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Continental philosophy of religion often takes place within the horizons of phenomenology. A central theme of this tradition is the correlation, in one form or another, of intentional act (noesis) and intentional object (noema), the "object" as given to or taken by the subject. But in dialectical tension with this theme is the notion of inverted intentionality in which the arrows of meaning bestowing intentionality come toward the self rather than emanating from the self. This theme is developed by Sartre, Levinas, and Derrida, among others. Since each of these is in some fashion an atheist, it is surprising but important that their reflections on what it means to be seen or to be addressed keep turning toward the question of God. This suggests that the basic concept is important for the philosophy of religion, at least in monotheistic contexts.

> Where have you hidden
> Beloved, and left me moaning?
> You fled like the stag
> After wounding me . . .[1]

How strange! Are not the hunter's arrows supposed to wound the stag? But here the arrows fly not from the hunter to the stag but from the stag to the hunter. No doubt John has been reading contemporary French philosophy; for Sartre, Levinas, and Derrida, are highly interested in such a reversal, one in which the arrows of intentionality do not have the subject as their source but as their target.

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[1]These are the opening lines of *The Spiritual Canticle* by St. John of the Cross, his poetic version, along with commentary, of the Song of Songs, a.k.a. the Song of Solomon, a.k.a. the Canticle. See *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, 1991), p. 471. In the commentary, it is made clear that it is the love of the Beloved (Bridegroom, Son of God) that has wounded the lover (Bride, human soul). These wounds are the product of "fiery arrows," but since they are the wounds of love, they are "very delightful and desirable" (pp. 478, 484–485). I have used these lines in a different, but related context. See "The Welcome Wound: Emerging from the *il y a* Otherwise," *Continental Philosophy Review* 40 (2007), pp. 211–230.

Levinas, for example, in spite of his sustained critique of Husserl[2] and of Heidegger (for making an important but incomplete break with Husserl),[3] insists that his work is still phenomenology, even if not a phenomenology of "thematizing intentionality" and "the impatience of a *grasping*."[4] He is interested in "an intentionality of a wholly different type," one which is oriented to *non-adequation* rather than *adequation* and which does not have "the noesis-noema structure."[5]

We should remind ourselves of a few basic aspects of the "thematizing intentionality" in which a subject (re)presents an object (theme) to itself. Its noesis-noema structure refers to this subject-object relation, signifying both the distinction and the correlation between the intentional act and the intentional object. Intentional acts (noeses) are "certain mental processes of specific and changing structure, such as perception, imagination, memory, predication, etc."[6] Descartes can be read as offering a classification of intentional acts in a crucial question and answer. "But what then am I? A thing that thinks. What is that? A thing that doubts, understands, affirms, denies, is willing, is unwilling, and also imagines and has sensory perceptions."[7] The same object can be (differently) given in different kinds of intentional acts. Thus I can *perceive* the birds at one of our bird feeders; or I can *imagine* them as, say, having better manners; or I can *remember* what greedy little buzzards they have always been. These are three distinctively different modes of (re)presentation.

There are two mistakes one might make regarding the "objects" (noemata) of such intentional acts. The first would be to assume that they must be physical objects. They can be, of course, but they can also be facts, actual or possible. I can believe, doubt, or hope that the cat is on the mat. They can be events, actual or possible. I can remember or wish for my wedding. But they need not have the tie to the empirical world that physical objects, such facts, and such events have. They can be fictions, such as the Easter Bunny or Sidney Carton. Then there are "objects" whose ontological status is even more puzzling: the number three and the square circle. Each of these can be the "object" (theme, sense, content) of some particular type of

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[2]See especially "The Work of Edmund Husserl," in *Discovering Existence with Husserl*, trans. Richard A. Cohen and Michael B. Smith (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1998), pp. 47–87. This text is shorter, and perhaps more to the point than *The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology*.

[3]See especially "Is Ontology Fundamental?" in *Basic Philosophical Writings*, ed. Adriaan T. Peperzak, Simon Critchley, and Robert Bernasconi (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), pp. 1–10.

[4]*Of God Who Comes to Mind*, trans. Bettina Bergo (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), pp. xiii–xv. Henceforth *GCM*.

[5]*Totality and Infinity*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), pp. 23, 27, 29. Cf. pp. 294–295. Henceforth *TI*. In Husserlian phenomenology adequation involves the correspondence between meaning-intention and meaning-fulfillment, the intuitive confirmation of what an intentional act anticipates. See Investigation VI of *Logical Investigations*.

[6]*The Idea of Phenomenology*, trans. William P. Alston and George Nakhnikian (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), p. 9. Henceforth *IP*.

[7]Second Meditation.

awareness, what I am thinking "about." In each case they are the noematic correlate of a noetic act.

The second mistake to avoid is to think of the intentional "object" of an intentional act as transcendent, as "out there" somewhere apart from the act by which it is thematized or (re)presented to consciousness, as having some sort of positive ontological status on its own, as fictional characters, numbers, and even the square circle are sometime said to have. Thus the noema or sense (*Sinn*) is "the *perceived as perceived*," "the *remembered as remembered*," or "the *judged as judged*," and thus is immanent to the act whose object it is.[8] This sense (*Sinn*) may have some transcendent "object" as its reference (*Bedeutung*), but the two are phenomenologically distinct.[9]

This immanence has nothing to do with the distinction between the real and the imaginary. Thus, for example, objects of hallucinations and misperceptions are, as noemata, no more immanent to the intentional acts in which they are given than actual objects accurately perceived. The real snake I perceive correctly, the unreal snake I perceive during delirium tremens, and the coiled rope that I misperceive as a snake in the dark all have the same status phenomenologically. In each case the "object" (sense, theme) of an act of perception is a snake. The fact that in two of the three cases there is actually no snake there should not obscure this point. Neither hallucination nor misperception keeps the experience from being in the mode of perception. It is surely not an act of memory or imagination. In each case, phenomenologically speaking, I see a snake.[10]

What is of special import for present purposes is the notion of the intentional object as *constituted* by the intentional act and the functionally synonymous idea of intentionality as the act of *Sinngebung* (meaning bestowal). Husserl's "*principle of all principles*" states "*that every originary presentive intuition is a legitimizing source of cognition,* that *everything originarily* (so to speak, in its 'personal' actuality) *offered* to us *in 'intuition' is to be accepted simply as what it is presented as being,* but also *only within the limits in which it is presented there*" (*Ideas*, I, p. 44). Given Husserl's Cartesian aspirations, this is surprisingly far from being clear and distinct. But the appeal to intuition, combined with reference to what is "offered to" or "presented to" us, suggests a view of knowing as a kind of passive mirroring; but that is by no means his view. This is why the reference to intentional *acts* is not a solecism and the concept of the given is glossed in

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[8]*Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book*, trans. F. Kersten (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983), p. 214. Henceforth *Ideas*, I.

