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Seeing the Divinely Structured Metadigital Self (work in progress)

To glory in adversity is not hard for the man who loves, for this is to glory in the Cross of the Lord.
- Thomas à Kempis in *The Imitation of Christ*

Meta: from the Greek *μετά* meaning after or beyond, equivalent to the Latin *post*.

Digital: from the Latin *digitus* meaning finger (for counting). In modern parlance, the word is most commonly used in computing and electronics, especially where real-world information is converted to binary numeric form.

The Foundational Opposition and the Metanarrative of History

Only from the shrinking stars and the spare resonance of severed souls hurling through the lower spheres did I realize that the lyric empire of my self had tragically collapsed.

Can't you hear it?

The cross-cracking of iron and steel above tumbling concrete?

Like Jericho's walls and all the cities of man?

Inevitable disintegration under the weight of an off-angled ambition.

So here we are then – my reader and only friend – our drafted lives floating in that undecidedly decidable middle-space between the images of ignorance and the Forms of awareness, the serfdom of tyranny and the liberty of Republic, the technology of man and the City of God. Like the Florentine pilgrim and his Roman guide, together and yet apart, you and I stand at the edge of a sinister wood that grows beneath a Heaven blocked by the visionless brutes of our shared appetites. If the Bride is ever to see the True, the Good, and the Beautiful, she must cling to the comic light of hope and descend into the spiraled darkness that lies beyond the shadowy gate of critical self-examination. Our Spirit-driven ascent up life's purging mountain forms the backdrop that allows us to reenvision the self like snow that only appears in the space between us and the deepening forest. Although merely a hasty flight through the ink-scratched pages of this book, we are like those ancient travelers propelled forward by the epic quest to achieve – at least in some meaningful way – the dictum carved in the forecourt Apollo's Temple at Delphi – γνῶθι σεαυτὸν (Know Yourself).

Infused into the collective consciousness by such giants as the golden-thighed Pythagoras and the obstinately methodical Socrates, this maxim has traveled through the Great Conversation of Western thought only to land above the Oracle's doorway in the Wachowski Brothers' digital *Matrix*. While the Greeks sought after an adolescent girl's prophetic powers drawn from the Castalian Spring's hallucinogenic vapors, and Neo sought after the obscurely predictive wisdom of a maternal computer program, together we must seek the counsel of an infallible Oracle who constructed the cosmos in speech. Neither finite human nor programmed machine, the Divine Architect built creation and authored history in order to reveal truth through a structured pedagogy of resistance to the self-facing will of man.

How can a saint realize the vigor of hope outside the frailty of despair?

How can a sinner understand the ecstasy of grace beyond the dread of justice?

How could we ever recognize the self without living in a world of others?

It is through the primary opposition that God has authored the great **metanarrative of history** itself, which He has infused with meaning via the preordained "enmity" between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.¹ In Romans, Paul discloses the utility of this biblical opposition, which is the enlightenment and instruction of His chosen people – Israel, or the Church. Caring little for the delicate ways of doctrinal hospitability, the Jewish Roman re-envision Genesis and declares that God

endures with much patience *vessels of wrath* (seed of the serpent) prepared for destruction in order to make known the riches of His glory upon the *vessels of mercy* (seed of the woman).² In the same surgical method Plato reflects, it is God Himself who actively and purposively establishes the divide between the seed in order to convey meaning through the tension created by this **foundational opposition**. One need only fracture the pages of a novel or amble to the local cinema to observe how meaning radiates from the binary tension inherent in the dialectic between self and other.³ Whether, for example, it is Winston's struggle to find his himself in opposition to an authoritarian state in Orwell's *1984* or Roy's effort to realize his being in opposition to his shortened life span in Scott's *Blade Runner*, narratives are driven and meaning is created through an evocative push and pull between the self and some form of other. Member of the Church of England General Synod, triple doctorate holder, and swell chap **Anthony Thiselton** sees this external, physical interaction as the material for telling our own story.⁴ While I generally agree with the former Society for the Study of Theology president, I would broaden his assertion and argue that our relations with others provide the material for God to tell His story, which we are merely privileged to participate in and learn from. Viewed in this way, the metanarrative of history becomes "His-story," which is itself comprised by the stories of individual selves guided and instructed through their relations with others.

So – my reader and only friend – although power shrieks at us to abandon hope, we must often rest in the fact that just as Tolkien's fellowship was guided into the depths of Moria by a servant of the Ilúvatar, so we are Divinely led through the darkness of life's cave. However, the journey does not end there. By grace, the elect are carried beyond this life by a Father who, on occasion, speaks to us through the still tones of another soul able to peer a bit further past the shadows of this world. Sometimes, at that moment when we feel that iniquity will forever crease our vision, that hope is merely a thing destroyed by others, some earthly angel channels the mysteries of Heaven and informs us that the grey rain-curtain of this world will peel back as all turns to silver glass before we see the great dénouement of our hope... the City of God... Home. It is only because we have walked through the valley of the shadow of death that we can truly apprehend the unstained beauty of the white shores that bound a far green country under a swift sunrise.⁵

Like the those expectant Greeks in search of oracular visions that punctured their humanity, Canuck philosopher **G.B. Madison** claims that what makes humans human is a paramount concern for their being and an insatiable desire to know who they are, to be themselves, truly, understandingly. It is only natural that philosophy has, from its fireside inception, arrested itself with the question of what constitutes the humanness of human beings.⁶ Flowing in a parallel vein, at the beginning of *Metaphysics*, **Aristotle** addressed this supremely human undertaking when he wrote: "By nature, all men long to know."⁷ Collège de France professor and the depressed son of a surgeon, **Michael Foucault** envisions philosophy as a way of "interrogating ourselves" in order to become other than one is.⁸ Holding neither resolutely against him, Eden Seminary grad and modern "just war" theorist **Reinhold Niebuhr** sees this intrinsic yearning as the metaphysical endeavor to discern the "mystery and meaning" above and beyond our rational faculties.⁹ **This most human ache to recognize the answers to metaphysical questions informs our central objective, which is to critically examine how the ontological concept of the self emerges through a dialectic between self and other that fuels both the story of our lives and the metanarrative that frames them.**¹⁰

