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Self Development with Dialectics — Nature of One and the Other

Cadell Last and Pauline Ezan

This work aims to understand the nature of self development as growing towards new levels of conscious transformation characterized by desire for real freedom of identity. In order to explore this aim we will be using the dialectical method as a tool to better comprehend the truth of the self's natural tendencies. The two terms processed in this work include the self (or the 'One'), and the non-self (or the 'Other'). The One and the Other have a universal structurally determined origin, a logical series of developmental relations governed by memory of this origin, and a common horizon related to reconciling this origin with freedom. The philosophical benefits of understanding the dialectics of the self is that we can gain a new perspective on the intimate coincidence between the personal and the intellectual. In this paper we use the intellect to elucidate the logic of the personal. In the purely personal activities of the self, there is a tendency to embody a concrete singularity presupposed as irrelevant in relation to universality. However, in the purely intellectual activities of self, there is a tendency to embody an abstract universality disconnected from the concrete personal dimension of singular life history (as in the two authors own concrete personal historical struggles). In cultivating an intellectual understanding of the personal development of self these two dimensions ultimately converge. One starts to see that personal life history aims to cultivation of freedom, and intellectual abstract universality aims towards the mystery of death. Convergence manifests because in cultivating true freedom (personally) one understands death of identity, and in understanding the mystery of death (intellectually) one achieves real freedom. The synthesis of death of identity and real freedom may be what we call true love.

1. Self

The self gains consciousness from an originally unconscious state of being. When we are forming in our Mother's womb, when we are being born, throughout the earliest moments of our development, we are in a state of unconsciousness. We are, presumably, and as evidenced from the development of the psychoanalytic method (Freud, 1916-17), experiencing incredibly complex thoughts and feelings. However, these complex thoughts and feelings are not being consciously mediated, as such. They are 'thoughts and feelings' 'without a thinker or feeler'. Only later in our development do we gain the impression that there is a thinker or feeler that is 'having thoughts and feelings', i.e. 'my thoughts' and 'my feelings', reflexively referred to as 'ego' or 'I' (Lacan, 1949).

When our original unconscious state gradually transforms, through a pre-conscious stage, and into a conscious stage, we more and more start to form an identity of our 'self'. The self is an entity that perceives itself to be a single thing surrounded by a world that is its opposite (i.e. not the self). Consequently, the self naturally and spontaneously starts to wonder about this opposite of itself: what is this not-self (or the world)? How did the world form? Where did it come from? Why does it exist? These are the rational questions which stimulate the impulse to explain and understand the nature of 'reality'. Of course, in our time, many forms of consciousness tend to use the methods of science to approach these questions in their essence or truth (Hegel, 1807).

However, consciousness can and does use other methods in the general search for truth, whether they be religious, philosophical, magical or otherwise (Lacan, 1966).

Depending on the historical conceptual form that consciousness uses to mediate its rational questions about the world, the consciousness may come to identify with this historical conceptual form. In other words, the consciousness may start to reflexively mediate its self identity as a 'scientist' or a 'scientific thinker' (or 'religious' or a 'religious thinker'), and so forth and so on. Thus, in this mode, the self starts to link its identity into the social matrix of other self consciousnesses, via the historical conceptual form (or 'paradigm') recognized by other self consciousnesses as useful to answer these questions (Kuhn, 1962). Moreover, this identity in relation to the social matrix, can start to gain certain political, economic and other powers to externalize its perspective on the world, as carried through its social links (Latour, 1988).

The conscious self with its political, economic and other social powers, can start to move the world on various levels. In other words, its thoughts about the world, which were effects of rational questions about the world's origin and nature, start to gain the form of answers that can have their own effects on this same world. Thus, what the conscious self calls 'the world' is not merely some naive 'objective nature' pre-existing consciousness, but is rather strategically mediating and transforming conscious self search for truth (Hegel, 1807). Consciousnesses ontological effects on the world can be categorized in relation to the epistemological levels in which thought organizes its answers. Thus, thought can have an effect on physical, chemical, biological, psychological, or sociological nature depending on the forms of knowledge that it has internally cultivated and mobilized (i.e. artificial intelligence, synthetic biology, atomic manufacturing) (Kurzweil, 2012; Drexler, 2013; Church & Regis, 2014). These effects are the product of a feedback loop which will in turn structure the emergence of future consciousness (Last, 2018). Due to the fact that the forms of science are still in a relatively early form, consciousness is still learning what the nature and limits of this effecting (Kaku, 2011, 2015).

Finally, through deeper and deeper explorations of the contradictions and paradoxes in its conceptual structure and social links, the consciousness may start to focus deeper on the nature of its own consciousness (Hegel, 1807). Through this deepening of focus the consciousness may start to push beyond identification with the world, as well as the concepts and social links that filter engagement with the world (Heidegger, 1962). Thus, consciousness may start to probe into closer and closer contact with realms of itself that were previously purely unconscious (Freud, 1900). In this probing the consciousness may find that the forms of concept structures and social links mediating its engagement with the world, reflect unconscious dimensions of the self that are relevant to the origins and nature of its being in the world (Freud, 1920). The further reaches and possibilities of such conscious forms are not well known, although perhaps observable in those rare individuals who have pushed conscious potential to the absolute limit (Maslow, 1971). Such figures have been mythologized and deified in ancient times as symbols of universal consciousness (e.g. Jesus as figure of deepest love; Buddha as figure of highest awareness). In modern times philosophical presuppositions of an 'Overman' have been theorized, as consciousness which not only overcomes human limitations, but also explores emergent 'transhuman' limit-spaces (Nietzsche, 1883).

