

A musical defense of political animal phenomenology: Aristotle by way of Arendt and Abram

Or “how to leave one's mark without pissing all over the place”

Ike Sharpless, WPSA 2019 conference paper draft, panel on affect and emotion
(please don't cite without permission)

For every season, turn, turn turn

Drawing on Book VIII of Aristotle's *Politics*, Hannah Arendt's *The Life of the Mind*, and David Abram's *The Spell of the Sensuous*, this paper presents a phenomenological reading, through deep time and history, of why musical education is relevant to all manner of human pursuits. The *muse* of this paper is the mantra that the truth of nature is inscribed between the gulf of logos and mythos. It thus takes no single author or text as authoritative so much as part of a sign-web of nature's meaning marked by human culture, and the writing down as each leaving our marks on the tree of knowledge. In the case of reading through authors like Arendt and Abram, one is drawn both to the concept foundations of the house of our thought and to how this house is situated, what is ecology but also its history, shallow and deep. It will turn out that this requires integrating the fourth dimension, that is, “making sense” of time itself.

“Proceeding” cautiously now, with the method of winged Hermes, the translator who carries signs from one place to another, entails a view of understanding being as a form of life in time, manifesting the world along with the rest of being, at every period in time, making meaning from the synaesthetic languages which come together to make the lived symphony of human meaning. To translate is to stand between the “language” of different forms of meaning, *here especially that concerning the coevolution of music and language in the first place*, in this case one seeking after music understood as the trinity defined in the tower that is thought and the will. Much as natural selection has its own role in shaping the concept-structure of our minds, the idea of understanding music as a form of *getting into rhythm*¹ is also one that predates our species by a a long time; John Sloboda goes as far as to say that music is the embodiment of the physical world in motion. All of nature participates in this imitation of its own reflection which is called the history of terrestrial life, in which the history of human life is placed in the topos of our political imaginary. While philosophers have long worried that *life is but a dream*, the modern age has taken upon itself to to feed reason's insomnia, and to thus rid the house of the mind of it's own affective side.

In the *Politics*, Aristotle presents what has come to be called an ethos theory of music. When one speaks today of the “musical” one instead imagines song, maybe dance, but not history or literature, let alone immanent resonant participation with the lived world. One may reasonably pause and say: what on earth is that? Hopefully what follows here can at least present a coherent answer to that question, one which frames it as one that stands between *hermeneutics* and *phenomenology*, between sign-system relation and direct experience.

To address the spaces of this political imaginary, this work takes up especially Marcel Hénaff and Tracy Strong's political topology of the affective and imaginative constituents of past, present, and future

1 Adopting this language, Stephen Mithen has argued in *The Singing Neanderthal*, following Deryck Cooke's *The Language of Music*, that music really *is* the language of emotion.

public spaces. In their introduction and conclusion to the edited work, *Public Space and Democracy* (2001), Hénaff and Strong provide a historical genealogy of the concept of public space, building a topological argument which begins in ancient Greece. In their telling, democratic politics entails placing oneself in the *meson*, in the center, in isonomic relation equidistant from others as the center of a circle is from its radial points from each other point along the circumference. And then, in that space, to engage in agonistic pursuit of the common good.

Only with the invention of concept of linear perspective and its manifestations in reality, however, do we arrive at Pocock's Machiavellian moment, in which "The Prince is he who knows how to place himself in the locus from which a picture made up by the whole of political interplay can best be viewed." (19) The skilled political agent is a technologist of optics, such that at some point in Christian history "we pass from belief to make-believe" (16). The paradox of representation "no longer presents objects as they are, but as they seem." (21) For Hénaff and Strong, "the paradoxical character of Machiavelli's thought is striking, in that the mastery of reality was exercised through the management of appearances, inasmuch as reality was only perceived through viewing" (22). Subsequently, however, and because "information cancels itself through overinformation," "the perspectival reference point. . .disintegrate[s]" (23).

Many of the paradoxes and problems of politics in modernity, in this reading, trace to how "contemporary theorists of democracy [such as Rawls and Habermas] attempt to guarantee [the strength of democratic legitimacy] by "leaving the affectional and the imaginary in limbo. Rationality alone becomes the core, and anything that would directly pertain to the imaginary is viewed with suspicion or is rejected as a dangerous ideological phenomenon." (24) But in Hénaff and Strong's view the social bond is *primarily* affective and symbolic and only secondarily rational,² so to look backwards at them instrumentally from the point of view of reason is to put the cart before the horse.³ In the virtual world, democracy reclaims the political imaginary, but only by losing its reason (27). This virtual world is not properly *new*, however, insofar as "for human beings, the virtual *begins* in the imagination. Any work of fiction already expresses it", and it is "in language *and* in our ties to others" that "we live in the *elsewhere*." (224, emphasis added) Indeed the virtual disrupts the topos of politics⁴ by materializing dreams and creating folds in the space of our political imaginary.

In the reading presented here, the political topologist is the true technologist of public space, the individual who organizes the field appearances in a suitable way, with moderation guiding the relation between possibility and suitability. These are the goals which Aristotle says at the end of *Politics* VIII should guide one's pursuits in musical education. The project of right orientation of emotion by ordering toward the mean is one that is itself reconcile with the idea of riding the edge of chaos, or staying with the puzzles of the world.

2 "The social bond is, before anything else, a web of affects and symbols. Rational legitimations always come after the fact and, most often, in order to conceal that core made of immemorial bonds, as if the acknowledgment of this uncontrollable origin of society constituted a threat to a state of law that claims to be based upon clear principles and upon a reason that since the Enlightenment, has set as its task to conquer all darkness." (26)

3 "from the point of view of reason, the value of these forms of expression remains instrumental and random, mere illustration, as if it were self-evident that any celebration requires props and symbols. Yet it may well be that these forms of expression lie at the core, as constituent elements, of the social bond, as the genesis of the symbolic order by which any community comes into being: that "us" whose identity is tied to a territory, a memory, a language, customs, symbolic figures." (25)

4 "virtual space stands in contradiction to the laws determining the occupancy of space" (225)

Much as the yin and the yang; the Red Queen strategies with their peaks and valleys or the the 'borg world' of reason, of evolutionary stable strategies (ESS); the consolidating left-hemispheric drive to systematize the world and the right's pull away, toward the strangeness of art and the puzzles of time in nature, which ultimately pull one's thinking toward the top that is the bottom, and the behavior of the waves and fields containing both or many parts of the world we live and the worlds we can imagine. Puzzling again is the felt experience of the disunity between common understandings of the relation between space and time or the law of the excluded middle; also of moments where the pattern repeats or answer precedes the question. One need look only to the new field of quantum biology to see that nature uses the real, whether superimposed on *or* existing *in* space. If the rational is defined *as* the real it cannot answer this question, but it remains as stuck in time as the rest of life.