Indeed, because the self is not currently in a state of no-thing-ness or in a condition of tabula rasa, we will initially view the seed of the self through the ultrasound of moderate realism in the Aristotelian-Thomastic sense.¹¹ As the union of body and soul, moderate realism places the self in an intermediate position between the purely spiritual

and the wholly material. As for the oppositional other, it may also be a human blend of the spiritual with the material in the form of other people and the political, social, and religious institutions they create, mere substance like the neighbor's unkempt back yard or the "impenetrable" jungle in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, or entirely celestial like the evil spirit sent to terrorize Saul.¹² Whatever form it may take, what is of true consequence is how the self cognitively processes its physical interaction with the other. South African philosopher and James Joyce groupie **Derek Attridge** sees this material interaction premised on a kind of relation with the other that leads to an "encounter" with the other's uniqueness which is, paradoxically, an affirmation of other as other.¹³ The self's external interaction is rendered meaningless until it undergoes an internal processing and interpretation, which Niebuhr sees as a cognitive dialogue and asserts that the self could not carry on this dialogue without using its reason.¹⁴ **And it is our capacity to reason that permits the spiritual "I" of the *res cogitans* to see itself as a singular Geist that emerges as a Hegelian synthesis from the spatio-temporal dialectical tension between the material *being-in-itself* (thesis) and the external other, or a kind of *res extensa* (antithesis).**

These very words you read – my reader and only friend – are an extension of my own internal dialectic, which resulted from my material self being in a world of oppositional others. While it is true that I can never perfectly communicate my ideas to you, as the boundaries of finiteness cannot be traversed in this limited life, the very fact that you are not I and I am not you paradoxically demonstrates the foundational opposition that allows us to see our spiritual selves beyond the images that keep us bound into the shadows of ignorance.

A Divinely Functional Structural Realism

Poured like concrete into the framing base of primary opposition, we can now inspect the Divine method used to structure, or build the house of the spiritual Geist-self. Although Aristotle originally addressed artistic structure in ***Poetics* (335 BC)**, those inclined towards various intoxicants and hearty conversation generally describe structuralism as a mode of analysis that originates in the methods of contemporary linguistics. Published after his death – an unchosen act that provided differential context to his life – in ***Cours de linguistique générale* (1916)**, **Ferdinand de Saussure** presented language as a sign system and proposed a theoretical separation between the ***langue*** (abstract language system) from the ***parole*** (particular speech act, or utterance).

This Tudor descendent and Leipzig grad sees a **paradigmatic** structure that gives words meaning only through the oppositional tension that exists between the word uttered and the host of others that could have been, but... sadly... were not. The reliance of a *present* word upon *absent* words is the reliance of *parole* upon *langue*, or the system of differentiations that both transcend and exist *a priori* to the self's consciousness.¹⁵ The *langue*, or vertical and transcendent paradigmatic structure of absent words frames and animates the *parole*, or the immanent and horizontal **syntagmatic** structure of words uttered in a linear time-space sequence that is present in the minds of both the speaker and the receiver. In other words, the horizontal syntagmatic axis is the combination of words in a sentence such as: "The philosopher was loved by the city." On the other hand, the vertical paradigmatic axis creates the ability of the speaker to select a particular word in the sentence: "The philosopher was *killed* (instead of loved) by the city."

To be certain, Saussure's structuralism not only informed other linguists such as the Prague School cofounder and M.I.T. Emeritus **Roman Jakobson**, but other unwitting disciplines as well. In the squarely fashionable 50's, anthropologist **Claude Lévi-Strauss** gleaned many of his ideas from Saussure who sought to envision the *langue* past the *parole*, or see the linguistic whole beyond the particulars of individual speech acts.

Searching for the abstract, transcendent mental structures that underlie the particular acts of human behavior, Lévi-Strauss believed that just as we are ignorant of the abstract system of language in the act of speaking, we are oblivious to the framework of the social structures that govern our behavior. The structuralism of both Jakobson and Lévi-Strauss plainly sees a **deep grammar** that emanates from the foundational principle of opposition and centers on the idea that people conceptualize their culture in terms of binary opposites such as life / death and inside / outside. ¹⁶ **So, beginning with Saussure, meaning is not determined via a direct correspondence to an external objective reality, but is an arbitrary construction of a particular system, whether it is printed words, spoken sounds, or practices.**

As a necessary consequence of its claims that meaning is merely structured and illumined through describable binary oppositions, structuralism presented the idea of the culturally constructed **subject**, as opposed to the idea of the indivisible and stable Renaissance individual. Rather than seeing the individual as the center of meaning, structuralism places structure at the center, and it is the structure that originates or produces meaning, rather than the individual.

Language creates the subject.

I can only say "I" because I inhabit a system of language.

The subject is the first person pronoun's position adjacent to other words.

Identity becomes a product of the linguistic system the "I" occupies.

Yankee cinephile and *suturistic* Brown grad **Kaja Silverman** argues that the term *subject* designates a different semantic and ideological space from that indicated by the more familiar term *individual*, which dates from the Renaissance and posits a reasoned, autonomous, and stable entity. It is **Descartes' Discourse on Method (1637)** that presents us with his *first principle* of philosophy and the classic example of the private and autonomous individual whose existence is proven from *Dubito, ergo cogito, ergo sum*. Although he concedes that we have an imperfect mind and senses that delude our thoughts of external objects, Descartes asserts that we are not deluded about God because an imperfect mind could not invent the idea of a perfect God. Silverman concludes that the notion that meaning emerges from the play of differences within a closed system is alien to Descartes' logic based on his operative belief that ideas, such as the idea of a perfect God, correspond in an unmediated way to real objects and values. For Descartes, both God and man transcend cultural definition as the concepts of goodness and perfection, which the latter discovers within his own mind, are not time-bound or specific to a given civilization, but eternal and immutable. ¹⁷

In contrast, both structuralism and **poststructuralism** – a revision and reversal of its predecessor – sees man as a subject that is the product of historically determined discourses. However, French poststructural thinkers like the finely quaffed Algerian Jew **Jacques Derrida** and the slickly bald and Death Valley tripping Foucault **deconstruct** the privileging of a particular subject over others and the grand narratives such privileging has produced. ¹⁸ Rhodes scholar, Cornell prof, and doting husband Jonathan Culler sees deconstruction as Derrida's term for a critique that demonstrates how the hierarchal oppositions of Western thought are undone, subverted, and exposed as constructions of particular ideological motivations and impositions. ¹⁹ Derrida also argues that structuralism is far too reductive and that all systems, including language, were instable, which renders meaning more slippery than the structuralists had supposed. ²⁰

Foucault aimed his critique at the arbitrarily privileged oppositional foundation of political and social power structures and its marginalizing effect on certain groups such as prisoners, homosexuals, and the insane. Most interestingly, poststructuralist thought does not eliminate the structural foundation of oppositional building blocks that underlie all systems of meaning. Rather, it theoretically deconstructs the foundation by inverting the central opposition and critically examining how one half has been privileged

according to particular ideologies used to serve the ends of a particular subject. So, although it is rooted in structuralism, poststructuralists are generally credited with decentering the subject by deconstructing the philosophical, religious, and social motivations behind the way, for example, the white male subject has been historically privileged in opposition to a female or black other.²¹

The history of Europe as written by Elizabeth I.