The central importance of this article is to work towards thinking of the self's personal life and the intellectual life as the same thing. This will be approached by using the intellect to elucidate the nature of personal development. Here we work with the idea that the personal can be conceptualized technically as a concrete singularity (or a 'One'), whereas the intellectual can be conceptualized technically as abstract universal (or the 'Other' of the One), and thus seek to apply the workings of our abstract universal capacities ('Otherness') to concrete singularities

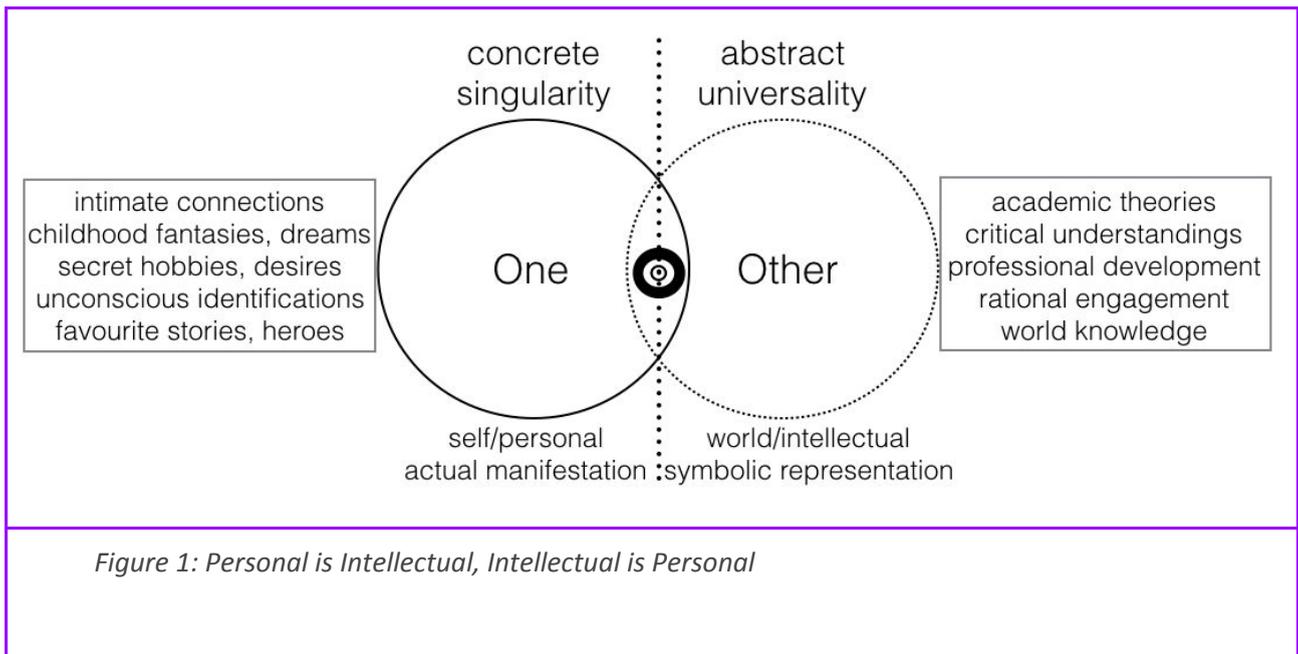
('Ones') (Lacan, 2005). In this we presuppose that one's personal concrete singularity: intimate connections, childhood fantasies, secret hobbies and desires, unconscious identifications, favourite stories, heroes and music, are all an integral part of the intellectual journey to understanding abstract universality (i.e. representation of what is universal). But also, one's intellectual life: academic theories, critical understandings, professional development, and rational engagement with world knowledge, are all an integral part of the personal journey to understanding concrete singularity (i.e. the actuality of self consciousness).

Thus, we as authors on a meta-level, are deploying our intellectual capacities in this paper to approach the actuality of what we are as concrete singularities (personally). In thinking together the dimension of the personal and the intellectual, we aim to bring together the idea that our representations of what is universal, and the actuality of our self consciousness, are not separate, but the same thing divided internal to itself: the personal is intellectual, and the intellectual is personal. The point of this bringing together is to construct a general understanding of self-consciousness as a natural development with ontological consequences (e.g. Piaget, 1954; Wilber, 2000). Self-consciousness has the capacity to freely author its own life-story inclusive but transcendent of the social matrix within which it was cultured (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). This free capacity for self-consciousness is an essential element in, and precursor to, the emergence of self-transforming individuals which retroactively define and delimit the territory of normative society and culture (Last, 2019). In other words, those unique and rare historical individuals who managed to transform themselves into something beyond the social matrix within which they were cultured (e.g. Newton, Darwin, Einstein; Dali, Picasso, Basquiat; Mandela, Gandhi, King Jr.; Freud, Heidegger, Deleuze), are those individuals who we read about 'after the fact' (in whatever sociocultural field). In order to understand how this happens we have to understand the coincidence between the personal and the intellectual, and to see if there are general patterns of self-conscious development that are universal in-themselves.

