, *MB*, p.95.

anticipation of something that follows, in a way that moves you to a new thought-location.

This, as noted, describes ‘predication’; and we call the feeling of expectancy ‘meaning’. Thus, all meaning is ‘intentional’ in the sense that its productivity alone *dictates* that it is always directed. Peirce’s triadic relationships show we can trace that directedness (without conceding to James’ nominalism).

Johnson uses source->target domain identification of constitutive ‘image schemas’ of an artwork to track ‘meaning *coherences*’. These produce ‘contours of our understanding’ taking shape in a new transformation of patterns of neural activation. He describes them as not ‘projections’ or ‘representations in the classical sense... [of]... some extramental content’; rather often unconscious patterning.<sup>140</sup> And they produce *common* meanings because they ‘structure our purposeful motion toward a “given” meaning destination’.<sup>141</sup> So far so good. But we are no wiser on making comparisons about the *quality* of an artwork’s meaning until we understand *how* these patterns (forming *Gestalts*) are restructured in our *reproductive* imagination to render values.

According to Johnson, the above explanation accounts for both ‘sensual’ and ‘intellectual’ intuition. Both ‘abstract conceptualisation’ and ‘reasoning’ thus rely on metaphor. Image schemas arise ‘recurrently in our perception and bodily movement’, functioning via ‘abstract conceptual domains’ and what he refers to as ‘primary and higher-level conceptual metaphors’.<sup>142</sup> In Peirce’s view however, thinking is a *synthetic* process (the synopsis, analysis, and synthesis of ideas), involving memory via ‘abductive reasoning’ or ‘retroduction’; and ‘images’ are merely relational fragments. This corresponds with Schelling’s definition of the *reproductive* imagination, characterising the ‘image’ as always concrete and purely particular. Via metaphor the universal is *intuited as the particular* - as an ‘image’; but these should not be confused. The latter *is* merely pictorial; the former is the product of the imagination standing ‘*between the concept and... object*’.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid, p.242-243. Here citing Damasio’s research.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid, p.258.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid, p.181.

<sup>143</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art. Volume 58 Theory and History of Literature*, Edited, translated and introduced by Douglas W Stott. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p.46. Note *both* Schelling’s and Peirce’s definitions of ‘the image’ (T2024b, Arnold 2011 respectively) differ from Johnson’s.

Johnson's 'image schema' are thus really only *parts* of the reproductive meaning-making ('thinking') *modalities* of Schelling's key mythological categories (schematic, allegoric, and metaphoric). The superiority of Schelling's and Peirce's conceptions becomes even clearer upon contemplating the elimination of subjectivity (via Ricoeur's 'second ontology' and Peirce's 'suspended second'), during Art's ascent to higher meaning. Discerning the 'thinking' from 'imaging' referential like this allows us to *relational* account for the merger of movement/action/logic passing over these modal meaning thresholds.<sup>144</sup>

Numerous obstacles to understanding higher meaning productivity are removed here. While nominalist neurophenomenological descriptions, bound to the 'art as language' model (*literalism*), easily lead us astray. For instance, in ephemeral artforms like music or dance neuroimaging cannot account for the movement we *feel* metaphorically, because these feelings are drawn from an embodied grand library of '*ways of feeling*' (rather than a specific content of feeling) stored in our bodies.<sup>145</sup> They are different 'Objects'. As Susanne Langer suggests, we need a broad palette of non-formal (qualitative) descriptions to capture such meaning-value.<sup>146</sup> Langer echoes Schelling in arguing the *intentionality* of feelings is phenomenologically present in the actual work, not our picture-like abstractions from it: '[A] work of art does not point to a meaning beyond its own presence... we have the direct presentation of a feeling, not a sign that points to it'.<sup>147</sup>

The fact that, as Johnson says, 'music can strive, seek, want to resolve, push ahead, and so forth', irrespective of our interpretation, shows that intentionality is embedded in it.<sup>148</sup> Its progress toward *meaning* (Reason), however, can be gauged by its advance upwards along Schelling's mythological categories - which

<sup>144</sup> See T2024c for how this operates in the example of David's *Marat Sade*.

<sup>145</sup> Johnson, *MB*, p.235. 'Dance reveals to the viewer-listener multiple vitality affects and their variations, without resorting to plot or categorical affect signals from which the vitality affects can be derived. The choreographer is most often trying to express a way of feeling, not a specific content of feeling. (Stern 1985, 56)' (p. 238).

<sup>146</sup> Langer, cited in Johnson, *MB*, p.238.

<sup>147</sup> Langer, in *Ibid*, p.239. NB: Peirce's triadic signs and Ricoeur's referential fields reveal *intention*.

<sup>148</sup> Johnson, *MB*, p.252. As Johnson says: 'Musical motion must be some kind of metaphorical motion that takes place within a metaphorical space... because the notes or pitches don't move in themselves' (p.246). But our ability to 'hear' this progress is habituated. It resides in our capacity to *imagine* it. Musical space and time are inseparable, though the 'landscape' we move through is fashioned by culture.

forge the link *between* ‘movement’ and ‘act’ intentionality, using logic that *can discern value* phenomenologically. As art becomes ‘objective’, says Schelling, we move beyond ‘empiricism’ (experience). Thus, sitting in the orchestra pit may enhance one’s *experience* of a piece by Wagner, but this cannot be used to measure *the work’s* meaning-value. And valuing the *performance* is another matter (though subject to the same logic). On the other hand, Schelling’s descriptions of music, which essentially reframe Hanslick’s musical affordance descriptors as meaning-making *modalities* (from schematic to metaphoric), can be associated with the productivity of thought and reason along Scheler’s hierarchy of values.

This progress, as noted, distinguishes proper metaphor from concept in the artwork’s propositional *intentionality* (including any meaningful *accidentality*). The intent-*logic* of Johnson’s ‘moving music metaphor’, described via neuroimaging, presupposes the same interactive, primordial understanding and anticipation of space-time movement.<sup>149</sup> But the imaging cannot distinguish that which requires our *retroductive* thinking capability: to synthesise it and make it meaningful. And it is only because our collective imagination is *re*-productive that we *all* absorb the same general ‘manners’ of meaning features (eg., observed motion in music/dance, or imagined motion in painting/sculpture). A synthesis occurring irrespective of cultural differences, though it may manifest differently.

Habitual cultural influences shape *culturally specific* metaphors. Differing cultural interpretations of bodily movement, and the multiplicity of metaphors available, ensure cultural variations produce different conceptions of artistic experience and practice.<sup>150</sup> This in no way repudiates a *unified principle* of Art, however; rather it confirms it. Because the same ontological properties and their affordances are at play in the processes of meaning productivity in each. What changes is context. Using Johnson’s model (eg., in music): the source and target domains of the ‘MUSICAL LANDSCAPE’ metaphor infer meaning in tandem with the ‘MOVING OBSERVER’ metaphor, using repeated ‘scenes’ of any culture’s music. The resultant narrative effect ‘introduces strong notions of

<sup>149</sup> Ibid, p.247. Johnson’s explanation: When we ‘compute’ inferences ‘[w]e don’t run an inferential process at the sensorimotor level and then perform an entirely different inferential process for abstract concepts... rather, we use the inference patterns found in the sensorimotor brain regions to do our abstract reasoning’ (p.180).

<sup>150</sup> Johnson, *MB*, p.259, pointing to Eric Pederson’s (1998) research.

intentional action within the piece of music' *irrespective of cultural perspective*.

To summarise, 'thought flows', 'ways of feeling', and 'manners' of valueception are absorbed into both observed and imagined morphogenic semiosis, via the motion-action-logic relation. Of course, Reason emerges in speculative *and* poetic discourse; but different *classes* and *applications* of metaphor distinguish the *kinds* of meanings produced. They hence essentially have different 'Objects'. And different *subject-object* intentionalities, dictated by the kinds of propositions posited and how. Johnson's source-target domain method of describing this as 'imaging', though hamstrung in what it can reveal, nevertheless corroborates Peirce's claim there is an 'algebra' for determining our modes of thinking *in either type* of inquiry (see Arnold 2011). Ricoeur argues we need a 'third language' between phenomenological and neuroscientific accounts of experience, and I have elsewhere suggested how a more appropriate way of assessing art could help produce it. Ricoeur's 'tension' theory arguably better accounts for metaphoric 'sense' than Johnson's approach, taking us beyond interpretation. To understand why, explaining what both constitutes and degrades 'proper metaphor' is necessary.

#### 4.4 Proper Metaphor

We can summarise what distinguishes metaphor from concept, and why the former is associated with higher meaning-value productivity, like this: all metaphors are formed relative to action, and circumscribe a process of *becoming*; all concepts are *fixed*. Metaphor's intuitively grasped embodied meaning stands transparently *between* the concept *and* the object, and offers the optimum possibility for transforming values upwards (ie., inverting lower-order to higher-order values).

This *becoming* "movement" in art objects (though it is only meaning's *affordances* that move) is best described as emerging from *the indifference* of 'the ideal' and 'the real', of beauty and truth, and necessity and freedom, in any given context (Schelling 1979). Higher-order meaning emerges from their lowest to highest indifferences, in the morphogenic transitions arising from *analogy*. The lowest meaning affordances are thus schematic and allegorical; which merge and transform into wholeness ('being'), as *proper* metaphoric meaning. The highest Real – or, manifest indifference of necessity and limitation - in the '*object*' (an

artwork's subject). Put another way, its 'real' necessary meaning *drawn into* 'the ideal' particularity; and thus, the particularity *proposed* as universal 'absolute' meaning. At bottom, this indifference between the part and the whole manifests as pure *accidental*ity; as simply tending toward schema. Toward symbol, icon, or, the equally fragmented notion of *concept*.

There is little discrimination between 'symbolic' and 'metaphoric' application of ideas, in the contemporary 'artworld' or elsewhere. Concept is commonly used synonymously with 'idea'.<sup>151</sup> But, as Ricoeur argues, the very idea of a metaphoric 'fragment' is non-sensical. However, *the act of 'conceptualising'* is implicitly a much broader act of thought metamorphosis than the particularity of a fixed 'concept' allows. In mathematics, for instance, one can become proficient in manipulating symbols using various tricks to solve problems without having any real insight into their conceptualising. Creative thinkers in mathematics (eg., Whitehead or Peirce) are really using *new metaphors*, and the concepts they use are understood in relation to these. Some philosophers in the analytic tradition, like Bertrand Russell for instance, could not see any place for metaphors and reduced thinking to mechanical processing of symbols according to very precise rules. The whole tradition committed to this ultimately rendered philosophy useless to scientific inquiry.

McGilchrist's neurological thesis explains much about these differing modes of attention, and the opposing orientations they produce in artistic expression.<sup>152</sup> Left hemisphere dominance accounts for various reductive forms of positivism (including 'symbolic idealism') becoming 'pathological'. In the mathematics example above, those developing new metaphors are primarily using their right hemisphere, while deploying their left hemisphere to refine and manipulate these, maintaining awareness of the context from which they have been developed. Those who are merely manipulating symbols representing concepts (including

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<sup>151</sup> See <https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=concept>: Concept is 'a general notion, the immediate object of a thought,' or '(a thing) conceived' combining the forms "to take" and "to grasp", which McGilchrist notably attributes to Left Hemisphere controlling tendencies.

<sup>152</sup> Space precludes detailed examination here of how to better apply McGilchrist's thesis to art (using the method proposed in T2024c). But for a general example of application in painting see: <https://www.markvernon.com/the-right-distance-of-the-right-brain>; also <https://thehumandivine.org/2022/01/23/fearful-symmetry-blake-and-the-symbolism-of-the-left-brain-by-iain-mcgilchrist/> accessed May 25, 2023.

‘dead metaphors’), without looking for or being able to accept the possibility of deeper meaning, arguably exhibit left hemisphere dominance. The latter’s growing specialisation in our brain’s evolution is evidenced in arts practice (showing similarity with that of schizophrenics). Because the left hemisphere mostly processes fragmented literal meaning, it retains a view of the world based *solely* on concepts and symbols. Simply manipulating schematic representations for meaningless concepts, blocking out the important contribution of the right hemisphere, McGilchrist argues accounts for habitual (mechanical) behaviours eg., reflexive denialism, using ‘spin’ or jargon liberally to justify arguments while having no real understanding of them, etc.