The history of the U.S. as written by Frederick Douglass.

While I find great value in deconstruction's critique of a particular, culturally constructed subject such as the white male, it founders in the face of the deeper foundational ontological opposition of self and other.²² In *The Gift of Death*, Derrida coins the motto "Tout autre est tout autre," or "every other is completely other."²³ If he means that this single opposition is absolute in the sense that human beings as individual selves are unable to transcend the time and space that constructs their finiteness, then we are in accord. While the other of culture is certainly external to the self, the self must deal with its oppositional relationship to culture internally, cognitively, so in this way the other is *within us*.²⁴ Despite our awareness of an external other, we are powerless to transcend the borders of our finiteness and can only attend to the concept of the other within ourselves – a notion provocatively examined in both Tarkovsky's and Soderbergh's filmic adaptations of Lem's *Solaris*.

We take off into the cosmos ready for anything.

But when you think about it our enthusiasm's a sham.

We don't want other worlds.

*We want mirrors.*²⁵

The self is not arbitrarily favored by capricious human ideology, but rather motivated by *necessity* since there is no way to absolutely comprehend or cross over into the other.²⁶ Attridge affirms the completeness of this view when he claims to see the other person's subjectivity as impenetrable to his own.²⁷ In this instance, poststructural thought paradoxically demonstrates that the finite self is not arbitrarily privileged because it exists in an opposition that encompasses all self-related oppositions. The oppositional situation of the self and other is "beyond deconstruction" because its privileging is absolute and cannot be inverted. Thus, the opposition of self and other is a kind of ontological **meta-opposition**, which cannot be deconstructed and is comprised of smaller **intra-oppositions**, which can. In other words, self and other are constructed by an arrangement of descriptive intra-oppositions. In the case of the self, some common intra-oppositions are: female / male, black / white, rich / poor etc. Freed from human moorings, the other draws from a broader range of intra-oppositional possibilities: alien / human, physical / spiritual, culture / nature, etc. While one may deconstruct the self's intra-oppositions and extract a transsexual (female / male), a person of observable mixed descent (black / white), or the bourgeois (rich / poor), these deconstructions leave intact the self that is positioned against the other. While the self can concurrently be female, white, and poor, it is unable to shatter the mirror and become the other. Although Attridge suggests a kind of experiential, encountering surrogate, the threshold of finiteness is ultimately and absolutely impenetrable.²⁸

While the particular male, white, rich subject might be theoretically decentered through a deconstructive critique of its oppositional privileging, the concept of a self that is both culturally constructed and yet an eternal, indivisible essence begins to emerge via its oppositional relation to an other. This new self is paradoxically conceived as a synthesis of both the essence of the Cartesian individual that is eternal and stable and the poststructural subject that is neither autonomous nor private. Although the self is constructed, this construction is not merely the product of blind cultural forces, but rather a Divinely reasoned and ordered meta-opposition described through a series of intra-oppositions. So – my reader and only friend – this new self is not merely a creation of a

Divinely shaped culture, but also an authentic essence that appears through its temporal **diachronic** opposition to the culture it interacts with; and it is this opposition that forms the parole, or the narrative of one's life. Indeed, Descartes erred when he imagined the individual as a free external narrator who speaks without simultaneously being spoken. Yet, poststructuralism has likewise erred in *seeing* history as a blindly autonomous creator of the self. **In response to these missteps, let us envision this new self as a finite, immanent "I" who is neither an external narrator nor simply a cultural construct, but rather a character-bound focalizer that exists inside a story narrated by the infinite, transcendent "I," which Aquinas calls God.** The metanarrative of history informs us of how the Divine employed innumerable oppositional others as instruments to reveal the essence of the self to the self's consciousness. In this pedagogic manner, the ontological circle is squared as:

- 1) the self is simultaneously self and other
- 2) as it is used as an other to instruct another self with regard to itself

It is in light of this view that we must consider a new ontological **structural realism** where the self emanates from a transcendent **Divine langue**, or a grand Pythagorean abstract system, and is structured into an oppositionally arranged, immanent, concretization that flows out of that system.²⁹ **So, this structural realism sees the self as both a culturally fashioned subject and a predetermined and structured individual provided with essence and stability because it is God who authors the story that shapes the self.**

Now – my reader and only friend – let us speak life into this proposition by placing it into the context of the theological domain and begin at the beginning when the Divine Other created the meristic totality of the cosmos. The earth, being “formless and void,” was still merely in a state of *potential* physical being where the cosmos only existed in the mind of God, or in the deep structure of a Pythagorean Divine Langue. It was not until the creative Spirit moved did the earth travel from abstract to concrete reality, or move from transcendent langue to immanent parole.

- 1) drawing upon the Divine langue that is Himself
- 2) God spoke the world into existence

In this way, human history, or **anthrohistory** is a single parole, or Divine speech act that is simultaneously in the **synchronic** *eternal now* from the infinite view of God and in the temporally **diachronic** traditional view of *history* from the finite and time-bound view of man.³⁰ **Through the narrative that moves from Genesis to Revelation, we gain epistemological entrance into ontology through an examination of the binary, or oppositional structure of anthrohistory. The self is formed and infused with meaning by and through its opposition to an other such as culture, which is not just the product of the human activity, but also an aspect of the Divinely structured narrative. In this structural realism, the self is both constructed in a closed system of differences and also imbued with meaning and an essential reality that is gradually revealed as it sees itself written by a Divine hand onto the pages of anthrohistory.** To the great “I am,” all meaning – including the meaning of the self – is synchronic and exists in the *eternal now*. For finite man, meaning is both immediate and synchronic through our experience in the present, and also absent and diachronic as it has been revealed through the gradual unfolding of anthrohistory, of which our individual story is merely a part.