[9]See Gottlob Frege, "On Sense and Nominatum," in *Readings in Philosophical Analysis*, ed. Herbert Feigl and Wilfrid Sellars (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1949), pp. 85–102. 'Reference' would be a happier translation of Frege's '*Bedeutung*' than 'Nominatum.'

[10]It is possible to make this point, as I have just done, without mentioning the phenomenological reduction (ἐποχή) or buying into Husserl's neurotic, Cartesian fixation on the need for absolute certainty (much less the hope that suspending the natural attitude will provide it). But this understanding of immanence is obviously related to the reduction as the bracketing of all concern with transcendent reality.

terms of the active concepts of constitution and *Sinngebung*, meaning or sense bestowal.[11]

For example, over against the notion that things are "'simply there' and need just to be 'seen,'" Husserl argues that "this 'simply being there' consists of certain mental processes . . . such as perception, imagination, memory, predication, etc. . . . things come to be *constituted* in these mental processes." It is as such that things are "given," that is, "*exhibited* (represented) as so and so" (*IP* pp. 9–10; cf. p. 239). Thus the intentional act of constituting or meaning-bestowal (*Sinngebung*) is that by which something (in the broadest sense of 'something') is "made known" (*Ideas*, I, pp. 205–207).

The act of constitution does not bring things into being, transcendently speaking, as when God creates the world or Dickens creates Sidney Carton. It is a matter of appearance, presence, and meaning. Something "out there" in some mode of actuality or possibility (transcendently speaking) is brought to consciousness precisely *as* it is (re)presented by the constituting act: thus the actual snake *as snake* in genuine perception, nothing in particular *as snakes* in delirium tremens, or the rope *as snake* in misperception at night. In other words, the noematic object as presented meaning is not merely the mirroring of what is "out there."

Another way to put this is to say that the "objects" of consciousness can be *given* to consciousness only as and insofar as they are *taken* by various intentional acts. Only as constituted can objects be given. We are concerned with "the mode in which something real is *intended to* and, in particular, *given* in consciousness itself" (*Ideas*, I, p. 239; emphasis added).

This has a distinctly Kantian flavor about it, especially when noetic acts are described as "animating stuff and combining it into manifold-unitary continua and syntheses" and in this way allowing it to be "made known" (*Ideas*, I, p. 207). Husserl does not wish to deny the passivity of sensation, but only its identification with consciousness. There is matter (*hyle* or hyletic data), to be sure, but there is always more. "But the stuffs, we said earlier, are 'animated' by noetic moments; they undergo (while the Ego is turned, not to them, but to the object)[12] 'construings,' 'sense-bestowals,' which, in reflections, we seize upon precisely in and along with the stuffs." The noemata, objects of intentional acts, are the products of the "hyletic moments" along with the "animating construals" (*beseelenden Auffasungen*) by which they are "*transcendentally constituted*" (*Ideas*, I, pp. 238–239). This is the intentionality that will be inverted so that meaning bearing arrows come toward the subject rather than emanating from it.[13]

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[11]It is especially important to remember this in relation to Husserl's neurotic, Cartesian fantasy of "*absolute self-givenness*" and "absolute givenness." *IP*, pp. 7, 24, 35.

[12]Cf. Kant's "refutation of idealism" in the First Critique.

[13]The relation between the phenomenological theory of consciousness as intentional, as consciousness of . . . , and various "analytic" philosophies of mind is complex, especially when it comes to self-consciousness. See, for example, Dan Zahavi, *Subjectivity and Selfhood: Investigating the First-Person Perspective* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005). But the fundamental claim that consciousness is unique is a resistance to reductionist theories and to any attempt to naturalize consciousness

Sartre's contribution to the theory of inverted intentionality comes in his important analysis of "The Existence of Others," culminating in his description of "The Look."[14] He asks the genuinely phenomenological question: How is the Other given in my experience as another person, self, or subject (knower or agent) like me? His answer begins with an emphatic negation: not as an object of knowledge. In other words, the entire preceding analysis of intentionality in its subject-object mode (transcendently speaking) or in its noesis-noema correlation (phenomenologically speaking) is irrelevant on this matter. It sheds no light on how the Other is given to me as a subject, and it is precisely as such that I experience the Other. But I have no intuition or perception of that inwardness, that first person consciousness (not my own) by virtue of which I experience the Other as another person or self. Nor is the "soul" of the Other a hypothesis or conjecture, produced perhaps with the help of analogy, for which I could seek to provide evidence or proof. Attempts to prove the reality of the Other as subject are as silly, for Sartre, as attempts to prove the existence of the external world. The philosophical task is not to overcome doubt but to clarify a distinctive mode of givenness.

If the Cartesian *cogito*, along with the noesis-noema intentionality which is best read as its explication, is not the scene in which the Other shows up, neither is that scene a derivation from the *cogito*, a supplement that is the necessary condition for the objectivity of my experience. If my act of constituting an object is unique and idiomatic, unsupported by acts of other subjects that agree with mine, then the result is merely subjective, not essentially different from the insane belief that I am Napoleon. Thus we try to discredit claims of fact or value we do not share by saying, "That's just your opinion." It belongs to the very idea of an object that others will see, feel, hear, judge, etc in agreement with our seeings, feelings, hearings, and judgings. Thus the Other as another origin of intentional acts is, if not presented to us in intuition or perception, *appresented* (Kant might say postulated) along with the objects of our own intentional acts. So we have it in Husserl's Fifth Meditation.

But Husserl gives away how minimal a break, if any, this represents from the Cartesian supremacy of the *cogito*. For this alter ego is "constituted *in me*" so that "the proposition that everything existing for me must derive its existential sense [*Seinsinn*] exclusively from me myself, retains its validity and fundamental importance."[15] Sartre takes Heidegger's account of *Mit-Sein* in *Being and Time* as a variation on the Husserlian theme in which both self and Other are understood as (practical) Being-in-the-World rather than (theoretical) consciousness. Thus, in agreement with Sartre, Levinas's critique of Heidegger is at the same time a critique of

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and thereby knowledge by making them primarily or even exhaustively into objects of some empirical science, be it psychology, neuro-physiology, cognitive science, or whatever.

[14]*Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956), Part Three, Chapter One. "The Look" is Section IV of this chapter.

[15]*Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), pp. 128, 130, 149–150.