If we recall how the *historical* weakening of criteria for metaphor occurred, understanding why they ‘wear out’ in *contemporary* application follows. When meaning is being *conceptually* manipulated, a connection appears between this wearing away and movement constituting concepts, which Ricoeur calls ‘lexicalisation’. It occurs both via a ‘transposition’ of meaning and the reuse of ‘worn out metaphor, which places the heuristic use of *living* metaphor in the service of *conceptual* formation.<sup>153</sup> Essentially, the *metaphoric* “image” (standing *between* the concept and the object) totally disappears, while under certain conditions it remains ‘attenuated but still perceptible’.<sup>154</sup> Ultimately, metaphoric meaning-value deteriorates toward ‘analogy’ (ie., the allegoric/schematic).

Almost all ‘lexicalized metaphors can recover their original brilliance’, but a ‘dead metaphor’ can only be reanimated by ‘a positive operation of de-lexicalizing that amounts to a new production of metaphor and, therefore, of metaphorical meaning’. For instance, in writing, ‘substituting a synonym that suggests an image, adding a more recent metaphor, etc.’ Old works in any artform can thus be revitalised by re-working the morphogenic movement-action-logic relation.<sup>155</sup> Hence discerning how reversing the effects of lexicalisation relates to *value*-reorientation in our reproductive imagination is key to understanding progress toward higher meaning.

Ricoeur distinguishes transport of higher meaning via pure living metaphor,

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<sup>153</sup> Ricoeur, *RM*, p.347. Emphasis added.

<sup>154</sup> Le Guern in *Ibid*, p.344.

<sup>155</sup> Eg., John Coltrane’s expansive metaphoric transformation of Rodgers and Hammerstein’s clichéd *My Favourite Things*.

from that of lower meaning via dead metaphor (or analogy), by delineating their respective ‘spiritual’ and ‘sensible’ order. Sense is described by the terms ‘proper’ (*eigentlich*, meaning actual) and ‘improper’ (*uneigentlich*, meaning non-proper) – delineating higher/lower-order Sense. In other words, ‘true meaning’ vs ‘less true meaning’, as a *scale* of ‘truth’ in meaning/sense.<sup>156</sup> Hence when transposed or degraded heuristically ‘Sense’ becomes ‘improper’. ‘Truth’, it must be remembered, is not a value but an *idea*. In art it must thus be associated with *meaning*-value using the logic of Scheler’s value hierarchy (§5).

In the opaque, non-immanent meaning characteristic of so-called ‘conceptual art’, only symbolic sense is generated. An artwork *loses vitality* when its morphogenic meaning is *re*-presented or processed in such a way that the lower-order values dominate. And its ‘spiritual’ essence deteriorates if its part-whole integrity is compromised. Hence *variations* in metaphoric quality correlate with meaning vitality and spirit in different ways. The left hemisphere (the centre of language production) here characteristically lexicalises both *implicit* and *explicit* meaning; ‘bootstrapping’ itself to certain fragments of ideas, draining the ‘becoming’ out of them to render them concrete.<sup>157</sup> It then reconstructs another ‘world’ emulating the certainty of ‘being’, providing a sense of security in it. This accounts for the proliferation of ‘dead metaphors’ in much contemporary “art” (eg., *readymades*). Many artforms constantly employ them, recycling old and new concepts.

This recycling naturally occurs in both speculative *and* poetic discourses. And metaphors are degraded both accidentally and deliberately. What is perhaps the most beguiling aspect of the postmodern ‘artworld’ is that ‘lexicalisation’ and ‘transportation’ can occur *alongside* proper metaphor deployments. The precise nature of the aesthetic privation is obfuscated by the fact that, as Ricoeur says: ‘Nothing prevents... metaphor... from being itself “redescribed” with the help of the various “heuristic fictions” produced sometimes by new living metaphors, sometimes by worn-out metaphors that have been revived’. This encourages delusional *idealisation* of the latter, while allowing ‘a new conceptual production to be grafted onto the metaphorical production itself’.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Ricoeur, *RM*, p.345.

<sup>157</sup> McGilchrist, *ME*, p.162.

<sup>158</sup> Ricoeur, *RM*, p.347.

So, to an untrained observer, these effects are not as obvious in many artworks as, for instance, in the iconic clichés bidding for recognition as powerful symbols of popular culture. Repetition normalises their categorisation as ‘styles’ and, through widespread familiarisation, certain forms habituated in “artistic” tastes, fashions, and brands become consecrated as ‘high art’. While such practices are glamorised, this industrialised ‘creativity’ amounts to little more than the habitual depleting of metaphoric meaning-value for the accretion of capital. Making once ‘proper’ meaning in admiring ‘improper’.

The difficulty of breaking this cycle in the modern mythology is that it is now heavily demand-driven. Few notice that what has been normalised is only a *general* aesthetic sensibility degrading art. And that ‘Spirit’ has been confused with ‘Life’ (as in ‘reality TV’). Even genuinely good, new, ideas in most contemporary attempts at art still rarely employ proper metaphors (some deliberately degraded to analogy in post-production, to fit a niche). Demand requires artists conform to formulaic icon-making trends underwriting market dogma. With so much value being placed on the acts of transposition or rejuvenation, technologies of action inevitably become the main preoccupation. It no longer matters if the artist does not realise a transformation is merely manipulative, or if they are deliberately trying to create symbolically idealised anti-art, as long as something *appears* transformed.



*Figure 1.* A graphic illustration of bland schematic “symbolism”.

[Figure 1 illustrates how Johnson’s “conceptual metaphor” conflation appears in the bland schematic modern symbolism common in Andy Warhol’s *Campbell’s Soup Tins* or Jeff Koons’ *Puppy*. And, not far removed, the more sophisticated allegoric ‘visual

synopsis' in Damien Hirst's 'fly-covered cow's head' (in *A Thousand Years*) - see Keats (2012). Keats praises Hirst's use of "metaphor", which really rather falls into the category of modern *parenthysos* (T2024a), yielding a disjuncture between 'passion' and subject. As with the illustrations above, such works provide no suspension of the (*object* O1, Peirce's 'second'), treating relativities merely symbolically]

In this state of affairs, the implicit has little hope of surfacing *meaningfully* above the explicit. Particularly when the *psychological* 'objectification' of life is misconstrued as Spirit, as in the modern tendency for internalising artistic inquiry (again, a feature of left hemisphere dominance). 'Internalisation' (not to be confused with *introspection*) limits possibility because only lexicalised metaphor can be deployed with such an intentionality.<sup>159</sup> Schelling describes this tendency early on in the development of the modern romantic epic, and it is now self-evident in *all* modern forms of 'expressionism'. It manifests in artists converting *technologies of action themselves* into artform 'languages', exclusively as means for exalting self-consciousness (ie., artificially objectifying the self, using lower order schematic, literal, or *literalising* figurative similes).

As Polak (1973) argues, this subjective instrumentalising of art caused a rapid decline of most modernist art movements after initial surges of imagination and genuine innovation. In *both* Impressionism and Expressionism, the concentration on form gave way to a focus on 'feelings'. Both movements then valorised the artist's ability to externalise their personal internalisations conceptually, and meaning values became industrially reassigned according to *affectations*. Many artists have mistaken their individualising psychological preoccupations to be the real content of art, instead of pointing to something beyond. Schelling considered any such idealisation of the abstracted particular a purely *symbolic* idealism. But Hegel viewed 'abstract meaning... bound up with the effacement of what is metaphorical' as evidence of the productive imagination. Derrida sees it as an 'innovation' of *idealisation*.<sup>160</sup> Following Hegel, Heidegger tried to 'break away from the concept of language as *Ausdruck*, "expression" ...as the exteriorization of the interior, and hence as the domination of the outside by the inside'; which

<sup>159</sup> Consider the introspection of John Coltrane's song *Alabama* (whose topic could easily have been internalised) compared with his 'concept album' *A Love Supreme*, widely regarded as the 'spiritual' apotheosis of jazz recordings. Arguably, the latter labours under symbolic internalisation of the general aesthetic ('Nature/God') while *Alabama* offers a metaphorically/meaningfully superior person-Person disclosure.

<sup>160</sup> Ricoeur, *RM*, p.337-338.

Ricoeur calls ‘an instrumental mastery attained by a subjectivity’.<sup>161</sup>

How profoundly artistic mis-conceptions have helped undermine *philosophical* conceptualising, cannot be underestimated. The *ontological* significance of the *apparent* conflict ‘between being as potentiality and being as actuality’ resonates through history. In Schelling’s ‘process metaphysics’ of art, this is key to understanding the transitional ‘absolutes’ between his mythological categories. Reviving ‘self-actualisation’ as the fundamental *reference point* of *poetic* discourse, makes the difference between representative and meditative thought clear. Actuality has meaning only in the discourse of being, hence the ‘semantic aim of metaphorical utterance’, says Ricoeur, does indeed ‘intersect most decisively with the aim of ontological discourse’. Not where ‘metaphor by analogy’ and ‘categorical analogy’ converge, but at the *referential* point where ‘metaphorical utterance brings being as actuality and as potentiality into play’.<sup>162</sup>

This is the ‘principle of sufficient reason’, returning us to Peirce’s claim that aesthetics can *only* be studied phenomenologically. Making *this* principle of transformation more impenetrable, making us question its *sense* more, in fact forces the principle itself to be heard. True metaphor, as Ricoeur insists, is thus produced at the very point ‘where metaphor in the metaphysical sense is challenged’.<sup>163</sup> At the point of Reason.

#### 4.5 Ricoeur’s Tensions, and Peirce’s ‘Suspended Second’

Ricoeur’s hermeneutics of poetic discourse bears a strong resemblance to Schelling’s, because his theory of ‘metaphoric utterance’ similarly underscores the *ontological* primacy of metaphor in Art’s *Principle*. This follows what he calls a “‘tensional’ conception of truth for thought”, combining *all* the ‘tensions’ inherent in poetic meaning. The tension between ‘subject and predicate’, ‘literal interpretation and metaphorical interpretation’, and between ‘identity and difference’.

All meaning, according to Ricoeur, is mastered by ‘varying the conditions for use in relation to different referents’. Thus, ‘[e]very gain in meaning is at one and

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid, p.335.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid, p. 363.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid, p.335.

the same time a gain in sense and a gain in reference'.<sup>164</sup> Like Lakoff & Johnson's 'schematic mappings' or Peirce's 'diagrammatic thinking', Ricoeur's 'predicative' and 'referential' fields provide a topology for our indwelling. The referential field 'can extend beyond the things we are able to show, and even beyond visible, perceptible things'. There are two 'movements' in the signifying process:<sup>165</sup>

One movement aims at determining more rigorously the conceptual traits of reality, while the other aims at making referents appear [that is, the entities to which the appropriate predictive terms apply]. This circularity between the abstractive phase and the concretizing phase makes this power of signifying an unending exercise, a 'continuing Odyssey'.

We tend toward meaninglessness when these movements between the referential and predicative fields are interrupted or degraded. The dynamism present in 'acts' of motion in this process of becoming, adheres to the logic of signs in enactive metamorphosis (Peirce's firsts, seconds, and thirds). Their *potential* to occur is present *irrespective* of intention. Yet intentionality is what they produce. Furthermore, as argued elsewhere, though Art's *Principle* cannot be legitimately historicised, artworks themselves possess inherent 'historicity' in their signifying power (through any artistic productivity), since newly arising possibilities are 'supported by meanings that have already been established':<sup>166</sup>

The sedimented history of assembled meanings can be recovered in a new semantic aim... [M]eaning appears less like a determined content, to take or to leave, than... like an inductive principle capable of guiding semantic innovation.

Thus, the artwork is already imbued with history at its inception. As it progresses toward *reason* (in the making/admiring), the inversion of lower meaning values into increasingly higher ones historicises it *legitimately* into 'being'. Hence, it gains a life of its own. Meaning innovation exists even in the absence of determination or community. Its 'metaphoric utterance' forms in the tension between the terms of its disclosure, 'between literal interpretation and metaphorical interpretation', and in the referential tension 'between is and is not'.<sup>167</sup> Only the artwork's *intentionality* (deliberative or not) guides its meaning

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<sup>164</sup> Ibid, p.351-352.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid, p.352.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid, p.353.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid, p.353.

toward ‘sense’, ie., *reasonable* communicative signification in a given context.

Meaning is therefore always ‘in search of itself in the twofold direction of sense and reference’ (via Peirce’s firsts, seconds, and thirds). Because metaphorical utterance functions in these two fields (predicative and referential), its meaning is linked together in this duality by the symbol whose ‘first meaning relates to the known field of reference’ (predicative) and whose second meaning ‘relates to a referential field for which... we consequently are unable to make identifying descriptions by means of appropriate predicates’.<sup>168</sup> Thus Peirce’s ‘second’ (*object 1*) is suspended. (This, as shown in T2024c, is the key to objectively, methodologically, distinguishing art from artefact and much more).

