
Deep Interpretation

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by

$$\exists d, e, \psi [\sigma_I(\text{says}, d, c, \psi) = 1 \wedge_{d,c} [\psi] = P]$$

(with $\sigma_I(\text{says}, a, p) = 0$, otherwise).

This allows us to avoid having propositions as arguments of situation types. At this point, our theory has led us up a spiral. We started from a realism toward situations in the world, were forced to be realists about objects, properties, relations, and locations. This forced upon us a philosophical realism toward cognitive states and activities. In the end, this allows a slight abandonment of pure innocence in favor of a sort of worldly innocence, which we hope that some readers may find attractive.

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DEEP INTERPRETATION*

But if you were to hide the world in the world
so that nothing could get away, this would be
the final reality of the constancy of things.

Chuang Tzu (tr. Burton Watson)

THERE is a concept of interpretation abroad these days which, though it arises in particular connection with texts, has little to do with matters that call for interpretation in the rather more routine acceptance of the term: with whether or not a certain ambiguity or inconsistency is intended and, if inadvertent, with how such flaws are to be resolved—with how the text is to be *read*. Thus the chronology appended by Faulkner to the text of *Absalom, Absalom* happens to be inconsistent with the chronicle one may recover from the notoriously tortured narrative of the novel, and there is an initial question of whether Faulkner got it wrong or whether the text of the novel is to be amended, or if it was deliberately planted to excite an even deeper reflection on time, voice, and narration than the already complex narrative structure alone would arouse in the literary consciousness of the reader. More important, the chronology must on

*To be presented in an APA symposium of the same title, December 29, 1981. David Hoy will comment; his paper is not available at this time.

this latter interpretation be construed as part of a work which happens also to contain a narrative now perceived as a fragment: it belongs to a more complex literary object, like the arch index of *Pale Fire* which recapitulates a mystery rather than helps the reader find his way about; and the identity of the work becomes indeterminate until a decision is made. Routine interpretation is a matter of determining textual identity, then, and although any number of factors must be appealed to in support of a theory, the central and controlling hypothesis is to the likely representations of the author himself as to how the text is to be read. These representations, of course, would themselves have been subject to change, and we can imagine the inconsistency between chronicle and chronology brought to Faulkner's surprised attention, and that he decided to allow it to stand. A textual problem has then been resolved by incorporation, but the work has been altered from a somewhat conventional story in *art deco* prose to a modernist exercise in cross-generic self-consciousness, with a corresponding gain or loss in critical standing. The history of art and literature is filled with lost confrontational opportunities, so we shall never know for certain whether, for example, Watteau's masterpiece, *L'Embarquement à Cythère* displays its *triste* and ephemeral eroticists leaving, or leaving *for*, the Isle of Love—either reading being consistent with the language of the title but each requiring a different reading of the work, which in view of its ambiguity occupies a limbo of indeterminacy of the sort epitomized by the duck-rabbit of Vienna. As there is no end to critical speculation, there is no terminus to interpretation. But the concept of interpretation I am seeking to identify has little to do with this, though confusion between it and the textual labors of humanistic scholarship has tended to obscure the differences. *This* concept of interpretation belongs less to humane studies than to the *Geisteswissenschaften*, or to the *humansciences*, as I shall term them in an effort to preserve the German agglutinative. And these scorn reference to authorial representation altogether.

Neither, therefore, has it much to do with meaningful actions construed on the model of texts, at least when ambiguities and inconsistencies of a sort made inevitable by the open textures of speech and gesture demand an interpretation or make one possible. An action is meaningful when its description makes reference to a social institution or practice; so moving a stone for the mere sake of its spatial translation would not—whereas anything a king did as a king or because he is a king would—be a meaningful act. Charles VII made an exceedingly generous gesture to the Anglo-Burgundian garrison of Troyes when Joan of Arc took that city

