

Towards a Relational Ontology, by A. Benjamin

- a. People / Organizations: **this author exemplifies the very reason why people despise reading - and, so never do read - complex philosophy as all what many writers seem to only accomplish is taking a difficult topic and turning it into something much more laborious to internalize (i.e., to 'see' what's seen by the author). In my view, this author should lose his Ph.D. for this work - this was egregiously irresponsible as it was nonsensically written. I've said before that if you can't say it simply, you simply didn't understand it. This is a prime example of a thinker who did not understand well enough that with which he was seeking to "recover" to know well-enough how to detail and expose such. That said, for those who wish to take up this book to read for themselves, it should be made clear upfront that the goal of this author is the "working through the detail[s] of actual texts to uncover the work of either the plural event or an original relationality..." (pg. 218). However, these details are exposed - brought to the surface - through a slew of complicated (and, ironically, abstract) terminology, leading the true effect of said "recovery" to be itself complicated (or, strained, weighed-down). Such exposition is ironic as "the starting point in each instance [of recovery] was that both universalization and the positing of abstraction are not only marked by their own eventual impossibility, but it is also the case that they are premised on the elimination or effacing of relationality and plurality" (pg. 218). Thus, seeing abstraction as effacing relationality, the author's use of abstract language acts only to efface the very matter he's trying to "recover" - i.e., relationality and plurality. So, in total, I'd say it's exactly for that that this was an impossible read.*
- b. Quotes:
- "Were singularity to precede relationality, then the truth of relationality would have already been provided. Its truth would be found in the coming into relation of two founding singularities. While the positing of a founding form of singularity exerts a pervasive hold on philosophy, it contains a dimension-what will emerge as an ineliminable dimension-that remains unthought within it. **What is yet to be thought is the possibility that plural relations are original and therefore that both singularity and relations between singularities are always secondary**" - Author (pg. 1)
 - "The project of this book assumes that not only is relationality an always already insistent presence, but also that its originality demands that both the relation and originality be thought. Once this demand is taken as the point of departure, what then emerges is the possibility of uncovering an already present thinking of relationality within the history of philosophy. (Be that thinking affirmative or not.) **The recovery of relationality can then be articulated within the more general metaphysical claim that particulars are always already in relation. Indeed, particulars are only ever the after-effect of relations...Ontology insofar as the term appears here identifies existence. What exists exists in relation**" - Author (pg. 219)
 - "For example, the existence of self and other is such that any self is an after-effect of the network of relations in which it is located. Moreover, it is a network that is reworked through the continuity of coming into relation" - Author (pg. 219)
 - "**Ontology therefore will always precede ethics. Equally, relation can be thought in terms of place.**" - Author (pg. 219)
 - "there is the need to think [of] *the world* philosophically..." - Author (pg. 78)
 - **italics added - cf. D. Binseel, On the Theory of the Aggregate Image*
https://www.binseelsnotes.com/files/ugd/d7b063_eea5e9a5a0ca40c3b1fd3d4e4fa4d913.pdf
 - "in acting and in continuing to act, there is the constitution and reconstitution of public space. Being public occurs in an open space" - Author (pg. 82)
 - "What is meant by the 'public' is given different formulations within the overall text. In the first instance, there is the 'public'. This is the totality...The 'public' is the totality that is able to free itself, or be freed, from prejudice. Hence he argues, with regard to the relationship between individual and the totality, that it is the former that will find enlightenment difficult, were the attaining of enlightenment to be understood as a solitary activity. In fact the contrary has to be the case...The public is an open space of activity, that is, a space in which the 'public' is able to act (and act publicly)" (pg. 81)
 - **meaning, we cannot all-of-a-sudden become enlightened standing apart from, as a distance to, the world of which we are (in). There is no 'place' to go but here. No where we go, we always go nowhere.*
 - "relationality pertains to modes of existence. Relationality describes a state of affairs that is ontological. It is not just that being is relational but that **what exists fundamentally is a relation**" - Author (pg. 16)
 - **i.e., that the 'way in which' things ek-sist (cf. K. Reinhardt, The Existentialist Revolt, pg. 15 for the meaning of the German word 'Existenz') is through a mode of Being which (is) "related". To this, Benjamin later remarks "What matters therefore is noting the ways in which relationality has a founding presence"* (pg. 39)
https://www.binseelsnotes.com/files/ugd/d7b063_41b6e46a40fd4167934b3cbc4c2b9caa.pdf
 - "**what is meant by... 'fabric of existence' - is that existence is a weave of relations in which singularities are after-effects**" - Author (pg. 17-18)
 - **the author notes in the margins "While the expression 'fabric of existence' presupposes an argument to be advanced elsewhere, it is intended to identify the locus of the ethical. Ethics, as it emerges here, is not defined in relation to a single subject who comes to act morally. The subject within ethics is always relational. Moreover, the locus of ethics is not a link between a subject and future actions. Rather, the locus of the ethical is already at hand within the place of human activity and thus within what is called the 'fabric of existence'"* - Author (pg. 17)
 - "[our] self is itself always already (anoriginally) in relation with others. This form of relationality, precisely in its involving others, where the status of the other is not exclusively human, means that **relationality continues to be both operative and constituting. The field of operations in which it occurs has already been identified as the fabric of existence. Relationality could equally be described as that field of operations and thus as the fabric of existence**. It is a fabric—a weave of relations—in which an individual is only ever present as an after-effect of the primacy of the operative and dynamic nature of the fabric of existence" - Author (pg. 30)
 - "as early as *Being and Time*, Heidegger defined his own project as inextricably bound up with having to work with those 'residues of Christian theology' that remain within philosophy and had 'not yet been radically extruded'" (pg. 56)
 - "**Being is, after all, being-in-relation**" - Author (pg. 71)
 - "**Relationality is what it is in its being lived out**" - Author (pg. 73)
 - "**relationality is understood as an already present condition**" - Author (pg. 73)
 - "there is an inherent tension within relationality as a dynamic process" - Author (pg. 98)
 - "**The ontological setting of being-in-relation is the setting of the ethical. As a consequence, any thinking of the ethical is already a thinking of relationality**" - Author (pg. 114)
 - "While morality takes the singular individual - often recast as the 'moral agent' - as the locus of its concerns as such, ethics, at least insofar as the term is being used here, already presupposes both relationality and commonality" - Author (pg. 114)
 - "a pure heart is not ashamed of love; but it is ashamed if its love is incomplete" - Hegel, *Love* (pg. 116)
 - <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/hegel/works/love/index.htm>

c. General Notes:

 - Chapter 1 - Being-in-Relation (pg. 1)
 - "What the second question holds open is the possibility that the truth of relationality brings a form of plurality into play, and therefore what is true of relationality, correspondingly, could not be given by any one form of singularity in which that singularity would have been taken as primary.