If the *principled* Object of Art (*Object 2*) is reached, the lower order value is destroyed in the process, and symbolic (ie., schematic or allegorical meaning) is transformed into proper metaphor. Precisely how this process *leans toward* reason, determines the *quality* (meaning-value) of the metaphor.<sup>169</sup>

Unable to fall back upon the interplay between reference and predication, the semantic aim has recourse to a network of predicates that already function in a familiar field of reference... But this transfer from one referential field to the other supposes that the latter field is already in some way present in the still unarticulated manner, and that it exerts an attraction on the already constituted sense in order to tear it away from its initial haven.

It depends on the possibility of this other referential field (the proposition lying dormant in its ‘obscure zone’) to uproot and execute this transfer. Thus ‘[i]ts dynamic, directional, vectoral character combines with the semantic aim seeking to fulfil its intention’.<sup>170</sup>

The semantic aim must therefore be *strong* to render higher meaning.<sup>171</sup> But meaning *cannot* be in a stable form to climb any great heights - it must be *non-formal*. For us to be *capable* of making great art, the imagination *cannot* be therefore as Hegel or Johnson would have it, merely ‘productive’. It must be ‘*re*-productive’. *Autopoiesis* is a fundamental feature of the system because of its essential state of chaos and vagueness. Meaningful movement occurs as a result of ‘meaning potentials’ between two spheres of influence: in complexity theory terms,

<sup>168</sup> Ibid, p.353.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid, p.354.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid, p.354.

<sup>171</sup> Consider the metaphor of Dante entering the *Inferno* with Virgil.

‘adjacent possibles’ turning into ‘actuals’. Only the presence of *intentionality* and *context* (two ‘enabling conditions’), aided by *instability*, is required for higher meaning to occur. Thus, the necessity, in all genuine art, for the first object to be suspended (which only metaphor enables).<sup>172</sup>

Two energies converge here: the gravitational pull exerted by the second referential field on meaning, giving it the force to leave its place of origin; and the dynamism of meaning itself as the inductive principle of sense.

As noted, it is the fact ‘sense’ *already exists* in the *proposition* that enables a metaphorical utterance to be created from a trajectory of meaning ‘that goes beyond the familiar referential field’ where it is already constituted. The unknown referential field is brought ‘towards language’, says Ricoeur, where intentional meaning unfolds. That is, towards the convergence of ‘absolutes’, towards ‘objectivity’ or ‘concrete reasonableness’. This strong ‘in-forming’ potentiality of art’s drive toward higher meaning, as Schelling refers to it, Ricoeur calls ‘the ontological vehemence of a semantic aim’. Lower order meaning is reformed ‘by means of its own figurative property’. But most importantly, here lies the necessity of the obscure zone’s existence, to create the conditions for proper metaphor to function and make it transparently distinguishable from otherwise *symbolic* opacity.<sup>173</sup>

[I]n order to declare itself this ontological vehemence makes use of mere hints of meaning, which are in no way determinations of meaning. An experience seeks to be expressed, *which is more than something undergone...*

This ‘phenomenological experience’ is *more* than experience *re-presented* or *interpreted*. It is the reproductive imagination merging knowledge with action. It is only by the suspension of the object (Peirce’s ‘second’, *object 1*) that we are allowed access to the *real Object* (‘real second’, or *object 2*). But this *only occurs in a genuine art object* - not artefacts or anything in the general aesthetic – because of the sense inherent in *Spirit* (see T2024c).

#### 4.6 ‘Sense’ vs *Interpretation*

Having argued the *real ‘objectivity’* afforded by this suspended second in such experience, supporting Schelling’s claim that art *is* objective, here are some

<sup>172</sup> Ricoeur, *RM*, p.354.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid, p.354. Emphasis added.

additional reasons for accepting metaphor as Art's defining ontological property.

Firstly, as noted, the *ontological* vehemence of Art's semantic aim *relies* on an artistic intentionality of *purposeful purposelessness* in the entirety of the artmaking process. There is nothing mysterious or miraculous about higher meaning productivity in art. It is bound by what *appears* paradoxical (ie., being/becoming), as Kant too recognised, but exists in Nature. It is manifest by humans in the inseparable link between the Art-Person perfect sign double-unity, which share the same logical space. This *metaphorically* makes 'sense' because, as Ricoeur says:<sup>174</sup>

If a sense that is 'one and the same' can be discerned in a meaning, it is not just because one sees it in that way but because one can connect it to a network of meanings of the same order in accordance with the constitutive laws of the logical space itself.

Ricoeur's examination of *interpretation* (or as Schelling simply calls it, the 'comprehensibility' of art) relates more to speculative than poetic discourse. But it importantly supports the fact that artistic intentionality relies on habituation *as well as* the intellect. Peircian semiotics takes us *beyond* interpretation (or 'speculation') to a discourse about habituation. As James Bradley says of Peirce's realist social practice theory of meaning: 'Meaning is use, but it is the use of signs... that never allows the ethical surrender of the individual interpretant'.<sup>175</sup> Which Ricoeur echoes:<sup>176</sup>

Signifying is always something other than representing. The same capacity of inscription in logical space enables the interpretation functioning in perception to become the seat of two distinct aims: one that tends towards individual things, and the other... towards logical signification, where interpretation at the perceptual or imaginative level plays nothing more than a 'supportive' role.

To apply McGilchrist's thesis, there are two ways of 'objectifying' meaning. One focusing on grasping or *apprehending* detail (left hemisphere), the other on obtaining the bigger picture (right hemisphere). Both are involved in comprehension, but the latter is indispensable to *synthesising* different experiences

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<sup>174</sup> Ibid, p.355-356.

<sup>175</sup> James Bradley, "Beyond Hermeneutics: Peirce's Semiology as a Trinitarian Metaphysics of Communication." *Analecta Hermeneutica*, S.l., n.1, May. 2009. 56-72. p.69.

<sup>176</sup> Ricoeur, *RM*, p.356.

and disparate ideas. As infants what counts in our ‘objectivist take’ on the world is the sense of object permanence and how causation works, which as Johnson argues is derived from our basic ‘body schema’. But we ‘eventually come to experience properties as inhering in objects “in themselves”’ independently.<sup>177</sup> However, as shown in the *Macbeth* example (§3), clinging to *apparently* ‘objective’ interpretations of an artwork’s metaphor/s may in fact be merely denying the *genuinely* objective bigger picture *proper* metaphoric truth obtained via inherent immanent relations (tensions) involving several metaphors.

Ricoeur’s argument that interpretation is ‘the work of concepts’ attests to a now dominant *habitus* of attending to art as a kind of ‘experimental science’ of diminishing proper metaphor. In which normativity of Spirit has been replaced by uniformity:<sup>178</sup>

[Interpretation] cannot help but be a... struggle for univocity. Whereas the metaphorical utterance leaves the second sense in suspension, while its reference continues to have no direct presentation, interpretation is necessarily a rationalization that at its limit eliminates the experience that comes to language through the metaphorical process.

Thus, the primacy of *metaphor* in art to produce higher meaning lies here, in Ricoeur’s ‘second ontology’. While meaning productivity is in the *real* world a function of natural processes, our *interpretation* of this merely provides a reflection of ‘life’ experience - mediated by an illusory ‘transcendental ego’ – between the emotivist self and ‘objects’. Genuine art has the potential to move us beyond this, to the real world of *Ideals*. To rise above *illusory* univocity; to harmonise humanity *pluri-vocally*, in concert with Nature; to find sense in chaos – these are the ‘normativities’ proper Metaphor offers us through it.

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The problem is not only that little *proper* metaphor is used in many artforms today; but that metaphoric meaning value in general is not even distinguished from the bland symbolism of the icon in modern fantasy. In the modern mythology we have become accustomed to approaching an artwork with

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<sup>177</sup> Johnson *MB*, p.45-46. Invoking Piaget’s early work developing the ‘enactive model’ of cognition.

<sup>178</sup> Ricoeur, *RM*, p.357.

‘knowledges’ that are *given* to us and stored as ‘concepts’, then used as interpretations. We come to it seeking to interpret it according to a correspondence theory of truth developed in our infancy; so that its value accords with how it matches our experience and expectations. Our habituated speculative assessment of it reconfirms ‘Art as concept’ in any event. Art as principle has vanished.

Without metaphor, meaningful transparency and novelty gives way to opacity and sensationalism. Visual artists are virtually obliged to employ literal interpretations alongside their works, to mitigate against bewilderment. Musical artists must ‘create themselves’, predictably, according to some arresting new style or personality-branding form. This merely ‘self-affirming’ obfuscation of the real un-prethinkable unconscious *split* between *the Self* and Art makes the Art-Person perfect sign relationship redundant. But we haven’t noticed how it has crippled our harmonising potentiality. Because the now habitual *symbolic* idealising and theoretical rationalising of the artwork as ‘miracle’, and the artist as ‘hero’, has rendered even the *propensity to think* metaphorically alien. Let alone the capacity to actualise any genuinely collectivising ideal.

According to Varela *et al*, we only know if a cognitive system is functioning properly when it either becomes part of an ongoing existing world or has the power to shape a new one.<sup>179</sup> Has our aesthetic cognition been entirely subsumed in the familiar world of the ‘general aesthetic’, to reciprocally interpret/reaffirm our lived experience of it? Apparently so. ‘In relation to... true discourse’, says Ricoeur, ‘symbolic discourse becomes synonymous with illusory discourse’.<sup>180</sup> So, with the now often deliberate stylised intentionality to rob the artwork of any realistic implicit objective meaning, we agree to disagree about the reasons for an ersatz elevation of artistic and personal freedoms. Along with the felt sense of losing shared social control over our own meaningfulness. A delusional populist “spirit”, replete with bespoke “artworks”, brandishes our hubristic dominance over the ‘magic’ of art. We have mastered it, we think. As we mass produce cultural ‘products’ and manufactured truths instead, trotting out custom-made “self-realisations” to smother the deeper mysteries of Nature and the Cosmos.

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<sup>179</sup> Rangarajan, “Review of ‘The Embodied Mind’”, p. 13.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid, p.358.

Anti-art's reflectively self-*legitimating* ubiquity in our world amounts to a theft. A privation draining life itself from the real *spirit* of the artwork, and the possible ideal *Spirit* of personhood. But as I will now show, Max Scheler's 'ethical phenomenology' reveals how to *logically* re-define *the Person* and hence the Art-Person relation in our misdirected modernity. What we should be paying attention to is how the higher values, being *non-formal*, have to *interact* with form. The re-merger of aesthetics, ethics, and logic begins here; and relearning how to connect them has never been more necessary. Not just to be able to distinguish good from bad art, but ethical from 'pathological' imaginaries. For, as should by now be clear, the aesthetic and ethical values we *choose* to cultivate determine our purpose and who *we* really are.

##### 5. SCHELER'S HIERARCHY, AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF VALUES

Having hopefully convinced the reader of the *ontological* primacy of metaphor in art, and why only its higher meaning-value reconnects the Art-Person perfect sign (and Life with Spirit), we can now turn to how it is that values must be transformed in the becoming-being process.

Why can't we simply dwell in lower values when contemplating art? Essentially because what produces a *phenomenological* experience is our attention moving from 'fact' to 'value'. This, as noted, is generated by universals being drawn into particulars (via the action of *Gestalt* formation), while *simultaneously* Beauty and Truth are merged in the combination of knowledge with action. It is this which produces higher meaning because, as Ricoeur says, 'the metaphorical utterance leaves the second sense in suspension, while its reference continues to have no direct presentation'<sup>181</sup> In that 'obscure zone', the reproductive imagination is activated - *if* the autopoietic merger of formal and non-formal values of beauty/truth and necessity/freedom achieve transparency (T2024b, 2024c).

If not, we remain 'unmoved', as it were; left to undertake 'a work of elucidation, in the Husserlian sense', which involves the 'struggle for univocity'. In other words, we are detained in interpretation (the 'work of concepts'). Thus, the optimum benefit of the tacit dimension eludes us. I will explain the conditions

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<sup>181</sup> Ricoeur, *RM*, p.357.

for transforming values in this ‘science of admiring’ by expanding below on Scheler’s insights on essences, truth, and the phenomenology of ‘preferring’. This will clarify why reconnecting Art with *normative* aesthetics (and hence ethics and logic) is necessary for the key aspects of our value-ception to enable habitual reorientation ‘from fact to value’.