The metaphysical principle at work through this paper is that the 'One' should be read from the point of view of the 'Two' (One and the Other) (Žižek, 2011):

'One divides into Two'

Thus, this work is not a work of (fashionable) 'non-dualism', but rather a work of 'dual-aspect monism' in which the 'One' (self) is always already divided into Two (its own abstract meditation) (Last 2020).



2. One and the Other

The generality of this work will be framed by notions of the experience of self (consciousness) as 'One'. This is justified on the basis that we experience our existence as a 'One' (as an individual). We may have many competing notions of identity, we may explore many competing notions of identity, we may embody many different notions of identity, but this inherent multiplicity of identity, is experientially framed by a continuous self with a history in memory, and a future in anticipation, that is 'One'.

In relation to this 'One', we will also delimit the notion of the 'Other' as its opposite. Thus, the 'Other' of the 'One' is the non-self or the opposite of the self. The Other of the One in its highest order generality, is here conceptualized as both before and after the One, but only with form and content in relation to the One ('a world'). In other words, the Other of the One is Other in-itself, but formless and contentless without the One. The form and content of the Other is thus only in relation to the One, and a marker or function of the One's own unconscious and conscious self-limitations. This general structure of the One and the Other will be essential to grasp for the natural development of the self's capacity to transform as a free consciousness.

The first thing to note about the One as a consciousness is that it comes into being without a self-consciousness (in utero). That is to say that the One as a consciousness comes into being as an unconscious form. Nonetheless this unconscious form as a consciousness is informed by both the general structure of physics (laws), the developmental history of its biology (evolution), its natural cognitive capacities for language (representation), as well as its immersion in a social web of others of a similar and ultimately connected history to its own form.

From the very beginning of the One there is an Other. Thus, this Other is something that likely emerges as coextensive with it as a One. For all Ones this first Other is the interiority of the Mother's womb. In ideal conditions the womb provides everything the One needs to develop, through the crucial function of the placenta and the uterine wall, which mediates the relation to the (M)Other. Although conditions are not always ideal, and sometimes even threatening or hostile. However, the One as a rule is initially and as a universal starting point totally and completely dependent on the Other to be a One. If we removed the Other from the One, or if the Other failed totally and completely, the One would be (once again) not-One.¹

Thus, we should start our understanding of the One from the point of view of compassion for the undeconstructible absoluteness of its dependency on the Other. This is obviously not any structural fault on the part of the One, but a general feature of the way in which a One comes into being as a One through inner principles of the Other. Such a structural determination of the existence of the One can be mobilized to understand why the One has such a long journey to its own freedom from the Other which unconsciously brings it forth.

After a mostly physical and genetic (but also ecological, psychological, social) developmental process in the Other, the One is forced by the nature of the Other outside of its initial starting condition in total and complete dependence on the Other. However, it must be noted that the One at this point in development has already gained and does exert agency to a limited degree (i.e. resisting birth, forcing early birth, etc.), for reasons that have yet to be explored or understood. The One tends to emotionally experience this force as an undesirable negativity (which can be observed externally by consciousness, but only experienced unconsciously). This

¹ This is the metaphysical structure implicit in debates about abortion (women/infant rights); a phenomena that can and should be read from the dialectical point of view of contradiction, opposition, and so forth.

general unconscious experience of the Other as a negativity produces effects in the One (i.e. crying, screaming, wailing) that we have come to label symbolically with emotional valences (fear, anxiety, sadness, desperation, terror, pain, suffering).

What is being signalled by the One in its relation to the Other is the experience of uncertainty of connection or loss of attachment to a secure base for its own freedom and integrity. Perhaps most importantly this structurally determined historical rupture between the One and the Other imprints, marks, or even wounds the One. Consequently, subsequent expressions of negative emotions in its historical development may be read as virtual shadows of this necessary ahistorical event stored in bodily memory.²

Due to physical and biological determinations of the One by the Other post-separation, it remains almost totally and completely dependent on the Other, although it is an Other in a radically transformed nature. The One has gained some freedom in so far as that it can exist as an independent body from the (M)Other, operating via unconscious mechanisms of breathing, and increasingly sensing, which allow for a weak but important symbiosis to the world. However, for most of the One's functioning it is still dependent on the Other for most activities (eating, drinking, comfort, safety, environment, love and nurturing, defecation and urination), even if the Other has now radically diversified and complexified from the point of view of the One (i.e. it is no longer simply the Mother's womb).

This radical diversification and complexification of the Other from the point of view of the One is experienced unconsciously in the form of the emergence of autonomous and embodied figures (i.e. parental care-givers, general others). The energies and motions of these figures inform the One as to the nature of the Other. Due to the near complete and total dependence on these others, the One can easily be here subject to a period of development marked by many potentially traumatizing events, irrespective of the conscious intent on the part of the Other(s) populating the environment of the One. For the One it is initially impossible or at least extremely difficult to predict the movements of the Other(s), or to anticipate how dependable the movements of the Other(s) will be in meeting its needs for continued freedom and integrity.

Thus, any major changes in the status of the Other(s) in regards to the energy and motion of their figurative appearance to the One, will likely be met with the relatively frequent emergence of negativity that can be read in the form of emotional valences. These emotional valences can again be interpreted as virtual shadows that further complicate the One's original relationship to the dependable and complete Other stored in bodily memory. In other words, even though the One's emotional valences signal an impulsive desire to return to the original dependable and complete Other, these same emotional valences are building a sense of self-consciousness as an individual identity. The foundations of this identity is in its nature a frustrated compromise with separation, and thus a marker of its separation in the complexifying and diversifying world.