for him in the course of their triumphant coronation ride to Reims: he permitted them to leave, together with their arms and baggage. The Anglo-Burgundians cleverly if gracelessly interpreted “baggage” to include prisoners they had taken in hostage. Joan resisted this dilation of the term’s extension, though a case would be made that prisoners held for ransom would be valuable property, that they owed their lives to their exchange value, that they literally had, like tents and *chaudières*, to be transported and, like horses, to be fed. Though this construction could scarcely have been intended by Charles, he in fact accepted the interpretation and ordered the ransoms paid. Whether he would have been that forthcoming had the Anglo-Burgundians proceeded to dilapidate Troyes, arguing that stones can be classed as arms if arrows are, since they are ammunition for catapults, is impossible now to determine. Yet, like Faulkner with *Absalom, Absalom*, Charles stood in a position of authority over which interpretation(s) would be allowed, whatever may have been his precise intentions, and authority of this sort is always required when there is a system of distinctions—a language, a code, a teaching, a writ—which must be accommodated to circumstances for which it could not have been expressly designed.

Interpretation cannot be avoided if the system is to be flexible enough to work, and authority is demanded if it is not to go to such extremes of elasticity as no longer to *be* a system. So it is a matter of interpretation whether abortion is murder, whether it is rape when a man forces sex upon his reluctant wife, whether the theory of evolution is really a scientific theory, whether a revolutionary when captured is a criminal or to be treated as a political prisoner, or whether a meaningful action is to be construed as a kind of text—and in each instance someone or something is an authority. The limits of interpretation would have been interpreted as the business, if not the essence, of philosophy not long ago, when what we say when, what we would say if, what we must say whether, were pre-emptively disputed in the analytical chambers of Oxford. And though neither here nor in the tribunals of social life is intention as such always invoked, what speakers or rulers might or must have meant, or would allow upon reflection were they consulted, is consistently appealed to as casuistry proceeds, and constitutes what most closely approaches experimental confirmation in such interpretational practice. So understanding what an author as agent and authority at once could have meant is central to this order of interpretation which, *for just this reason*, must be distinguished from the sort of interpretation, hermeneutic or what I shall designate *deep* interpretation, which I want to examine here. It is

deep precisely because there is not that reference to authority which is a conceptual feature of what we may as well term *surface* interpretation. There is not because the level of explanation referred to in deep interpretation is not a level on which a participant in a form of action can as such occupy a position of authority. Or the only authority that counts is that of the scientist, in this instance the humanscientist. The distinction would have been more intuitive at a time when science was not yet construed as merely another form of action, in which paradigms are contested in a manner not to be greatly differentiated from that in which missionaries and Melanesians contest over sexual moralities. The scientist does not make the realities he is authoritative over and derive his authority from that, as an author or a ruler does—but this too can be a matter of philosophical litigation.

Perhaps a differentiation may be eked out as follows. The distinction between depth and surface cuts at right angles across the philosophically more commonplace distinction between inner and outer. It is difficult to draw the inner-outer distinction without begging every question in the philosophies of mind and knowledge, but surface interpretation undertakes to characterize the external behavior of an agent with reference to the internal representation of it presumed to be the agent's, and the agent is in some privileged position with regard to what his representations are. Or at least what his surface representations are. With regard to his deep representations, he has no privilege, hence no authority, for he must come to know them in ways no different from those imposed upon others: they are at least cognitively external to him, even if part of his character and personality, and with regard to them he is, as it were, an Other Mind to himself. The operation known as *Verstehen*, in which we seek to interpret through vicarious occupation of the agent's own point of view, though certainly a flawed conception, is at least a possible theory of how the Outer traverses the dark boundaries that separate him from Inner, if we grant that Inner has no need or use for *Verstehen* as applied to himself, the point of view being his. But it is not a possible theory of how we arrive at a deep interpretation, if only because Inner is cut off from his own depths for reasons different from those which cut Outer off from Inner. It has been said that part of what makes a reason an unconscious reason is that it would not be a reason for him whose action it explains if it were conscious. It would not in part because the beliefs that would justify it if conscious are alien to the system of beliefs which the agent would invoke. So it is part of something being deep that it is hidden, as much from him whose depth is in question as from anyone else. We may never—

and bats may always—know what it is like to be a bat, but bats, if they have depths, are no better situated than we for knowing what it deeply is to be a bat. And perhaps the very notion of what it is to be something implies just that sort of consciousness which has no more application than the concept of authority to the depths. In the depths there is nothing that counts as being there.