Firstly, recall that there are *a priori* interconnections between values (eg., vitality) and the *bearers* of values (eg., the Person). Therefore, anything designated ‘agreeable’ or ‘useful’ can only fall into the realm of ‘*essentially thing-values* and *values of events*’. *The Person*, since neither a ‘thing’ nor an event but a living being (ie., a *bearer* of ‘*vital values*’), is *ethically* the highest possible value-*bearer* and cannot ever be assigned ‘agreeable’ or ‘useful’. All *aesthetic* values are essentially values of *objects* ‘whose posited reality has been suspended’. The artwork (as thing/event) can thus be associated with *any* values we choose (ie., symbolic or real ‘capital’), since all values are relative.

But *the Principle* of art is a *bearer* of values with *a priori* connections to artworks (via ontological properties like intersubjectivity, metaphor, narrative, etc.,). When we assign Art perfect-sign status with *the Person*, it also becomes a bearer of purposefulness reconnecting Nature with History - hence of human *Spirit*, not life. Which *cannot* be ‘agreeable’ or ‘useful’, but must remain ‘*purposeless*’ to retain autonomy in search of possibility. Ontology and teleology coexist in Nature; this assignation makes it possible in Art and Humanity too, harmonising all three.

Aesthetics and ethics are therefore only connected *normatively*, via the Person, in aspiration of the highest Spiritual/Holy value ‘*absolutes*’ (T2024c). Art in modernity, however, is conceived only as a *product* - according to its thing- or event-value. And is hence no longer judged in terms of real *ethical* value, only its symbolic agreeable/disagreeable ‘*moral*’ value. This is because it is *essentially* disconnected from the Person. Aesthetics and ethics were severed due to their historicisation, separating art *realistically* from Nature and Society. But, in reality, Art/the Person can never (originally) be given as ‘*objects*’ because they belong in *essence* to the sphere of the *person* and ‘*act-being*’. And ‘neither the person or acts can ever be given to us as “objects”’.<sup>182</sup> ‘As soon as we tend to “objectify” a human being in any way’, says Scheler, ‘the bearer of moral values disappears of

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<sup>182</sup> Scheler, *FE*, p.85-86.

*necessity*'.<sup>183</sup> If Art were reconnected to the Person (as a perfect sign), Kant's doctrine of agreement would function properly; Art would again be linked to normative aesthetics, and we could again judge it according to the *highest* bearers of value (as in ancient Greek mythology - T2024a).

Furthermore, if Art were reconnected to ethics (as it is *Ideally*), ethical values would then be '*given*' in any genuine artwork *as real*, whether or not contained within a vehicle of appearances (ie., 'empirical-historical' contents). What this means, in practical terms, is that we could distinguish an artwork's value as *ethically* higher/lower, by how it occurs as *real*.<sup>184</sup> This in turn would be given, phenomenologically, as equally a 'marker' of an artwork's higher/lower *aesthetic* value. It would thus indicate an artwork's *meaning* value - by virtue of its *posited* reality - *irrespective of appearance*. In other words, the ethical/aesthetic values of meaning-markers intuited in *thought* (not necessarily pictorially) – via the artwork's ethical *intentionality* – would indicate its meaning value. And this could be assessed by way of directionality toward *Reason* (ie., Schelling's 'Real', the *ultimate Ideal* of art).

All real-ideal polarities, as previously argued, are hence resolved in a '*phenomenological* experience' of the merger of Beauty with Truth and Freedom with Necessity (in the Nature-History nexus).

Scheler therefore provides clear logical evidence undergirding both Peirce and Schelling's arguments that, to have any meaning, the *Principle* of art must *embody* the link between 'the person' and the artwork (the Art-Person perfect sign). From Peirce's perspective, this accounts for how we could genuinely take aesthetics to be a *science* of ideals, of understanding beauty *and* truth *normatively*. From Schelling's, this allows *organic* cultivation of a collective intentionality directed at art/humanity's *real* Ideal – which *naturalises* art (T2024a). This logic is key to producing any realistic 'new mythology', because it returns ethics to its rightful place in the art of admiring. We can then regain the skills for knowing how to choose between 'goods'. In the absence of which we remain encumbered by growing aesthetic privation and socio-cultural disorientation.

If choosing a paradigm for the *Judgment* of art that could best genuinely benefit

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<sup>183</sup> Ibid, p.86.

<sup>184</sup> My particular meaning of *occurring as 'real'* is as it pertains to Schelling's system (T2024a and 2024b).

humanity, one combining the above logical associations therefore holds most promise.<sup>185</sup> This synthesis of philosophical approaches points to a practical methodology for restoring Art ‘as principle’, and reinvigorating the philosophy of art. Calling it ‘idealistic’ would be non-sensical, though it is certainly ‘utopian’ (in the original sense). However, it relies on recognising how values are able to be transformed in art’s essences and potencies.

Scheler’s *ethical* value hierarchy corresponds with how *meaning* values progress from lower to higher order. From schematic, to allegoric, to metaphoric categories governed by indifferences between idealities and realities in Schelling’s system. Assessment of this is aided by combining Ricoeur’s *Tensions* with Peirce’s *Semiotic Realism* to map how both progress ‘sense’ via a system of signs laying out the relativity of subjects, objects, and interpretants in poetic discourses. A new hermeneutics can be developed to describe this ‘truth as manifestation’. It must consist of guiding phenomenological principles for assessing *ethical intentionality* by obtaining the directionality of meaning-value productivity in an artwork. Hence, understanding Scheler’s approach to ‘essences’ is key.

#### 5.1      *Essences*

At the outset it should be understood that *ethical* ‘essence’ has nothing to do with ‘universality’ as such. We cannot draw inference from any particular ethical intuition to a generalised ethics. And because ‘morality’ too ‘does not lie in the realm of ideal meanings *alone*’, this in fact supports the possibility for Aristotle’s virtue ethics being applied in our own epoch (T2022).<sup>186</sup> As noted, Plato and Kant were among those who erred in thinking that there is a division of spirit between ‘reason’ and ‘sensibility’, this being a category error coupling morality with *sensible* intuition (rather than *ethical* intuition).<sup>187</sup> Thus, Scheler disputes evolutionary theories that conflate *vital* (or ‘biological’) *values* with mistaken concepts of ‘egoism’. This leads to his different conception of *Spirit* (eg., from

<sup>185</sup> It is notable, given this, that there is little reference in the literature to Scheler’s insights on art, however Wolhart Henckmann (in *Handbook of Phenomenological Aesthetics* p.303-307) offers a good general overview of some of his contributions to aesthetic phenomenology.

<sup>186</sup> Scheler, *FE*, p.165-166. This requires *beginning* with naturalising Art, because there is arguably no other conceivable way virtue ethics can realistically be revived in modern societies by any other means (T2022).

<sup>187</sup> As should be clear from §3, ‘sense’ = meaning/reason, and ‘sensible’ here refers to ‘sensory’. Though these are inseparable, *ethical* intuition of the former is of a higher order (T2024c).

Hegel's), upon which modern aesthetics itself should arguably be redefined. But let us begin with what this means for the art object.

According to Scheler, the *immediacy* of the givenness of an object (not necessarily its picturelike content) means that *ethical* values are intuited via *non-formal* intuitions 'given' to us in our *habituated* attention to the world. Beauty and Truth are *different* essences; as are their opposites ugliness/untruth, whose relationship must be understood using the same reasoning. They are *relativities*, and it is their *merger* which creates value (T2024a, 2024b).

Various intentionalities creating this merger can be understood by, for example, considering different applications of '*distance*' in the visual arts.

Visual perspective (a 'technology of action'/means) was famously exploited very realistically by early Renaissance artists, who wanted to produce greater depth of meaning about the human condition; contrasting with the later strict formal two-dimensionality employed by Reformation artists. This was clearly their intention, because this 'technology' acts in this way; it is a defining 'actantial' feature of their works.<sup>188</sup> Distance and multidimensional perspectives were used, not to detach the observer, but to draw them into a 'human reality' (frowned upon in the Reformation, for religious reasons). Instead, the deconstruction of wholes into parts, laid flat into two dimensional un-interrelated often diagrammatic symbolic representations, is how later Cubist artists chose to depict reality - returning to methods used by Reformation artists (and a primitivist ideal).

In the latter case, however, an intentional *distanciation* becomes the necessary condition of the work (slightly different than in the Reformation, yet with similar equally unmistakable features). The 'mid-modernist' intention was, like the Reformation artists' religious one, to abstract meaning to an 'un-real' interpretable dimension or doctrine. But there is an added sense of dissonance. Picasso's *Weeping Woman* does this very effectively, merging the 'ugliness' of human distress with truth. As valid as this symbolic 'truth' may be, the complete abandonment of perspective separates us from its realness.

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<sup>188</sup> That is, we know of its processual presence by its very self-defining action.



Figure 2. Pablo Picasso

*The Weeping Woman (1937)*<sup>189</sup>

As noted, attention to *ends* over means garners higher meaning value in art; while the reversal of this orientation emphasises art's purportedly 'dissembling' nature. The 'end' of *Weeping Woman* is clearly to express an anguish, suffering, and worldly pain entirely symbolically. Its *means* of achieving this, though seamless, overpowers whatever deeper meaning-value may be discovered in the 'obscure zone' of Picasso's *ideation*.<sup>190</sup> The embrace of perspective by early Renaissance artists was, however, seamlessly applied with the clear end of achieving 'sense' in the beauty-truth merger. Even when ugliness was the subject (eg., Caravaggio's *David with the Head of Goliath*). Engaging with the *human-ness* of subjects also makes us 'take sides' in something concerning Reason.

In the above examples of the use of perspective lie the expression of value 'essences' in the intentionality evident in their meaning *bearers*. These suggest *direction* in the 'ordering of Reality', and our value-ception of it via the Art-Person perfect sign relation in each. The holistic perspective of Renaissance artists was essentially aiming to express *Spirit*, while Picasso's distanciation expresses *Life* as

<sup>189</sup>

From:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Weeping\\_Woman#/media/File:Picasso\\_The\\_Weeping\\_Woman\\_Tate\\_identifier\\_T05010\\_10.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Weeping_Woman#/media/File:Picasso_The_Weeping_Woman_Tate_identifier_T05010_10.jpg) accessed March 26, 2023.

<sup>190</sup> Claimed, with *Guernica*, as one of Picasso's most political works, this painting's more interesting aspect is that it is purportedly a composite image of his jilted lover's tears and mother's anguish over Franco's war (combining the personal with the public, which indeed elevates meaning value). But the observer is phenomenologically *locked out* of this, being directed only to a generalised abstraction of grief. Thus, what is *implicit* relies entirely on overlaid *interpretation* of its theorised, historicised, 'empirical comprehensibility'.

discussed in §4 (remaining stuck in the realm of ‘vital’ values). Put another way, the *reality* of the *Person* is self-evidently obscured by a distancing, abstracted, fragmenting lower order of value-essences in the latter. While the former pursues it in wholeness, as ‘a whole life’, invoking *Holy* values.<sup>191</sup>

And thus, as regards *Art’s* reality, these beauty/truth preferences manifest in the difference between what is *given in* truth and its ‘empirical’ (ie., experiential) *cognition*.<sup>192</sup>

##### 5.2 ‘Given’ Truths

What is *given in* the *idea* of Truth remains in the realm of spiritual and holy values. The highest realm of meaning productivity, where *Spirit* presides over Life. Because of its special orientation toward ‘the absolute’.

Scheler’s hierarchy distinguishes between values by virtue of the proof of anthropologically phenomenological *relations* which separate objects (*things*) from modalities (*intentions*). These distinctions fundamentally refocus Kant’s notion of ‘agreement’. And, applied to the value relation between artworks and the principle of art, and *our* relation to both, they rest upon an *a priori* ‘obligation’ quite apart from utilitarian values or *any* future consequences or happiness. For Kant, the *a priori* is expressed in the form of a categorical imperative that is ‘universalisable’ in the whole. Unlike Schelling’s universalising, the absolute is *not drawn into particularity* (ie., metaphor).<sup>193</sup> Scheler, like Schelling, argues that such a formulation is abstract and fails to account for both the unique obligation one has to another person and the unique call to responsibility given in *ethics*. (Kant’s form of universalising is purely symbolic, as is Picasso’s above).

Scheler thus places the most fundamental *a priori* relations as an ‘order of ranks’ upon which the qualities of *non-formal* values, or ‘value modalities’, rest. The *lowest* order values are ‘the agreeable and disagreeable’, then come vital feeling values (the ‘human’ or ‘biological’ values), then spiritual values, followed

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<sup>191</sup> This highest value, as argued in T2024a, should not be confused with *revealed* religious values. There is no such religious/political interpretation or moralising in this assessment. Only the phenomenology of intentions.