- Were singularity to precede relationality, then the truth of relationality would have already been provided. Its truth would be found in the coming into relation of two founding singularities. While the positing of a founding form of singularity exerts a pervasive hold on philosophy, it contains a dimension - what will emerge as an ineliminable dimension - that remains unthought within it. **What is yet to be thought is the possibility that plural relations are original and therefore that both singularity and relations between singularities are always secondary**" (pg. 1)
- "the proposition that the truth of relationality inheres in what is always at work within relations, namely, the effective presence of a founding and irreducible plurality. Within the structure of this general argument, singular relations, which can be more accurately described as pragmatic occurrences within relationality, can only ever be secondary (and this is the case despite the possibility of attributing a form of originality to them). Such occurrences always depend upon the presence of an original form of multiplicity or plurality (even if the presence of the latter is not affirmed)" (pg. 2)
 - "the overriding position advanced throughout the varying engagements with texts and figures from the history of philosophy that form the basis of this book is that **relationality is always primary and that it continues to appear in this way**. Moreover, what is fundamental to the argument developed in the course of this project is that relationality has always been there as a possibility. **Relationality is not a lost possibility to be viewed nostalgically**. It can be recovered. And yet the argument goes further. Not only can relationality be recovered from within the context of this overall argument, but relationality also is there as philosophy's other possibility" (pg. 2)
 - "The contention at work here is that **relationality has an original presence**. At times it has what might be described as an almost archaic presence. Nonetheless, the presence of relationality, no matter how the presence of a founding form of relationality is understood, is often excised or effaced in the name of a posited founding singularity (to which it should be added that it is a singularity that can only ever be posited as founding.) The feint of original singularity, or more accurately the latter's emergence as a feint, is part of this process. That such a singularity is posited and thus only ever there, and therefore only ever present as an after-effect, is a central aspect of the general argument. It should be added here that the presence of this conception of the after-effect when recognized as such, that is, when recognized as coming after rather than as actually original - needs to be taken as attesting to **the primacy of relationality**. It is important therefore to deploy the word 'after-effect' as part of a rethinking of relationality" (pg. 2)
 - "the event in question is what is called henceforth a constituting 'plural event'. As a result, the 'plural event' then becomes one of the names for the quality of this founding form of relationality" (pg. 2-3)
 - "The plural event is that which allows for singularities. As is argued throughout the course of this book, the term 'plural event' has a double ontological register. In the first instance, that register identifies the presence of a founding ontological irreducibility. Secondly and consequently, that register marks the place of a founding set-up that needs to be explicated in terms of a relational ontology precisely because it is the site of already present and irreducible relations. Irreducibility is a term that is fundamental to this project. **Irreducibility is an essential part of relationality** (in the way that the term is deployed here). **If a relation is original, then there cannot be any element of the relation that precedes it**. Irreducibility is central therefore to any thinking of the plural when the latter occurs with a relational ontology. The reference here to ontology is also of fundamental importance. The plural event refers to modes of existence (and thus to what is). The claim made in connection to a relational ontology pertains therefore to 'being' - the domain of the ontological - and consequently the plurality in question refers neither to the hermeneutic nor to the interpretative, except to the extent that they are both effects of the ontological. Taken more broadly, what the reciprocity between the plural event and an occurrence entails - where the occurrence is understood as that which is what it is only after the event - is that singularity is an after-effect" (pg. 3)
 - **this gets us to considering Sartre's "existence precedes essence" - otherwise, that what is man (is) is 'first' what he makes of himself and simply 'that he is'.*
 - **the author notes in the margins "The concept of the 'plural event' was first formulated in my "The Plural Event" (London: Routledge, 1993) and plays a pivotal role in all of my work. It identifies an ontological position comprising a founding irreducibility. What this means is that at the origin there is already more than one. However, the key point here is that this is not a claim concerning meaning. Pluralism in the context of this project is an inherently ontological term. It is therefore a claim made exclusively on the level of existence. Interpretive plurality, incorrectly understood as semantic relativism, is the result of an original ontological irreducibility" (pg. 3)*
 - *To me, 'plural horizon' would have been more appropriate as 'event' indicates a concrete (i.e., singularity).*
 - "within such a context, namely, the context in which singularity is asserted as an end in itself, the plural event, while it remains the condition for singularities, can always be exercised" (pg. 4)
 - **"the plural event as a site of original relationality is that which allows for the singular"** (pg. 4)
 - "The principal aim of this project is to outline the aspects of Descartes, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, and Heidegger that are integral to the development of the argument for the operative presence of both anoriginal relationality and the plural event" (pg. 5)
 - "An opening in which it is possible to clarify what at the outset appears as no more than a set of general claims. It is this 'generality' that holds the key. The presence of the general therefore provides a beginning. Indeed, a start can be made with the question of the essential and thus the possibility of the general. In other words, a point of departure need not inhere at this stage in the truth of the set of claims noted above concerning relationality-as though such claims existed as ends in themselves. Rather, a point of departure can be found in the assumption that the overall argument would seem to admit, if not necessitate, the equation of relationality with a form of generality in which each instance - each relation - would then be an example of the general. Accepting this position - that is, the positioning of apparent generality as providing an opening - gives rise to a specific point of departure. Following from its acceptance... is the need to move from a concern with the general (which can always be understood as the relationship between the universal and the particular) to a preliminary sketch of what is entailed by the terms 'anoriginal plurality' and 'plural event'" (pg. 5)
 - "the terms 'anoriginal plurality' and 'plural event'... need to be understood as distancing, if not interrupting, the hold exercised by the continuity of the oscillation between universal and particular where the elements - universal/particular - are defined in terms of each other. What this means is that while the terms 'anoriginal plurality' and 'plural event' admit a type of generality, their clarification brings to the fore the limits of any recourse to forms of generality as providing the only basis of the philosophical" (pg. 6)