Husserl. He sets his own viewpoint over against "the collectivity that says 'we', that, turned toward the intelligible sun, toward the truth, *feels the other at its side and not in front of itself.*"[16]

We free ourselves fully from the hegemony of the *cogito*, both as a theory of the self and as the self therein theorized, only when we move, individually and together, to a fully inverted intentionality in which the arrows of intentionality (constitution and *Sinngebung*) are aimed at me rather than emanating from me. Sartre does precisely this in his answer to the question: how is the Other given in my experience as another person, self, or subject (knower or agent) like me? Not as an object of knowledge, intuited, perceived, hypothesized, conjectured, appresented, or postulated, but in the experience of being seen, looked at.

The appeal here is not to some high powered philosophical analysis but to an utterly concrete and everyday experience. Sartre evokes it for us with reference to three emotional responses: fear, shame, and pride, the second of which receives by far the most attention.

The look of the Other evokes fear because I recognize that as embodied I am vulnerable.[17] The Other can hurt me in a whole variety of physical ways. But the distinctiveness of the Other as another self does not come through here; for I can be afraid of an animal or of a storm or of a virus or bacterium that brings with it a debilitating or even fatal disease. If existentialism is to be a humanism, as Sartre claims,[18] the Look will have to have a more distinctively human meaning.

Sartre's focus on the shame that the Look of the Other evokes provides precisely such a meaning. We are not ashamed before animals or inanimate nature but only before other humans, whose inward subjectivity is the point at issue. Thus the most dramatic moment in his account of "The Look." I am a voyeur, a Peeping Tom (though I do not know myself as such). I am looking through a keyhole. Suddenly I hear footsteps behind me. I have been seen, and I am ashamed. More precisely, I become prereflectively aware of myself as shameful. J. N. Findlay, who apparently hadn't refreshed his memory of this passage, writes, "Sartre may be able to conjure eidetic meaning into two eyes regarding each other through the same keyhole, but such confrontations are for the most part best seen as embarrassing accidents, over which no great eidetic pother should be made."[19] Sartre makes a great deal of eidetic pother over such experiences both because they are so utterly quotidian and so deeply revealing of the way in which the Other is given to us as such. The Other is the subject and we are the "object," constituted by the *Sinngebung* of the Other. The

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[16]*Time and the Other*, from *The Levinas Reader*, ed. Seán Hand (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), p. 53. Emphasis added.

[17]Part Three, Chapter Two of *Being and Nothingness* is devoted to "The Body."

[18]See "Existentialism is a Humanism," in *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre*, ed. Walter Kaufmann, rev. ed. (New York: New American Library, 1975), in a variety of other anthologies, and as an independent publication, sometimes under the simple title, "Existentialism."

[19]*Plato: The Written and Unwritten Doctrines* (New York: Humanities Press, 1974), p. 410.

Look says, "Shame on you!" and in so doing defines me and gives me an identity I did not choose and do not welcome.

It may seem that the case is different when the response to the Look is pride. When the Look says, "Good job," or "That was a courageous thing to do," or "I love you," the result may be that we feel good about ourselves and the unrelenting negativism of Sartre's account has broken down. To see why this is not the case, we need to notice two features of the Look.

First, the Look of the Other is necessary for my very being as a self. Let us hear how Sartre repeats this point in his own words.

> But the Other is the indispensable mediator between myself and me . . . I need the Other in order to realize fully all the structures of my being. The For-itself refers to the For-others. (p. 222)[20]

In his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel, we are told,

> has made significant progress over Husserl. Here the appearance of the Other is indispensable not to the constitution of the world and of my empirical "Ego" but to the very existence of my consciousness as self-consciousness. (p. 235)[21]

Just after telling of how I hear those footsteps in the hall, Sartre writes,

> I am for myself only as I am a pure reference to the Other. (p. 260)

> Thus I can not confer on myself any quality without mediation or an objectifying power which is not my own power . . . the Other teaches me who I am." (p. 274)

Second, while the Look of the Other is a necessary condition for my experience of myself and, derivatively, of the world, this necessity does not arise from a formal structure of my own subjectivity, as if it were a Kantian a priori. It derives from a fact. We are dealing with the transcendent, not the transcendental, with

> the fact that being-for-others is not an ontological structure of the For-itself. We cannot think of deriving being-for-others from a being-for-itself . . . . Of course our human reality must of necessity be simultaneously for-itself and for-others. . . . What the *cogito* reveals to us here it just factual necessity: it is found. . . . The Cartesian *cogito* only makes an affirmation of the absolute truth of a fact—that of my existence. In the same way the *cogito* a little expanded as we are using it here, reveals to us as a fact the existence of the Other and my existence for the Other. That is all we can say. (p. 282)[22]

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[20]Page numbers for this and the following quotations are from *Being and Nothingness* as cited in note 14 above.

[21]For Sartre's quarrel with Hegel despite this agreement, see pp. 238–244.

[22]Of course Sartre already has said and will say a great deal more about this fact.

Put a little differently

> We encounter the Other; we do not constitute him. (p. 250)

Here is a fact that is necessary to my being myself but in which intentionality is inverted and I am constituted by the Other instead of being able to constitute the other with my own Look. I become dependent, alienated, indeed enslaved to a freedom that is no longer my own, that is without limits, unpredictable, and often enough unknowable. What is different here from the scene of fear is that the Look makes judgments or appraisals of me, confers a nature on me, and in that sense defines me. This is my original fall. The Look defines me not only in the eyes of the Other and other Others, but in my own eyes as well. For in the judgments of the Other I can all too often and all too easily recognize myself; thus does the Other teach me who I am.[23]

Now it becomes clear why pride does not brighten the Sartrean skies over against shame. To be sure, the Look that says "Good job," or "That was a courageous thing to do," or "I love you," is welcome in a way in which the Look that says "Shame on you!" is not. But I am just as little the master of my own identity in the former case as in the latter. My transcendence as the freedom to (re)define myself over against any facticity of past deeds or current dispositions has been transcended.[24]

This fall involves no exile from an original Eden; it is rather original in the sense that it signifies the underived and permanent fact of the Hegelian master-slave contest between the self and its Others, and at a far deeper and more fundamental level than economic institutions. Commenting on the verbal Look with which Don Imus defined the black women of the Rutgers women's basketball team in degrading terms, political columnist Bob Hebert wrote, in a very Sartrean tone of voice, "People in positions of great power are the ones who define those who are relatively lacking in power."[25] For Sartre, human existence is a struggle for power. If I can define myself and the Other, I am the master. If the Other defines me, I am a slave.