Deep interpretation, all this having been said, cannot altogether dispense with those representations with reference to the accessibility of which we mark the difference between inner and outer. It cannot because, in pretending to give a deep interpretation of what persons do, it takes it for granted that it is known what in fact persons do, and this may require reference precisely to those representations. Indeed, what deep interpretation undertakes is a kind of understanding of the complex consisting of representations together with the conduct they, at the surface level, enable us to understand; so surface interpretation, when successfully achieved, gives us the interpretanda for deep interpretation, the interpretantia for which are to be sought in the depths. So a deep reading of *Absalom, Absalom* seeks to interpret text and authorial representation together with reference to factors with regard to which it may be justifiably said that the interpreter knows things the author does not. Though an author, to the degree that he masters the technologies of deep interpretation, may come to be able to give deep interpretations of his own writings, he is in no better position to discern in these matters than anyone else, and questions of interpretation, in contrast with surface readings of the text, have nothing to do with questions on which he may be said to have some authority.

Surface interpretation, which we are all obliged in the course of socialization to become masters of, has been extensively discussed by philosophers in the theory of action and in the analysis of other languages and other minds. But deep interpretation has been scarcely discussed at all. Yet because it is practiced by the human-sciences, the theories it presupposes are presupposed by them, and their viability depends upon its viability. I should like therefore to give some examples of deep interpretation and to sketch some problems it gives rise to in at least some of those examples. And I should like to dissipate certain confusions which come about, especially in the philosophy of art, when the claims of deep and surface interpretation are not kept isolated. Depth, needless to say, has little to do with profundity. But I have no analysis of “deep” in the sense of profound readings of texts to offer.

II

Of the forms of divination anciently practiced by the Greeks, one in particular has a curious pertinence to our topic. This was div-

ination *dia kledonon*, exercised upon the casual utterances of men. The message seeker pressed a coin into the hand of a certain statue of Hermes, whispered his query in the idol's ear, blocked his own ears—and the answer would be contained in the first human words he heard upon unblocking them. Needless to say, interpretation of these would be required, supposing, as altogether likely, the words did not transparently reveal the message. It would rarely have been as pointed as the text, randomly encountered on the surface but viewed as set there by Providence, which nudged Augustine onto the path of sainthood (“Not in rioting and drunkenness . . .”), nor as apt as the equally famous text from the *Confessions* (“And men go about to wonder at the heights of mountains . . .”) which Petrarch pretended to have come upon by accident while pondering his relationship to himself and history atop Mt. Ventoux. More likely a passerby mumbled something about the price of olive oil while the message seeker wished to know whether Daphne (or was it Ion?) really cared. And an interpreter as middleman would be called upon to map interpretandum onto interpretans. The automatic writing from which the Surrealists sought to elicit astounding insights belongs to the same general sort of undertaking.

In view of the god's identity, we have an archeo-hermeneutical practice here, which pivots upon interpreting utterances “that mean more than the speaker realizes,” which is the English definition of the Greek work *kledon*, herewith introduced as an English word in its own right. Divination, like oracles and auguries generally, has fallen into disuse, but kledons and the form of interpretation they exemplify play a considerable role in modern hermeneutic theory, where we deal with symbols that Ricoeur, somewhat gnominically, tells us “say more than they say.” It is a kledon, then, when in saying *a* a speaker says *b* (or when, in performing a meaningful action *c* an agent does *d*), but where the ordinary structures for understanding *a* would not disclose to a hearer that *b* is also being said: nor is the speaker at all aware that he is saying *b*, meaning as he does only to be saying *a* (speakers have no authority over what they are saying when they voice kledons). In one of his novels, Vonnegut portrays a radio announcer in Nazi Germany who manages to alert the Allies to important military movements in Germany through messages coded into the anti-semitic utterances his German audience believes it is listening to. He happens to know he is doing this, which puts him in a difficult moral posture that would not be altered were he merely the writer of military intelligence embedded invisibly in bigoted discourse, delivered by a staff announcer who, unaware of hidden messages, would only be