One must, however, also acknowledge the *uses* to which one puts thought into the world in will and action. It is only when the world goes against the grain of truth that we find ourselves correcting the swing of the pendulum with the right-brained archetypes that make up the metaphorical concept-foundations of our thinking consciousness, seeking to stitch together the fantasy of reality, mad in a world of wall-straddlers proclaiming upon the final truth of all things. Better far to use the common faculty of thought to at least keep afloat with the world, and better still yet form a will towards political community capable of truly confronting the madness of the world.⁵ That the madness of the modern world is hidden beneath this mountain of meaning is related itself to how patterns of life in modernity are so thoroughly mediated by technology that this talk of the *weirding way* is itself now too much a part of what the popular consciousness has made real, usually in a way of seeing which domesticates its originary vital power;⁶ thus truth becomes cliché, the “new age” absorbed into whichever of the old ages is dominant. This is the dialectic by which the enlightenment consumes the world but fails to see itself.

Thus instead *enchantment is a dwelling in the in-between*, already lost in the project of translation which by its nature is a kind of staying with the trouble entailed in the metaphoric mind, the right brain, and the disposition toward inquiry itself. That inquiry and ideology clash is not only not a recent creation, such as with the advent of social media; it coexists with the tension between the philosopher and the political theorist understood as the archetype to truth versus the archetype to community. As an agent of the state one chooses to kill Socrates.⁷ Truth, however, is something *that returns*. Hence also the truth of the present location upon the pendulum between democracy and fascism, itself too deeply rooted in our own ego to be able to truly speak of clearly seeing its public manifestations in the political world, too caught up in the present to see the dialectic of enlightenment at work.

Four years earlier than Henaff and Strong's collaborative work, in the *The Spell of the Sensuous* (1997), David Abram made the provocative claim that we now read classic texts, especially ones we own or know in ways which approach the religious or spiritual, much like animals read their habitats by the winds or the seasons, which have their own natural music in a place: marking, highlighting, dog-earing,

5 In the case of the place from which most of this was thought and typed, this means the condominium which exists in the urban extension of UC San Diego which is its surrounding area. Specifically on *dieguenos* street and near rose canyon, where regeneration of melatonin and other participations in the circadian rhythms of life brought me, but which were also the lands of the original inhabitants of this place.

6 This is way horror disturbs and why the uncanny and strange are so, well, strange: they each in their own way represent something out of place, *a-topos*. One measure of a healthy mind really *is* to say that everything is in its right place.

7 As an agent of the truth one becomes instead what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. called an extremist for love. One wonders and is skeptical if Machiavelli is an extremist, so called, unless his love were that of the Italian patriot.

writing and rewriting and then finally speaking, much as an animal will move, sniff, sniff again, mark, move, mark again, all the while also “speaking” in its own way. As every known author to date becomes further buried under the ground of the past, the mediating layers of relation to the text before more difficult to understand, let alone harmonize. This story is one of with a particular beat, if you will one that follows the serpent's winding path, harmonizing text to nature with a political topology beyond the human.

A pragmatic return to first principles would have us ask: how do we perceive and conceive of the world, both as individuals and politically, and what is the priority between each pair? Arendt, who one could say wrote not just for one but for a love of the world, for *amor mundi*, herself wrote that “analogies, metaphors, and emblems are the threads by which the mind holds on to the world.” (*Thinking*, 109) This is in part because, she goes on to quote Aristotle, “every metaphor discovers “an intuitive perception of similarity in dissimilars” and for this very reason a “sign of genius,” “the greatest thing by far.” (*Thinking* 103).⁸ Aristotle additionally argues that human excellence (*arete*) is a character (*hexis*) of the of the soul defined vis a vis the emotions (*pathe*). (1105b-6a) It is because humans are capable of *choice*⁹ that our hexis is an open one, or that we become specifically ethical as well as political animals. With choice understood as action, however, the process of coming to *judgment* always requires a *tertium quid*, a “third what” which is the elusive unreconciled third, insofar as in order to judge one particular one needs not another particular but “something related to the two particulars and yet distinct from both.” The process of making connections is itself a process of taking known particulars and connecting them, often by way of one or another “third what.” And because for Aristotle the poet can in some cases know more of universals than the historian (1451b), such as by knowledge of personality type's influence on the relation between necessity, contingency, and politics. In this way the aesthetic imagination's desire to reach beyond itself is not only a pump for social priming but also the conduit for the stories, fables, and myths which stage and structure our lived worlds. And without many—or at least multiple—perspectives on these world we tell each other and continue to create and recreate, it only becomes possible to imagine the world already placed in flow, which surrounds and often outpaces us, whether individually or collectively.

The thinking ego, however, is for Arendt itself “homeless in an emphatic sense” (*Thinking* 199); thus thinking is always a process engaged in at some remove from the world. In *The Life of the Mind* Arendt takes up, with Aristotle, the project of “saving the appearances,” reversing Plato's metaphysical hierarchy (*Thinking* 27). To bring the affective and imaginative back into human reason—all of which come together to actualize human potentiality literally in the way that Yin and Yang cohabit the space of the design which makes real their story in the world of appearances. By its nature, human politics under the forces of specifically world history seems to tend inevitably to be not truth-facing but instead facing only the truth *of the idea both of the human and of politics*. This is, in the first case, simply to call for a less anthropocentric axiology, with many views and ultimately with a certain view of Spinoza's immanent plural ontology that is his conception of god as nature. To genuinely think through the the conditions which have led to liberal humanist modernity requires a return to metaphysics that can provide not a “view from nowhere” but the lived acknowledgment that every

8 Arendt's account, however, does not fully connect the dots of road which Sorabji (1993) was first to most clearly walk down in rediscovery of: that is, the problem of of animal minds and human morals, if by way of perception (*phantasia*) and desire (*orexis*) they are granted some measure as well of imagination, even *phronesis*, but never, for Aristotle, choice (*proairesis*) or the happiness (*eudaimonia*) informed by a life of action (*praxis*).

9 or *proairesis*, called by Arendt a forerunner of the will.

viewpoint is a participating somewhere, integrating the part to to the ongoing whole of being. Ultimately this also presents the problem of how much of the Western tradition has no spatial theory and thus puts the nation in time as well as in a territory, as Vine Deloria critiques.

I will try to show, in my own sinuous or scuttling way, that that musical education can aid not only in the philosophical process of harmonizing the soul to itself, but also in the political process of harmonizing the soul to its lived surroundings, to what we have come, in history, to call “nature;” It can help us see our mirrors, and can thus ultimately perform the psychological task of reconciling civilization to its creators and ultimately to creation itself. Just as written texts are the artifactual residues upon which, as meaning-inscribing as well as meaning-making creatures, we impose on the world and call it information. But this world came into time aeons ago, and we participate with it along with the rest of sensate nature but under history are exiled from that nature as a matter of definition: this is the meaning of the myth of Eden, which gets at the the matter which forms the human being under time and history.

A much-debated question of late is whether the world of modernity into which we have long been thrown is a “disenchanted” one in the sense described by Max Weber, and if the world has its now gods, its new enchantments, what are they and how do they operate? The questions of the working of person beyond the screen, the political technologist, have become forefront in recent politics and debate. But the question will be shown here to date at the very least to the Hellenic moment, to Machiavelli's political topology, and to the historical moment of the present.