3. Idealization and Negativity

Now the importance of understanding these initial conditions leads us into what is the general development of the One vis-a-vis this Other. On the side of the Other it will continue to diversify and complexify, often unpredictably, leading to greater loss and uncertainty. This nature on the side of the Other could be framed as an irreversible temporality, in the sense that no activity on the part of the One can stop the Other from its diversification and complexification. The Other

² Such a possibility should lead to heightened awareness of birth practices, and thus the role of midwifery as a knowledge technique facilitating initial separation of consciousness in its pathway to freedom.

will diversify and complexify in terms of the quantity and the quality of autonomous and embodied figures, each of which will provide new challenges for the One vis-a-vis its own emotional system of valences. These figures could be represented as parents, siblings, friends, partners, lovers, guiders, teachers, gurus, heroes, enemies, teammates, coworkers, and so forth and so on, at different moments for the One.

However, on the side of the One, the motion that we can observe, which happens both spontaneously and unconsciously, as informed by a counter-motion to negative emotional valences, is the process of integration or sublation. Integration/sublation is a motion whereby the general otherness is transformed by the One into a self-model in image. In other words, as a consequence of separation from the (M)Other, a gap appears between the One and the Other, and this gap of general otherness is integrated/sublated back into itself. This integration/sublation back into self is the logical emotional motion by which the One attempts to recreate the original or 'primal' scene of its relation to the Other, and a phenomenal experience of a 'pure One' minus the Other.³

This process of integration/sublation is a process that we will call the process of idealization since it creates an antagonism with the actuality of material reality. In other words, processes of integration/sublation is the process by which the One attempts to transform general otherness as a negativity into its 'Ideal Other' (a proper Other to the One). This 'Ideal Other' is in essence an eradication of an otherness that would be structured by a gap or a separation between the identity of the One and the Other. The One unconsciously interprets its ability to achieve this action as its 'power', and uses its knowledge unconsciously to either achieve this end as a goal, or orient this aim as a process. Consequently, processes of idealization manifest throughout the development of the One in many different fields of the Other as the general otherness diversifies and complexifies (i.e. parents, siblings, friends, partners, lovers, guiders, teachers, heroes, enemies, teammates, coworkers, etc.).

Here it is essential to know that because the Other is irreversibly diversifying and complexifying (since in-itself it is a field of Ones, or a multiplicity of others), this unconscious motion of the One in its process of idealization is fundamentally characterized by division or disintegration to different degrees. In other words, whereas integration/sublation attempts to bring general otherness into a One (continuous 'unity' or a 'whole'), the fact of general otherness is that this 'unity' or 'whole' as an ideal is subject to repetitive division/disintegration (discontinuities). Another way of saying this is that it is only a matter of time before the One and its powers for idealization inevitably encounter the Other as more powerful. General otherness cannot permanently submit to the function of integration/sublation as a real (i.e. it is determined as the nature of the Other).

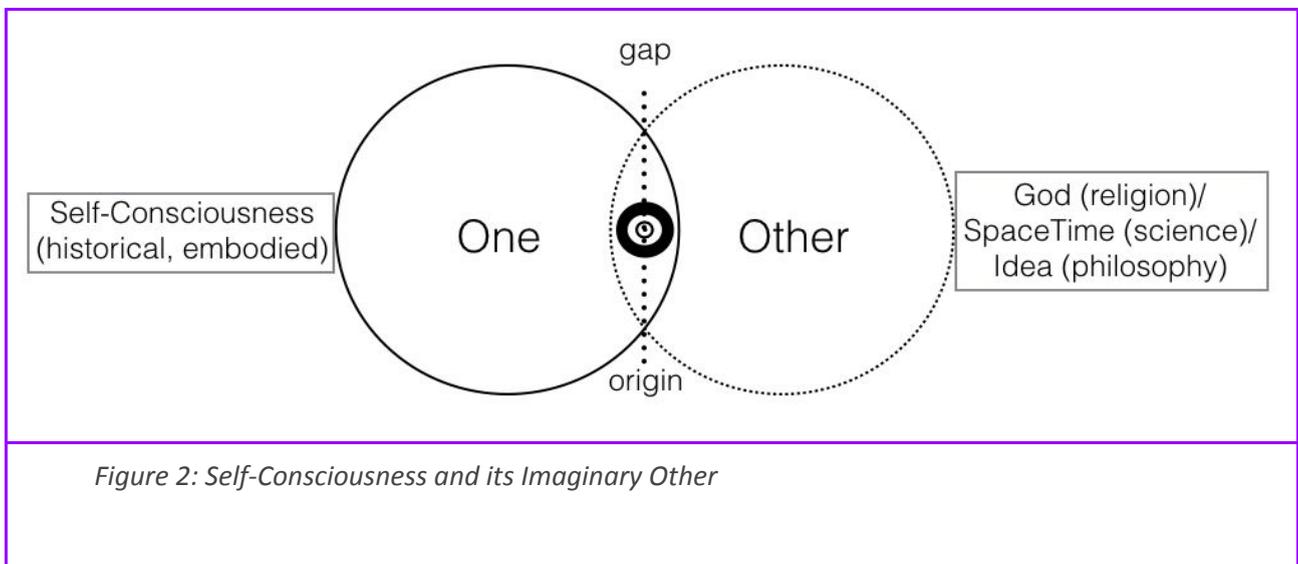
This fact of the Other as diversifying/complexifying negativity is why the unconsciousness of the One will start to transform into a self-consciousness which becomes increasingly aware of itself and its motion (i.e. ideal self-modelling). Thus the One becomes reflective (and increasingly reflective) as a response to increasingly diverse and complex situations that cannot be managed or mediated without reflectivity. Reflectivity gives consciousness the ability to create more complex and diverse models that can be selected or destroyed based on actual observations of others failures/successes, virtual simulations of present potential, and anticipation of a program's ability to perform work in the real.