The theological overtones of this analysis are heard not primarily in the reference to an original fall but in the reference to God. Here we discover the heart of Sartre's atheism. In a trope that goes back at least to Feuerbach

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[23]I have defined subjective guilt (guilty conscience) as approving the Other's (moral) disapproval of me and, on that basis, argued that there is no significant difference between guilt and shame, which can also be so defined. Moreover, the Other's presence need not be actual but only virtual for the essential reference to the Other to be operative. "If anyone were to see me do this, I would feel ashamed, and so I feel guilty." See *God, Guilt, and Death: An Existential Phenomenology of Religion* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), chap. 4.

[24]On the dialectic of facticity and transcendence, see Part One, Chapter Two, Section II.

[25]"Signs of Infection," an Op-Ed column in the *New York Times*, April 16, 2007. The slave, Sixo, in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (New York: Penguin, 1987), 190, knows this all too well. I have discussed this passage in *Levinas and Kierkegaard in Dialogue* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), p. 121.

(and, I would argue, Hegel) 'God' turns out to be the name for something else. While the God signified by the manifest content of the believer's usage is unreal, according to Sartre, the actual referent (the latent content, in Freudian language) is real, all too real, and is deeply problematic.

In a dramatic image, Sartre says I find myself "thrown in the arena beneath millions of looks" (p. 281).[26] If I treat these looks as an impersonal collective, they become, precisely, "the They," a more ominous They than Heidegger's. But if we treat these looks as a personal individual, their name is 'God,' a name that signifies the Other pushed to the limit. The issue is power, not causal power, but the power of judgment and appraisal and thus of naming, of identifying, of defining.

This is the power that is synonymous with authority. To say, as Sartre does, that God is the subject that can never be made into an object is to say that there is something irresistible about this authority. But that doesn't mean that we don't try to resist it. Whether we encounter the other as merely human or as divine, our primary strategy of defense is to objectify the Other, just because the subjective reality of the Other, so far from being in need of proof, is experienced as overwhelmingly and inescapably real. Accordingly, "Black masses, desecration of the host, demonic associations, etc., are so many attempts to confer the character of object on the absolute Subject" (p. 290). Similarly, arrogance, which may look like pride in relation to the human Other, is something different. In pride, I feel good about myself because of the affirming Look of the Other, while resenting my dependence on and my vulnerability to that unpredictable and uncontrollable subjectivity. In arrogance I seek to neutralize that subjectivity, either by reducing it to a means to my own ends or, more boldly, treating it as if it didn't count at all. Thus, we find that Dostoyevsky's Underground Man, constantly wounded (shamed) by the Look of others, finds it even worse to be entirely unnoticed, and is willing deliberately to court both fear and shame in order not to be nobody. The look that simply ignores is the most violent look of all.

But the fullest account Sartre gives of our defense mechanisms against the Look comes in that dreary and pessimistic (and realistic?) chapter, "Concrete Relations With Others."[27] We might call him the great secular theologian of original sin. For he knows more about the nature of sin, though he doesn't call it by that name, than many if not most theologians.

He takes sadism and masochism to be metaphors for two basic attitudes we take toward the Other; the literal senses of these terms signify only special instances of a more general structure. Sadism, which includes not only hatred but sexual desire and indifference, is the outright attempt to reduce the Other to a thing, to reduce the Other's subjectivity to something

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[26]If we think of the modern (American) football stadium instead of the ancient Roman arena we get the picture. I am defined as hero or goat by the thousands of fans in the stadium and the millions watching on TV. They know me as the one who made the dramatic catch for the winning touchdown, or the one whose fumble cost our team a touchdown, or, since the official identifies me by number, as the one whose penalty brought our crucial, last minute, potentially winning drive to a screeching halt.

[27]Part Three, Chapter Three.

merely objective. Especially to be noted here is the virtual equivalence of hatred and indifference.

Masochism appears to be a mode of self-objectification. But on closer examination it shows itself to be an assault on the subjectivity of the Other, not by denying it but by manipulating it. If I can (apparently) preserve your subjectivity but neutralize its authority by possessing it and putting it to work for my projects, I have effectively objectified you. When Sartre associates love and language with masochism, it is clear that he cynically (and perhaps all too realistically) sees them as essentially manipulative. Thus, in a famous definition, he writes that "love is [only] the demand to be loved" (p. 375).

Here, once again, the theological overtones of Sartre's analysis come to overt expression. Against the perceived threat of the Other as a Look that defines and identifies me with infinite and absolute authority, I fight back. Against the threat of existential slavery, I adopt the attitudes of existential mastery, absolute and unlimited mastery. That is why, in his "Existential Psychoanalysis,"[28] Sartre will identify our fundamental project as the desire to be God. Of course, this is not possible. Not only is it impossible for us to be God in the traditional sense; it is also impossible in our intrahuman relations to become the Absolute Definer, the Lord of Language, the Subject before whom all others are reduced to Objects. Our fundamental project is futile. That is why Sartre's conclusion is "man is a useless passion" (p. 615).

We have seen that Levinas wants to develop a phenomenology "of a wholly different type."[29] When he says that "in spite of everything, what I do is phenomenology," he explains, "It is not the word 'transcendental' that I would retain but the notion of intentional analysis" (*GCM* p. 87). What bothers him about the transcendental is that it is just one more in a string of epistemic gestures in western philosophy in which the Other is reduced to the Same. For Husserl, as Levinas sees him

> Light makes possible, then, this enveloping of the exterior [the other] by the inward [the same], which is the very structure of the cogito and of sense [meaning, not sensation] . . . due to the light an object, while coming from without, is already ours in the horizon which precedes it; it comes from an exterior already apprehended [cf. Kant on the a priori] and comes into being as though it came from us, as though commanded by our freedom.[30]

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[28]Part Four, Chapter Two, Section I.

[29]See note 5 above.