In the original Greek story, the Muses were the daughter of Zeus and memory itself. Thus it is little surprise that the word *mousa* could itself originate etymologically either as 'to think,' 'to tower', or 'to will.' In the mythic and magic modes, music inhabits the the tower of the will; in mentalism the soul sees only the face of reason. This deep nature of what has come to be called the passion of the western mind is, however, itself a creation of the romantic reaction to modernity and its relation to the counter-Enlightenment, and so cannot be understood genealogically in a simple way if we are trying to do the task of the translator, which by its nature is a betrayal (*traduttore, traditore*) in the same way that *truth-as-rebus* is necessarily a *betrayal* of the concept of *truth-as-web*; they mirror each other, but the one at least cannot see the other. Fixing the horizon cuts the web.

The reader has likely heard the phrase “custom is a second nature.”¹⁰ Maybe also that Blaise Pascal worried nature is simply a first custom in the same way that custom is a second nature. These questions appear to be—possibly to always have been—deeply human questions. Upon examining the question of natural kinds, however, one tends to agree with John Muir that upon close examination of any one thing you find it hitched to everything else in the universe; one is thus drawn away from substance and toward process, and then back again. This could even be the nature of the human standing in-between, the dialectic of making the real. If our religions, then, are the structures which binds (*religio*) the

10 This is too deep a hole to inspect so briefly, so for those interested: Whatever custom and culture are or are said to be, what is variously called *nature* itself is first and foremost a *system of signs* and we are among the myriad which are its product, and now, insofar as we are become as the gods which inhabit nature, it's co-creators. The process by which human agency acting in concert has come to influence the world but misunderstand itself is the very process by which Kafka describes our condition in the world: “man found the Archimedean point, but he used it against himself; it seems that he was permitted to find it only under this condition.” (Quoted from Arendt's *Between Past and Future*) This version of “Heisenberg's man” for Arendt is only ever able to see itself insofar as it is the only species that “desires to be at home in a “territory” as large as possible.” (278)

individual to the community, our nation is of course a kind of religion. It defines identity and forms allegiances, but as a thinking creature with the ability to choose, the human has long been a tribe to many nations. Push and pull. Again.

A hermeneutic phenomenology of the topos of the text as nature thus requires that one distinguish the marks of different points in the ecological web of the whole. To do so it very much helps to first *be able to stand in the vineyard of the text, to read toward the harmony of meaning while trying to situate the text in the topos of political history*. One's ultimate allegiance in this view of philosophy is *mystical*¹¹ rather than political, insofar as the anchor of nature itself is an orientation toward the lived participation in harmony rather than; being anchored either to reason or the human weighs down our dreams and impoverishes our worlds. This opens the idea, with Eduardo Kohn, that *forests* might, actually, *think*. At the stage of integrating the magical and mythical with the mental, this entails a discussion of the way the truths of oral indigeneity have been intertwined with those of our written wisdom traditions in often curious ways; multimodal perception is a curious thing by its nature, as it awakens the strange, a-topos, or out of place that stands, of necessity, between different modalities and objects of perception. This is to track and mark the texts of history, which are inscribed on the thought of the world.

For every season, turn, turn turn. Take up the idea of *epistrophe*, the *turning* around toward which the soul aligns itself with the world, and by which also a naturalizing theory of judgment can work to re-enchanting the immanent world of lived sensorial participation; put even more grandly, more mythically, this is to realize the take up the gifts of the gods, to retrieve Epimetheus' anamnestic wisdom from Prometheus' stolen fire, in order to better dwell in and inhabit our own kind of creaturely nature, but also arguably just to inhabit the web-and-network of human and more-than-human personalities, which emerge in the dynamic dance of between interest and beauty, to capture the face of the world. *This paper tells a story about how this dance is inscribed in nature and conditions its form for us as organisms thrown into the world we come to co-create.*

Given just *how* grandiose all of this so far sounds, and to keep the more Apollonian of readers from becoming annoyed or disgusted by these flights of fancy, do know that the song here is being sung in search of order. One might ask while reading this paper if the author knows how to tell a story, as what is in front of you here seems both to begin and end too many times; it is a story told, in time, about the music of the world, a kind of phenomenology of the deep time of political storytelling, in order to realize and actualize the topology of politics and the space of its imaginary and affective domains which together constitute the emotional substrata of reason. Epistolary philosophy is difficult insofar as it unburdens the author's own mind to the claims of reason, but not, alas, the mind of the reader, of necessity; they have their own marks to make.

Now that I have set up the story, and then apologized for the way it is told, I would like to begin again, to declare that this story *really* begins and ends with birds. To begin: upon being asked why the Klezmer musician couldn't read musical notation, a traditional folk response was to say 'does the bird

11 Drawing here primarily on James' definition, and Pollan's recent book on "entheogenics" and mind-manifesting "drug experiences," *How to Change your Mind*, which makes explicit some of the therapeutic powers of realignment to the world of nature, also some of radical implications of its ecological understanding of truth, a truth accountable also to what Pollan has earlier called *The Botany of Desire*.

know how to read music?'

In Hebrew cosmogony, Eden seems to have had not just the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but also a tree of life. Upon eating the fruit of knowledge one is no longer able to *inhabit* the world, insofar as one has become something outside of nature, something literally godlike. In this mythic telling, one of the things which places us outside of nature is alphabetic consciousness itself. This is also one of the reasons it is so interesting to read both Plato and Aristotle,¹² if one is attempting to make sense of the the making of the ancient as well as the modern worlds; they are situated at the cusp between mythic and mentalistic consciousness, which in the history of the region contained both palace civilizations and the subsequent period of lawlessness which led to the development of the Athenian democracy. Thus the *bird* isn't the one with any problem accessing the notes of their song, and the Klezmer's passion can even be interpreted as an attempt at reprieve from exile into the word, by way of music. Explicating the nature of this gnomic claim is among the aims of this paper.

Aristotle, for one, would say that the bird does not know how to read music, but he would at least agree that the bird sings and dances. In the *Politics*, with its orientation toward civic as well as intellectual virtue or excellence (*arete*), he writes that “music ought to be employed not for the purpose of one benefit that it confers but on account of several.” (1341b38). For Aristotle it is clear that music influences emotional states by way of presenting “likenesses” of a range of emotions. From the perspective of political self-sufficiency, and given the priority of the concept of the political to human flourishing on this ground, it should also inform our choice of emotional disposition (*hexeis*).

The question for today's “polis,” if one can reasonably speak of such a thing, is bounded by the system of horizons between, on the one hand, the system of speculative fabulations “us” moderns have dismissed, whether in the form of dream analysis (*oneiromancy*) or the reading of the land and its signals, and, on the other hand, the originary topos binding the democratic form of politics in place, as concerning all standing as one equidistant from the center, as do all others. To understand music from the perspective of justice entails finding the mean between *equity* and *esteem*, captured by what Aristotle calls the two senses in which one speaks of the proportionality of justice; this turns out to be very closely related to the claims of reason itself.