³ Which is how we should understand what is happening in extreme forms of addiction, i.e. drug, sexual, food, etc.

From this emergence of self-conscious reflexivity in the increasing gap of the Other there is the attempt to model in image an Other that would be suitable for all the One's reflections. This can and has taken many forms historically, including in religious, scientific and philosophical forms. The religious form searches for an Other beyond what can be reflected by any One; the scientific form searches for an Other in all that can be reflected by the One; and the philosophical form searches for an Other that allows reflection by the One.

In religious context this Other tends to be represented as God (as the foundational and eternal cause of everything), in scientific context this Other tends to be represented as SpaceTime (as the foundation of mechanical motion and reductionist scientific knowing), and in philosophical context this Other gains the most abstract quality represented as the Idea (as the foundation for thought and its conceptual capacity). In this sense the traditional foundation for most of our knowledge is a historical opposite of the 'real Other' as a diverse and complex general otherness irreducible to all of the One's reflections. Thus, these different historical Others could be said to represent a desired idealization of the self-conscious ego's reflections, which emerge as repressed compensation for the unconscious gap at the origin of the One (loss of the (M)Other which was once the foundation for all reflection).

The qualities of these historical Others represent an ontological 'fullness' or a 'completeness' in-itself structured by geometrical form that would be eternally present (either as a beyond, as the world, or as thought). For example, in traditional religion God was, is and will always be there; in classical science SpaceTime was, is and will always be there; and in classical philosophy the Idea was, is and will always be there. Moreover, these Others are always the ground of our historical embodied symbolism, containing all Ones. For example, in traditional religion The Bible reflects God's Word, and all historical embodied consciousness will have to answer to God; in classical science the Laws of Nature reflect SpaceTime, and all historical embodied consciousness is governed by these Laws; and in classical philosophy our conscious thoughts reflect the Idea, and all historical embodied consciousness is participating in this Idea.



However, in these self-consciously generated abstractions of the Other holding all Ones there is a tendency to disembodied ahistorical thinking. In other words, these Others represent a complete and dependable Other for the abstracted imaginary of the mind, but do not correspond to the real in which the mind finds itself in embodied and historical context. Consequently, such images of the Other holding all Ones tends towards an obfuscation of the actuality of the Ones as a series of separated self-consciousnesses in increasing diversity and complexity. Thus, these traditional or classical forms of thinking have not yet approached the level at which separation

from the Other must be reconciled on the level of the embodied and historical self's unconscious origin (i.e separation qua (M)Other).

Here we must recall that in the origin of the One's separation from the Other it was marked with a very real negativity that signalled a fear of uncertainty and loss of freedom. The traditional or classical religious, scientific, and philosophical knowledge provides certainty and the gain of ultimate reality for the imaginary of the religious, scientific or philosophical thinker. However, this is only in a disembodied and ahistorical form which remains threatened by the real of embodiment and history. Thus, we need a knowledge that helps the embodied and historical series of Ones achieve realer freedom without an illusory image of the Other which would provide pseudo-certainty and gain.

4. Libidinal Field

In contrast with classical forms of religion, science and philosophy, psychoanalysis actively occupies the reflections of self-consciousness in-themselves as Ones attempting to reconcile emergent consciousness with its unconscious origin. In this focus on the real of the reflections in-themselves (independent of an Other qua God, SpaceTime, Idea), there is the discovery of an unconscious desire to transform general otherness into a singular Other for the One. This occurs at the location of the One's own memory of this Other as originally dependable and complete.⁴

Moreover, the One starts to become aware that this process of idealization in its various manifestations does not have the status of an actuality, but rather the status of a virtuality. Another way of representing this recognition is that the desire to transform the Other into the One is understood as a repressed fantasy of its own inner deadlock with general otherness. Thus, this Other is actually the opposite of real freedom for its historical body. In this way the ultimate positivity of classical knowledge in religion, science and philosophy, is consciously recognized as a general negativity blocking true knowledge of self.

In order to cultivate true knowledge of self, the One has to confront directly the real of embodied historical existence as a diverse and complex general otherness, without fantasy, and the concrete mechanisms which have been put in place to block it in the form of the fantasmatic Other. What is being blocked by the image of the Other is the way this general otherness provokes negativity in the form of tensions, conflicts or antagonisms for identity. When this negativity is confronted directly, and as it is without fantasy, there is the possibility for reconciliation with it in the genuine transformation of the One as a process marked by an irreducibly unknown otherness. To embrace this unknown otherness means to fully accept the absence of the Other, and consequently, emotionally integrated responsibility for the One, which may include with it a series of traumatic experiences that re-enact the primal separation from the (M)Other until the loss has been fully embodied and even enjoyed as liberation.