[30]*Existence and Existents*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1978), p. 48. Cf. pp. 84–85. In *Otherwise Than Being or Beyond Essence* (henceforth *OB*) trans. Alphonso Lingis (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1991) and the essays clustered around it, this "already apprehended" takes on a social linguistic character as the "already said." Edith Wyschogrod writes that within such Husserlian horizons "the object soon ceases to disturb us by its alterity as soon as we bestow a meaning upon it. Every experience, however passive, becomes a 'constituting of being' as if what is given

Husserl puts it this way himself:

> The world is for me absolutely nothing else but the world existing
> for and accepted by me in such a conscious cogito. It gets its whole
> sense, universal and specific, and its acceptance as existing, exclu-
> sively from such *cogitationes.* . . . By my living, by my experiencing,
> thinking, valuing, and acting, I can enter no world other than the one
> that gets its sense and importance [*Sinn und Geltung*] in and from me.
> . . . The objective world, the world that exists for me . . . this world,
> with all its Objects, I said, derives its whole sense and existential
> importance [*Seinsgeltung*], which it has for me, from me myself, *from
> me as the transcendental Ego*.[31]

Paul Ricoeur finds a "disconcerting glide" in this movement from
the *für mich* to the *aus mir*.[32] Levinas immediately agrees. This is why for
him phenomenology is about intentional analysis but not about the tran-
scendental ego or the transcendental unity of apperception. As he puts
it, phenomenology will have to concern itself with a "meaning prior to
my *Sinngebung*" (*TI* p. 51; cf. pp. 207–208, 293–295). As with Sartre, the
movement away from Husserl is toward an inverted intentionality. This
prior meaning, this prior definition of the world and of myself, comes
from the Other. As Adrian Peperzak puts it, for Levinas "Light and order
proceed not from this 'Being,' but from something else: from the Other,
the stranger who comes from afar, from an unreachable unknown, whose
visage illuminates the world. The human Other's look is the origin of all
meaning."[33] The face of the other is no longer an object vulnerable to my
Sinngebung, but the sign of the fact that I am seen. The ring of Gyges,
which made it possible for him to see without being seen, to be the subject
for whom all else is object [*noesis-noema*], is put, if one may mix metaphors
here, into reverse gear. It is now the Other who has become invisible (*TI*
pp. 33–35).[34] As the one who sees me, the Other is no longer an object of
my perception. Nor am I the sole subject. "I find myself torn up from the
secrecy of Gyges" (*OB* p. 149). I exist "through the other and for the other"
and my very "identity is inverted" (*OB* pp. 114–115).

As this last phrase suggests, and in harmony with Sartre, there is no
shortage of trauma in Levinas's analysis of our being seen by the Other. I
am put on trial (*TI* p. 23), I am put into question, commanded, and judged
(*TI* p. 51). All this represents "a *traumatism of astonishment*" (*TI* p. 73). If any-
thing the theme of trauma is accentuated in the later writings, especially

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originates with the thinker." *Emmanuel Levinas: The Problem of Ethical Metaphysics*
(New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), p. 98.

[31]*Cartesian Meditations*, 21 and 26. Translation slightly altered.

[32]*Husserl: An Analysis*, trans. Edward G. Ballad and Lester E. Embree (Evan-
ston: Northwestern University Press, 1967), p. 89.

[33]*Beyond: The Philosophy of Edmund Husserl* (Evanston: Northwestern University
Press, 1979), p. 212.

[34]Levinas frequently refers to the story of Gyges and his magic ring. For an inter-
pretation of Levinas that puts this motif front and center, see Cory Beals, *Levinas and
the Wisdom of Love: The Question of Invisibility* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007).

but not exclusively in chapter 4, "Substitution," of *Otherwise Than Being*. The Other "assigns me before I designate him" (*OB* p. 86). One can almost see Sartre shuddering, and applauding.

Yet there are significant differences between Levinas and Sartre; the former does not merely restate the latter's view of inverted intentionality but adds significantly to it. (1) The first important difference is that Levinas takes the linguistic turn. The face in and through which I encounter the other does not just look at me. It expresses itself (*TI* p. 51). "The face speaks" (*TI* p. 66). We read that "Speech cuts across vision,"[35] which means that "Better than comprehension, *discourse* relates with what remains essentially transcendent. . . . For the ethical relationship which subtends discourse is not a species of consciousness whose ray emanates from the I; it puts the I in question. This putting in question emanates from the other" (*TI* p. 195) That is inverted intentionality, but now it is not so much a matter of *being seen* as of *being addressed*. This is why in the later writings the distinction between the saying and the said is so important.[36] Regardless of the content of a speech act, and regardless of whether it is in a declarative, interrogative, optative, or subjunctive mood, every speech act is vocative. In conversation I am always addressed. Here as in the Look I am the intentional object of the Other's intentional act. My transcendence (autonomy, primacy) has been transcended by what "remains essentially transcendent."

(2) A second difference is that for Levinas inverted intentionality takes place not primarily within the horizon of power but is most fundamentally a matter of ethical import. The face of the Other, the face that speaks (even without any speech act in the literal sense of that term) judges to be sure, and I can respond in shame or pride. But before it judges, it commands. It is the source of the norms by which it judges. As a call to responsibility, it signifies the teleological suspension, the *Aufhebung* of freedom in responsibility. For Sartre the Look is the origin of the war of all against all; for Levinas it signifies the possibility of ethics, of a triumph of an eschatology of peace over a politics of war and the reason to which the latter is so tightly wed (*TI* pp. 21–22). Whereas Habermas sees epistemic norms inherent in the very act of discourse, Levinas finds ethical norms to be integral to speech as such. To be addressed, even in such an unwelcome manner as "Your money or your life," is to be confronted by an unconditional moral claim.

(3) This is closely related to a third difference. Although the voice of the other always commands and judges, putting my very being in question, Levinas makes two striking claims about it that would leave Sartre

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[35]It is clear that Levinas is speaking of vision in Husserl's sense rather than Sartre's, for he continues, "In knowledge or vision the object seen can indeed determine an act, but it is an act that in some way appropriates the 'seen' to itself, integrates it into a world by endowing it with signification, and, in the last analysis, constitutes it. In discourse the divergence that inevitably opens between the Other as my theme and the Other as my interlocutor, emancipated from the theme that seemed [for] a moment to hold him, forthwith contests the meaning I ascribe to my interlocutor . . . he remains absolute within the relation" (*TI* p. 195).