doing his job of filling the air with banal evil. Like his ancient counterpart who was an unwitting *porte-parole* of hermetic communication, this announcer would be kledonizing and, given his presumed values, would not transmit the concealed message if he knew he was doing it; so what he is *deeply* doing is not only unintentional, it is (almost dialectically) counterintentional. From the perspective of the surface of discourse, the status as kledon of what he says is inscrutable, and the meaning of what he says in saying what he would suppose himself (only) to be saying is not really his. Much as in one sense the child born to the Virgin is not really *hers*. Had the identity of the child not been somehow *revealed*, there would be no way of knowing that a god had been born into history. It takes a prophet to reveal the divine overcharge on secular history as it takes an interpreter to unveil the communicative overcharge on ordinary communication. Without these revelations, life would have gone on in both instances with no way of knowing kledons were being transmitted into the unheeding air. What makes kledons so interesting is that they supervene upon forms of life and discourse which are already, as it were, under surface interpretation complete as they are. It is like the world being hidden in the world.

Now the interesting question is why the meanings are hidden. We can of course understand it when the secret agent uses the air-waves to disguise subversive intelligence, but why must Hermes graft his tidings onto inadvertent hosts instead of speaking directly? Well, why must Jupiter have recourse to bolts of lightning and flights of birds to communicate matters it would not have been thought beyond divine power to lay upon us directly, without the mediation of interpreters? There is a cynical answer. If there were direct communication, the interpreters would suffer technological unemployment. So in order to secure their economic position, they claim semantical monopoly over crucial urgent messages that only they can make out. I have no idea whether this cynical answer is true, but it illustrates a kind of low-level deep interpretation in its own right, in that the diviners are in fact maintaining their own position in the world through the fact that their clients believe them to be discharging an important, though in truth it is an epiphenomenal, function. The deep reasons governing these transactions and in the light of which we are enabled to say what really is happening, are hidden from interpreter and consumer alike, and the surface practice would not survive if the deep reasons for it were known: it would not exist if it were *not* hidden. Its being hidden from the client could be put down as priestly *fourberie* but for

the fact that it is hidden from the priests themselves: which is what makes the mechanisms of concealment philosophically interesting.

I have archeologized this long-abandoned practice to bring to prominence a structure of action in which, when *a* is done, there is a description of *a*, call it *b*, such that in doing *a* one is really doing *b* in the sense that *a* is done in order that *b* be done—which distinguishes *b* from the countless many other descriptions of *a* recognized in the theory of action—and where it is hidden from the *a*-doer that he is a *b*-doer. A deep interpretation of *a* identifies it as *b*, whereas a surface interpretation identifies it as *a*. Surface interpretation, as we saw, is with reference to the agent's reasons, though not his deep reasons, and though he may have difficulty in saying what his surface reasons are, this will not be because they are hidden. Its being hidden is a special kind of reason for not being able to make something out. But let me now give some examples, most of them familiar, where it seems to me this structure occurs.

A. Marxist theories. Marx and Engels do not accept at face value the descriptions and explanations men spontaneously give of their own actions. In every instance this side of the classless society, in doing *a* whatever it may be, they are doing something else, call it *b*, which must be understood in terms of their class location. Marx famously explained the repeal of the Corn Laws, under the ideological leadership of Cobden and the political leadership of Peel, which *they* explained as done in order that the working man should pay less for bread, as *really* to be explained as done so that the industrialist should pay less for the working man. Peel and Cobden, both Free Traders, vested their actions (sincerely) in humanitarian terms, but really were advancing the interests of their class, just as their opponents were expressing the interests of theirs. Peel was politically and Cobden economically ruined, but they were but the kledons of their class, instruments of the forces of history in the dramatical interplay of which classes are the true agents. A parallel sort of theory explains the sacrifice of the male insect in the rage of reproduction in terms of the interests of the species.

B. Nonlogical behavior. The economic principles of the Liberal reformers of 1846 define one of the few examples Pareto is disposed to regard as *logical*, namely pursuing one's own interests. But much of what men do is nonlogical, in the respect that the explanations men give of what they do is in reality no explanation at all, and underlying a whole class of actions is what Pareto terms a *residue*, which really explains what the *de facto* explanations men give only rationalize. Pareto-interpretation seeks the residue under-

lying conduct and rationalization together. A man forbears from murder because he has a deep horror of murder, but he explains forbearance with reference to his fears that the gods will punish him. Etc., etc., etc.