 - "integral to the construction of this other possibility for philosophy, **the primacy of relationality has a determining effect on the nature of the philosophical task**. Philosophy, as a result, is linked to a form of recovery, where what is recovered are anoriginal forms of relationality. Any argument that is centered on overcoming the effacing of anoriginality, rather than the simply projective, defines futurity in terms of modes of recovery. However, **it is a conception of futurity in which openings are connected to what will go on to be developed as the yet-to-be-determined. (The latter—the yet-to-be-determined—forms an integral part of the process of coming into relation.)**" (pg. 6)
 - "In sum, the opening up of the philosophical occurs as a recovery; an occurrence that is, of course, dependent upon the primacy of potentiality insofar as recovery is not a simple repetition but the uncovering of a possibility - thus a potentiality - whose actualization awaits. Actualization here becomes a form of affirmation. An affirmation of anoriginal relationality is dependent upon its potential to be affirmed. The interplay of recovery and potentiality rids philosophy of the threat of 'eternal return' insofar as, once they are taken together, recovery and potentiality comprise a form of transformation. **Transformation is both an opening to thought and an opening for thought**" (pg. 8)
 - "The difficulty with the recourse to empiricism and thus the reason why it is a mere response rather than a counter-measure is that it does not obviate the need for forms of abstraction" (pg. 9)
 - "Leaving aside the problematic relationship between empiricism and abstraction, there is another reason why the counter-measure has to involve greater forms of philosophical dexterity. That reason is straightforward. **The recovery of relationality is the recovery of a**

- sustained possibility, a potentiality, that, while having an exacting reality, is not addressed in any direct way" (pg. 10)
- "These terms [*e.g., koinōnía, sensus communis, partagé, Mitsein*], while identifying the centrality of commonality and relationality (after all, **being-in-common is the identification of a relation**; in sum, commonality is a possible name for relationality), still occur within a setting in which neither commonality nor relationality is addressed as an original position" (pg. 10)
 - "as part of the argument for engaging with the generality of relationality as a problem, it has to be argued in addition that the limit of the essential is not found in the denial of any form of abstraction or transcendence. (In sum, **empiricism is not the counter to idealism.**) Rather, the claim has to be that the recovering of relationality, the identification of an anoriginal possibility, demands a mode of philosophical thinking that cannot be equated with varying forms of essentialism, nor can it be equated with that conception of particularity that refuses any form of abstraction. **Abstraction therefore has to be rethought.** Remembering that abstraction thus far involves differing modes of separation, the relevance of the problem in this context is clear. Namely, that relationality, and with it the constraint of having to think relationality as an already present set-up, **necessitates a mode of philosophical thought that breaks with an oscillation between the universal and the particular where that oscillation is defined either by idealism or empiricism.** It is precisely this possibility - that is, relationality's already present existence - that allows it to be understood as philosophy's other possibility. What this means is that it is a set-up that is already there. In other words, what is already there with the anoriginal presence of relationality is not just another mode of thought. Rather, **to allow for anoriginal relationality** - that is, allowing for that which is already there, where the "there" is a mode of presence - is to allow for the incorporation of abstraction. This incorporation is premised on the very real possibility that the force of abstraction is not exhausted either by its identification with idealism on the one hand or by its conceded presence within empiricism on the other. While at this stage it remains a conception of abstraction whose status is still to be determined, once abstraction is understood as forming part of anoriginal relationality, then accounting for abstraction has to locate abstraction within the operative presence of a relational ontology and not as necessarily differentiated from particularity. In other words, incorporation would mean that abstraction, while present, would no longer be external to relations. Rather, it would already be there within relationality" (pg. 11)
 - "Abstraction itself is therefore not abstract. Abstraction as a question cannot be asked as though it were independent of the problem of the relation between particular determinations and the related particular abstraction. This is the effect of the doubling of abstraction" (pg. 13)
 - "abstractions are always determined abstractions" (pg. 13)
 - **i.e., they are abstractions (of) some particular - so, much in the same way Sartre says "consciousness is always consciousness (of) something"*
 - "To argue that relationality is an abstraction does not mean that relationality is abstracted from differing forms of relationality. If it were, namely, if relationality were abstracted from particulars, then the problem of application would reappear" (pg. 15)
 - "the abstract universality encounters a founding problem in the moment in which its relation to particulars emerges as a question" (pg. 15)
 - "If relationality is to be thought, and thus for it to become another form of philosophical inquiry, it is vital to begin with the supposition that the relationship between universal and particular is not the way original relationality is to be understood. This gives rise to the position in which attempting to understand the presence of relationality would necessitate a rethinking of relationality. As a result, it would take on the quality of the already present (where 'presence' would be defined as much in terms of potentiality as it would in terms of actuality). Again there is a return to the position that has already become clear, namely, that **relationality pertains to modes of existence. Relationality describes a state of affairs that is ontological. It is not just that being is relational but that what exists fundamentally is a relation.** Moreover, because fundamental existence becomes the point of origination, when that point is given within anoriginal relationality, then it cannot be reduced further. Original existence has to be thought as the point of anorigination" (pg. 16)
 - "In other words, the claim is that relationality describes existence in such a way that there are no singulars that come into relation as though there were singulars prior to relationality. **There are in fact only relations**" (pg. 17)
 - "While relationality is ubiquitous, there is no one determined form of relationality. On the contrary, singulars are always already in relation such that singularities are the after-effect of relationality" (pg. 17)
 - "**what is meant by... 'fabric of existence' - is that existence is a weave of relations in which singularities are after-effects**" (pg. 17-18)