[36]See, for example, chap. 2 of *OB*.

shaking his head. On the one hand, precisely this Other is the object of desire (*TI* pp. 33–35). Of course this desire is not that of my *conatus essendi*; its origin is deeper than either my empirical or my transcendental ego. But, Levinas insists, such a desire is there. On the other hand, for just this reason he sees the real possibility of hospitality and of welcoming the other, not just to dinner, of course, but into my world as no longer unilaterally mine and into my very identity.[37] Early on this is limned in terms of justice, but eventually this welcoming hospitality is described as love (without concupiscence).[38]

(4) As with Sartre, inverted intentionality has theological overtones for Levinas. It is in the experience of being seen and being addressed by the Other that God "comes to mind" (*GCM*). Within the horizons of empirical facticity the Other is not God. But as the arrows of intentionality emanate from the Other toward me, they are the trace of a divine authority. God does not seem to be another Other for Levinas. He speaks of God as "the *he* in the depth of the you . . . He is neither an object nor an interlocutor. . . . And this analysis implies that God is not simply the 'first other,' the 'other par excellence,' or the 'absolutely other,' but other than the other."[39]

Rather than being an agent, a speaker, a lawgiver, a judge, a merciful redeemer, and so forth, as in the Jewish and Christian Bibles, Levinas's God seems to be the depth dimension within each human speaker by virtue of which the claim inherent in the speech acts they address to me come with a unilateral, absolute authority. It is as if, in response to Nietzsche, Levinas is saying, "Yes, God is dead indeed, but the morality of justice and altruism is still very much alive. For its ground is the transcendence of the human Other, not the transcendence of another Other. 'God' is the name for this depth dimension of the human person."[40]

On one important point, Levinas's "atheism," if that is the right name for it, agrees with Sartre. In neither case is the God to whom they refer a Savior. The trauma of the intrusion of the Other into our lives, the rigor of the commands, the sternness of the judgments, the weakness of our desire for such an other, and the difficulty of welcoming the Other with justice, let alone with love (*agape*)—all these might lead to that most basic of prayers: HELP! But Levinas's God can neither help us to be good nor forgive and renew us when we fail (cf. Psalm. 51). This God is certainly not the God of onto-theology; but it is not the God of the Bible either.

(5) But there remains a marked difference between the "theologies" of Sartre and Levinas that we should mark. For Sartre, God is the futile project and useless passion that each of us is qua for-itself. For Levinas, God is not who I am or am trying to be but the divinity of the Other, the face by whom

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[37]See the essay, "No Identity," in *Collected Philosophical Papers*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987) and my discussion in chapter 6 of my *Levinas and Kierkegaard in Dialogue*.

[38]Especially throughout *Entre Nous: Thinking-of-the-Other*, trans. Michael B. Smith and Barbara Harshav (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998). We might say that eros is *aufgehoben* in agape.

[39]"God and Philosophy," in *Collected Philosophical Papers*, p. 165.

[40]For more detailed analysis of Levinas's "theology," see chaps. 3 and 4 of *Levinas and Kierkegaard in Dialogue.*

I am seen and addressed. That is why such theological terms as revelation, height, transcendence, and glory are used to describe the widow, the orphan, and the stranger. Sartre's world is the Nietzschean world in which we strive (in vain) for an innocence beyond good and evil, beyond guilt and shame. Levinas's world is the Kantian world in which we are always confronted by an unconditional, that is categorical imperative that intrudes upon our inclinations and challenges our *conatus essendi*. Of course, this does not entail a pure, practical reason that produces universal principles. One is almost tempted to say that Levinas is a moral nominalist.

John D. Caputo has suggested that the so-called "Levinasian turn" in the work of Jacques Derrida is best dated from "Force of Law: The 'Mystical Foundation of Authority'" (1989–1990),[41] especially because of the idea of something "undeconstructible," namely justice as distinct from law.[42] This makes a lot of sense, so it is not surprising that a text that comes shortly thereafter, *The Gift of Death* (1992),[43] should be, if anything, more fully and overtly Levinasian—and precisely on the theme of inverted intentionality.

In dialogue with Patočka and Kierkegaard, Derrida poses the question of the birth (genealogy, if you like) of the responsible self. Patočka presents a two stage account of the emergence of responsibility from the orgiastic fusion or demonic rapture within which no self that could be responsible has emerged. All is rather submerged in a sacred power that is before rather than beyond good and evil. Plato represents a partial break in which an individuated soul emerges that is responsible before the Good. But it is only a partial break because it is based on knowledge, "an eternal gaze toward the Good" (p. 8), an act in which the soul seeks "to recall itself to itself" in a "gesture of *remember*ing" (p. 13). The ontological fusion of the soul and its object is a significant but incomplete break from the orgiastic fusion posited as primal.

Christianity represents a more nearly complete break. Epistemically it rests on faith rather than knowledge because it presupposes an inverted intentionality that in turn presupposes an ontological otherness not found in Plato. It is the ring of Gyges in reverse, and the theme of being seen without being able to see the seer is a constantly recurring theme. There are several points to notice:

(1) Derrida immediately equates the unseen seer with God.

(2) In doing so he uses Rudolf Otto's language of the *mysterium tremendum* as wholly other (*GD* pp. 2–3, 6, 27, 31, 56) along with the language of transcendence (*GD* pp. 24, 40). Whereas Patočka focuses on Christianity and Kierkegaard on a story from the Jewish Bible, Derrida suggests that

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[41]In *Acts of Religion*, ed. Gil Anidjar (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 230–298. The suggestion here is that it is in these writings that the Levinasian influence comes clearly into view. Biographically the influence may well be much earlier and implicit in earlier writings.

[42]In personal correspondence.

[43]*The Gift of Death*, trans. David Wills (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995). Henceforth *GD*.

the structure in question belongs to Islam as well and thus is common to the Abrahamic monotheisms.

(3) Although Derrida primarily speaks of the gaze which sees me without my being able to see it, he follows Levinas in making the linguistic turn. "God sees me, he looks into me in secret, but I don't see him, I don't see him looking at me. . . . Since I don't see him looking at me, I can, and must, only hear him" (*GD* p. 91).

(4) Whether as gaze or as voice, the other of this inverted intentionality commands me, and I am no longer the measure of things (*GD* pp. 27, 41). I am identified, individuated, singled out, to be sure,

> But not in the sense of a (Kantian) autonomy by means of which I see myself acting in total liberty or according to a law that I make for myself, rather in the lookout of an 'it concerns me' [*ça me regarde*] even when I can't see anything and can take no initiative, there where I cannot preempt by my own initiative whatever is commanding me to make decisions, decisions that will nevertheless be mine and which I alone will have to answer for. (*GD* p. 91, trans. altered)[44]

(5) Although he carries on his discussion for the most part in terms of the overtly theistic discourses of Patočka and Kierkegaard, Derrida makes it clear that this is not his discourse. Hence the famous phrase: "every other is wholly other" [*tout autre est tout autre*] (*GD* p. 68).[45] In other words, 'God' becomes the name for something else, the absolute authority of the human gaze and voice by which I am seen and by which I am addressed. As Levinas would put it, God "comes to mind" only in the face of the widow, the orphan, and the stranger. There are, to be sure, other faces, but the full trauma of alterity is found in those faces I would rather ignore or even deface. A kind of Kantian rigorism seems to be at work here. By retaining the theological language but transferring the predicates to human bearers, though not in their empirical particularity, Derrida is able to remain religious. But his is a "religion without religion," without "institutional dogma," without "an article of faith" (*GD* p. 49). More precisely, perhaps, it is religion without God, and Derrida says that he "rightly passes for an atheist."[46]

(6) Finally, Derrida cites a passage in which Levinas says that "intentionality is not the secret of what is human" (*GD* p. 47). Does this mean that

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[44]For other places where Derrida breaks with the ideals of autonomy, see "How to Avoid Speaking: Denials," in *Derrida and Negative Theology*, ed. Harold Coward and Toby Foshay (Albany: SUNY Press, 1992), p. 99 and "Faith and Knowledge: The Two Sources of 'Religion' at the Limits of Reason Alone," in *Acts of Religion*, p. 71. In the former passage, 'God' functions as the name for something else, a typical gesture. When the question of not speaking arises, "it is always too late. There is no longer any question of not speaking. Language has started without us, in us and before us. This is what theology calls God."