<sup>192</sup> Scheler, *FE*, p.99.

<sup>193</sup> This key difference between their ‘absolutes’, critical to Art – since drawing the universal into the particular defines Metaphor - is examined in T2024a and 2024b.

by values of the holy and unholy.<sup>194</sup> This is an ascending order within which we can reframe our understanding of ‘usefulness’, and pursuits of pleasure, according to the *key value relativities* of normative aesthetic judgement: the *virtues* of Beauty and Truth *relative to* Necessity and Freedom.

Naturally, then, the higher meaning value of Art *must* reside in propositions ultimately *not* predicated on *agreement/disagreement*, nor vital feelings. But rather emerging from the *dialectical* relations which *claim us* in the Beauty-Truth nexus. Hence, they must be propositions requiring us to ‘take sides’ on questions regarding ‘*human conduct...* most applicable to self-control’, as Peirce argued; the Necessity-Freedom polarities upon which the *normalising* science of aesthetics is concerned with. This is why great acting relies less on dredging up emotions, than on the dialectical universalising of a character’s whole essence by thoughtful, artful upending of lower-order value particularity (eg., a facial twitch). Realness is *end*-driven: towards *the whole* reality (the ‘absolute’) of a character.

By fundamentally differentiating *Spirit* from ‘human values’, our *ideative acts* can produce genuinely objectifiable meaning, enabling a common ‘transcendence’ arising from the *known relations* of non-formal values. This creates, as Schelling argues, the ‘collectivising intent’ of Art’s principle. (Which, since lacking in any *non-formal* values of grief, Picasso’s *Weeping Woman* can only manufacture externally afterwards - symbolically). Intuition of ‘Spirit’ elevates the Person beyond sensible feelings, and the needs and functions of the body. Beyond our environment, our real or false perceptions, and even beyond our own biological finitude. It consists neither of a Kantian/Hegelian ‘transcendence’ of *Nature*, nor the mind/body/ego. But rather of one whose *realistic* awareness of the *self-Self* relation is mutually corresponding – hence ‘self-actualising’ - and meaningfully totalising via *manifest* truth of the highest values of the Person.

We can thus distinguish the beauty of a chair (lower *use-value*) from that of a person (higher *spiritual-value*); just like any relational truth concerning chair joinery from the higher truths about human relationships. We cannot however make arbitrary laws out of value-facts that, as in Kant’s aesthetics, are ‘comparable to straight lines and triangles and therefore belong to the sphere of

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<sup>194</sup> Scheler, *FE*, p.110.

“sensations”<sup>195</sup>. Neither, as noted, can we derive *value*-facts from psychologism. The cognition of ethics and morals ‘must have their foundations in experience’, not ‘inner perception’. Hence, giving a place to both reason *and* sensibility, Scheler avoids the Platonic error leading to the elitist view of art as a social status symbol, whose real understanding only certain people can cultivate. By the same token, he demolishes the modern *false* populist belief that merely *empathic* connectivity ensuing from ‘vital values’ produces art’s higher meaning-value. (Confusing means and ends, accidentality and purpose, are features of avant-garde “democratising” of art; egoistically promoting experimental experientialism in artmaking/admiring).<sup>196</sup>

Furthermore, the given truths of Personhood underscore Scheler’s claim that egoism is not an ‘original vital tendency’ from which any ‘genetic’ solidarity of interests could grow.<sup>197</sup> As Parvis Emad argues, his radical conception diametrically opposes all earlier conceptions. ‘Prior to Scheler’, he says, ‘traditional philosophy took person to be identical with substance, consciousness, and occasionally with the ego’. Which Scheler deemed ‘inadequate to grasp the being of a person’.<sup>198</sup> As Scheler argues, ‘the simple facts of experience of life... show that egoism is based on a loss, on a removal of the feelings of sympathy that belong originally and naturally to all life’. This same privation is associated by Schelling with lower order artistic productivity. Darwinian and Nietzschean ‘sympathy’-related conceptions created the ‘*unified power-striving* of living beings’ mythology of spirit, fueling delusory linked perceptions of Art’s *in principle* ‘development’ with human progress under a positivistic materialist paradigm of truth.

Scheler’s ‘Person’ instead allows aesthetics to be understood as a *normative* science of the human mind’s expansion via acts of ‘value-ception’. His systematic treatment of ethical categories applicable in anthropological phenomenology overshadows any modern philosophical ‘value theory’. And it suffices here to simply distinguish it fundamentally from the widely condemned ‘teleological’

<sup>195</sup> Ibid, p.163-165.

<sup>196</sup> For Schelling’s explanation of ‘accidentality’ see T2024b. Essentially, while experimentation is of course necessary in the process of art-making, it is not, like art, an end in itself. Hence categorising ‘experimental art’ as a *practice* is mere nominalism falsely consecrating means as ends.

<sup>197</sup> Scheler, *FE*, p.278-279.

<sup>198</sup> Emad, “Person, Death, World”, p.64.

reasoning used in forms of classical consequentialism and universalisable egoism. These position ‘the ought’ as *ai priori* ontological, while Scheler’s system reveals teleology and ontology can coexist without contradiction. The key difference is that Scheler instead positions ‘the ought’ in *Spirit*.

The *self*, cast adrift in modernity as MacIntyre (2007) argues, is bereft of any objective psychological means to find a *reasonable* ‘Ought’ in search of value. Neither inner nor outer intuition is offered anything but privation in what it can construct out of this as art (neutralising its ‘totalising’ potential; reducing artistic populism to ‘tastes’; etc.,). This has been fueled by what Scheler calls the arbitrariness and more or less ‘*artificial diminution...* of the originally given by virtue of the express *absence* of certain acts of feeling, loving, hating, willing, etc., which results in *value-free* objects’.<sup>199</sup> Culminating in both disorientation and boredom, and a constant search for elusive remedies in novelties. Eventually leading to a vacant, begrudging nihilism spiteful of life’s meaninglessness.<sup>200</sup> The resulting self-defeating tendency for ‘permanent revolution’ in art both *and* humanity has made a genuine ‘political community’ impossible to attain.

Artistic ‘truth’ (the ought in *Spirit*) can, as earlier noted, be distinguished from ‘affects and effects’. With *genuine* artistic intentionality being a search for *the merger* of truth and beauty, acts bound by a system of value-free thought, action, or effect, are shunned in favour of ones pursuing *the truth of ends*. ‘Value-goals’ can once again *define* ‘the field of possible purposes’, providing a purposefully purposeless *habitual* reason for making/contemplating art. Being *immediately experienced as a unity*, they may be *phenomenologically* differentiated from pursuit of ‘technological’ means in themselves; revealing *concrete* purposes, over the mere *adoption* of purposes brought on by ‘experienced feeling states’ (ie., choices), reflected in the artwork.

The question of ‘purpose’ returns us to the slippery slope towards posthumanism, and what it means for Truth. The fundamental reason no artificial intelligence can be programmed or ‘learn’ to make genuine original art is because artmaking is not simply a matter of reflection. If it were, it would

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<sup>199</sup> Scheler, FE, p.197.

<sup>200</sup> Patricia M Spacks, *Boredom: The Literary History of a State of Mind*. (University of Chicago Press, 1996). ‘Boredom’ began in the same historical industrialising transitions impacting attention to art (also argued by both McGilchrist and MacIntyre).

merely reflect an ego (and hence the lowest orders of meaning-value). Considering ‘biological’/‘vital’ values as ethical bearers of goods creates such deceptions; like confused associations of Nature’s beauty with human-made objects (T2024b). The ‘given truth’ here – which is the *posthuman* point of departure in worlding ‘reality’ - attempts to *disregard* values and be ‘guided by a selection of elements of outer intuition... founded in the *value* of possible control over nature’<sup>201</sup>

When the Person (*self*<->*Self* relation) is *genuinely* re-situated as the centre of action, the principle of art emerges in its own right. And, since all meaning comes from the body, its essences, truths, and our primordial ‘preferring’, merge in the *poiesis-praxis* nexus. The ego is simply ‘the object of differentiated perception that cannot act or “direct its body”’. The *embodied person* is the ‘actor’, because their ‘milieu of action’ contains all the dimensions and tensions we find in poetic discourse.<sup>202</sup> This is partly why *AI* cannot be taught to make original art: it possesses no ‘un-prethinkable’ ethical value and purpose. And any computer-brain interface “singularity” dream must still respect the fundamental *a priori* relations in Scheler’s hierarchy, or surrender art and humanity to mechanism.

### 5.3      *Ethical Value and Purpose*

As Scheler argues, ‘the person’ (and ‘act-being’) are bearers of ethical value and in any artwork where ethical values occur, these must be ‘given’ as real even though they are contained within a ‘vehicle of appearances’. If not, there is no value-meaning as such. But bearers of *ethical* values can never be thought of as ‘objects’ because objectifying human ‘being’ in any way (ie., even via *abstraction*) makes personhood (the bearer of *moral* values) vanish. The *purpose* of Art (‘as principle’) is to offer us a way to ‘objectify’ human-ness in a detached way, via the subject-object interface in artworks. But we can only distinguish an artwork’s *ethical* value by how well this subject-objectification occurs as ‘real’. That is, as *given*, phenomenologically.

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<sup>201</sup> Scheler, *FE*, p.267.

<sup>202</sup> In ‘anthropomorphising’ futuristic films like *Blade Runner* or *I, Robot*, for instance, note how unbelievable and banal any attempt to rise above the egoistic values becomes. Sentimentality is the only recourse; and sadly, these are the prevailing values in filmmaking today, explaining their falsely elevated merit (and the ‘postmodern’ fascination with trans- and post-humanist driven content).

Ethics are therefore identified in the artwork's *meaning*-value according to its *posited* reality, *irrespective of appearance*. We need not ask the artist. Any ethical values attached to bearers obtained via the intellectual intuition, indicate meaning-value – not pictorially - but by way of *directionality toward the real*. Thus, to have any *real* meaning or ethical value, the link between 'the person' and artwork ('in-formed' by a *unifying* principle of Art), must carry real purpose. The general aesthetic, fake art, or anti-art *lack* this purpose, hence have no positive ethical value. Any moral argument posited on the pretext of *their* 'sacredness' consists in self-deception and a diversion from what *is* really sacred to humanity (T2022).

Wendy Wheeler argues our reproductive imagination draws upon 'partially occluded and "disattended" to' ontologically prior tacit knowledges 'as ancient as life itself'.<sup>203</sup> Aesthetics offers access to *this* History via its normative purposiveness: its associated *ethics* (value) and *meaning productivity* (logic). Schelling's system models the indifference between the ideal and real of this nexus reaching its highest value ('absolute'). That is, by correlating artworks with an intentionality directed toward *that* reality. Not '*realism*', but an *Ideal* 'more real than reality itself'. This underscores the linkage between humanity's forward oriented purpose (*telos*) and primordial History. The harmonious human nature/Nature 'double-unity', then, is at the foundation of morality via a genuinely real relation between meaning, ethics, and morals.

Art then, not philosophy, may be the best route to restoring the modern disjuncture between ethics and morals. Reconceiving it as a 'research program' in Complexity Science (as *Wissenschaft*), returning it to the centre of the Humanities, may represent our only hope for avoiding modernity's deepening dehumanising fragmentation of *the Self*, and great art's complete disappearance (except in museums/private collections, etc.,). Art's potential to bridge the 'two cultures', refocusing their attention on *humanism* and the human *telos*, lies in the fact that there is no algorithm for Art, and ethical value is essential to its making and appreciation. Contemplating two related questions concerning AI will help reaffirm why Art can *insure* a humanist future. (Which is its real *moral* role).

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<sup>203</sup> Wendy Wheeler, *The Whole Creature Complexity, biosemiotics and the evolution of culture*. (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 2006), p. 137.

Firstly, can artificial intelligence *independently* create a genuine artwork – ie., in whose ethical phenomenology we could find any *real Secondness*? As noted, *detecting* this requires ‘ethical intuition’. A machine may be taught to mimic technologies of action *producing* great art but, without possessing Mind, cannot conceive of the intention creating it *originally*. It may learn to detect and copy the *likeness* of ethical intentionality, but this is hardly meaningful. Any machine (eg., a camera) has certain *precision* advantages, but also major disadvantages because depth of understanding requires a particular kind of structuring via *both* perception *and* logic. Only humans possess this.