 - **the author notes in the margins "While the expression 'fabric of existence' presupposes an argument to be advanced elsewhere, it is intended to identify the locus of the ethical. Ethics, as it emerges here, is not defined in relation to a single subject who comes to act morally. The subject within ethics is always relational. Moreover, the locus of ethics is not a link between a subject and future actions. Rather, the locus of the ethical is already at hand within the place of human activity and thus within what is called the 'fabric of existence'"* (pg. 17)
 - "integral to this project is that there is the already present interconnection between potentiality and relationality..." (pg. 18)
 - "To reiterate what is at stake here, it can be argued that once relationality is no longer thought in terms of abstract universality, but is thought instead as a set-up that already exists within the history of philosophy, and that while there are different modalities of relationality... it remains the case that precisely because relationality also exists in terms of potentiality, the incorporation of the relational within abstract universality would need to be understood as a denial of the status of relationality as defined as much by potentiality as it is by actuality" (pg. 18)
 - "Were potentiality to have been repositioned within abstract universality, then it would have ceded its place to relations that are to be established on the premise of a non-relational singularity or singularities that come into relation. Moreover, the already present existence of anoriginal relationality would itself be effaced if relationality were only ever understood in terms of that which is to be established. **Relationality, henceforth, is not positioned within the structure of abstract universality** insofar as that structure is presupposed either to frame the philosophical project (Plato) or is such that while effective, its actual determinations fall outside the domain of knowledge (Kant). Nor is it taken to be futural in the sense that it is without precedent" (pg. 18)
 - "Relationality, therefore, can only be understood as an abstraction if there is a concomitant transformation of what abstraction is taken to mean. (This is the presence of transformation as an opening.) Within this setting, abstraction would need to be defined in terms of a potentiality to be recovered and thus actualized. Potentiality therefore is a key term within a conception of the philosophical that is itself bound up with recovery. Potentiality allows for recovery" (pg. 18)
 - "**Abstraction and universality** - again, what should be underscored is the already admitted confluence between these terms - **need to be rethought...in terms of potentiality**" (pg. 19)
 - "part of the definition of the original setting is the necessity of its opening to future forms of relationality" (pg. 19)
 - "therefore, integral to the working out of any one particular is its being open to other modalities or forms of relation. Again, this attests to the effective presence of potentiality" (pg. 19-20)
 - "To reiterate elements of the argument presented thus far, it should be noted that what is underscored by this approach is the need to account for that conception of relationality in which what are being worked out are irreducible relations. **Relationality thus construed has a grounding anoriginality.** What has been described as anoriginal relationality brings the plural event into play. What the plural event means in this instance is a founding ontological irreducibility; plurality is only ever ontological. **Irreducibility that is both original and ontological will be defined as the anoriginal.** Both these terms - anoriginal and plural event - have an operative presence. The operative has a twofold determination here. In the first instance it is the mark of potentiality. In the second it is the interrelated position that relationality is there in terms that allow relationality to be defined on the basis of the continuity of relations. This attests further to the indispensability of potentiality as part of any account of what is emerging as a fundamentally different account of the relationship between universal and particular. Precisely because of the repositioning and reworking of singularities as after-effects, the possibility of coming into relation depends upon the capacity of the singular to be reworked - a

- capacity that can itself be reformulated in terms of potentiality. At work here are openings that can only be explained in terms of the interconnection of relationality and potentiality and therefore also where actuality has to be thought in terms of its possibility" (pg. 20)
- "what counts as abstract is defined in terms of its necessary separation from the work of relationality itself, that is, in terms of the without-relation. Relationality is not a mere abstraction" (pg. 21)
 - "The first is: Between what are there relations? The second: What is described in describing an original relationality? And finally there is the question that repositions a concern with the future: What is meant by coming into relation? What has been opened up as a consequence of taking these questions as providing points of departure is not just a space of activity. Rather, it is a space whose opening is already a form of transformation" (pg. 21)
 - "Determination is not fixed. Determinations do not just occur once. They are linked to a conception of existence in which what exists is what it is in the process of being worked out. This begins to identify the fundamental and original place of potentiality within being-in-relation such that being-in-relation is the continuity of a process. What the process names is the particular abstraction being worked out" (pg. 23)
 - "a relation between the finite and the infinite in which the recognition of finitude is in a very real sense not just conditioned by the infinite. More significantly, the infinite grounds that very possibility. **Finitude is therefore an after-effect of the infinite. What has to be thought philosophically... is that specific relation; in sum, the relation between the finite and the infinite**" (pg. 24)
 - "Finitude, therefore, is not the reduction of the infinite to a projected form of pure or simple particularity. This would be the conception of particularity operative within empiricism. At work here is a different set-up, one in which finitude is defined in terms of an already present relation" (pg. 25)
 - "The point is not that it is merely incorrect to use negation as the way of understanding this founding relation, which is an original (and thus an original) form of separation. Rather, the point is that there is a separation that has to be understood as a founding relation. This irreducibility is the anoriginal relation" (pg. 25)
 - "coming into relation... can be rethought in terms of a relationality-to-come, where what comes into relation is a singularity as an after-effect. As such, what comes into relation is a plural event, because it is only the latter that allows for the presence of the singular as an after-effect. Accepting this reformulation as a point of departure assumes therefore that **any form of finitude is the after-effect of an anoriginal and therefore founding irreducibility** (one modality of which is the relation between the finite and the infinite). This is the entity that comes into relation. The opening to future relations means that any instance of finitude will always be the after-effect of a network of relations. The status of that with which the finite comes into relation, even if it is finite in its own right, will nonetheless be marked by a form of the infinite" (pg. 26)