C. *Psychoanalytical theories.* Pareto says rather little about what residues are or how *they* are to be explained, being content to identify with the zeal of the village atheist the countless pieces of non-logical conduct which “originate chiefly in psychic states, sentiments, subconscious feelings, and the like.” A better theory comes from Freud. The distance between a commonplace and a kledonic reading of an action or utterance could scarcely have been more surprising under divination *dia kledonon* than the distance between the manifest thought or conduct of a person and its redescription with reference to its latent form as revealed by psychoanalytical interpretation. The Ratman jogs furiously after meals, “in order,” he would rationalize, patting a surprisingly flat stomach, “to eliminate *Dick*.” *Dick*, which is thickness in the Ratman’s native language, German, happens also to be the name of his lady-love’s American suitor, whose elimination the Ratman deeply intends. Obviously, jogging cannot remotely be a means for eliminating rivals, and “eliminating *Dick*” would not be a reason for running were it conscious. So the acceptable reason, “in order to eliminate *Dick*,” only rationalizes a reason the Ratman cannot acceptably act on and connects with this deep reason via a punning transformation, and the deep reason is hidden from him, though not from his interpreter (Freud), for whatever reason the unconscious itself is hidden. The example is far from atypical, and the type is found broadcast through Freud’s collected writings.

D. *Structuralisms.* Puns play transformative roles in Freud’s great hermeneutical works, which may explain, if those works are sound, why puns are socially so offensive (why do they meet with groans, why are they classed the “lowest form of humor,” why does the leading French philologist, who has made punning the principal feature of his mythod, get rejected for positions in his ungrateful land?), but certainly explains, since puns are native to the language they occur in, why they cannot be translated. So interpretation rather than translation or even paraphrase, connects the speech and actions of the neuropath to the Language of his Unconscious. Indeed it is just because the symptom is a pun on the psychic pathogen that Lacan postulates his hasty theory that the structure of the unconscious must be the structure of a language. Psychoanalysis as practiced by Lacan consists precisely in identify-

ing what the symptom says—or better, what a piece of behavior says when treated as a symptom, where symptoms are treated as a discourse hidden, as it were, on the surface of conduct as the purloined letter is hidden in full sight of those who seek it. But the theory of the linguistic unconscious generates a wide class of theories, e.g., Lévi-Strauss's witty thought that marriage is a kind of language, or at least a form of communication if we can construe, as he sees no obstacle to doing, the exchange of women as a kind of exchange of words. Now the reasons Elizabeth may give for marrying Paul are rationalizations of the interests of clans she is *really* advancing, whatever *she* may think. Dinners at the Douglas's, cockfights at the Geertz's, are other examples of conduct in which whatever we think we are doing, we are doing something else, deep interpretation telling us what.

E. Philosophies of History. It is Hegel who lays upon us the alarming thought that "Reason is the sovereign of the world," and that "the history of the world, therefore [*sic*], presents us with a rational process." So, however chaotic it may appear, Reason is in some way to be interpreted as acting through the actions of men to achieve ends, or an end, which can come about in no other way, even though the secondary agents of historical realization are totally unaware of the grand scheme in which they figure. What Hegel speaks of as Reason is close to what Vico speaks of as Providence, which exploits human intentions in order to subvert them and bring about states of affairs ironically opposite to what those who act on those intentions envision. Through "ferocity, arrogance, and ambition . . . the three great vices that could destroy mankind on the face of the earth" are generated "soldiers, merchants, and rulers," through the civilizing conduct of whom social happiness prevails. The kleidonic meaning of actions under the interpretational schemes of philosophical history are hidden from agents for whatever reason the future is hidden.

These are perhaps examples enough. I want now briefly to comment on some structural features they share.