In terms of concrete personal dynamics of the One, psychoanalysis identifies an exceptionally important structural determination (perhaps as significant as birth itself), that marks the most difficult passage for the One if it is to achieve reconciliation with this unknown otherness. This structural determination is a historical and embodied problem, that of sexualization. The body of the One and its energetic historical development, is irreducibly sexual or 'libidinal' in nature. The One is a manifestation of 'life' and constitutes itself in the field of the libido. The field of the libido in

⁴ Independent of the material fact of whether it was actually originally dependable and complete, which it likely is not.

fact requires separation into individual Ones in order for its own mechanical operation.⁵ This is required because the libido's fundamental nature is that of attracting separate and opposed life entities into a temporary energetic symbiosis in order to permanently or 'immortally' reproduce itself (i.e. all Ones were unconsciously produced by the life action of this field, which is invariant in-itself).

Thus, from the perspective of the embodied historicity of the libidinal field, the Ones are not merely struggling with a problem with the One and the Other of their origin (the (M)Other), but also the reproduction of the One in-and-through each other (the Ones). This means that sex structures a field, not just between Ones and the Other, but rather a phenomenal internalization of the structure of the One and the Other internal to the drama of the Ones. In this structure all the Ones have the same initial condition (qua (M)Other), but transform differently into Ones via their libidinal relation to the Other (body, environment, etc.). The possible transformation in this field is that of either becoming the One or the Other in relation to separation as a historical individual.

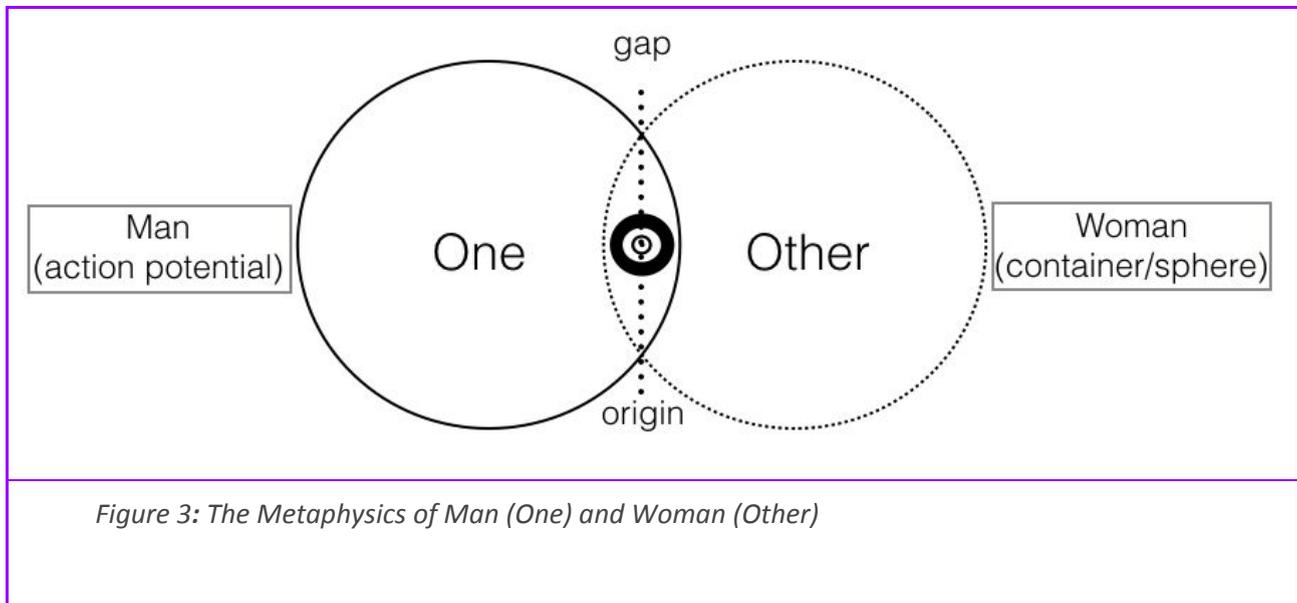
In terms of libidinal mechanics we can say that the One is that of conscious embodiment of the energetic field of the libido as an action potential for the Other; whereas the Other is that of conscious embodiment of the container or spherical unity within which the One can actualize this action potential. However, much of this occurs unconsciously, and is even disturbing if and when these energy dynamics are brought to conscious awareness. The Ones may become the One in-and-through unconscious identification with desire for the (M)Other. This locus of identification signals reproduction which the One lacks due to separation from the Other (as the original site where it was reproduced). The Ones may become the Other in-and-through unconscious identification as the desired (M)Other. This locus of identification signals power which the Other lacks due to the fact that it gets form and content from the One.

Thus there is a huge complication internal to the field of the Ones divided by sex into the One and the Other because as long as this division is maintained internal to the field of the Ones, real freedom is not possible, and total and complete dependency will be normalized (typically as a false form of egoic 'love'). This situation is what we conventionally refer to in the historical process as the emergence of 'Man' or 'masculine energy' (symbolized by the phallus qua action potential), and 'Woman' or 'feminine energy' (symbolized by the womb qua spherical container). The Man is what we refer to as occupying the position of the One (power), and the Woman is what we refer to as occupying the position of the Other (reproduction). The Man is the One for the Woman, an energetic action potential which is nurtured and cultivated for its power to develop abstract universality (i.e. transforming the world environment). The Woman is the Other for the Man, an embodied container or sphere for maximization of action in reproduction, which is ultimately related to the development of concrete singularities (i.e. new Ones). In terms of embodied historical sexualization these general energies are lifted into the domain of consciousness via identification, and thus influenced, but ultimately independent, of both the anatomy of the body, and the environment of the society.