As Schelling, Peirce, and Scheler have shown, artistic *intentionality* depends upon implicit meaning-value synthesis and expression, of which parts only *technologies of action* are teachable. The necessary *intuition* is not, because this has primordial origins. Also, value and *purpose* are interdependently connected by ‘the vehemence of a semantic aim’ in any organism-environment interaction. But such organic ‘vehemence’ in humans is cultivated very differently from any other living entity over a lifetime. Even if we could *implant* precisely the same temporal life-like cultivation in a machine, it begs the question: What kind of *semantic* aim could be programmed given that any *self-actualising* purpose is made redundant by its *ontological* disconnectedness from Nature? What could it *originally* ‘create’ that is meaningful?

Essentially, therefore, there is no realistic possibility of *posthuman* art (even via merger/enhancement) because no theory of mind can reconstruct a consciousness with a primordial past like ours. We cannot mechanically ‘enhance’ that past (only disturb it). Our natural, sentient, individual/collective, self-structuring *Historia* is uniquely *born* into us as ‘purpose’. Many have understood the genesis and apotheosis of Art’s link to this purpose was realised in *the past*, waiting to be rediscovered (but not in *techno*-science).

Therefore, the *realistic* answer to the first question is no. The required *organic* intentionality to *suspend the second*, and render an object Art cannot be pre-programmed (it is *entirely* unpredictable). Pre-programming accidentally merely imitates Nature. Hence artistic intentionality directing any propositional search for the indifference between the real and ideal must come from an actively engaged human source, to be a *genuine* search for beauty/truth. This is because any realistic proposition must have an historicity *in its making*, and only humans

can draw upon the *Historia* of the Person for this. If posited by proxy (ie., pre-programmed), it is automatically inauthentic.<sup>204</sup> Therefore, any resulting work must be a relatively inert, meaningless object to us - because the perfect-sign relation between artist and artwork has been interrupted.

The second question is this: If a robot can *copy* an artist's technologies of action precisely (eg., Van Gogh's brush strokes), could we distinguish the result from an original? Possibly not, but the task of separating fake from real in this context is essentially a pointless exercise, as far as meaning-value goes (it only concerns 'copyrights' – ie., utility).<sup>205</sup> In such cases, comparing their 'absolute' *Objects* is arguably a meaningless proposition because the *idea* must be *conceived* humanly. The only thing that matters, which makes an artwork *meaningful*, is the human intentionality communicated by it. Without this, it is merely an object that inhabits 'the general aesthetic'.

Such is the *ethical* significance of the relation between 'the person', the artwork, and the principle of art. Any artwork's real meaning-value depends on this (T2024c). It was this realistic *humanist* relationship that the Florentine Renaissance artists rediscovered in ancient Greek mythology. They had to develop new materials and technologies of action (eg., pigments/chiaroscuro) in response, since much was lost in the declines of Athens and Rome. But breathing *new life* into the ancient intentionality still required balancing detail in *perceived* reality with something *intangible* beyond it which can only be intuited.

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We must remember that the Art-Person perfect sign (and hence *truth*) remains

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<sup>204</sup> *AI* has no basis upon which to generate such propositions. Human sentience originates in a deeper primordial past (Schelling's 'Nature-History' *nexus*) that cannot be artificially regenerated, only copied/abstracted.

<sup>205</sup> 'Originality' (in the modern sense) is essentially meaningless compared to the meaningfulness of the work *in itself*. Copyright is a form of 'legal positivism', useful in one respect alone: for the dialectic of (artist/artwork) *recognition* in terms of values attributable to labour and representation. But it is today merely a means to consecrate the 'artworld'. To increase symbolic capital/idealism, via materialist (technicist) *distractions* from the real importance to upholding practices, traditions, and institutions which this key dialectic holds.

the highest *bearer* of value *only* insofar as the expression of spiritual/holy values remain the predominant intentional tendency in acts. This not only must guide ‘the ought’ in how we make art, but also in how we make *judgements* about it. How do we assess the ‘warrants’ of any such truth without falling prey to the fallacy of misplaced concreteness?

The essence of being deceived about the higher value of something, as Scheler argues, lies in the ease with which we shift ‘feeling states’, which we may project onto something ‘that is in fact not its cause’:<sup>206</sup> To make such distinctions, it is necessary to examine the foundations of his reasoning on how we generate ‘knowing’ within our bodies. While these are built on the work of earlier phenomenologists like Brentano, Husserl, and others, Scheler’s development of them is particularly helpful in revealing the phenomenology of art. I am limited here to only briefly summarising his main principle of preferring, which yields ‘known relations’ of values, and what affects it in the discernment of feelings, before finally turning to how these are transformed in art.

#### 5.4 *Preferring and Prefeeling*

Feeling-states belong to the ‘contents of appearances’, but feelings belong to the function of ‘reception’ and hence involve intent. To understand ‘preferring’ requires firstly understanding how ‘prefeeling’ is distinguished here. Counter to Kant, it is false to think that ‘the laws of objects must “conform” to the laws of acts which comprehend objects’<sup>207</sup> Thus, as noted, the fundamental intersubjective relationship between the artwork and intentional experiencing is not bound by a simple correspondence between observable objects and acts. The correspondence theory of truth fails, revealing symbol to be far inferior to metaphor as a generator of any higher meaning.

Because ‘the Other’ presents possibilities bound by our lived experience of *pre-felt* value-ception, nothing prohibits art revealing meaningful reception of the ‘objective’ world (via Peirce’s ‘retroductive reasoning’ and Schelling’s ‘reproductive imagination’). Or any sense of awe arising from it. Our prefeeling of the world is *pre-cognitive*. Scheler vindicates both Peirce’s objection to ‘unfathomable’

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<sup>206</sup> Scheler, *FE*, p.246-247.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid*, p.265.

knowledge, and Schelling's conception of 'sublimity' over Kant's (T2024a). Essentially by similarly rejecting 'the theory that there can be objects which are, according to their nature, beyond comprehension by any consciousness' (ie., an 'absolute ontologism'). This theory is false because the *value-essence* of any such class of objects 'must be able to appear in a feeling-consciousness'.<sup>208</sup> They must be able to be *pre-felt*.

Now, clarifying how 'prefeeling' operates in 'preferring' explains what values we seek in art and how intentionality functions in our interactive experience of it. Preferring and 'placing after' (choosing) are discerned from emotional functions despite *experiences* being the subject of both. As noted, we *prefer*, and place judgements *after*, based on *already prefelt experiences*. Hence these *preferred* acts represent a 'higher stage in our emotional and intentional life'; 'higher' here meaning a later or secondary function (as in cognition, which comes *after* prefeeling). In preferring and placing after, says Scheler, 'we comprehend the ranks of values, their being higher or lower'.<sup>209</sup> This explains why it is not only through conscious or unconscious experience, but through *habituation* that meaning *arises from* valuing (both cognitively *and* non-cognitively). And why Lakoff & Johnson's experientialist, 'sensory-motor' account of meaning acquisition is inadequate to explain the divergence of choosing from preferring.

Prefeelings are nevertheless *not* conative activities like 'choosing', which *is based on acts of 'preferring'*. But choosing is a *different kind* of intentional act to preferring. Preferring is a particular act of value-cognition that *does not* belong to the sphere of striving even though it is in the strictest sense 'intentional'. As Scheler explains, choosing belongs to a class of experiences that are "directed" and sense-giving... [but]... we classify them with loving and hating as "emotional acts," in contrast to intentional functions of feeling'.<sup>210</sup> But 'loving and hating' are in a higher class again because *they are not 'feeling-states'*; they belong to the primordial class of feelings that are *not* 'reactive' responses. Neuro-imaging simply cannot make such distinctions.

Preferring and placing after always presuppose 'a plurality of felt values in intention'. This helps us understand the illusory effect an *historicised* theoretical

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<sup>208</sup> Ibid, p.265.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid, 260.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid, p.260.

aesthetics can burden a culture with; by synthesising reflective experience with pre-felt valuations, and then elevating the status of taste to legitimate judgement. It is *illusory* because in fact it is ‘*in preferring* that the synthetic relations of higher and lower values are constituted’.<sup>211</sup> So it is only by reasoning through all these different acts with the benefit of hindsight and perspective that we can distinguish between reality and ‘irreality’.

Understanding ‘preferring’ allows us to realise the essence of the experiencing of ‘being-higher’ within Scheler’s value-modalities. That begins with distinguishing between values that are ‘already given’ (*essences*) compared with those ‘types of values that manifest themselves as higher or lower according to their *essential interconnections with* their bearers’ (yielding *potences*).<sup>212</sup> Thus, by examining our preferring we can distinguish ‘aptitude’ from ‘virtue’, or values like ‘noble and base’ from ‘good and evil’. Such distinctions in *aesthetic* assessments help discern the difference between, for instance, the *figurative meaning* of something and its appearance. That is, between meanings generated by metaphor (figurative, multidimensional) and symbol or simile (linear, two-dimensional) since they elicit completely different *kinds* of experiences and meaning *values* via our habits of *preferring*.

How can we validate our assessments using these distinctions? The difference between ‘classical empiricist’ and ‘phenomenological’ (radical empiricist) assessment of such meanings is that the former is based on *observed experience* while the latter is based on *known relations* of differing values. How something is aesthetically ‘prefelt’ is thus validated in the relation between ‘appetite’ and ‘disgust’. These correlate to the naturally *nurturing* effect of aesthetic qualities as ‘nutritive’; that is, as ‘the phenomenological datum... in terms of “inviting” and “attracting,” or in terms of “disgusting” and “repelling”’.<sup>213</sup> Why we can rely on phenomenological assessment of *this* relation is because, as Scheler argues, ‘objective chemicophysiological investigation and measurement of the so-called nutritive value of substances... rests on this foundation’. And it would be ‘not merely ridiculous but impossible... to *replace* the value-differentiating function of

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid, p.306.

<sup>212</sup> See T2024b.

<sup>213</sup> Scheler, *FE*, p.245.

“appetite” with empirical investigations’:<sup>214</sup>

For the very *problem* of such an investigation cannot be meaningfully posed without referring to and presupposing such emotively felt value-differentiations. Appetite and disgust are by no means drive-impulses, no matter to what extent they may be based on such impulses in their expressions. They are *value-directed functions of (vital) feeling*. They are therefore wholly different from hunger, which is a non-directional urging accompanied by burning and searing stresses of pain and organic sensations; hunger can neither yield a value-difference nor have an opposite...

The significance of this cannot be understated since it demonstrates how we can verify intentionality in art *phenomenologically* via given relations of values as a function of *semiosis*. Appetite and disgust (though not ‘drive-impulses’) are prefelt drivers of *aesthetic* responses, which connect more deeply to our *ethical* orientation to the world than any empirical measurement can determine. Thus, a range of associated ‘sensible feeling-states’ such as good and bad flavour, usually considered arbitrary qualities of ‘taste’, are in fact *prefelt* and ‘predicative’. As Scheler says: ‘Appetite and disgust *predecide*, as it were, which of such sensible feeling-states are to come about. And *they* immediately condition a “striving for”. They hence verify a normative meaning-value orientation ontologically *and* teleologically; and our emotive and lived-body responses to art can therefore be described using Ricoeur’s theory of tensions. Moreover, these offer no ‘false testimony’ because they represent the *truth of manifestation*, and whatever has the power and disposition to *release or effect* feeling states does not condition them.<sup>215</sup>

The givenness of value-difference of the objects concerned *precede* in principle the experience of feeling-states which the objects effect and are the *foundation* of these states and their completion.

In summary, we - the Person – *invite* or *attract* (and repel) value-meanings already embedded in works of art. We do this in response to features in these works themselves, via pre-existing, pre-decided, corresponding feelings about these values in the works. Therefore, we intuitively *judge* works *prior to* any cognition of their value we might otherwise find in ‘empirical-historical’ assessments. Since values and ‘goods’ are *experientially* attracting or repelling, they themselves effect these responses objectively.

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<sup>214</sup> Ibid, p.245.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid, p.246.

All of which somewhat neutralises the purpose of so much neuro-aesthetic research. Ricoeur's prudent call for a 'third way' to describe these value-meanings, as noted, has some precedent.

Schelling refers to the different kinds of 'knowing' that characterise art's claim on us as rhythmic (signifying 'satisfaction and vigorous passion') or harmonic (signifying 'yearning and longing'). These *motivational modalities* in *valuing* (as indicated above), correspond with Schelling's hermeneutic descriptions of the progress of *meaning* in art objects via his mythological categories (T2024b). Hence Schelling's and Scheler's associated meaning-value 'absolutes' converge in an orientation we can obtain from Ricoeur's 'tensions' and Peirce's 'triadic thinking', as phenomenological correlates of various essence and potency polarities in *any* genuine artwork. We need not ask an artist of their intentions (though of course conscious deliberations are not entirely inconsequential).