Deconstruction claims that there can never be a **transcendental signified**, or a center to all meaning for which all other language is built upon, and that there can never, in any instance of speech or written language, be a fixed and decidable present meaning. There is a relative truth to this claim when one considers that humans have a limited view of the totality of factors that inform any given speech act and of the causal chain that constructs anthrohistory. In response, allow me to humbly submit:

- 1) if God is all-in-all meaning and we are the speech act of God

- 2) then the self has a fixed and decidable present meaning that is *progressively* revealed in space and time

To place this in a different light, as the speech act of God we reflect the presence of the Divine, which is our essence. For the Transcendent Being, there is no interplay between presence and absence, interiority and exteriority, this interplay exists only on the finite plane where there has been permitted a temporary entrance of darkness in order to create the foundational opposition upon which God has built and revealed the house of the self.

Although structural in its foundations, this approach attempts to loosen its inherent rigidity by keeping in mind some poststructural considerations that may benefit our methodology and make it more functional in the manner Prague structuralism is functionalistic, or its preference of dialectic over reductionism.³¹ Based on the premise that anthrohistory is God's speech act, which is a dialectic between self and other, this dialectical movement reveals a self in opposition to an other that is not merely a static construct, but rather exists *in statu viae* and is in the process of becoming the end of a Divine intent. Via the Author-Spirit, God has written the larger parole of anthrohistory in the form of a story, or the narrative from Genesis to Revelation, which comprises billions of individual speech acts, or the stories of each individual life. So, framed by Scripture, anthrohistory becomes **ecclesiohistory**, or the history of the Church. Ecclesiohistory is Scripture's **primary narrative** and defines humanity by the collective opposition of the Church and secular civilization:

- 1) the teleology of a linear view of time is established in Genesis 1:1
- 2) the creative Spirit begins to move in 1:2
- 3) God begins the speech act of ecclesiohistory in 1:3
- 4) the **primary opposition** that drives the primary narrative is established in 1:4 via the separation of the "light from the darkness"

In this way, our structural interest shamelessly lies in the most reductive core principle of opposition, rather than its methodological cousin, which is the study of signs and sign systems known as **semiotics**. While we may not have direct access to the Divine language, through Scripture we can still drill down into the deep structure of the primary narrative driven by the tension between light and dark established in Genesis 1:4 and concluded through the comic restoration and removal of darkness in Revelation.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth.

And I saw the holy city made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

The first things have passed away.

While the primary opposition is established in Genesis 1, it is then literally fleshed-out as God forms both man and woman ("male and female He created them") in the light of reason, which is immediately contrasted by the darkness the serpent's irrational suggestion that man perform an action that would lead to spiritual death. With the Fall, the darkness of irrational sin now divides the rational light of truth and the oppositional tension that drives the primary narrative is poured; it is concretized in Genesis 3:15 when God actively places enmity between the seed of the woman, or the **elect** and the seed of the serpent. This Divinely ordained enmity is the struggle between the spiritual offspring of God, or the Church, and the spiritual descendents of the serpent, or secular civilization and its cultures. As the entirety of God's family, the Church is seen in contrast with the seed of the serpent and is provided a *telos* through its struggle with the serpent's seed.

He who overcomes will inherit these things and he will be My son.

But for the cowardly and unbelieving, their part will be in the second death.

In Genesis, the particular spiritual seed of the woman, Seth and his son Enosh who lead men to "call upon the name of the Lord," is contrasted with the particular seed of the serpent, Cain, who builds the first city and names it after his son Enoch. A

descendent of Enosh, it is Abraham and his descendents who are promised the Divine inheritance, or the City of God. Throughout the primary narrative, while Leviticus provides the Church with a distinct culture of its own, God is continually placing the Church in opposition to, for example, the secular cultures of the Egyptians, Babylonians, Romans, etc. In Christ's High Priestly prayer, He does not request that Christians remove themselves from secular culture, but rather acknowledges the fact that they have been sent into the world so that they might, through their opposition to it, know God, themselves, and obtain their future glory.³² Just as Christ had tribulation, so will the Church, which is called to take courage because it is through Christ's victory in opposition to the world that the Church will ultimately claim Hers.³³ **So, it is this predetermined and necessary Fall that provides the rudimentary oppositional material that constructs the primary narrative. Looking again to analogy, just as God forms the Church and supplies it with meaning through opposition, so we may reason that God would use the same method to construct to the individual self, which is here limited to those particular selves that comprise the Church. Based on the premise that the highest truths are revelational, it is only this particular kind of self that can achieve true authenticity as God reveals the self to the this self within the oppositional structure of ecclesiohistory. Thus, this ontological proposition seeks to image a particular kind of self planted in Scripture as the singular seed of the woman.**

While the primary narrative of Scripture is viewed as an organic whole that images the self writ large in the form of the Church, it is comprised by hundreds of **secondary narratives** that provide the reader with cross-sections of particular selves expressed through the same foundational oppositional arrangement of the self and other. Although Scripture does not extend into the present (its eternal principles certainly apply), we will image a 21st century self through its oppositional relationship to the secular culture of its day; this culture is comprised by images, objects, individuals, and institutions.³⁴ In Genesis, the Architect demonstrates the method for the creation of man and the cosmos and the elect's post-Fall spiritual recreation through the division of the darkness of our irrational sin with the Light of the Truth. This methodology allows the Divine to teach, shape, and transform the Church into a fitting bride for the Son. We can envision this creative act as the Father, through the Spirit, writing the selves that are His children as the dark ink of being upon the light pages of ecclesiohistory.³⁵

So herein lurks our task – my reader and only companion – to examine both the primary narrative of ecclesiohistory as it is revealed through Scripture, secular works, and our own continuing secondary narratives in order to better understand how God has and is presently writing the self. In our search, however, we will not put the self under a microscope and try to understand it as a word or object (signifier) that designates an abstract concept (signified), for in our secondary narrative, the self is not the word on the page that signifies a concept, but rather the mere color of the ink that constructs the word in opposition to the page:



In structuralism, the ink is shaped by the dictates of a langue, whether it is English, German, Dutch, or whatever, into particular letters that form signs, or words. These words form the speech acts of a specific group of people who enter into the semiotic process of arbitrarily attaching their concept of individual human identity to a word. Viewed in this way, a signifier may signify a multitude of signifieds as it is woven within a web of cultural associations. Although I am limited to writing in words that are subject to

slippage and misinterpretation, we will undertake a deeper look at the most reductive structure of the self as it emerges through a dialectical opposition with the other, or the oppositional color that allows a word to appear. As this sort of **functional structural realism** does not view a word as a sign signifying a concept, we are somewhat unchained from a messy semiotic analysis.³⁶ This is not to say that such an examination is as clean as black and white, but rather that we are simply interested in observing how the self *has been* and *is being* Divinely constructed. Although flawed by the darkness of irrationality, we must use the light of reason that remains within us to search for the self's elemental form as it appears in opposition to secular culture.