 - "That with which finite entities, which are themselves already relational, come into relation - in coming to have a determinate or determining effect on finitude - brings a sense of the infinite into that relation, almost as a precondition of relationality itself. Coming into relation is this complex process. It is a process whose continuity is interrupted by the identification of finitude with a moment of particularity" (pg. 26)
 - "the problem of abstraction needs to be noted. The problem is central insofar as what is being worked out in these differing philosophical projects - Kant's, Fichte's, and Hegel's - ought not be understood in terms of the relation between abstraction and particularity. The reason for this being the case should now be clear. While the abstracting move is always possible, what the analysis of each these projects will seek to establish is the way in which the anoriginality of relationality - being-in-relation as defined in terms of its operative particularity - is at work within them" (pg. 27)
 - "what is of interest in all these projects is the way they contain within them an identification of the ineliminability of relationality—thus its anoriginal presence—and the construction of that relationality as a plural event. In certain instances relationality has to be recovered, while in others its presence can be affirmed" (pg. 27)
 - "Despite the complexity of this positioning of relationality, the overall contention remains; namely, that both the insistence as well as the instance of relationality—where both are modes of presence—can be taken as constitutive of philosophy's other possibility" (pg. 27)
 - "Once there is the primacy of relationality, then relationality comes to define the affective in its differentiation from the aesthetic such that being-in-relation comes to be more than just a mode of being that describes relationships between human subjects. Relationality, and with it being-in-relation, has greater extension. Part of that extension, indeed integral to the formation of being-in-relation, is that relationality is sited. **Relations occur in place. There is therefore, as a beginning, an anoriginal relation to place.** Indeed, part of being-in-relation is that once relationality is no longer defined in terms that are anthropocentric in orientation, then relations involve the place of human beings and thus what can be described as the placedness of the being of being human" (pg. 28-29)
 - "Indeed, it is possible to go further and argue that relationality understood as part of the definition of human being and the network of relations that are therefore constitutive of the specificity of a determined human being (where this determination is attributed the status, always after the event, of a form of singularity; for example, the after-effect having become the named individual) are always placed. At its most elementary, the position is that the anoriginal nature of relationality means that a relation brings differing forms of externality into play" (pg. 29)
 - "[our] self is itself always already (anoriginally) in relation with others. This form of relationality, precisely in its involving others, where the status of the other is not exclusively human, means that **relationality continues to be both operative and constituting. The field of operations in which it occurs has already been identified as the fabric of existence. Relationality could equally be described as that field of operations and thus as the fabric of existence.** It is a fabric—a weave of relations—in which an individual is only ever present as an after-effect of the primacy of the operative and dynamic nature of the fabric of existence" (pg. 30)
 - "relationality involves place for the precise reason that part of relationality... is a relation to place" (pg. 30)
 - "**place is that in which relations occur**" (pg. 30)
 - "what this means... is that **being-in-relation is equally being-in-place**" (pg. 30)
 - "in the case of Kant, for example, what is called an affective structure of subjectivity is axiomatically bound up with the always already present status of place; in sum the anoriginality of place. Place figures as an already assumed part of the primacy of relationality" (pg. 31)
 - "While both abstraction and universality are linked to a conception of 'freedom' and thus also to undetermined subjectivity (precisely because freedom involves the undetermined), it is possible for 'freedom' to come undone once it is recognized that the subject—the subject there in its apparent universality - is only possible as an after-effect. It appears only as the mark of the effacing of the anoriginal insistence of the subject as a plural event, that is, a subject given within difference and consequently not recuperable by abstract universality. Freedom is in part present as a feeling; more significantly as a feeling that allows for other forms of feeling" (pg. 32-33)
 - Chapter 2 - Recovering Relationality: *Contra* Heidegger's Descartes (pg. 35)
 - "While it is always possible to argue that with Descartes there is indeed a specific version of the inauguration of the centrality of the subject, and thus that a unified and separated subject comes into being with Cartesian thought, it can equally be claimed, for example, that it is the Renaissance that gives rise to the centrality of the human being thought of as the separate and separated individual. To the extent that this position is maintained, Descartes can be viewed as continuing this tradition and not inaugurating it" (pg. 37-38)
 - "While relationality will always have different modalities—there is, after all, no single form that is taken or, more importantly, can be taken by being-in-relation—arguments concerning the locus of the individual would all have to be recast in order that the primacy of anoriginal relationality

- be maintained" (pg. 39)
- "Consistent with the arguments advanced thus far, there will not be an abstract conception of relationality that can be identified, described, and then reidentified as at work in various instances. The contrary is the case. Hence what continues is the primacy of forms of potentiality such that it will always be possible to argue that relationality is the process of its enactment - an enactment that has a necessary plurality. **What matters therefore is noting the ways in which relationality has a founding presence**. Again it needs to be recognized that claims pertaining to the overcoming of relationality - where the claims involve either the positing or the identification of a founding and original form of singularity - need to be interpreted as *de facto* identifications of relationality's primacy and ubiquity. Two instances are noted here. Their importance is to be found in the nature of the form of relationality that has been excised and the way this excised form leaves its mark within any consequent conception of singularity. The final aspect that needs to be shown is the way disequilibria of power can be a structuring force within an original relationality" (pg. 39)
 - "The poet becomes who he is through an act of differentiation. There is therefore a form of dependence as well as a type of separation. The latter is necessary in order that the identity of the poet be maintained. This complex set-up consisting of connection and separation allows for the identification of the one "unable to help himself"-the one who cannot be saved—as the Jew" (pg. 40)
 - *cf. D. Winnicott, *The Maturation Process and the Facilitating Environment*, pg. 75 - "the infant is beginning to relate himself to objects that are less and less subjective phenomena, and more and more objectively perceived 'not-me' elements. He has begun to establish a self... This development implies an ego that begins to be independent of the mother's auxiliary ego, and there can now be said to be an inside to the baby, and therefore an outside."