To attempt, however, to provide a history of irrationality, which Justin E.H. Smith (2019) calls “the dark side of reason,” is to attempt to formalize a folk theory. This can be done, but only through the same process of reduction by which the *ratio* cuts. The rational organizes *but impoverishes* its content, by fixing its place in the labyrinthine web of meaning in the four-dimensional world of space understood through time; that is by reducing four dimensions to three, by failing to integrate. Having divided in this way, the claims of reason discard the potentiality of the remainder insofar as they become unable to see the twin face of their own creator, this exists in poetry, affect, emotion, and in what, following Marcel Henaff and Tracy Strong, could be called a new political *topos* for the manifold space of the political imaginary in history.¹³

12 And why so many are today drawn to Hellenism as a kind of antidote to the puzzled condition of humanist modernity after Romanticism, but without an ultimate response to the question of priority of concerning the individual and the whole.

13 It also could be said to stand between Ian Hacking, John Searle, and Heraclitus, to say that the social world is constructed, by way of dynamic nominalism, out of the world of brute facts, but that the natural world is instead of cyclical flux in which life, imitating nature, rides the edge of chaos.

This idea of *defining violence* is central also to the project “the control of reason” which Marcel Henaff called *La Violence dans la Raison*, a control which cannot see beyond the “violence” of its own conception of the patterns which give order and structure to the world. Literally inscribed on the floor of the UC San Diego Price Center is Roland Barthes' saying that “all violence is the illustration of a poetic stereotype.” This is the “violence” of reason itself, and the question being examined here is whether politics can find a way to situate its stories in a way where reason can again aim to “see” the affective and imaginative dark sides which fracture its own reflection.

In *The Dynamics of Transformation*, Grant Maxwell presents an eclectic but compelling answer to this question, drawing especially on a fractal reading of Jean Geber's account of a five-stage schema between the *archaic, magical, mythical, mental*, and *integral* stages of human development. With the aid of James, Jung, and Whitehead,¹⁴ Maxwell reads into this a process philosophy of political consciousness as a mirror to the universals of the human experience concerning the archetype of age, the *senex*. This is to see the world *refracted* through the prism of one's account of being, and to trace an emergent view of the process of historical development. In such a view there are many ways that humans have lived in the world in the past, and the process of integration we call human wisdom draws on all and each; specifically, Maxwell claims that it requires the human to understand the fourth-dimensionality of time, in order to really situate ourselves in history after both Copernicus and the quantum self. Maxwell and Smith both also draw on Julian Jaynes' conception of the bicameral mind, linking the mental stage in particular to the left hemisphere of the brain, with its corresponding influences on the structure of our minds and the worlds we co-constitutively bring into being with our collective thought in action, and this already entering into the actualized thought of the world which we call the project of nature; this is the world in which human consciousness participates in, the natural technology of which human *techne* is the craft that makes the human become as gods.

Difference and repetition inscribe being on the knowledge in and of the world as experienced through the prism of the space-time continuum. In this “view,” history itself is an emergent but discontinuous process, with knowledge of thought in history structured as a coming to knowledge of being in time; *the text is but one topos in the space of politics, which is manifold*. The topos of Hellenic antiquity is especially interesting because they too were deeply interested in the relation between *mythos* and *logos* through which the rational inhabits the real, but also through which the real can become chained unknowingly to the very dreams of reason. Both Hellenism and the counter-Enlightenment sought to reconcile the rational to the real, both in their ways drawing attention to the limits of definition which cohere with the limits of the lived human horizon, the ground under our feet, and the other conditioning factors, of which history is but one, which come together to define our lived conception of the history of the world. The asymptote is unreachable, a limit *by definition*, such that the very project of archeology can be defined as the idea of integrating history into the surrounding field of habitat. Another way to try to frame this could be to say that stadial theories got us *to* modernity, but have yet to get us *through* it. One way to do so would be to conceptualize the fractured face of reason as its participation in the ecstasies of time (the past, present, and future), and thus to “see,” to *realize for oneself* that the modern mind denies quality to time.

14 This book takes up the question of the making of the modern mind, and argues that Hegel's idealism, James' pragmatism, Jung's analytical psychology, Whitehead's process philosophy combine to make sense of the stage upon which humans living today find themselves situated, in the structures of reason-in-and-as-history, but also in the fractal weave that both constitutes and rides the edge of chaos, exploring, in thought, the fractured topology of the forms and archetypes which make up the house of our mind, this house divided within, often against, itself. Indeed, *culture* could be described, maybe even defined, as the edge of chaos between the knowledge of science and the knowledge of poetry.

It may help here to think of two events concerning monuments, both inscribed in recent time by the popular imagination: the imaging of the M83 black hole and the fire in the Notre Dame Cathedral. The latter monument is one of the icons which gives its meaning to French identity in the world; this alone explains why the nation has a will to restore it, and the way of inquiry needn't look very hard to understand this. The case of what it means to create a picture of the phenomenon we have come to call a black hole is more complicated, or at least inhabits a different domain in the political imaginary. The complications themselves provide a way in, much as the epigrammatic or gnomonic wisdom of a Heraclitus or a Nietzsche¹⁵ is designed to illustrate by way of *aporia*, to jar the reader out time and place, to both the wonder *and* puzzlement in which philosophy is said to begin *and* end.

The asymptote is the limit which defines the inquiry by giving it scope, by situating it in a place, and in each and every such case of defining the limit language puts forwards its propositions, its judgments to the world. To “make sense” of this it helps to take up what it might mean to be able to speak of imagining a black hole with a pictorial image representing its material “face,” the accretion disk surrounding the event horizon. But this giving of a face to nature is one of the ways through which art transfigures the real, integrally. In Whitehead's view, this is to orient oneself explicitly toward process, to better see the grooves in history that can make the human provincial not only in time but also in place, to learn about the ways by which mankind embodies itself in institutions and thus to gain knowledge of political memory itself.

To arrive at this place, however, again requires the difficult task of engaging a in history of the dark side of reason. The attempt to formalize all folk theories could be conceived of as Promethean but also Sisyphean attempt to bring all night into the day. Adopting the frame of disruption is to attempt to step outside of the periodicity of time and the linearity of reason, or maybe instead to scuttle laterally into the colocality of the spaces in-between. In this view manifesting the human will is the project of a history in the world, but we have put the cart before the horse if we understand the human to be the architect of reason itself.

Hume is thus ultimately right to say that reason not only is but should ever be a servant to the passions which it organizes and drives.¹⁶ This provides an entry point into the debate concerning the nature-culture divide, word which this paper provides an integralist attempt at nature-culture consilience and convergence. The problem of consilience itself stands between the magisteria, between science and poetry, as it does between reason and the sacred, secular, as well as civil religions that bind us to our many and overlapping nations; these are the identities which bind individuals to their time and place in history.