[45]This phrase becomes the title of chapter 4 of *GD*.

[46]For Derrida's commentary on this curious locution, see the interview with Mark Dooley in *A Passion for the Impossible: John D. Caputo in Focus* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2003), p. 32. The phrase "religion without religion" is the subtitle of Caputo's *The Prayers and Tears of Jacques Derrida* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997).

their account of the unseen seer and speaker is "beyond intentionality"?[47] Not exactly. It is more helpful to speak, with Levinas, of "an intentionality of a wholly different type" (*TI* p. 23). For the root idea of intentionality is consciousness of. . . . Under the gaze or at the commanding call of the other I become conscious of myself and of my situation or world. The only difference, but of course it is a crucial one, is that it is not from my own standpoint but from that of the other that I become conscious of myself and my world.

Derrida recognizes this, for he immediately cites an adjacent passage from Levinas: "The human *esse* is not *conatus* but disinterestedness and adieu" (*GD* p. 47).[48] Left all to myself, my intentionality would be but an expression of my *conatus essendi*, the self-centered self-assertion of my self-interest. My "rationality" would be calculative and instrumental, the use of intelligence for finding the best means to my own ends.[49] In the "intentionality of a wholly different type" this rationality and the selfhood it expresses are interrupted, challenged, called on the carpet by the gaze and the voice of the other.

These accounts of inverse intentionality together pose the question whether there is any alternative to the Sartrean arrogant and violent (objectifying) response to the vision and voice of the other. Sartre's ethical Cartesianism dismisses this possibility in a footnote. After describing "concrete relations with others" in terms of the extended meaning of masochism and sadism, he writes, "These considerations do not exclude the possibility of an ethics of deliverance and salvation. But this can be achieved only after a radical conversion which we can not discuss here."[50] Levinas speaks of the possibility of welcoming the other, in spite of the trauma of being seen and being addressed, but he leaves us puzzled as to how this might be possible. Derrida pushes the analysis one step farther and speaks of both hospitality and forgiveness.[51] But like Levinas he is silent about how this might be possible.

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[47]The quoted phrase is the title of an essay by Levinas in *Philosophy in France Today*, ed. Alan Montefiore (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

[48]Derrida immediately gives his own gloss on Levinas's 'adieu.' See also his *Adieu: To Emmanuel Levinas*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999). Most of this little volume is devoted to a long essay entitled "A Word of Welcome."

[49]Nothing is essentially changed if my ends become our ends. Nativism, nationalism, tribalism, racism, chauvinism, etc. can be just as self-centered as any personal self-interest and much more violent. It is a moral and political tragedy that in so much of contemporary philosophy and social science this definition of 'rationality' is allowed to stand unchallenged.

[50]*Being and Nothingness*, p. 412, n. 12 (Conclusion of Part Three, Chapter Three, Section II). Sartre is a great secular Augustinian. He understands the seriousness of sin as pride. So even though he knows nothing of salvation, he understands that it would require a "radical conversion."

[51]On the former, see *Of Hospitality*, trans. Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000) and "Hostipitality" (sic) in *Acts of Religion*. On the latter, see *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, trans. Mark Dooley and Michael Hughes (New York: Routledge, 2001). See also *Given Time: 1. Counterfeit Money*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 163–169, where Derrida

If we are hermeneutical phenomenologists we can take what Ricoeur calls "the long detour of the signs of humanity deposited in cultural works" and of "the detour of understanding the cultural signs in which the self documents and forms itself . . . [so that] reflection is nothing without the mediation of signs and works."[52] So without appealing to the Bible as Scripture, we can look to biblical texts to see what light they may throw on the issues before us. It is all the more appropriate since the texts to which I turn are from the Hebrew Bible, which doubles, of course, as the Christian Old Testament. They provide part of the background against which or out of which all three of our thinkers operate.

To begin with there is the beautiful blessing of Numbers 6:24–26[53]

The Lᴏʀᴅ bless you and keep you:

the Lᴏʀᴅ make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;

the Lᴏʀᴅ lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

In liturgical use "look kindly on you"[54] or some similar rendering is substituted for the less transparent "lift up his countenance upon you." In any case, the meaning is clear. To be blessed is to find oneself under the gracious gaze of the invisible God.

Does biblical faith know nothing of the trauma of the look that Sartre and Levinas, each in his own way, find to be an undeniable phenomenological datum? By no means. Adam and Eve hide from the voice of God in Eden after eating of the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3:8–13). Like Sartre's Peeping Tom, the faithful find the divine gaze intolerable when it evokes guilt or shame. So in contexts of penitence the psalmist pleads,

Turn your gaze away from me,

    that I may smile again,

  before I depart and am no more. (Ps. 39:13)

Hide your face from my sins,

  and blot out all my iniquities. (Ps. 51:9)

The trauma is felt, but the response is unsartrean. Instead of the attempt to neutralize the gaze by one's own act, the request is for God to act. The

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poses the question "And does one have to deserve forgiveness?" and discusses the relation of confession to forgiveness. John D. Caputo has an "Edifying Divertissement" on forgiveness in a Derridean context in *Prayers and Tears*, pp. 226–229.

[52]*Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, ed. and trans. John B. Thompson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 143, 158–159. Ricoeur also speaks of "the detour through the contingency of cultures, though an incurably equivocal language, and through the conflict of interpretations." *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, trans. Denis Savage (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), p. 42.

[53]Unless otherwise noted, biblical citations are from the New Revised Standard Version.

[54]Thus the Revised English Bible.

request to "hide your face" is a request for forgiveness, "blot out all my iniquities," so that it will be possible to be seen with favor, "Do not cast me away from your presence" (v. 11).