Importantly, while motivational modalities do not refer to 'drive-impulses', and are not *dependent* on feeling-states (eg., emotions), they *do* condition them. So, *habituation* is critical to our attention, perception, and judgement. It is not that *the nature* of beauty as an essence *consists in* an artist/aesthete's attraction to it, and can therefore be triggered by a valueless thing. Rather, our emotional responses to beauty are conditioned (*habituated*). These 'laws of motivation' are not simply felt in inner-perception. They are bound up with the lived body and belong to me in a wider sense', says Scheler, not as ego-centripetal forces of attraction and repulsion.<sup>216</sup>

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So too, then, the higher-meaning *claim* art makes on us. (A claim it can never have on any replicant 'intelligence'). Our entire 'habitus', our whole orientation to the world, is as Lakoff & Johnson show and the neuroscience clearly supports, built upon *lived*-body, aesthetic, meaning-gathering experiences.

The Beauty-Truth merger occurs *in us* because of our *habitus*. The same can be said for 'ugliness'. Beauty and truth are *conditioned* values embedded in an 'ethos'. It is not that something loses its essential beauty/ugliness from ethos to ethos, rather we lose a *capacity* to 'see' it (similarly with truth). Being *spellbound* by the beauty of something may be a common experience, but all such experiences

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<sup>216</sup> Ibid, p.247.

are differentiated meaningfully by *an order of values*. Similarly, the beauty of a landscape or human being depicted through art is *differentiated* by the fact that the former is schematically *the foundation* of the latter. Which Schelling recognises in placing human portraiture above landscape painting, according to their comparative potential to produce *proper metaphor* (T2024b).

Thus, understanding *the relation* between truth and beauty and what we find pleasurable, in terms of the ‘nutritive values’ that form an aspirational habitus of admiring, is key to applying metaphor in art. The reason for this is that truth and beauty are *essences*, not values; and any *fulfilling* pleasure obtained from them converges in *aesthetic* reception of the *highest* meaning-values – the Spiritual and Holy, in Scheler’s hierarchy.<sup>217</sup> ‘Beauty “is” not the experienced efficacy of a (value-free) landscape’, says Scheler. ‘It is its *beauty* that has an effect, whose efficacy is transformed into the changes of a feeling-state’. Hence it is the tacit dimension of this efficacy (not any material effects and affects) that the best landscape painters are really attending to.

I have above described how – via essences, given truths, etc., - art offers an ‘*objective*’ way of ‘seeing’/valuing reality. But how does it *transform* meaning-value, via the reproductive imagination, in the subject-objectivation process? I will here merely outline the theoretical basis provided by Scheler, and how it relates to Humanity’s ‘harmonisation’ (since a practical account, in various artforms, has already been given: T2024b, T2024c).

##### 5.5 *Transforming Values (to Avoid the Pervasive Deceptive Idealism)*

Firstly, to understand art’s ‘self-actualising’ intentionality, one must discern *artistic* from ‘*naturalistic*’ semiotic productivity. This distinction is key to identifying the emergence of both art’s higher meaning and Scheler’s *spiritual* ‘solidarity of interests’. As explained elsewhere, the *aesthetic theory* of ‘naturalism’ misconstrues Art’s task as *approximating* Nature (*and* human nature). Its modern consigned intentionality - as a *copy* of the real - is completely at odds with Aristotle’s widely misunderstood meaning of ‘*mimesis*’, and misrepresents the true purpose of artistic inquiry (T2025b). Secondly, as Peircian semiotics reveals: ‘In ordering new Reality the existing order in the mind must give way before a new disorder

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<sup>217</sup> Ibid, p.247.

and chaos'.<sup>218</sup> Hence the journey toward higher meaning requires all newness, all genuine novelty and reason, to become a self-replenishing upward spiralling metamorphosis of disorder materialising into reality.

Both points can equally be taken as a metaphor for *Humanity's* purpose: Understanding. And thus, our aspiration to harmony and finding our rightful place in the Cosmos. Scheler below describes the nature of Reason, which in the tacit dimension, via Metaphor, this distinctly *phenomenological* experience of art affords us:<sup>219</sup>

It is a kind of experience that leads us to *genuinely* objective objects and the eternal order among them, i.e., to *values* and the order of ranks among them. And the order and laws contained in this experience are as exact and evident as those of logic and mathematics; that is, there are evident interconnections and oppositions among values and value-attitudes and among the acts of preferring, etc., which are built on them, and on the basis of these a genuine grounding of moral decisions and laws for such decisions is both possible and necessary.

This process of transforming lower to higher meaning values produces *normative* reasoning; but *only* when Spirit 'sets the project' (Findlay 1970). As we withdraw from the vital impulses, a gap is created in which emergent intentionality - *powered* by lower values - coordinates the drives to form the project's disclosure. To elevate art above the general aesthetic therefore means attending to *the proliferation of lower order values* cluttering our world.

Scheler's view was that, in the first place, lower order values are the most powerful and higher order values are most impotent; accounting for our natural attraction to the former.<sup>220</sup> Through Spirit, however, humans can deny vital drives of 'the nourishment of perceptual images and representations'.<sup>221</sup> In this process, J. N. Findlay notes the temporary 'loss of self' (in *purposelessness*), which is nevertheless still *guided* by Spirit. The fact higher values *must be pursued through* lower values (in *any* endeavour), explains why art cannot be pursued as a self-indulgent elitist activity placing the heaviest burden on others (eg., to decipher

<sup>218</sup> Roberta Kevelson, "The Mediating Role of 'Esthetics' in Peirce's Semiotics" in *Peirce and Value Theory: On Peircean Ethics and Aesthetics* ed. Herman Parret (John Benjamins Publishing Company Amsterdam/Philadelphia Vol.6, 1984), p.225.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid, p.255.

<sup>220</sup> Max Scheler, *Man's Place in Nature*. (Farrar Straus & Giroux, 1962), p.66.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid, p.54.

deliberatively bewildering nonsense).<sup>222</sup>

In his practical use of this ascending scale of values, Scheler stresses an important principle afterwards taken over by Hartmann: that the higher values cannot be independently pursued, but that they arise 'on the back' of a pursuit of lower values. It is not by seeking to be virtuous or cultivated or scientific, least of all by seeking to be holy, that we become these excellent things: we become them by pursuing and diffusing the lower goods in which it is proper to 'lose ourselves'. Not to achieve such a loss of self, is to corrupt, not to realise, the higher values: in the moral sphere, it is to achieve Pharisaism rather than true moral goodness.

Practicing art *in pursuit* of higher values, completely ignoring the mundane, simple, or tiresome parts of life, merely creates privation; the absence of the real world, closing us off from possibility. Aspiring to 'virtue and sanctity', residing in a lofty realm of intellectual, religious, or other pursuit simply causes stagnation; because, as Findlay says, 'all such higher goods presuppose lower, foundational goods'. On the other hand, aspiring to the precisely opposite 'absolutes', in any lowest-order aspiration, without similarly 'rending them from their necessary soil', achieves the same result. Deliberate dogged pursuit of one's 'personal culture' hence equally tends to invite *deceptive* idealism.

Schelling predicted humanity's complete descent into the modern mythology's purely symbolic 'world of ideals' via such manufactured "productive" reflection. And, as futurologist Fred Polak presciently realised by the mid-twentieth century, this is essentially what caused deterioration in all modern art movements from Impressionism into Expressionism (T2023). The tumultuous worlding back and forth, ultimately inevitably finding rest in 'the explicit', coincided then with one of the most turbulent periods in human history.<sup>223</sup> And this has not yet fully run its course.

The implications for revising how we mythologise artmaking and admiring, in practices, traditions, and institutions, are clear; if we want to return aesthetics to a 'practical science' for *knowing* how to choose between goods.

Firstly, modern perceptions of art – for example, the artist as hero myth, or the romanticised notion of 'suffering for art' - clearly fall into the above

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<sup>222</sup> J N Findlay, *Axiological Ethics*. (London, Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970), p.64.

<sup>223</sup> See McGilchrist (2010) for an account of similar periodic strong links between art and humanity's decline/resurgence supporting his left hemisphere specialisation theory.

propositional categories. But there are many more. Secondly, as noted, the tendency for Fragmentation (valuing the part over the whole) - via cultural *over-determination* of Art and the Person - drains meaning from the tacit dimension. The prevailing lower-order “symbolism” prevailing in these perceptions pervades humanity’s entire global habitus (ie., both ‘democratic’/‘totalitarian’ States; also now East/West cultural hegemonies). It consists in an ideological “reality” which our very poor ideas of “modernity” and “progress” have been in the service of now for centuries, steering us toward self-destruction.

The ideological parallels are unmistakable in what we *choose* as ‘art’, both in periodical trends and practice tendencies. For instance, as a ‘tradition of thought’, art is now *institutionally* almost anything we want it to be - just like ‘person’-ality. But reason suggests, as Schelling system of artform/work construction shows, that not just anything is even suitable as a *subject* for art; even though any ‘material’ (ie., lower order ideation) may be *used* in the subject-objectification process (T2024b). On the other hand, the same prudent judgement needed for *engaging with* lower-order values in artmaking applies equally in any other field for generating new lines of inquiry. In artmaking this requires the artist (as ‘geometer’) to be cultivated in selecting *what to aim at* (ie., Aristotle’s ‘mark’). Contemplating ‘the absolute’ *prudently*, is what steers a course to higher meaning, without sacrificing reason (ie., pitting lower and higher values in opposition).

Being unable to distinguish the higher and lower values – in any human endeavour - is thus an *ethical* problem. It is born from an aesthetic habit of ‘universalising’ reality purely symbolically. Which drains our world of the implicit Truth found only in the tacit dimension. Both art and humanity’s meaningfulness has suffered immeasurably from allowing false dualisms to obfuscate *necessary* polarities, causing division and conflict. In the ‘artworld’ what emerged was a mistaken belief that theories could set *a priori* laws which would hold fast in any *genuine* search for possibility; and the natural way aesthetic logic produces *ethical* ‘sense’ regarding the ideal of ‘human-ism’, was simultaneously infected. As in artmaking/admiring, ‘moral decisions and laws’ capable only of assessing according to what amounts to *alogical* sensibility took control. Ethics, as Scheler says, was similarly to aesthetics historicised and reconstituted ‘either as absolute and *a priori*, and therefore rational, or as relative, empirical, and emotional’. Thus, entrenching *consequentialist* values in society.

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When our whole emotional life becomes ‘assigned to “sensibility”, everything in the mind which is alogical, e.g., intuition, feeling, striving, loving, hating’ is made independent of the self’s ‘psychophysical organization’, says Scheler. This impacts severely on our capacity to world normatively because the alogical forms now as ‘a function of real changes in organization during the evolution of life and history ...dependent on the peculiarities of the environment and all their effects’.<sup>224</sup> We move naturally from higher values to biological (lower) values. As Polanyi says, the laws governing particulars assume the understanding of operations at a higher level only to nurture a cognitive dissonance. And hence an unimpeachable, politically sanctioned, preoccupation with lower order meaning, producing not only deleterious effects in art-making/admiring, but in our ethics and logic, and every decision we make as a whole.

Consider, however, the alternative course which Art presents us: for *prudently* transforming values to gradually restore a normative aesthetic sensibility. *No* other form of speculation can produce such an habitual *implicit* attention to reasoning. Reasoning that normalises *indwelling between* apparent dualisms (“paradoxes”), to retain the unique tenor, quality, and purpose obtained from the ‘subjective-objectification’ of values which only great Art produces.

Upon recognising that a purposefully purposeless comportment is fundamental to artmaking (and indeed *understanding* art), contemplating the interplay between lower and higher values becomes an act of effortless proposition that automatically produces higher meaning. The important kind of *Indwelling* this encourages, generates possibility simply because it causes a temporary meditative loss of self in contemplation of ‘between-ness’ (the ‘absolute’). The purposeless *pursuit* of this truth/beauty nexus alone, in the back and forth between lower and higher values, *automatically* generates the emergence

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<sup>224</sup> Scheler, *FE*, p.253-254.

of new dimensions.<sup>225</sup> And hence a *polyphony* of ‘voices’ seeking harmony.<sup>226</sup> How we can make realistic assessments of this experience, by tracking the inversion of values in any artwork, involves combining Ricoeur’s tensions with Peircian semiotics, and is best detailed *in praxis* (see T2024c).