It's fruitless to only look to antiquity get us out of history, insofar as we would be looking to the roots to see landscape, above and below ground. Better to see in the process between the *phusilogoï*, from

15 “Nietzschean aphorism is a form of language which is concerned with the simultaneous limitation and inversion of meaning. The aphorism is not open to indefinitely many meanings, but it does present us with a thought which when pushed to its limit or horizon (the *horismos*) reveals a second thought; it is an overturning or reversal of meaning (an *Umkehrung*), not its dissolution. The aphorism says that one begins to do philosophy seriously in a certain moment or *Augenblick*.” Gary Shapiro, “Nietzschean Aphorism as Art and Act” (*Man and World* 17:399-429 (1984))

16 A Smithian reading of Hume that's not as far from Aristotle as some readers would think is right to focus in on sentiments relevant to shame (a driver of morality's evolution); the focus is on right organization of emotion. For Aristotle this is arrived at through a *hexis* which constitutes human virtue in action. For Smith it appeals to the impartial spectator, to tease out the roles of nature and custom.

Pythagoras to Heraclitus to Democritus, but these are exemplars in the same way that the mind reconciles itself to the world, using concepts mapped into a place in the mind and squaring them with the perceptual in dreams, whether by night or day; the limits of control are entailed in the idea that reason *participates in nature*.

To Give a history of the dark side of reason is, it turns out, to venture outside of history itself, and back into habitat, but also back into the very cosmos; this is the appeal of ancient Hellenism's cyclical time sense which keeps us in a temporal loop between wonder and puzzlement. Nature is the first custom which, as Kant has it, "gives the rule to art." This is why genius is a resource of nature that is scarce by nature, but some exercises of perception summon it more than others. Hence again the puzzle of the face of a black hole, the reflection of which presents the human with the face of its own limits.

Time is the measure of reason as the horizon is the limit of Adam's task, to define the world. This is in fact the originary task of exile in the word, that of defining the horizons of the world, of giving it its peaks and its valleys in word. Standing integrally between the myths and *logoi* which define and then organize our world. Time gives a measure to the human participating in history.¹⁷ Indeed "time and history constitute a process of the world awakening, through the human mind, from a three-dimensional slumber into a four-dimensional phase-space." (39)¹⁸ By its very nature this manifold space eludes the linearity of reason's mode of thought. An integral politics is capable of such an unflattening insofar as it can integrate the mental with the archaic, magical, and mythic.

The novelty of the world itself creates the dialectic between history and habitat. A dialectical process of always thinking *through* something, to a beyond, is itself a part of the "reconciling third." Plato writes in the *Timaeus* (at 114) that "God invented and gave us sight to the end that we might behold the courses of intelligence in the heaven, and apply them to the courses of our own intelligence." Some 2500 years later, Jung wrote that "our psyche is set up in accord with the structure of the universe, and what happens in the macrocosm likewise happens in the infinitesimal and most subjective reaches of the psyche . . . In this way the imagination liberates itself from the concretion of the object and attempts to sketch the image of the invisible as something which stands behind the phenomenon." (179) In both of these passages one is asking questions of what one is doing when one is doing philosophy, how it should be gone about. And whether "doing philosophy" is just thinking with priority to reason and "doing poetry" is dancing to the music and rhythms of nature and making art that translate or transvert those rhythms into the being of reason, or whether it is specifically to follow the path of reason to the point of declaring a break from nature. This is very broadly to view history as thought participating in time, but as a result the history of the present is a very complicated thought-web of overlaid systems of meaning build on the experience of history as well as the history-in-writing which remains to us in primary and secondary forms as a way to converse with the minds of the past.

17 To quote Maxwell's *The Dynamic Transformation*, "For a modern, rationalist sensibility, the suggestion that human history constitutes the process of coming to awareness of a fourth degree of freedom may seem absurd", but "this sense of absurdity may have more to do with the limitations of the conventional modern mentality than with the inherent implausibility of the idea itself." (27) That is, that "time and history constitute a process of the world awakening, through the human mind, from a three-dimensional slumber into a four-dimensional phase-space." (39) This manifold space eludes the linearity of reason's mode of thought.

18 "For a modern, rationalist sensibility, the suggestion that human history constitutes the process of coming to awareness of a fourth degree of freedom may seem absurd", but "this sense of absurdity may have more to do with the limitations of the conventional modern mentality than with the inherent implausibility of the idea itself." Also from page 39 of Maxwell's *Dynamics of Transformation*.

The twin faces of the control of reason are the dual aspects of the human condition understood as the manifested conscious and unconscious thoughts of a collective will in time. That the control of reason has become lost in science in something which Goethe's conception of a science that cultivates the sensible tried to forestall; and with discussion of quantum selves we seem to be returning to question concerning predication and the problems of periodicity and orientation which stand at the gates of space-time puzzlement. To define a thing is to define its limits and to place it within a horizon, the *horismos* that is in fact the very word for "definition" in Aristotle's *Metaphysics Zeta*, considered by many to be the peak of the mountain in philosophy which calls being substance and sets out to define it. One could even say this is Adam's Task itself, to give word and meaning to things. But philosophy has many mountains, and since to define is to situate a horizon, better perhaps to stay with the process before the horizon becomes fixed.

To integrate the human in its horizon, with Maxwell and following Geber, is thus to situate it against the deeper time of its history, by way of the puzzles of emergent dynamics which themselves present themselves, in time. This integration could also be conceived of as an *attunement*, in a way that synaesthetic participation in the world is an originary mythic attunement to the sound of the world in flux, of the wind in the trees and the water in the river.

David Abram begins his work *The Spell of the Sensuous* with the line, "Humans are *tuned* for relationship." (ix) And for the mammoth proportion of human life on this planet, it was the shamans and magicians who facilitated this tuning, specifically by mediating "the moral efficacy of the landscape" (156) with stories that throw communities in place beyond the given, but then bring them back by situating them in the ground of the past and the horizon of the future. In Mircea Eliade's telling, "indigenous peoples inhabit a cyclical time periodically regenerated through the ritual repetition of mythic events." In Abram's reading this is "a style of thinking" "that associates *truth* not with static fact, but with a quality of relationship," (216) one for which an explanation entails telling a story rather than presenting a set of reasons or arguments. (265) To provocatively simplify, "space, in oral culture, is directly experienced as *place*." (190) This paper thus takes up Paul Shephard view that "the idea of history is itself a western invention whose central theme is the rejection of habitat." Indigenous people inhabit the world, while we moderns are instead placeless in time, caught up in the world-historicity of the concept of humanity itself, but also, with the alphabetic peoples of the book, exiled in the word itself. As Abram distills Husserl's own phenomenological "overthrow of the Copernican theory," "the "ark of the world" is the "root basis" for all life-worlds." That is, our bodily percepts are the basis of our mental concepts.

At multiple and cumulative points throughout this history which has erased habitat, a profound schism has opened up between the two. In this view the earth *provides* space for all terrestrial bodies, but with Merleau-Ponty we tend often to *block perceptual reciprocity* with another sensing being "by linguistically defining the surrounding world as a determinate set of objects" (56). This is the project by which humanity makes a world in its own image, forgetting that the tools it takes as its own were nature's all along. Thus does Stuart Kauffman spend his life arguing that we are *At Home in the Universe*, that life is a phase transition in nature, (48) as is every subsequent development in and of life. *This*, by contrast, is a view of history in which the trilobite is as comfortable as the human, insofar as "species live in the niches afforded by other species. They always have and presumably always will." (214) The evolution of coevolution concerns an ongoing series of work at the frontier between Red Queen arms races and evolutionary stable strategies. Kauffman calls this the "edge of chaos." between the rigid stability of ESS and the high peaks and cavernous valleys of the Red Queen regime.