*I am the Light of the world.
How then were your eyes opened?
I was washed and now I see.*

Echolocating the Metadigital Version

As a particular parole of the Divine langue, my middling middle class secondary narrative was birthed into spacetime at 12:07 ante meridiem on January 31, 1973. Ah... the seventies...

*Supertramp's Crime Of The Century.
Farrah Fawcett's cockeyed smile.
The mile long Lincoln Mark V.
The détente policy of Gerald Ford.*

Not to mention the rough midpoint of already undone and yet constructed period generally referred to as **postmodernity**. Together – my reader and only friend – we will use postmodernity as a term of periodization, a rhetorical formation that constructs a present in relation to a past, or the cultural situation known as **modernity** that preceded.³⁷ While one cannot be entirely precise in the division of the two periods aesthetically, philosophically, or even temporally, we limit ourselves to the latter principle of division.

Poststructuralism is a central philosophical movement within postmodernity and the concepts of self and other are at the forefront of poststructural theory. As we have briefly discussed, poststructural theory sought to deconstruct this opposition in response to the common ethic of modernism – the development of the self – which was rooted in the fundamental concept of Western civilization since the Renaissance that the individual, rather than the group, is the basic unit of society.³⁸ The bourgeois entrepreneur and the independent artist together represented the embodiment of the Western ideal of the autonomous individual who attained freedom through self-determination.³⁹

*I am the lizard king.
I can do anything.*

The dual development of these two allegedly self-directed modern agents, however, soon produced what **Daniel Bell** – professor emeritus at the first American Corporation and the university formerly known as the Harvard College – refers to as an “extraordinary paradox” whereby each feared the other and sought its destruction. As a result of that most ancient of emotions, the middle class, progressive in the economic realm, became much more morally and socially conservative. In contrast, the independent artists began to investigate those aspects of life marked *inaccessible* by the bourgeois, which sparked the shifting view with regard to the nature of consciousness about the self.⁴⁰

Known for her argument that interpretation had become the intellect's revenge upon art, the Dark Lady of American Letters, a.k.a. **Susan Sontag**, sees this dynamic as the self colonizing the other in the search for identity. She saw a modern sensibility that moved between two apparently contradictory, but actually related impulses – surrender to the exotic, the strange, or the other, and the domestication of the other through science.⁴¹ The latter called forth by modern **Machiavellian political philosophy** and its **Baconian scientific nephew**, Bell believed that this apparent contradiction resulted in an

attack on rationality, a suspension of social and religious morality, and a preoccupation with limitless ends. With vanishing religiously drawn boundaries, a bourgeois social structure became rooted in a mass-consumption economy that became the fertile ground for a 1960's postmodern culture to develop that Bell described as the logical culmination of modernism and manifested itself in the "porno-pop" celebrations of the counterculture.⁴² Through the potent mechanism of the technologically advanced mass media, postmodernism became a commodified extension of modernist adversary culture. The postmodern subject is not necessarily released from modernist angst, but rather machine-gunned with the cultural debts of consumer capitalism. A logical extension of the shortsighted attempt to replace God with science and an overreaction to the abuses of the Church, adversarial forms of modern and postmodern culture have undermined middle class ethics and self-indulgent lifestyles packaged and sold by the technological apparatus of contemporary capitalism. As a consequence, the postmodern subject often floats in a narcotic haze that has engulfed a depressed and vacant culture called forth by the fragmentation of subjectivity.

The modernist problem of alienation and anxiety, however, may no longer be on the bow of the postmodern world because as Auerbach's pupil and an admirer of a Hegelian immanent critique **Freddie Jameson** argued, the postmodern self is decentered and in a state of "hysterical sublime" because the other of Western societies was no longer nature but technology.⁴³ It is technology that drives the mass media and creates a kind of hyper-reality within which the postmodern self feels, at times, hopelessly lost. In line with Jameson's notion of hyper-reality, the favorite son of Reims, France and typhoid victim **Jean Baudrillard** claims that postmodern culture distinguishes neither between reality or unreality, nor between true or false representation. Rather, it becomes a weightless **simulation** that conceals the whole edifice of representation itself as a **simulacrum**.⁴⁴ Postmodern culture is no longer conditioned by anything external to itself as it has broken with representation and is (supposedly) free to construct a purely imaginary universe.⁴⁵ Pushed to its academic limits, Baudrillard contends that the media has so pervaded our everyday life with the ideological myths of late capitalism that reality itself does not exist and we are all trapped in a kind of **hyper-reality** defined as a universe of images. While this may be too bold a claim, there is a theoretical truth to the appearance of a powerful *Matrix*-like illusion that makes it difficult for the postmodern self to find its bearings in a world where the boundaries of hyper-reality and reality are hazily defined.

The postmodern subject is a prisoner dazzled by images.

Bound it to an existence on the lowest level of the divided line – the hyper-real.

As a corollary of this ontological detention, the notion of the prisoner's emancipation has been an integral part of postmodern theory that sees it as a kind of freedom from an oppressive universal conception, or grand narrative of self and other imposed by Western white males who assume that their own idiosyncratic rendering of humanity should apply to everyone.⁴⁶ Derrida calls this metaphysical tendency **white mythology**, which reflects the culture of the West where the white man takes his own mythology for the universal form of that he must still wish to call Reason.⁴⁷ In postmodernity, mythologies (white, black, or any other less achromatic color) have generally been imposed through the image-factory that is the technological media. Consequently, the postmodern prisoner's emancipation does not spring merely from the total elimination of mechanically imposed mythologies, which will never occur, but primarily from a greater awareness of itself in relation to a collective other that has become more transparent.