In order to transcend this total and complete dependence of identity in embodied and historical sexualization, and thus in order to achieve a real freedom in reconciliation with the diversity and complexity of general otherness: Man must not place Woman as his central Other; and Woman must not place Man as her central One. In this mode of identification the Ones fail to cultivate the truth of their power and their reproduction. In other words, the Ones need to displace the Other from a human locus (as if another human could really be the Other!); and also understand

⁵ The latin etymological root of 'sex' is related to a scission: *sectus*, *secare*, meaning 'to divide' or 'to cut'.

their nature as Ones self-referentially (as split-Ones into Two that will become otherness). In achieving this aim the field of Ones can approach the meaning of their own nature as Ones (the truth of their powers of effecting), as well as the status of the Other as it is in-itself (the truth of immortal or endless reproduction of self) without image.



The historical and embodied markings of this passage of sexuation on the fields of Ones, will not be without a scar, in terms of a difference in challenge for freedom. For Ones who consciously identified as the Other (Woman), there is the need to gain (or re-gain) a sense of One-self as free (and not just the location of reproduction of the pseudo-image). For the Ones who consciously identified as the One (Man), there is the need to cultivate an inner sense of the Other as limiting the self to a finite-mortal status (and not a pseudo-powerful immortality). What a field of Ones who have achieved this transcendence in body and history become in time, has only very weakly and obscurely been understood and actualized. We are thus brought to the frontier of our understanding of the growth of the field of the Ones and their potentials.

5. Growth Beyond One-Self

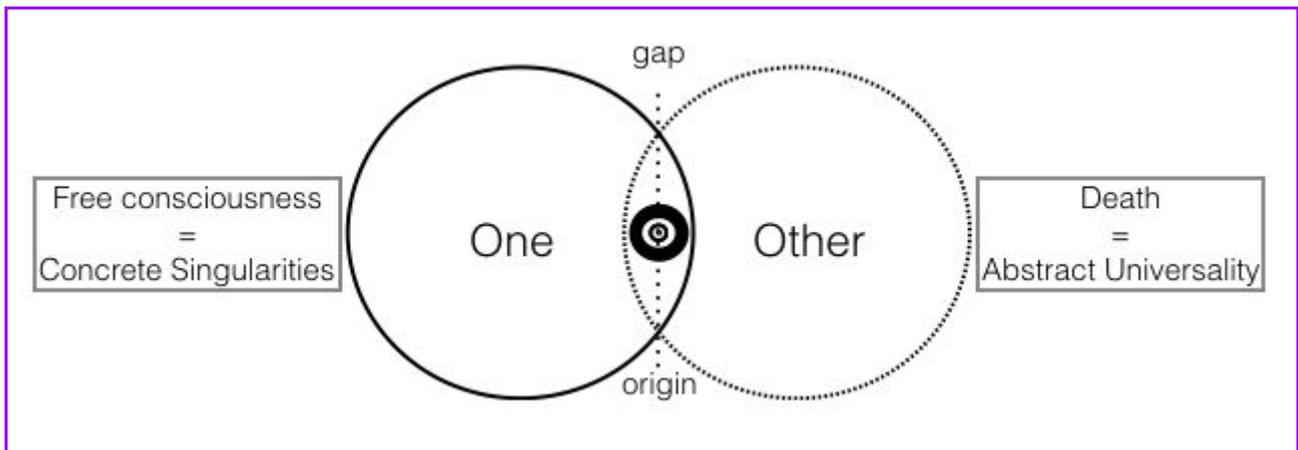
In the One's acceptance of the fantasy of the Other on the level of libidinal dynamics a new horizon of growth in relation to the diversity and complexity of general otherness emerges. In the absence of the Other this relation is irreducibly marked by obstacles, tensions, antagonisms for the identity of the One, but these obstacles, tensions, antagonisms for the identity of the One are the very source of growth of the One. Thus, the One engages in a general perspectival shift on general otherness as beyond its control or reduction back to itself in the image of the Other. This absence of the Other in image coupled with the deepening of the self-referential nature of the One's challenges, leads the One towards enjoyment in the notion that it will become totally other to itself. In other words, it will become a One capable of directing itself internally, and also a One that is capable of new transformations without historical reference.

On this level there is recognition that what is most real for the One is its own freedom to act and to participate in the on-going growth of diversity and complexity of general otherness. In accomplishing its perspectival shift on general otherness, what was once an unconquerable negativity of otherness, becomes even a source of positive emotion in challenge. The nature of the challenge as perceived by the identity of the One is that of contradiction vis-a-vis truth of identity. These contradictions of identity were first perceived by the One as negative insofar as

they unsettle the positive nature of present identity. This unsettling occurs due to confrontation with an opposite or an opposition that, if processed, would lead to death of present identity. However, the deeper the One understands itself self-referentially, the easier it is for it to perceive the necessity of contradiction as a creative power for future identity in building otherness to what it is now.