The world stands in balance. The multimodal sensory perception of the world, which itself *balances* and *harmonizes* the world of the mind that stands between percepts and concepts, is also influenced by circadian rhythms which inform an inquiry into cosmic harmony. Russell Foster and Leon Kreitzman's *Rhythms of Life* (2004) looks at “photoperiodically regulated events in birds” (149) such as migration, moulting, and song regulation. More metaphorically: the wind in the trees is literally inscribed in the deep history of migration. Part of this statement is a provocation to think about a history that can include the trilobyte as well as the human, or in this case the migratory bird, but it is also an invitation to see how music and synaesthesia often go hand in hand, and how the synaesthetic view is closer to the pre-reflective view of life and is thus a bridge to the human condition prior to language, with which music coevolved. As Abram puts it, “the intertwining of sensory modalities seems unusual to us only to the extent that we have become estranged from our direct experience” (58). Much the same *but in a different way*¹⁹ for the experience of color, which stands in relation to sound much the way the Red Queens of the world ride the “edge of chaos” against the evolutionary stable strategies which call them into reality, and which sometimes end up calling only themselves reality, seeing only the face of reason but not its mirror image.

The more we learn of consciousness, the more we see it as an interplay between the fundamental stories well tell ourselves about the world. In Ted Chiang's short story “Tower of Babylon,” the protagonist climbs to the top of Nimrod's tower only to immediately bottom out again, emerging again near the beginning of the ascent to the tower. All he has learned in his journey is “knowledge about the shape of the world.”²⁰ This “knowledge about the shape of the world” is a lesson that is literally learned as the world turns, as one gains knowledge of more of the surfaces of the cylinder upon which the meaning of the world's knowledge is inscribed, in loop. By gaining this knowledge of the world one also can glimpse paradoxically *overlapping divide* that stands between between mythos and logos.

The whole is the record of the past written toward the speculated futures both of our pasts and our

19 Emphasis is a phase shift. If this annoyed you a lot, it's probably because a nihilism has come to inhabit the sarcastic disposition. Possibly it was there all a long but is now front and center in a way David Foster Wallace originally described and which Hénaff and Strong, and ultimately following Adorno and Hornkheimer much as the spirit of this essay could as much be said to be in the Heraclitean turn of Heidegger's philosophy, toward a process ontology over an ontology of being. There are many authors looking in the scents of the trees being marked up here.

20 “He was in Shinar. He had returned to the earth. He had climbed above the reservoirs of heaven and arrived back at the earth. Had Yahweh brought him to this place to keep him from reaching further above? Yet Hillalum still hadn't seen any signs, any indication that Yahweh noticed him. He had not experienced any miracle that Yahweh had performed to place him here. As far as he could see, he had merely swum up from the vault and entered the cavern below. Somehow the vault of heaven lay beneath the earth. It was as if they lay against each other, though they were separated by many leagues. How could that be? How could such distant places touch? Hillalum's head hurt trying to think about it. And then it came to him: a seal cylinder. When rolled upon a tablet of soft clay, the carved cylinder left an imprint that formed a picture. Two figures might appear at opposite ends of the tablet, though they stood side by side on the surface of the cylinder. All the world was as such a cylinder. Men imagined heaven and Earth as being at the ends of a tablet, with sky and stars stretched between; yet the world was wrapped around in some fantastic way so that heaven and Earth touched. It was clear now why Yahweh had not struck down the tower, had not punished men for wishing to reach beyond the bounds set for them—for the longest journey would merely return them to the place whence they'd come. Centuries of their labor would not reveal to them any more of creation than they already knew. Yet through their endeavor, men would glimpse the unimaginable artistry of Yahweh's work, in seeing how ingeniously the world had been constructed. By this construction, Yahweh's work was indicated, and Yahweh's work was concealed. Thus would men know their place. Hillalum rose to his feet, his legs unsteady from awe, and sought out the caravan drivers. He would go back to Babylon. Perhaps he would see Lugatum again. He would send word to those on the tower. He would tell them about the shape of the world.”

future, but also concerning the mythologies of the many nations we imagine for ourselves, which make up part of the fabric of meaning as we, each and all, understand it. Meaning exists in the world and nature prior to logic, which like reason consists in a process of ordering the real in the world by actualizing its potential meaning in the world. The ordering of the world inscribed in deep time and history is as much present in the texts of nature as in the very rhythms of nature's oscillations, and the movements which make up middle boundaries between the microscopic and the macroscopic, the scales of at which atomic particles vibrate and black holes are imaged rather than the scale of protein-bonding, cellular life, or the humming of an organism up to the scale of our kind monkey-which-is-an-ape-which-is-a-human.

Nature does not, of necessity, carve at the joints in the way the human mind needs to carve, but the rational mind has sublimated its own violence through its own rationalizations, deepening and deepening from the originary thinking ego. This deep history of exile into thought sowed the seeds for a commitment to what could be called a project of violence against nature, most clearly laid bare by Francis Bacon but then revolutionized in the phase shift to modernity which Cartesian mind-body dualism brought about in history. The heir's to modernity's crisis of reason remain deaf to the harmony of things in the affective and imaginative domains. One of the central puzzles of modernity concerns the question of rationality posed by the counter-Enlightenment which constitutes its dark twin. Looking to the other side reason is again to engage in a phase shift, to change states. A new *kind*. Sometimes this can be created simply by a turning in place, an oscillation. There are, however, stories one does not tell, rabbits one does not chase, if one does not want to go mad with respect to human civilization.²¹ But by unflattening our perspectives we can learn to appreciate the epigrammatic wisdom of Heraclitan flux, in which “the road up and the road down is one and the same.”²²

In a spatially embodied view of the lived world, however, there can be no perspective without parallax, or without multiple and somehow converging points of view; similarly there can be no harmony without at least two notes. This project of harmonizing the soul with the social world is thus a mythic archetype in the same way that one “sees” an issue or moves “forward” on understanding something. Making sense of the human point of view in history requires a more gnomic knowledge, for it is to make sense of the meaning of the fire which is the gift of the gods. These are all, however, places in the *manifold* house of the mind. This process that again is Adam's Task, that of “seeing” the world by defining it. This could even be said to be the work of the rational animal itself.

Thus a turn now to better integrate Aristotle, and especially to the purposes of *Politics* VIII: Phillip Brüllmann's “Music Builds Character”²³ boils it down nicely to the question “should the children of an ideal state learn to play a musical instrument, or is this a superfluous, maybe even an ignoble activity?” (371) The ends of education are multiple and often overlapping. Civic education has its own ends, for Aristotle as it does for us, such as not “vulgarizing the frame”, for him. For him as well education into intellectual virtue is something different, and into good character something different still, than the playing of an instrument. It eventually turns out that education in music, especially for civic purposes, should be bounded by “moderation, possibility, and suitability.”²⁴ In Brüllmann's reading, Aristotle's

21 As Richard Sorabji points out, in *Animal Minds and Human Morals: the Origins of the Western Debate* (1993): “civilization would collapse if we were required to spare animals.” This particular *agnus dei*...