III

It is difficult to know whether more to admire the antique diviners for having grasped a structure repeatedly exhibited in some of the most influential humansciences of modernist times, or to suspect these latter hermeneutical enterprises for finding cognitive satisfaction in structures from a more ignorant and credulous age. Or to draw some inferences from the fact that we may have turned up a residue, in Pareto's sense, and that each of these humansciences

owes its existence to an impulse, also realized in biblical interpretation, to get answers of a certain kind to questions that ought not to be put. But I hesitate to offer a deep interpretation of deep interpretation, not merely because I have some serious reservations about an enterprise no less suspicious when exercised upon itself in self-deconstruction, but because I wish to show how easy it is to avoid the dread Hermeneutical Circle, namely by refusing to step into it, avoiding hermeneutics altogether.

Instead I should like to bring out some conceptual features of the humansciences by drawing a contrast with a quite different account altogether of human conduct, namely that kind of token materialism which holds that mental states are really states of our neural system—a theory I mention rather than describe because of the great difficulty in describing it noncontroversially, and because of the general familiarity of that sort of theory to philosophers. There is, I think, no temptation to say that this is an interpretive theory (though of course there is a sense of interpretation which is virtually synonymous with theory), nor that we *interpret* mental states in terms of neural states. In part this is because we know very little about neural states, let alone enough to say with which neural states this or that mental state is to be identified, whereas the terms used to describe interpretantia in the deep humansciences are mainly very familiar to us, with definite analogies to distinctions on the surface; e.g., we refer to deep interests, desires, feelings, beliefs, strategies, and the like. But the contrast is sharper than this, I think, and I would like to make a few observations to the end of revealing the differences between a natural science, as it were, of human conduct and a humanscience.

First, materialist theories, if redeemed by scientific ones, would be universal in the sense of allowing no exceptions, a claim which must immediately be qualified to accommodate functionalistic possibilities that mental states which in humans are identified with neural states should in other orders of creatures be differently embodied. But at least no unembodied mental state is allowed. Deep theories in the humansciences allow, on the other hand, a great many exceptions, so it is not true that every surface phenomenon really has a deep interpretation. The deep structures of class membership and class conflict evaporate in the classless society in which men become coincident with what for lack of a contrast can no longer be termed their surface selves. Pareto allows that not all conduct is nonlogical and traceable to residues, and conceivably he drew attention to residues to liberate us from their distorting energies. Freud surely did not believe all behavior was neurotic, to be

referred via interpretation to unresolved conflicts in the unconscious, and in any case the possibility of a cure promised a form of integrated being suspiciously similar to that promised when class conflicts are resolved (though Freud was pessimistic about cures and it is in fact exceedingly difficult to find out whether he really cured anyone). Hegel excluded certain events from what we may as well call deep history; e.g., what happens in Siberia has no historical meaning whatever. And, lest we forget, only the first utterance heard by the message seeker is a *kledon*. I am less certain whether structuralisms allow exceptions, though to the degree that it is possible that there should be actions that are not meaningful actions, it is possible that there are actions for which no deep interpretation is in order. The repertoire of actions somewhat narrowly addressed by recent action theorists—raising an arm, moving a stone—could be nonmeaningful in principle when nothing ulterior is done by doing these beyond what simply here is said to be done—raising an arm, moving a stone. So these may occur outside any structures at all. By similar reckoning, not every even meaningful utterance is a speech-act, viz., covered by rules of a certain sort such that, in saying *s* one may be interpreted as doing *d*. So meaningful utterance need not have the kind of meaning ascribed by structuralist theories.

Secondly, there is no inclination to say that a given mental state *means*, or refers to, the neural state it is identical with if the theory is true, but the very use of the expression 'interpretation' implies just that in connecting surface with depth. The interpreter tells us what deep thing a surface thing means. It is this semantical component in the theories of the humansciences which distinguishes them in part from those of the natural sciences and which licenses the characterization of surface phenomena as in some sense like language. Contemporary anthropology has enabled us to see the most banal or at least commonplace actions as part of a communication system, so no one can any longer flatly describe ordering a meal, building a house, shopping for clothes, or launching a seduction in the flat terms of food, shelter, warmth, and sex. And it is with reference to a system of meanings which penetrates existence very deeply indeed, that we interpret phenomena whose surface interpretations may be quite different.