 - <https://psptraining.com/wp-content/uploads/Winnicott-D.W.-1965.-The-maturation-processes-and-the-facilitating-environment.pdf>
 - *this illustrates 'separation (as) integration' - that is, as one begins to isolate and determine something as 'there' a 'being-here' arises.
 - "this line announces the reality of the Jew carrying behind him a light that illuminates. The Jew walks in the dark into the dark. There is a founding act of exclusion. And yet that founding act brings with it a certain complexity" (pg. 40)
 - "there is a necessary reciprocity at work here" (pg. 40)
 - "What is described in these lines is nothing other than a generalized form of humanity defined by **the face; the oscillation between particularity and universality, in which both are read in and as the same place**, should be noted from the start. The face is not a surface. On the contrary, the face is the very structure of the human being" (pg. 41)
 - "Here what is announced, in the first place, is not just a relation of dependence, that is, identity as the after-effect of a relation, but also that the relation has an already existent quality. It was already present, and therefore its anoriginality is the precondition for instruction (and for identity). In other words, **a relation has already been announced, announced with its own internal strategic necessity; it is necessary for "instruction" on the one hand and the acquisition of identity on the other**. Here, inevitably, relationality has its own particularity. The relation is already announced within its being a relation of dependence." (pg. 43)
 - "Dante's conception of human being is bound up with a particular understanding of universality in which universal human being is defined in terms of Christianity..." (pg. 42)
 - "not in spite of this disequilibrium but because of it there is a founding form of relationality. It is this foundation that, because it is structured in terms of a disequilibrium of power, has important consequences. The most central consequence is that it shows that anoriginality should not be thought to be a simply benign state of affairs. The disequilibrium of power allows for the overcoming of that relation in the name of a singular conception of being human. This is what occurs within the Dantean conception of the face. In other words, the coincidence of an anoriginal relation within a disequilibrium of power yields a conception of universality in which those without a 'face' - or a face to be read - are excluded from a form of relationality that, as a form of commonality defined by the coalescence of sameness and universality, would have been identified by words such as 'brethren', or argued for on the basis of a community of love or friends. **These conceptions of universality depend upon acts of exclusion that are themselves the result of a founding relation that, in this instance, was structured in terms of a disequilibrium of power**. As a consequence, the philosophico-political question that almost inevitably arises in this context does not concern universality... Rather, allowance has to be made for the possibility of relations that, while they involve a disequilibrium of identity, are not structured in such a way that they entail automatically a disequilibrium power. The latter is the counter to the former. **Universality, especially universality as a synthetic unity, can never function effectively as a counter to a disequilibrium of power because establishing universality is itself dependent upon effacing the possibility of a disequilibrium of identity** (where the latter excludes disequilibria of power). Universality cannot escape from its having effaced all forms of original difference. Universality is therefore always an after-effect and thus only ever strategic" (pg. 43-44)
 - "There are two points that need to be made in relation to the above discussion of Dante that sum up what has emerged thus far. In the first instance, what this example reinforces is that **both relationality and anoriginality do not have an abstract form**. They are what, in their differing processes, mark and define their own effectuation. In the second there is the position in which not only does **relationality**, despite having a specific presence, precede forms of singularity—here the "poet" or the "Christian"—but it is also the case that **singularity depends upon the anoriginal presence of relationality**. There is therefore another dimension to this set-up. While it involves a complex mode of presence, it is essential to identify some of its constitutive elements. Consistent with the point noted above, it is always possible to affirm the anoriginality of relationality. Recalling relationality is always the other possibility. However, there is another element that flows from the effacing of anoriginal relationality, an element that was alluded to above. **Once relationality is effaced or excised, then both endure as that which accompanies - or haunts - claims about singularity or universality**. In other words, the evocation of the universal or the singular - precisely because both positions are after-effects - will always recall, either explicitly or implicitly, the anoriginal. As the possibility of recall is always present, it follows that the recalled will itself stand in need of further excision. There is therefore a specific logic at work here that emerges because, from the position of universality, what cannot be excised with exacting finality is anoriginal relationality. Equally, what is there within anoriginal relationality - relations exemplified by a disequilibrium of identity rather than a disequilibrium power - is the presence of universality as a threat. Moreover, universality must continue to threaten. The actualization of that threat is the effacing of differences by attributing them the status of particularities. However, the threat of universality is the necessity of universality's having to be policed. What threatens is taken up at a later stage in terms of the fear of anonymity" (pg. 44-45)
 - "The writings of Dante and Charron do not comprise a unified position. However, **what their work opens up are the differing ways in which universality is always an after-effect. Its presence as an after-effect does not give universality an essential quality. Moreover, the already present, thus anoriginal, presence of modes of relationality that are effaced in the process cannot be unified**. That they have importantly different determinations is once again the consequence of the claim that informs this entire attempt to rethink the primordially of being-in-relation, namely, that relations become what they are in the processes of their self-realization" (pg. 47)
 - Chapter 3 - Relationality and the Affective Structure of Subjectivity (pg. 61)