22 ὁδὸς ἄνω κάτω μία καὶ ὡυτή (fragment 60)

23 In the 2013 *Apeiron* essay, “Music Builds Character: Aristotle, *Politics* VIII 5, 1340a14-b5.

24 These are the closing words of the *Politics: to te meson kai to dunaton kai to prepon*. To stitch rhapsodically just once more: In *Politics* VIII Aristotle discusses civic education, emphasizing throughout the nature and purpose of musical

account of music differs from Plato insofar as music is not just mimetic in a representative sense, but also that it contains “likenesses” (*homoiomata*) of emotions ranging from anger and gentleness to courage and temperance. Whereas for Plato “education has to aim at making people love and hate the right things,” for Aristotle performance and judgment of music concerns not just mimetic imitation but a process of finding the isonomic mean (*meson*). Moral virtues, for Aristotle, are dispositions (*hexeis*) instead of affections (*pathe*) (*EN II 5*), but also “also, and mainly, because they include certain forms of behavior and action.” (*praxis*); the correct emotional response concerns one of degree, of finding the mean. This is the project of judgment itself, though it should be said to stand well below the level of perspective required for a contemporary political technologist of power.

Aristotle's *Metaphysics* begins with the well-known line that “all men by nature desire to know.” Less well-known, but equally important for the purposes of this paper, is the next: “a sign of this is our esteem (*agathesis*) for the senses.” Here it is significant also that the sense primarily discussed is sight, one of our more distance-oriented senses; Aristotle is himself quite skeptical of the Pythagorean project of taking changeless mathematical entities as their principles, as the *archai* which organize one's process of coming to right opinion. Aristotle instead takes upon the path by which there are gods in all things,²⁵ the sensible no less than the intelligible (989b). And he roots his physics and motion and metaphysics on defining substances, so his was a project of determining substance which ultimately entails poetry as well as rhetoric as well as instrumental reasoning, and no doubt everything else in to universe to which we find things unexpectedly hitched.

The *zoon politikon*, however, is interested in the *common* good, in living well together by ruling and being ruled *at once*. The mythos of a people constitute the lived wisdom of life in place. In the case of ancient Greece it helps to look to such originary genealogies as between Thales and Heraclitus on the gods which inhabit all things, and on the way this epigram passes on the wisdom of the traditions of oral indigeneity by which people around around the world already inscribed the deep time of the music of place into history. We subsequent examiners are those who leave on marks and tracks on these texts. One could side with the poets more thoroughly, or with Diogenes or the haughty Heraclitus, and join the crowd of the Aristophanes *Birds* and choose interpret political thought as something closer to to organism's urge to mark history, to piss on it, so to speak. To join Heraclitus in playing knucklebones with children rather than play at politics with the self-styled adults. The children have yet to grow into their own ideas the way adults tend to, and in this way remain more open to the world.

This “ruling and being ruled in turn” has also its affinity with the riding of the edge of chaos which is

education. After arguing in chapter two that music is not just for play but also for leisure, or *schole*, and in chapter three that children should be taught music both for its utility and because “many other areas of study become possible” as a result,” the discussion proceeds to whether music can improve character (chapter four) and whether the musician is by its nature a vulgar craftsman or not (chapter five). The fifth chapter ends with Aristotle saying that “education in music is well adapted to the youthful nature; for the young owing to their youth cannot endure anything not sweetened by pleasure, and music is by nature a thing that has a pleasant sweetness. And we seem to have a certain affinity with tunes and rhythms; owing to which many wise men say either that the soul is a harmony or that it has a harmony.” (Loeb 661) The remainder of the book concerns what the young should learn to play with regard to civic virtue in particular (chapter six), and which harmonies and rhythms suit which topics and conduce to which educational ends (chapter 7), which ultimately for Aristotle are three and include moderation, possibility, and suitability (*to te meson kai to dunaton kai to prepon*). Natural philosophy could even be understood as a discussion between these three things: the appropriate organization of power, which always requires the work of harmonizing the possible to the suitable by way of the principle of moderation, or of right emotion, which underlies a theory of right action in which right *political* action concerns common rather than individual ends.

25 As Thales first said, and Heraclitus is said to indicate (“there are gods here too”) in *PA*'s invitation to biology.

part the tension between agonistic and affiliative behaviors, or between symbolism and diabolism themselves, which as throwing-together or pulling-apart are the two faces, or the two rooms, of the bicameral human mind. One way to ride the edge is see the action of politics as would a bricoleur of life-stories, stitching together (*rhapsodein*) the songs that make up the rhythms which inform an era's political imaginary.

This paper is heterodox both in tone and content, but is deeply enough rooted in the web of meaning in time to think that either Aristotle or the predecessors who served as his singular interlocutors got much more right than is understood by most subsequent thinkers until very recently, if only because few since have taken the requisite effort to look both back and sideways to make sense of the intervening muddle of marks, and the difficulty of distinguishing signal from noise, truth from bullshit. Rather than closely looking at the deep archeographies which have built up like nets of meaning crushed down like geological sedimentation, the tower at the surface keeps building higher, toward the heavens, and as a result ever less able to see anything than the heights it imagines, which collocates to Adam's finishing of the task of naming the world, of giving it a definition. But the task can only one for humanity, not for individual humans, who burn with the knowledge of the *fire* which embodies the concept of a phase shift in nature. Only upon acknowledgement of deep history of the idea of being fallen from grace do the thermodynamics of the universe impose themselves; life is the burning against nature's gradient. Overinformation, however, pollutes political topology no less than it does it psyche, and instead produces ever more of a burning only toward the mediated reflections of an increasingly algorithmic subjectivity, a kingdom of means in which the ultimate end, "humanity," stands like same the idea of a utopian future which haunted the twentieth century. This is Yeats "rough beast . . . slouching toward Bethlehem," "Turning and turning in the widening gyre."

This hermeneutic method maintains as a motto the priority of Charles Sanders Peirce's, 'do not block the way of inquiry,' but understands *inquiry* as only ever being able to sit at the door of the infinite library which divides the two hemispheres of our brains and minds, divided in the way they are precisely to allow the human to reconcile itself, to *integrate*, to the dualities of the world. This is ultimately is to learn importance of staying with the trouble, to learn to ride the edge of chaos and to call that life. But this is also to see the appeal at least of the path back to the present-in-place already with us in deep time and history, through a participation in the music of life. The difficulties of standing in the in-between are myriad, but especially concern the deepest and most-longstanding rifts, such as between oral indigeneity and written monotheism, but also between natural philosophy and the increasingly world-historical and humanist project of modern science. This project, however, is one that evacuates power from nature, over time. The working of the natural world is the vital energy (*energon*) at work in the operation of the universe itself; it is also, but secondarily rather than primarily, a thing of the human mind. This "thing at work" is nature itself, what Aristotle called the "doctor doctoring himself."