More than ever, the West, and the U.S. in particular, desperately requires philosophers who will descend into the cave and facilitate the prisoners' elevation beyond the realm of images in order to juxtapose the hyper-real with the reality it

cheaply imitates. Englishman, professor, associate priest in the C of E, and all-around swell guy **Anthony Thiselton** sees the postmodern subject as the victim of competing groups' vested interest for power whose manipulation of mass advertising has contributed to the disintegration of confidence in truth claims.⁴⁸ American sociologist and keen observer of the recovering drunk, **Norman K. Denzin** believes that the postmodern subject has lost confidence in its ability to control its own destiny because of a loss of trust in social planning and in universal criteria of rationality.⁴⁹ Such notions are more easily accessible and possibly better expressed through a literary and filmic narrative such as *Fight Club*, which conveys an emasculated and pessimistic postmodern subject who struggles to find his identity in a world where a hyper-reality is imposed on him by the mass media through an inundation of images.

Deliver me from Swedish furniture.

Deliver me from clever art.

On the finite plane, it is true that the individual has indeed been decentered by a world of relentless commodification accelerated by the expanding media manipulation. Canadian philosopher, student of Isaiah Berlin, and a practicing Roman Catholic with the unfortunate middle name of "Margrave," **Charles Taylor** sees the identity crisis of the postmodern subject in terms of a disorientation in a moral space in which questions arise about what is good and what is bad and what has meaning and what is trivial.⁵⁰ Often imprisoned in a hyper-reality that tends to confuse and invert perceptions, it appears that the subject may lack a meaningful level of self-awareness because s/he is no longer oriented in moral space, which is to say that its position in relation to an other, an external material reality, has become a most perplexing situation indeed. Complicating matters, according to poststructural theory, any attempt to find one's self through a search for meaning is bound to go awry, for every sign promising some sort of primary knowledge is embedded in further contexts whose explication requires the setting of even more signs. Thus, in the very attempt to find itself, the postmodern subject slips and drowns in a flood of ever expanding cross-references. According to poststructuralists, the subject fares no better in its attempts to cling the physical world because form does not remedy the problem of meaning, which is dispersed through objects that create a network of alien signs that thwart every approach to a transcendental signified.⁵¹ In its futile search for a unified identity, the subject runs desperately toward the light at the end of the ever-expanding hallway of postmodernism.

Picture a string that stretches into infinity.

Or maybe the desperate JoBeth Williams in Spielberg's Poltergeist.

In spite of this telos of uncertainty, those of us new dreamers who look to recenter the self – even in the face of the destabilizing forces of technology – have audaciously peered beyond the endless tail chasing of a postmodernist poststructuralism. While the term post-postmodernism has been bandied about by clever and sequestered folk, we, especially in the Reformed community, must look to the coming **Metadigital Age** that centers on a functional structural realism, which is both a revision and a reversal of the poststructuralism that preceded. With a nod to **Raoul Eshelman's** notion of performatism, **functional structural realism pays heed to the poststructural warning against manmade mythologies while acknowledging a Divinely authored metanarrative that serves as a binding authorial frame and provides the orienting point for the determined and closed oppositional systems we refer to as the primary and secondary narratives. This is to say that God, who signifies nothing outside Himself, but is Himself the Divine Languge and transcendental signified, provides the absolute standard of measurement and a constant and universal meaning to the reflected self as it is writ large onto the pages of ecclesiohistory. The subject is no longer decentered and destabilized through its mere existence as a thing constructed through the endless temporal deferral of an unceasing process of signification. Rather, through a functional structural realism, we seek to regain**

the centered and indivisible essence of the self that can be seen through the Divinely ordered juxtaposition of opposites in both history past and in the present. In order to accomplish this, we call forth a kind of **metadigital vision** that peers beyond the technologically driven media into a higher reality where one can see the **metadigital self** as it has been and is being written in binary opposition to culture. This way of seeing the world permits a transmutation of the decentered postmodern subject into the recentered metadigital self who can effectively transition from metaphysical pessimism to optimism because its point of orientation is no longer death and its proxies (emptiness, absence, and dysfunctionality), but rather the fulfillment that comes from the spiritually and cognitively experienced truth of its Spirit-authored telos.

Abram took Sarai and Lot and they set out for the land of Canaan.

The LORD appeared to Abram and said...

To your descendants I will give this land – The City of God.

Understanding that Frank Herbert created Dune just as God created the cosmos – to train the faithful – the metadigital self is able to travel from a kind of Hegelian **bondsman** to an **understanding consciousness**. **Functional structural realism sees that it is ultimately the bondsman's admiration for the Lord of lords and His oppositional system that removes the narrow self-identifications and self-interest and enables the metadigital self to attain an enlightening degree of negativity – authentic self-consciousness.** ⁵² **Through this recognition, the bondsman is able to transcend the fear that was his initial response to the otherness as embodied in the Lord's created system.** ⁵³ **As a result – while the bondsman achieved a kind of self-consciousness by discovering himself in opposition to the otherness – a higher version is obtained in the otherness. Stating this more plainly, it is not the scientific mastery of the other, but recognizing the Divine structure of the oppositional struggle and consciously subjecting oneself to it that accomplishes the evolution of consciousness into the realm of understanding.**

This understanding metadigital self is the ontological category that we – my reader and only friend – seek to call forth through its oppositional tension with the external other of culture. Most assuredly, we battle our own egoistic intents, our appetites, our vices, but this encounter is simply the internal processing of an external opposition that creates the walls designed to allow those who would see to **echolocate** their metadigital selves. The story has been Divinely written, but, being finite, we live in sequential moments of illusory freedom that permit us to learn from those occasions when we crack our head on the wall so that we may avoid doing it again in the process of becoming a living ontology of celestial intent.

*Just as falling snow is seen in the foreground of the deepening forest,
so being is called forth...*

in opposition.

Endnotes: Seeing the Divinely Structured Metadigital Self

¹ Genesis 3:15, *New American Standard Bible* (Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1999), 3.

² Romans 9, *NASB* (1999), ???.

³ Anthony Thiselton, *Interpreting God and the Postmodern Self* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), ix. Thiselton notes that this idea can also be seen in the work of such thinkers as French philosopher Paul Ricoeur and German theologian Jürgen Moltmann who both envision the self as drawing its full personhood from a dialectic between a self and its relation to an other.