 - "The limitation within Descartes conception of subjectivity creates an opening. Indeed, openings only emerge with the creation of limits. A limit therefore has an already present spatio-temporal orientation. Limits can be located and thus occur at the moment at which a question can be posed to a philosophical position, a question that the position invites but that from within its own resources cannot be answered. At the outset, the possibility of an invited question identifies the limit. Limits are therefore a potential within any philosophical position. In this context... **the limit condition concerns the identification of a site of relationality that is defined by a form of internality**. The possibility of a move away from it, therefore, would emerge with the ensuing impossibility of restricting relationality to a purely internal relation. In other words, **the limit emerges**

- because the presence of relationality opens up...the possibility of a relation that is no longer delimited by internality but occurs in the move from the internal to the external. Developing the openings created by that limit will not only further what is meant by being-in-relation, but it also will show in what way there is a **foundational interrelationship between being-in-relation and being-in-place**. That being-in-relation is placed constructs an already present relation to place that will, of course, already have been named within being-in-relation" (pg. 61-62)
- "At work in the process of identifying limits and in the opening that this identification establishes is the opening up of relationality. More emphatically, it should be suggested that the creation of the limit is what allows for the opening up" (pg. 62)
 - "To reiterate the opening of this chapter, it should be clear that within such a context, **'opening up' is understood as the position that emerges at the encounter of a limit condition**, and what will be important as the analysis unfolds is that the limit that emerges in relation to the aesthetic is marked by what it allows. Here this opening brings two positions into play. In the first instance, it means that this subject-object relation that defines the aesthetic is not an end in itself. In 'opening up', therefore - and this is the second position - what occurs is not just the move from internality to externality. Rather, the position's 'opening up' needs to be understood as a transformation of internality and therefore of the subject in the process. It is not as though that which is external to the subject is brought into consideration, leaving the subject untouched by the process. This is a position that is reinforced once it can be argued that at play here is the recovery of a position rather than the creation of a new position, and thus there is not the unprecedented positioning of the subject. As has already been suggested, the recovery of forms of relationality is there as an always already present potential" (pg. 64)
 - "The consequence of this 'opening up' necessitates therefore both that the subject is given as experiencing, and that what exerts a force on the subject - the exertion of force as that which sets the conditions for experience - has a necessary externality in relation to the subject. Affect, as opposed to the aesthetic, necessitates a world as conditioning experience...Affect, in having a necessary externality, produces a subject - the subject as the after-effect" (pg. 64)
 - "Affect generates a conception of the subject as an after-effect; an after-effect that presupposes relationality. Moreover, the subject as an after-effect - what might be described as produced subjectivity - allows, in addition, for the inscription of historicity as itself inextricably bound up with the subject's lived experience. Built into this conception of subjectivity... is an anoriginal relation to place. What will emerge therefore is the opening up of being-in-relation to its interarticulation with being-in-place" (pg. 65)
 - "the argument in this chapter is that what a concern with the affective presupposes and demonstrates is that **relationality is an original condition**" (pg. 66)
 - "relationality...comprises a setting in which single subjects would always occur *after* relationality and as such would be marked in advance by their original location within relations" (pg. 67)
 - "What matters here, and this is what links the project of this chapter to the project of the book, is the identification of this position as an already present implicit possibility within the philosophical. In other words, the task of uncovering relationality involves more than the move from the singular to the relational, where the latter emerges as the negation of the former. After all, there will still be singularities within a relational ontology; namely, the singular as an after-effect traced by its own production, and thus the singular can never be a complete singularity" (pg. 68)
 - "there is...a drive for relationality in Kant..." (pg. 68)
 - "there are three interrelated elements central to the affective" (pg. 69)
 - "the first is that **subjectivity - the subject - is placed**. As an minimal condition, a relation to a given externality positions the subject, and positions it as placed. There is therefore a constitutive reciprocity between the subject and externality, where the latter is a place that thereby places the subject. As a result, place, or what is identified henceforth as being-in-place, is a necessary element of relationality and thus of the constitution of subjectivity. Working with the assumption that the subject is located and therefore is defined as being-in-place yields both an outside while at the same time defines the subject in terms of its having an already present relation to an outside. As a consequence, **the outside already plays a constitutive role in the structure of subjectivity** and thus exerts its own philosophical demands. The demand has a philosophical character in which what is demanded is that the outside, rather than having the status of a given, now has to be thought philosophically. It is not an outside for a subject. **The outside is already an inherent part of the structure of subjectivity**. Rather than the subject coming into relation, therefore, there is an already present externality with which the subject is always already in relation. The significant point is that relationality thus conceived already involves the inscription of that which is other as integral to the structure of subjectivity. What this means is that alterity is not an addition. Such a set-up would depend upon the subject as a founding singularity. **The centrality of relationality stems from the constitutive nature of the inscription of externality (externality as alterity) as constitutive**. While there are different modalities of alterity, modalities that include the human as other, relationality, which in this context defines the subject both within and as always already mediated by being-in-place, does not presuppose an identification of that which is other with the necessarily human. Externality as alterity and as constitutive, while abstract, on one level of description will only ever be present in terms of specificity. Hence externality - externality as a mode of alterity - is present as an other person, as place, as an animal, et cetera" (pg. 70-71)