To sum up, the subject-objectivation occurring in an artwork is not like that in Nature. Art does *not* mimic Nature; it *models* it, and requires *our* intentionality - our Spirit – to guide this. The fundamental reason lower values are *necessary* in artmaking is in fact because art is *not* the same kind of ‘creation’ of Reason as Nature’s. It is a *re-creation* (or *renaissance*) of ideas; requiring tacit knowledge and ‘right thinking’ *in praxis* (the merger of knowledge and action in the *re*-productive imagination). This becomes obvious in comparing their phenomenology. In nature, as a tree with a broken hanging branch moves toward concrete reasonableness it cuts off circulation, until the dead part drops to the ground, becoming dirt, then rock. Biosemiotics describes this ‘natural semiosis’ in terms of Peirce’s triadic evolution of thinking: subjects (firsts)-> objects (seconds)-> interpretants (thirds). But here the resemblance stops; artmaking’s end is no *replication* of Nature’s products. Its Metaphoric process of semiosis is identical except for one thing: the *Person* is *both* the *Object* and subject. Hence ‘seconds’ are suspended (T2024c).

Because Art both directs and is being directed by Spirit, a unique ‘ethical’ intentionality, with features described above, drives the ‘vehemence’ of its semantic aim. Art’s *praxis* thus informs a philosophy of ‘speculative naturalism’, which could change humanity’s course. However, this way of ‘worlding’ needs to become all pervasive in our habitus to cultivate a cultural telos and society that can benefit from it.

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<sup>225</sup> Purposelessly seeking the emergence of higher value by indwelling in lower values is evident in the emergence of philosophy in ancient Greece, when technological innovation was linked metaphorically with artistic questioning (e.g., Thales’ technical innovations created new inquiries via the proposition that all beings are generated by water). And, as early novels evolved beyond entertainment/political purposes, the more edifying dialogical novels of Flaubert or Dostoyevsky still presented diverse, ‘objective’ outlooks on life, while allowing readers to engage with these in search of truth. Tolstoy’s realistic depiction of Anna in *Anna Karenina*, despite being didactic like his earlier novels, elevated its meaning-value through identification.

<sup>226</sup> In our ‘Information Age’ we have learned to endure a cacophony of ‘voices’ creating disharmony, which Epstein (2007) has termed ‘information trauma’. A pervasive psychological condition associated with the difficulty experienced discerning lower/higher-order valuing.

## CONCLUSION

Harmonising humanity, with Nature, has always been the aim of true Humanists. From ancient peoples, early Greek philosophers, to the eighteenth and nineteenth century European and American nature enthusiasts, to the Daoists of China, to those still today in various ways pursuing a ‘human ecology’. Civic humanism and Art are united in this aim; via a collectivising spirit that is, however, always under threat of a certain ‘empiricism’ securing a false mythology.

Despite many great insights, it was Kant’s failures in science later supported by neo-Kantians and logical empiricists, that reduced mathematics to logic and scientific method to deductive and inductive reasoning. Which in turn devalued speculative reasoning as subordinate to timeless and established ‘knowledge’ (Gare 2018). In *The Rule of Metaphor*, Paul Ricoeur recounts how philosophers were, following the medieval bowdlerising of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, eventually forced to deny a place for art as any kind of scientific inquiry.<sup>227</sup> Being and Becoming were confused in their essences. Artists and aesthetes were subsequently forced to deny the non-formal, qualitative, phenomenological values of art in favour of form, structure, and historical standard. And many were driven to either seek out *the material* in favour of *the immaterial*, or depict the immaterial as mystical.

It was because of this that Schelling’s philosophy of art, like his *Naturphilosophie*, was conceived as ‘neither materialism nor spiritualism, neither realism nor idealism’. A position vindicated by - what I have attempted to do in this paper - situating more recent thinkers like Ricoeur, Merleau-Ponty, McGilchrist and others with Max Scheler in the same humanist tradition of thought, which really began with Aristotle’s association of biology with Reason. A tradition which Michael Polanyi admirably follows in *The Tacit Dimension*. As Schelling argued, because of the nature of intellectual intuition, the capacity for sensing indifference in this tacit dimension is manifest *organically* within us: ‘[T]he organic being *does not view the object outside itself*; it views only the indifference between the ideal and the real *posited within that object*.<sup>228</sup> The fact that the indifference takes the place of the object itself alerts us to the kind of claim *to Reason* that we experience via

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<sup>227</sup> See also Gare, “Philosophical Anthropology”, p.307.

<sup>228</sup> Schelling *PA*, p.125 emphasis mine.

metaphor, and hence the importance of metaphor to higher meaning in art.

Art's greatest claim is thus found in final (or *real*) Firstness. *Schelling's* 'empirical Object'. That is, the indifference between the suspended object (second) and what Peirce calls *real secondness*. Put another way, the indifference between the real and ideal *posited* in the suspended object, is what delivers us the *subject's* essence. Aristotle's division of metaphorical 'kind' and 'quality' thus offered an early insight into what informs our ability, as artists or admirers of art, to suspend the object. Realising this depth of possibility in Art's *claim* on us, as noted, therefore depends entirely upon the capability of originating *suitable* propositions via the artwork.

Art hence only *approaches* the absolute identity of an idea because its 'objectivity' is already present in the embodied human organism itself. But the 'human subject' is not an historical 'person'; and it is not any historical reflection of the art object that is preserved in this moment of intuition. The great artwork must therefore approach ideas via metaphor. Because, as Kant too realised but failed to properly account for, an idea's absolute identity is simply *inaccessible to conceptual knowledge*. Art alone, via metaphor, obtains a unique potential to synthesise its thinking and being. This, I have argued, manifests as Art's unique reproductive purpose: its *ethical* 'subject-objectivation' of ideas. Which both defines it, and its greatest benefit to humanity. Art's principle is therefore imbued with a tacit purposefulness; as a 'way of valuing' our entire world. Which is self-evident in the phenomenology of the genuine artwork itself, if we know what to look for.

In this paper I have thus tried to explain the philosophical anthropological groundwork for how to familiarise ourselves with this phenomenological 'object' or experience. The problem of losing perspective about the value of the 'applied arts' compared to Art's *higher* purpose, lies in how we have become accustomed to the false belief of art's usefulness in activities like play, therapy, or crafting/designing (T2022). It is indeed useful here; but because of Art's *real* superior talent for producing *higher* meaning, which manifests as *metaphoric* reason (since this can be *synthesised* in no other way), we need to rise above 'ordinary reality'. And misguided arguments about elitism. An alternative course to realising this has been suggested summarily as follows.

Firstly, early on I showed why Art's pursuit of reason goes beyond language

and perception. Which, as Peirce's semiotic realism reveals, favours an 'enactive theory of Mind' approach to cognition, that neuroscience cannot easily account for. Rather, Ricoeur's separation of poetic and speculative discourses was presented as a preferred approach to metaphor, overcoming limitations in Lakoff & Johnson's experientialist thesis. Discerning metaphoric from conceptual truth is made phenomenologically possible by understanding his definition of *Proper* metaphor. And, via both Ricoeur and Schelling's account of the weakening criteria which allowed various forms of analogy to cloud it, we learn how to decipher this from ordinary metaphors, symbols, and concepts.

This finds ground in Max Scheler's concept of Spirit, *embodied* in the Person (personhood); helping us to discern a *phenomenological* experience (in subject->Object relations) from *ordinary* experience. A key distinction which revives the real meaning of 'sense' in propositions, moving us beyond interpretation. We can, with this understanding then, distinguish artistic thinking from imaging, art's essentially propositional nature, and how metaphoric meaning-value is elevated in the movement-action-logic nexus. All of which points to why Ricoeur's referential tensions and Peirce's 'suspended second' may be tracked phenomenologically.

Finally, how the passage of thought into action, authorised by reason, links meaning and valuing, was elucidated by examining the conditions for transforming values in Scheler's hierarchy. This revealed why certain 'given' truths point to ethical value and purpose; and why lower values are *essential* to higher meaning-making in art (though *prudence* is needed, lest they persist). By combining Ricoeur's hermeneutic and Scheler's anthropological phenomenology, returning us to Schelling, Peirce, and Aristotle's earlier connection of Art as principle with a *human telos*, we can see why art's normative 'collectivising intent' arises from its *propositional* capacity to merge Beauty with Truth, according to the natural polarities of Necessity and Freedom. And why the Spirit of humanism *sets the project*.

To conclude, Schelling writes that Art's claim on humanity 'is not toward sense reality, but rather always toward beauty elevated above all sensuality'.<sup>229</sup> Hence the merger of beauty with truth should reveal to us, in every exemplary

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<sup>229</sup> Schelling, *PA*, 129.

artwork, how the real historical essence of ‘being’ is tied to Nature. And that human ‘being’, like the artwork’s higher meaning, rests only in a temporal stage of becoming. In a self-constraining activity in which process and product are simultaneously subject and object. We are, like the artwork, while in the process of becoming, a subject. But to the extent that we become a “product”, we are its object. This, as I have shown, constitutes the Art-Person perfect signification necessary for either ‘Object’ to ‘self-actualise’ freely toward ‘concrete reasonableness’.

The artwork (like us) is never a finished product, at least in this respect. If it were, it would be ‘dead matter’ and cease to have any relation in our intellectual intuition to human becoming.<sup>230</sup> Here lies the fundamental problem with how we mythologise the modern ‘artworld’. Both Humanity’s and Art’s autonomies are integrally related, in the way just described. Not in the way we have come to believe, as freed from Reason. Art’s ‘subject-objectification’ of the Person is bound by strict limitation (Necessity). It is therefore the *only* realistic way of reconnecting aesthetics with ethics and logic. Failing which, we are prone to succumbing to false theories of values, as Scheler says, ‘based in *assessments according to norms*’ - ie., *theoretical* aesthetic norms producing dubious ‘artworlds’. As argued in T2022, this constitutes both false autonomy (freedom) *and* normativity (necessity). If art is defined *merely* as some arbitrary theory of beauty, as it mostly is today, it can neither point to nor produce higher meaning. Higher meaning must, via ideals, manifest in *real world* phenomena. Because real beauty’s essence lies in truth.

My arguments above therefore reinforce the need to study aesthetics *phenomenologically*. And to reconceive Art as a discipline of complexity science – as a research program, in the ‘practical sciences’ – restoring its naturalising benefits. It was the failure of Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology, says Gare, that ‘opened up the way for the development of philosophical biology and philosophical anthropology’. Contemporary radical enlightenment thinkers, like

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<sup>230</sup> Cf. Ricoeur’s ‘dead metaphor’. As Schelling (1989) says, sentient life in being an emergence of spirit which has a real relation to the world in its social and historical existence is apparent in the forms of art. But art becomes ‘self-conscious’ when it holds no recognition of the self being reflected *in the other*. In this instant the self becomes only an object (‘dead matter’ incapable of having any free will) and the ‘art’ becomes artificial – it becomes ‘unreal’.

Gare, MacIntyre, Wheeler and others, have hence been able to revive the value of historical traditions and the role of narratives. Which we find in Vico's arguments that the value of the humanities over the sciences lies in grounding *all* traditions of thought in an historical humanism which emphasises why 'people should grasp the whole of any situation... so that it can be objectified and understood'.<sup>231</sup> As argued elsewhere, and expanded upon above, this is why reviving art's Principle and Humanism are inseparable projects. Reconceiving Art as complexity science would reinstate its *real* significance in the Humanities, and offer sound foundations for unifying the 'two cultures' and redefining the human telos.

Possible human extinction arguably now rests in the balance of our inability to collectively come to grips with the ideal ('Spirit') of civic humanism aligned with Nature. Despite the concerted efforts of radical enlightenment thinkers, and two thousand years of philosophy, theology, and science, we have failed to develop a proper political community capable of avoiding the growing meaning crisis fuelling conflicts and degrading the biosphere. And technology alone cannot resolve our ever-deepening ethical, cultural, and political divides. Realising a political totality able to produce a 'human ecology' is what is needed; so, changing how we both individually and collectively *world* reality is key. Because Metaphor is humanity's unique, fundamental form of meaning productivity *originating in* Nature, nurturing habitual reorientation toward the Art-Person perfect sign relation would help return meaningfulness, not just to art-making/admiring, but to all human endeavours. It would elevate the real link between art and science (above the current false 'artworld'/techno-science merger), which is clearly necessary to harmonise Humanity, with Nature and History, to find our true purpose and place in the cosmos.

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<sup>231</sup> Gare, "Philosophical Anthropology", p.310-11, p.306 and p.309. 'Sapientia or wisdom of the whole achieved thorough self-knowledge, and eloquentia, the ability to put this whole into words' are fundamental concepts of human intelligibility, and the basis for knowledge about how to live and what proper human action entails for Vico.

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