⁴ Anthony Thiselton, *Interpreting God and the Postmodern Self* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), x.

⁵ J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Return of the King* (

⁶ G.B. Madison, *The Hermeneutics of Postmodernity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 155.

⁷ Aristotle, *Metaphysics* (New York: Penguin Group, 1998), 4.

⁸ Michael Foucault, "Polemics, Politics, and Problematization," in *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Random House, 1984), 329.

⁹ Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Self and the Dramas of History* (New York: Scribner Publishing, 1955), 61.

¹⁰ C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* (New York: Touchstone Books, 1996), 26. Lewis sees these categories as prerequisites for "self-consciousness." He writes: "There is no reason to suppose that self-consciousness, the recognition of a creature by itself as a 'self,' can exist except in contrast with an 'other,' a something which is not the self."

¹¹ Norman Kretzmann, Eleonore Stump, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 11: "Again, even scholars entirely friendly to Aquinas and impressed with his achievements as a philosopher have sometimes presented him as simply the consummate Aristotelian, adopting the term 'Aristotelian-Thomastic' as the best short characterization of Aquinas' philosophical positions." With this point in mind, for the purposes of this study, I employ the philosophy of moderate realism in the Aristotelian-Thomastic sense. Thomas Aquinas, *Questions On The Soul*, translated by James Robb (Marquette: Marquette University Press, 1984). "Aquinas - clearly Aristotelian - generally argued that all knowledge originates in sensation, but sensory information can only be made comprehensible by the mind, which elevates thought toward a preliminary apprehension of such immaterial realities as God and the soul. However, revelation is required to reach an understanding of the highest truths. While in opposition to Platonic extreme realism (conceptualism, nominalism), which holds that universals exist independently of both particular things and human minds, Aristotelian moderate realism holds that universals only exist as they are instantiated by particulars. Like Aristotle, Aquinas saw a foundation for transcendent universals in immanent things. Warren Austin Gage, *The Gospel of Genesis: Studies in Protology and Eschatology* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001), 75. Aquinas is echoed by American theologian Gage who wrote: "As an observer of nature man discerns the metaphysical by the means of the physical, the transcendent by the immanent." Romans 1:20, *New American Standard Bible* (Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1999), 1071. Expressing this same idea, the apostle Paul argued that: "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made."

¹² 1 Samuel 16:14, *New American Standard Bible* (Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1999), 273.

¹³ Derek Attridge, "Innovation, Literature, Ethics: Relating to the Other," in *PMLA* 114 (New York: MLA Press, 1999) 22-24.

¹⁴ Niebuhr, *The Self and the Dramas of History* (1955), 6.

¹⁵ Richard Harland, *Beyond Superstructuralism* (London: Routledge, 1993), 3-4.

¹⁶ Claude Levi-Strauss, "Structuralism and Ecology" in *Social Science and Information* (London: Sage Publications, 1973), 7-23.

¹⁷ Kaja Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 128.

¹⁸ Jacques Derrida, "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy," in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: Chicago University Press., 1982), 213.

¹⁹ Jonathan Culler, *Ferdinand de Saussure* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 139-146. This view is in line with Culler's interpretation of Derrida's argument with regard to the hidden motivation of

apparently arbitrary linguistic signs. Culler wonders with Derrida: "...whether the language one speaks or writes is not always exposed to the contamination of arbitrary signs by suggestions of imitative motivation, whether effects of motivation are not inseparable for the workings of language." Along these lines, Culler suggests that: "arbitrary signs of the linguistic system may be part of larger discursive system in which effects of motivation, demotivation, and remotivations are always occurring."

²⁰ Michael Groden, Martin Kreiswirth, eds. *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994). The root or (at least) the point of departure of Derrida's philosophy is a critical engagement with structuralism and Saussure's theory of the sign. Deconstruction develops one of Saussure's insights that language consists of a system of relations among arbitrary signs whose meanings are defined by the differences that set them apart from one another. It is this structuralist foundation that induces some philosophers to discuss Derrida as a neostructuralist, or even a superstructuralist.

²¹ Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, translated by Wake Baskin (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), 69. Saussure specified that the term "arbitrary" means "unmotivated." In an arbitrary sign, the signifier "actually has no connection with the signified." Used in this sense, however, arbitrary means that one half of an opposition is privileged choices and actions which are considered to be done not by means of any underlying principle or logic, but by whim or some decidedly illogical formula.

²² Terry Eagleton, *The Illusions of Postmodernism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 127.

"...postmodernism tends to be dogmatically monistic about pluralism, which is of course very often good, but by no means always. One would have expected that the pragmatically-minded might have been a touch more contextual about their claims. A great deal of postmodern politics is based on an opposition between identity and otherness: what is to be fundamentally rejected, "absolutely" one might be tempted to say, is the dominion of self-identity over otherness and difference."

²³ Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death*. Trans. David Wills (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 68.

²⁴ Jacques Derrida, *Psyche: Inventions of the Other* (Paris: Editions Galilée, 1987), 203. Derrida implies that the "mirror" is representative of human finiteness when he asks: "Or is it what I imagine of the other who is still held in my psyche, my soul or the self of a mirror?" In an engaging description, Derrida goes on to address our desperate attempts to surpass the absolute limit of human nature that is reflected by the other side of the mirror: "Of the desperate and unhappy speech to move beyond the illusion that it constitutes itself and of the possibility of stating the other or speaking to the other, this moment is most difficult and a kind of death when the breaking of the mirror is most necessary and also the most difficult. The most difficult because everything we say or do or cry, however outstretched toward the other we may be remains within us... [...] ...let us weep no longer over ourselves alas when we must no longer be concerned with the other in ourselves, we can no longer be concerned with anyone except the other in ourselves."

²⁵ Stanislaw Lem. *Solaris* (New York: Faber and Faber, 1970), 8.

²⁶ Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, translated by Wake Baskin (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), 69. Saussure specified that the term "arbitrary" means "unmotivated." In an arbitrary sign, the signifier "actually has no connection with the signified." Jonathan Culler, *Ferdinand de Saussure*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 29. Culler adds that there are exceptions to this principle and gives two examples: onomatopoeia and secondary motivation. For our purposes, arbitrary is not a purely semiotic term and does mean entirely unmotivated, but rather implies a motivation that is subject to human capriciousness.