This process of openness to contradiction of identity can be formalized as positivizing negativity. The standard mode of positivizing negativity comes in the formation of an image of the Other that would eliminate contradiction in the form of opposites or opposition, by reducing the Other to the One. However, without the Other as a positive image, the nature of contradiction in the form of opposites or opposition, is eventually perceived as a necessity and also complementarity. This complementarity is not in a perfect union of opposition,⁶ but rather a complementarity of their mutual implication or processing of identity through the One's own loss and uncertainty of identity.⁷ Thus, and paradoxically, the One comes to understanding a paradoxical Other as an absence of the perfect image. The Ones tend to call this absence of the perfect image Death, and the embodiment of this absence in life allows for self-transformation in pure repetition of otherness to present identity (or 'death drive').

The One comes to understand that it is not only a field of Ones vis-a-vis general otherness which contains all Ones, but rather that the field of Ones is contained by the negative Other of Death: the locus of dissolution of complementary contradictions. In this recognition the deepest complementary contradiction is recognized by the One: that of life and death, or something and nothing. The field of Ones in-itself is Life, structured by the libidinal field. However, the Other, irreducible to any One, is Death, which claims every (life-)form of the One. The field of the Ones on this level can reach a real conscious growth in the birth of the new because they answer to nothing but the absent Other. This was not possible before this level because there was fear of loss of the past and uncertainty of the future.⁸ In other words, before this level of growth, growth was marked by unconsciousness, a simple function of the history of the physical body and its anatomical development (sexuation), as well as a function of being cultured into a certain matrix of understanding (socialization).



⁶ Referenced as 'dialectical synthesis' and enacted in 'marriage' (m/w) or 'state' (l/r) where Two is One.

⁷ Where One is a 'weird Two' (m/w; l/r), like 'one hand clapping' (Buddha); 'a mouth kissing itself' (Freud).

⁸ Which is how we should read the epidemic of 'depression' (loss of the past) and 'anxiety' (uncertainty of the future).

Figure 4: One and the Other as Freedom and Death

In conscious growth proper there is the emergence of an asexual form that is informed by consciousness, and its willingness to work with an Other that is death of One's identity (pure uncertainty). The power discovered in the One is the capacity of transforming into the absent Other, the reproduction discovered in the Other is the eternal rebirth of the One as a new One (creation ex nihilo, the emergence of something out of nothing). Thus, we achieve a pure coincidence of freedom and death in the split-One (1+) and the absent Other (0). The split-One has transcended its original total and complete dependence on the absent Other through a self-mediation; and the absent Other has become the source of the new in the freedom of the split-One. In this there is the achievement of a paradoxical form of certainty and gain in One that comes from uncertainty and loss of the Other. In other words, uncertainty and loss are not seen to be enemies of the growth of the One, but closest allies of the growth of the One.

This brings us to the idea that there are Two major mysteries that are generated by the structure of the singular field of the One and the Other. The first mystery relates to the field of the Other inclusive of all transformations on the side of the field of Ones (free conscious transformation): what is the 'truth' of 'reality'? The second mystery relates to the field of the Ones inclusive of full conscious exploration of the unconscious Other (death): what am 'I'(dentity)?⁹ When we combine the possible transformations of the Other inclusive of the powers of the field of free Ones, as well as the field of the Ones and their full conscious exploration of the Other as death, we do reach the level at which embodied historicity itself must be questioned (anatomical sexuation, gendered socialization). In other words: will there be an end to individuality (the field of the Ones), and will there be an end to history (the absence of the Other)? Will the Ones (instead of reproducing themselves through each other) subtract themselves from the field?¹⁰

On the side of the Other as death we are often here dealing with what is referred to as the intellect of abstract universality. On the side of the free Ones we are often here dealing with what is referred to as the personal life of concrete singularities. The point of this paper was to work towards the understanding that abstract universality and concrete singularity are the same thing (via application of abstract intellect to the logical mediation of personal development). Consequently, the point of abstract universality and the development of the intellect is to explore the potential transformations of the Other that become possible because in-itself it is death; and the point of concrete singularity and the development of the personality is to realize the deepest conscious state because in-itself it is freedom. In the pure coincidence of these opposites, it could be that both individuality is ended, and the presence of the Other is actualized in and through the field of the Ones own free death.

We may tentatively speculate here that such a phenomenon is what we refer to as 'true love'. In true love one is no longer an individual embodied 'split-One', but reduced to the 'Other'; and in true love the absent Other is present, no longer a diverse and complex field of indifferent otherness. To offer yet another tentative speculation, it could be that what the truest spiritual figures of history (most or all of whom we do not know by name, only meta-phors) represent is the asexual intimation of this possibility. It could be that the sexuated and socialized Ones ('human animal') is itself nothing but a fragmented fetus being birthed by (M)Other Earth into a

⁹ Religion answers: God, Soul; Science answers: SpaceTime, Human; Philosophy answers: Idea, Thought.

¹⁰ An absolute impossibility for purely biological life.

reality so alien from what we call reality as to be comparable to the difference between a womb (natural biology) and a hospital delivery room (artificial laboratory). Such a metaphor can birth new life into what Nietzsche called the 'Overman': the figure that overcomes human limitation, and openly explores the limit-spaces of what it means to be a self-conscious being; and what Freud called the 'Unconscious': the nothing-space which stimulates desire for 'fulfillment' with a loving presence.

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