Human excellence, however, is not of the kind that understands things not in motion, and not in this way 'fallen'. That the contemporary understanding of the debate over the Judeo-Christian religion's role in history mixes up not only the debate over alphabetism and monotheism, but also the properly transcendent wisdom at the heart of natural philosophy of motion in its relation to the music which produces the symphony in time that is life.

Technology is thus a human participation in nature. Humans are embodied in the world of emergent

nature, and how we have always and will always continue to exist in niches created by affordances of coevolution with all other organisms. This includes the human niche. Thus understood our penchant for technology and agriculture are as much a form of imitation from nature through the *exphrasis* of art in which nature itself participates as being in time. But if one is evaluating one's craftsmanship it is difficult to go about truly judging the works of nature, the maker of the craft of crafts. Better instead, following Hegel down through Arendt (and often beyond Marx), to see history and philosophy as a dialectic manifesting the real, but then to again look beyond history and reason, to attempt to see the enveloping habitat and world.

The thinking being still exists in the co-created world of appearances, just as it imagines space through the measure of time. For the purposes of human life, time is a critical force structuring all lives, as all beings come into the world, have different peaks and valleys of development and experience, and then leave the world of the living. A beginning, a middle, an end. But as thinking humans collectively engaged in a project of thinking physics in concert (that is, science), we can see that time and space are not separated out in this way, but instead of time as a measure primarily of the progress of the human species. This view again has its origins in the development of monotheism and its relation to alphabetic writing and reaches in apotheosis in Augustine's argument that time and the concept of humanity are one and the same. Because the measure of truth is ultimately understood with reference to the meaning of one's life. This was perhaps best explained by Viktor Frankl, who realized first of all that the will to meaning is at the least co-originary with the will to power, and that anyone with a will to meaning by definition has a will to life, because meaning is the measure of truth, and truth of the measure of judgment.

Because, however, of the stink of what often appears to be one or another scholarly pissing contest, it is difficult to briefly situate Aristotle's own account of the relation between music and education for the same purpose it is difficult to look at any one topic in Aristotle or even word in antiquity too closely; too many people have already drunk from this or that well, so to speak, and each having decided what it tastes like has put back a *residue* of their own. Yes, "through a glass, darkly," and often spat back in. Maybe sometimes the waters that constitute the world of political thought need that kinds of cleansing. Mill for one said himself that Rousseau dropped "like a bomb" onto European Philosophy. At least from the perspective of the political technologist, the philosopher is always going to be throwing bombs. It's what they do.

To approach the end of this paper with another mythic archetype: that of Alice through the looking-glass. As Alberto Manguel's book *Curiosity* has it, "throughout her adventures . . . Alice confronts unreason with simple logic. Convention (the artificial construct of reality) is set against fantasy (the natural reality)." This is thus to take up once more Arendt's inquiry concerning "the intramural warfare between common-sense reasoning and speculative thinking going on in the mind of the philosopher" (*Thinking*, 83) and to pair it with Alice's realization that the world down the rabbit hole is both like and unlike the world of languaging humans. Upon falling down the rabbit hole and altering her relation to time and space, Alice has to decide how big or small she can or should be; and that she repeatedly finds herself identifying with animals humans eat or exterminate is telling: the mouse drowning in her own tears (pest), and the doe that runs off upon remembering its name (prey).

To think about the world is to understand the forms of being which participate in the harmony of life; this wonderment of inquiry after nature has a humility to it insofar as the object of inquiry is nature

rather than our own reflection, which is again quite literally vanity. But to step through the mirror, with Alice, or with the mirrors of human reality reflected in the phenomenology of prey species, such as is present in Richard Adams' *Watership Down*, is to see a world defined only its relation of co-constitution of nature's web of meaning, in to which human life steps, in time, not only into being as such but being human in a late stage of history. Humans set history apart from nature but outside history there has always remained habitat, at every scale, from the orbit of the atom to the accretion disk of a black hole, to the habitat of the "feeling" hydra of 650 million years ago, to the bacterial life which populated space on the surface of earth well before that. Our "feelings" are in this sense rooted in our thought but also in the felt history of deep time itself. As a result feelings really are in a sense prior to thought, and remain constitutive not only of the relation between the felt experience of organisms thrown into time-space, but also in turn between the organism and its ground and horizon given the way its work and niche define its way of being, its horizons. To remember all of this this is not just participate in nature but more deeply to revive a civic virtue that is also an action-oriented ecophilosophy of nature. A student of comparative political topology in today's world is thus an interpreter of the psychology of different cultures' mediating structures.

By inscribing the habitat of time in place, as beings in history we always in search of our originary Eden only to ever and always find it with us all along but out of reach, as one's own face is out of reach unless it can be reflected back as well as brought to light; that is, seen. We have again now literally "imaged" the frontier of the event horizon that is a black hole's accretion disk. The radius of this disk larger than the distance that the Voyager probe has yet to travel from the earth. One could build on Mark Twain and say one can't see straight if the imagination is out of focus, and a task of reading the river is to learn the work of reading the rhythms of life. With some education into the topic, whether by the experience of life over time or by reading the marks left before, one can learn to try to "see" a black hole, although all one is really summoned to by this is the paradox of space-time itself. But in any case one *cannot* ultimately see the thing itself, as the idea of what a black hole actually is stands *at the limit* of the space-time continuum itself.

An example, to actually close with actual birds (though they are still only virtual to you, they will be made real in the sad telling). Upon arriving home two weeks ago from a long family vacation, my wife Alex and I found that we had accidentally trapped two sparrows in our condominium before leaving early in the morning a month or so ago. One of them was dead. The other one was in a horrible state and flew out upon our opening the door which acts as a window in our living room. They were likely a couple who had found a place for the night, unnoticed, and then who were shut in as we left before dawn for my parents house, then the airport. Upon our return, we spent some time cleaning the evidence of their accidental habitation of the confined space at the boundary of public and private life. That this was a disharmony is a fact not just of reason but also of nature and proportion. One doesn't need to look beyond the rhythms of life to know this is true, or at least that this shared set of time spaces stands as an event pointing out the view of history as a tear in the fabric of habitat. A turning in place, an oscillation, is no less a motion than a movement; but such confinement under an extreme demonstration of the absence of care is also a story that provides a warning in life, an actual cautionary tale. Among other things, my wife and I will definitely not be leaving the screen door ajar, but we will likely also go about bushwhacking the house before leaving for any long period.

Part of the purpose of a life is to take the meaning it has created and inscribe it on the world. Or just a train of rationalizations from a will seeking to explain away a guilty conscience with reference to the

weird and winding way of the path of Hermes the messenger, in in-betweenness arriving in dreams to stand as the messenger of the real, as dusk and dawn punctuate the rhythms which separate day and night, and the music inscribed into the myths which personify such vital natures. The rhythms of a day passed influence the choices, habits, and dispositions structured around the thoughts which in turn condition our shared future. Best we think about it together, and then act.