²⁷ Attridge, "Innovation" in *PMLA* 114 (1999) 24.

²⁸ Attridge, "Innovation" in *PMLA* 114 (1999), 24: "It is in the acknowledgement of the other human being's uniqueness and therefore of the impossibility of finding general rules of schemata to account fully for him or her that one can be said to encounter the other. At the same time as it is an affirmation of the other as other, therefore, the experience is an encounter with the limits of one's powers to think and to judge, a challenge to one's capacities as a rational agent."

²⁹ Culler, *Ferdinand de Saussure* (1986), 40. American literary theorist Culler renders Saussure's view when he states that "langue" is the system of a language, the language as a system of forms, and "parole" is actual speech, the speech acts that are made possible by the language.

³⁰ Culler, Ferdinand de Saussure (1986), 45. Culler defines the two studies of language as "synchronic," the study of the linguistic system in a particular state, and "diachronic," the study of its evolution in time. While Culler concedes that Saussure has been attacked for privileging the synchronic by distinguishing it from diachronic, Culler argues that it was because Saussure recognized the radical historicity of language that he asserted the importance of distinguishing between the two.

³¹ Josef Vachek, ed., *A Prague School Reader in Linguistics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1964), 469. "As opposed to the 'pure' structuralists such as Saussure, the Prague school refused to consider language as an isolated synchronic system of pure form." The Prague school reconciled Saussure's opposition of synchrony and diachrony, or the linguistic system in a particular state and its evolution over time. Roman Jakobson, Krystyna Pomorska, *Dialogues*, trans. by Christian Hubert (Boston: MIT Press, 1983), 58. Discussing the departure from Saussure, Jakobson wrote that: "Saussure attempted to suppress the tie between the system of a language and its modifications by considering the system as the exclusive domain of synchrony and assigning modifications to the sphere of diachrony alone. In actuality, as indicated in the different social sciences, the concepts of a system and its change are not only compatible but indissolubly tied."

³² John 17

³³ John 16:33

³⁴ Just as meaning from language is derived from the most basic and fundamental difference in sounds, so we can see the self as it stands in opposition to the other. A specific linguistic example of this concept is seen in the Prague School of structuralism and phonemics. Rather than simply compile a list of which sounds occur in a language, the Prague School sought to examine how they were related. They determined that the inventory of sounds in a language could be analyzed in terms of a series of contrasts. Thus in English the sounds /p/ and /b/ represent distinct phonemes because there are cases (minimal pairs) where the contrast between the two is the only difference between two distinct words (e.g. 'pat' and 'bat').

³⁵ This view centers on a Reformed theological position that sees man as totally depraved as a result of original sin. Thus, the self is initially written as dark ink upon a the light pages of history. History is signified by light pages because it was created to contain the Law and lead man to see the stain of sin in himself. Man, through the process of sanctification, eventually become as light as the pages he / she is written upon. Thus, man in heaven exists in a perfected, glorified state and is now "light," or free from the temporary darkness of sin.

³⁶ Building upon Saussure's work, structuralists such as French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss and Russian linguist Roman Jakobson searched for ways in which meanings are made through binaries, or oppositions such as good / bad, rich / poor, hot / cold. Thinkers as Levi-Strauss and Jakobson informed the work of such later 20th century theorists as Roland Barthes, Michael Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, and Umberto Eco (among others) who examined specific sign systems like as literature and fashion. I mention this semiotic outflow of structuralism only to point out that it is not something that I am borrowing from structuralism.

³⁷ Barry Lewis, "Postmodernism and Literature," in *The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism* (New York: Routledge, 2001) 122. While the dates that frame postmodernity are far from absolute, it is generally accepted that it began around 1960 and continues through at least the end of the twentieth-century, although there are some who feel that the postmodern era has ended. Malcolm Bradbury, Richard Ruland, *From Puritanism to Postmodernism* (New York: Viking Press, 1991), 33. For example, Bradbury and Ruland believe that: "Postmodernism now looks like a stylistic phase that ran from the 1960's to the 1980's. Therefore, a large portion of writing published after 1990, which is dubbed postmodernist, is really 'post-postmodernist,' or 'post-pomo' for short."

³⁸ Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), 16.

³⁹ Thiselton, *Postmodern Self* (1995), 11: "Whether or not we agree with Jürgen Habermas (1988) in doubting if postmodernity brings the end of modernity, it is generally agreed that the postmodern self has lost the innocence which characterized the self of modernity which possessed a basic optimism about the capacities of human reason, social strategies, and scientific achievement. However, such optimism omits too many factors to provide hope for the postmodern self."

⁴⁰ Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (1978), 17.

⁴¹ Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation* (New York: Anchor Publishing, 1996), 69-70.

⁴² Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (1978), 22, 51.

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- ⁴³ Frederic Jameson, "Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism" (*New Left Review*, 1984), 64.
- ⁴⁴ Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra et Simulation*. Trans. Paul Foss, Paul Patton, and Phillip Beitchman (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983), 11.
- ⁴⁵ David Dickens, Andrea Fontana, eds. *Postmodernism and Social Inquiry* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1994), 54.
- ⁴⁶ Terry Eagleton, *The Illusions of Postmodernism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 116.
- ⁴⁷ Derrida, "White Mythology" (1982), 213.
- ⁴⁸ Thiselton, *Postmodern Self* (1995), 12.
- ⁴⁹ Norman K. Denzin, *Images of Postmodern Society* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1991), vii.
- ⁵⁰ Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 28.
- ⁵¹ Raoul Eshelman, *Performatism, or the End of Postmodernism* (*Anthropoetics* 6, no. 2, 2000 / 2001) [text online] accessed 25 October 2007, <http://www.anthropoetics.ucla.edu/ap0602/perform.htm>.
- ⁵² J.N. Findlay, "The Phenomenology of the Spirit: An Analysis of the Text," in *The Phenomenology of the Spirit*, translated by A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 521.
- ⁵³ John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress* (London: The Penguin Publishing Group, 1987), 40. Although couched in a Christian theology, the task of Bunyan's protagonist "Christian," who must also transcend his fear and sinful servitude by traveling to the Celestial City, is not so different that Hegel's bondsman. Christian states: "I am sure to be in safety there. I must venture: to go back is nothing but death, to go forward is fear of death, and life everlasting beyond it. I will yet go forward."