Finally, it seems to me that deep interpretantia are intensional for just the reason that makes them deep, namely that they afford descriptions of the same phenomena covered by surface interpretation, and that it is false that the descriptions are deep in the terms used by surface interpretation. This would make sense if in fact the deep interpretantia were representations, for intensionality has to

do precisely with representing representations. So the humansciences refer us to various representational systems with reference to which what humans do is to be understood, though those whose representations these are will naturally not be conscious of them as *their* representations. And in some cases they could not rationally allow them. Dotty as he was, the Ratman could hardly consciously suppose himself to be representing himself as eliminating a rival by running after meals. But in any case it is far from plain that neural states have representational properties or that neural sciences are intentionalistic at all. But these are matters better discussed elsewhere.

Whatever the case, it should be clear what deep interpretation consists in, at least in part. Surface occurrences stand in two distinct relationships to depth occurrences. We interpret *S* in terms of *D* when *S* means *D* and when *D* explains *S*. *D* moreover is a representation on the part of him whose surface behavior is being interpreted, but, typically, that he represents the world under *D* is hidden from him. The comparison with materialism has allowed these features to emerge, and at this point I drop the comparison. Needless to say, it was not drawn with invidious intent, nor meant as indicating failings in the humansciences. What have in fact been regarded as failings may have arisen only because an inappropriate model of a quite different sort of science has been applied to them, and the differences noted may serve to help draw that boundary between the humansciences and the natural sciences dimly discriminated by theorists in the early twentieth century. That will be a task for another time. I would now like to dispel a confusion I am far better equipped to deal with, namely one which has clouded the philosophy of art when features of deep interpretation have been the basis for drawing inappropriate inferences about the interpretation of works of art.

IV

In view of the fact that any work of art you choose can be imagined matched by a perceptually congruent counterpart which, though not a work of art, cannot be told apart from the artwork by perceptual differentia, the major problem in the philosophy of art consists in identifying what the difference then consists in between works of art and mere things. Consider thus the corpus of Leonardo's frescoes viewed in the light of a curious bit of advice he offered fellow painters as a stimulant to invention. He urges them to equip themselves with a wall spotted with stains. Then, whatever they intend to paint, they will find pictorial adumbrations of it on the smudged wall. "You will see in it a resemblance to various landscapes,

adorned with mountains, rivers, rocks, trees, plains, wide valleys, and various groups of hills. You will also be able to see divers combats and figures in quick movement and strange expressions of faces and outlandish costumes, and an infinite number of things you can reduced into separate and well-conceived forms." (Leonardo observes that similarly every tune can be heard in pealing bells, and I am certain there is a literary equivalent where every story can be read from a patch of spotted prose.) There are sheets of Leonardo's sketches that may have been generated by just such transfigurative vision, and it is always fascinating to speculate over which of his great works may have been provoked into artistic existence by this prosthetic of painterly vision. But this suggests an obverse exercise, namely to try to see, through an act of deliberate *disinvention*, a divine landscape, such as the one against which La Gioconda is set, or for that matter La Gioconda herself, as so much stain-splotched expanse. Nature and a certain surprising casualness regarding the material bases of his craft have helped turn certain of Leonardo's work into what look like stains to the casual eye. His *intonacco* for the *Battle of Anghiari* was, Vasari tells us, so coarse that the legendary composition sank into the wall; and though recent projects have thought of locating it by means of sonar and thus bringing a lost masterpiece to light, it is conceivable that the wall was stuccoed over in the first place because it looked more and more as though it were attacked by mildew. The rough napoleonic troops who occupied the refectory in Milan where the *Last Supper* is painted are often impugned as barbarians for the brutal way they treated that priceless wall, but since it takes strenuous curatorial intervention even today to prevent the painting from subsiding into stains, it is feasible that the soldiers only saw it as so much fungus and damp. To be sure, there may here or there have been seen a surprising form—an eye, a finger—but that might itself be of the same playful order as seeing the profile of Talleyrand in a lombardian cloud or, more likely in terms of soldierly fantasy, two hills as *des tetons*.