The background makes it clear that for the psalmist there is something worse than the gaze that renders one guilty, and that is the total absence of the gaze, to be completely off God's radar screen. Our psalmist understands Underground Man's need to be seen. God has made it clear that when the people of God forsake their covenantal responsibilities, "I will forsake them and hide my face from them. . . . On that day I will surely hide my face on account of all the evil they have done" (Deut. 31:17–18; cf. 32:20). Accordingly, the psalmist cries out again and again, "Do not hide your face from me" (13:1, 27:9, 30:7, 55:1, 69:17, 102:2, 143:7). While God's hiding of God's face from us can signify withdrawing from our gaze, the suggestion here is that in relation to the request, "hide your face," in other words, don't look at me, we can also read "do not hide your face" as the request to be seen.

The paradox of the double request, "Hide your face" and "Hide not your face" is only apparent. It is the request for merciful forgiveness so that the look may be gracious and welcome. Moreover, in both cases the request is associated with the desire to hear the divine voice, to be addressed as well as to be seen. Thus in Psalm 51 the request, "Hide your face from my sins" follows immediately on "Let me hear joy and gladness," as if the former is recognized as the necessary condition of hearing God's voice as friendly. Then in Psalm 143, "Do no hide your face from me" is followed immediately by "Let me hear of your steadfast love ." Whether the word of mercy, forgiveness, and reconciliation comes directly from God or through a human mediator, the psalmist knows that it is the word of the Lᴏʀᴅ, and it is thus the divine voice that he longs to hear.

As hermeneutical phenomenologists we can turn our attention to a rather different text, Puccini's *Tosca*. The diva Floria Tosca and the painter, Mario Cavaradossi are lovers. Above the altar of the church he is painting a huge scene featuring Mary Magdalene. He has used as a model for the face a woman who has recently been at prayer near the front of the church, a woman he has not met and who does not know she is serving a his model. When Tosca sees the beautiful face she throws a jealous fit (as if to prove that she really is a diva). In his attempt to assuage her anger, Cavaradossi sings

I've never seen other eyes so lovely as your ardent dark eyes, my Tosca.

Eyes that have seared my heart and have engraved there your beauty forever.

At this point it seems as if Tosca's eyes are merely his intentional object, as if loveliness and beauty are the *Sinn* that has been *gegeben* by his gaze. But he continues

Eyes now aglow with passion, now afire with fury.

No other eyes in this world can rival your beautiful dark eyes.

The reference to the glow of passion and the (more immediate) fire of fury makes it clear that the eyes he sees are the eyes that see him, not objects but subjects of an intentionality that emanates from her rather than from him. He is blissfully content to be seen by her, whether in passion or in a jealous fury before which he knows himself to be innocent.

Unlike the scenes painted by Sartre, Levinas, and Derrida, there is a reciprocity here. Just as he feels no need to flee from her gaze, she feels no need to flee from his voice. She sings

One word from you, my darling, and I can doubt no longer.

Here love is not never having to say, "I'm sorry;" it is rather the blissful joy of being seen and addressed by the other.

No doubt, reminded of our own experience by the biblical passages we've just noted, we may wish to warn the lovers that their reciprocal rapture cannot long endure without forgiveness. But they beat us to the punch. He sings

You are jealous

and she responds

Yes, I'm guilty. I confess that I am jealous!
Yet I'm certain you'll forgive me.
I am sure you will forgive me when you know the grief in my heart

to which he responds

My Tosca, whom I worship, who alone makes life worth living,
I'll forgive you for I know the grief in your heart.[55]

We are in for plenty of tragedy, but not yet. Here, in the psalms and in the opera, we are face to face with the phenomenon of love. Garrison Keillor gives us these lines from the poet Raymond Carver:

And did you get what
you wanted from this life, even so?
I did.
And what did you want?
To call myself beloved, to feel myself
beloved on the earth.[56]

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[55]From the vocal score with English translation by John Gutman of *Tosca: Opera in Three Acts* (New York: G. Shirmer, 1956), pp. 49–54 (Act I).

[56]From the Introduction to *Good Poems* (New York: Penguin Books, 2002), p. xxvi.

In the Sartrean world this cannot happen. I insist on calling myself by myself without any intrusion of another; so I try to render myself immune to any gaze or any voice with any measure of alterity. Autonomy, the glory of modernity, becomes alienation; eros becomes estrangement because love is nothing more than "the demand to be loved," a demand I do not allow the other to fulfil. For it is a "contradictory effort . . . without solution."[57] I call myself; the other's voice I silence.

Levinas and Derrida hold out a ray of hope. They do not ignore the trauma involved in the gaze and the voice of the other, whom I cannot objectify (Sartre's sadism) or manipulate (Sartre's masochism). But they think there remains a possibility of welcome and hospitality, or, as Marcel puts it, that I will somehow be able to "make room for the other in myself."[58] They understand that it will involve the surrender of autonomy to a certain heteronomy, but they do not make it clear how this could be possible.[59]

In our psalms and our opera we encounter the hypothesis that the missing ingredient may be a combination of repentance and forgiveness—not the giving of forgiveness, at least not in the first instance, but rather the willingness to receive the forgiveness whose need is acknowledged in repentance. What is needed just may be what Tillich has called "the courage to accept acceptance." This courage is not the self-esteem of an "I'm OK, You're OK" pop psychology that knows nothing of the trauma of inverted intentionality. It is "the courage to accept oneself as accepted in spite of being unacceptable."[60] It is the willingness to be seen and to be addressed by someone, human or divine, who sees us just as we are and who accepts us anyway. There is, I think, something profoundly symbolic about the fact that erotic love takes place, not in nudity but in nakedness.

No doubt we hasten to ask, Is there anyone out there who loves me in that way? The question is a real one. But perhaps the prior question is whether we have the courage and humility to accept such love should there be such a lover.[61]

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[57]*Being and Nothingness*, pp. 375–376. (Part Three, Chapter Three, Section I.)

[58]*Creative Fidelity*, trans. Robert Rosthal (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002), p. 88.

[59]I had originally planned to discuss Jean-Luc Marion along with Sartre, Levinas, and Derrida. But I ran out of space. For some thoughts on his work in connection with inverted intentionality, see my "Vision and Voice: Phenomenology and theology in the work of Jean-Luc Marion," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 60 (2006), pp. 117–137.

[60]*The Courage to Be* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), p. 164.

[61]It is worth noting here that in Kierkegaard's Johannes de Silentio treats courage and humility as essential ingredients in Abrahamic faith. *Fear and Trembling*, trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), pp. 33–34, 48–49, 73. Cf. *Sickness Unto Death*, trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 85.