So imagine that on a forgotten wall in the sacristy of the Chiesa S. Leone Pietromontana, Leonardo depicted a Last Judgment which has, alas, reverted to a set of stains so as to be indiscernible from the very wall in Leonardo's studio from which his fancy projected and realized those great works, including, of course, the Last Judgment itself. Both have a certain art-historical interest. Owning the wall in the studio would be like owning Leonardo's palette, or, better, his *camera obscura*. It would be owning a bit of remarkable gear. Owning the other wall by contrast would be owning a

work of art in a sad state of degradation, worth, even so, plenty of millions if only the *Patrimonio Nazionale* would permit it to be moved to Düsseldorf or Houston. Knowing it to be a work of art, we must interpret those stains and mottles, an operation having no application to the counterpart, though we may use the latter just as Leonardo did, to excite the visual imagination. To interpret means in effect an imaginative restoration, to try to find the identity of areas gone amorphous through chemistry and time. It would be helpful to have a sketch, a contemporary copy, a description—anything to help with recovering Leonardo's intentions. There are many Last Judgments, but how much really will they help us? Will this one possess the celebrated moral diagonal the Vatican guides never tire of tracing for the edification of tourists who learned about it through popular lectures on Michelangelo? Will there even be a Christ figure? Perhaps Leonardo absented Him from a scene defined by His traditionally heavy presence. Or perhaps a certain blob is all that remains of a remarkable Christ, originally tiny in proportion to the dimension of the tableau, one more anticipation to Leonardo's credit, this time to manneristic optics. Interpretations are endless, but only because knowledge is unattainable. The right sort of knowledge gives the work its identity and *surface* interpretation has done its work. What remains is responding to the work, so far as this is possible in its sad state. We have an aesthetic for ruins, even for faded photographs, but not quite for ruined paintings. But such matters must be mooted elsewhere.

Deep interpretation supposes surface interpretation to have done its work, so that we know what has been done and why. Now we look for the deep determinates of da-vincian action. Appeal to his intentions only individuates the interpretandum for a deep interpretation, but the interpretantia refer us to Leonardo's kinky unconscious, his economic locus, and to the semiotics of embellishment in Florentine culture—what the Medici went in for instead of cockfights—and on and on and on. There is no end to deep interpretation, perhaps because there is no end to science, not even humanscience, and who knows what deep structures the future will reveal? The artist's intentions have nothing to do with these. Surface interpretation must be scrupulously historical, and refer only to possibilities Leonardo could have acknowledged without attributing to him knowledge of the humansciences of the future. He could not have known of Eisler's book nor the theory Eisler used. But that requires no reference to the artist's authority. Deep interpretation, finally, admits a certain overdetermination—the work can mean many different things under deep interpretation without

being rendered the least indeterminate under surface interpretation. Like philosophy, in a way, deep interpretation leaves the world as it finds it. Nor does knowledge of it enter into response, except to the degree that response itself is given deep interpretation.

It is deep interpretation which those who speak out against interpretation speak out against, in urging that we allow the works to speak for themselves. They hardly can be speaking out against surface interpretation, inasmuch as we cannot so much as identify the work, let alone allow it to speak, save against an assumption of achieved interpretation. Without surface interpretation, the art-world lapses into so much ruined canvas, and so many stained walls.

Of course it is irresistible to ponder what need for ritual purification it must have been that drove Leonardo to transcend stains and transfigure them into works of art—to ask what the stains *meant*—and to contrast his achievement with that of the American painter Morris Louis, in whose works stains remain stains, resist transfiguration even into veils, showing, perhaps, a hatred for fat? a need to soil? a wish for pushing off the white radiance of eternity? . . . This is to treat works of art as Leonardo treated his spotted wall, as an occasion for critical invention which knows no limit, the deep play of departments of literature and hermeneutics.

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INTENTIONALITY AND NOEMA*

I. INTENTIONALITY: NATURALISTIC AND TRANSCENDENTAL?

ONE may want to have an account of intentionality within the framework of a naturalistic theory. For such an account, mental acts, characterized by intentionality, occur as events within the spatiotemporal and *causal* order of nature. How precisely these events are to be located within the causal order of nature, more particularly within the structure of the human body, would have to be worked out in detail. But, in principle, on such an account, a physicalistic theory of nature, body, and the mental is perceived as capable of making room for a specific sort of natural

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