 - ◆ *cf. *The Levinas Reader*, pg. 64 https://monoskop.org/images/f/f9/The_Levinas_Reader_1989.pdf
 - "Once the point of departure is the assumed presence of relationality...then **relationality becomes an original condition**. Indeed, it takes on the quality of what has already been identified as *anoriginal* relationality. As a consequence, **this provides the ground for any response to questions concerning the constitution of the being of being human**. Even though it reiterates the point noted above, this response needs to thought within the structure of a relational ontology. (Consistent with what has been argued in earlier chapters, the question of being always takes being-in-relation - now, of course, with its interconnection with being-in-place—as its address)" (pg. 71)
 - "The second element is that place then becomes more than just a site of experience (as though place were incidental to being human). Opened up as a consequence of this inscription of place is the possibility of the subject's own awareness of its already having been positioned within relationality. (Being is, after all, being-in-relation.) Self-awareness would take as its 'object' the self within *anoriginal* relationality. Awareness would be of that condition. Hence **awareness involves the movement in which what was taken to be an original condition, that is, a founding sense of a singular subject, comes to emerge as a misconception, and thus a founding sense of relationality would then take its place. (What would have been recognized is its always already having been in place.)** In this sense, such a process accords with strategies within the history of philosophy that link either awareness or reflection to the overcoming of prejudice. Given this setting, prejudice would have been the assertion that there was, in fact, a founding *original* singular self. **Becoming aware involves the subsequent impossibility for the self to hold itself apart from anoriginal relationality**. Or rather, were there to be such a possibility, where that possibility can be equated with the actuality of prejudice, it would be predicated upon the implicit or explicit *disavowal of relationality*. **Awareness has therefore a specific twofold quality. In the first instance, it would be awareness of anoriginal relationality as a necessary and constitutive condition of subjectivity**. In the second, awareness would take the form of the pragmatic determinations necessitated by such a condition. **The subject, therefore, positioned by an anoriginal relation to the other, is already there as a being-in-place**. Within this setting, experience becomes an object of reflection, and thus the subject is (is what it is) in the living out of its subjectivity. Becoming aware is not an argument for 'recognition', were that term to be understood in its strictly Hegelian sense. Indeed, becoming aware, despite the limitation of its Kantian construal, has its own presence in Kant's text. **Becoming aware, understood as a process, is there in Kant's use of the term 'maturity', that is, the subject's self-understanding of maturity as a process. It is a process that defines the subject as anoriginally relational because maturity involves the necessary presence not just of**

the other but also of a relation. The presence of this understanding becomes therefore an argument for locating as central to subjectivity - where subjectivity is not an already determined entity but a locus of activity - its being placed. **The subject is present as being-in-place**" (pg. 71-72)

- *cf. I. Kant, *What is Enlightenment?* <https://dailynous.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/kant-what-is-enlightenment.pdf>
 - ◆ "Two aspects of [Kant's] opening are central. The first is the presence of a 'way out' and thus a type of movement involving differentiation. The second is the description of 'immaturity' as 'self-imposed'. In a sense, therefore, the subject is indebted, and as a result maturity cannot be limited just to the possibility of overcoming this debt. More is involved. What has to be attained, and therefore what 'maturity' gestures toward, is a state of affairs in which freedom can be defined in terms of being free from debt (albeit a self-imposed debt)" (pg. 76)
 - ◇ "as a beginning, 'immaturity' as it pertains to the subject needs to be conceived as marking the state of being unworldly. 'Enlightenment' is the way out of that condition of unworldliness" (pg. 76)
 - ▶ "in the *Critique of the Power of Judgement*... Kant describes the attempt to 'broaden' one's mind..." (pg. 76-77)
 - ◆ "Maturity is therefore the becoming worldly of the subject; a movement in which the subject recognizes itself through acts of reflection as being both of the world as well as in the world with others. Both positions inform (and thus form) each other. The latter is indispensable for the enactment of Enlightenment and thus the Enlightenment, an enactment that always moves beyond the identification of becoming worldly with the subject as though becoming worldly were no more than the project of a single subject. In other words, integral to that process is the recognition - given to the subject in question via an act of reflection - that becoming worldly is not a singular activity, or, more exactly, is more effective when it is not understood as the activity of a subject defined in terms of its original and sustained singularity. Such an understanding, the equation of the project of the Enlightenment with a singular subject, can be rethought as a 'prejudice'. **Becoming worldly, therefore, is the repositioning of the subject that had been taken...to be singular.** As a result, **becoming worldly means that the subject within aesthetics cedes its place to a subject as given within the processes of the world.** (Here the world recalls what has already been introduced as the 'fabric of existence')" (pg. 77)
 - ◆ "**An initial placing of subjectivity and thus individuality**, thought in terms of original singularities, *gives way to what has already been described as being-in-place*. In addition, maturity as worldliness, as becoming worldly, is both a condition of the world and occasioned by the world. **Without reflection, the subject merely 'is'.** **Through reflection, the place of mere being becomes the world.** A movement that, to adapt the language of the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, is a re-grounding in the sense that *there is a move from the ground as mere being to a conception of 'ground' defined by 'the standpoint' of the other.* While this may open itself up to an identification with simple abstract universality, this is not a necessary outcome. Precisely because this ground is now a place, it has become a different world. **The state of mere being is the world as continually becoming itself. The process that is the move from the singular to this other ground is the becoming worldly.** A state of becoming that pertains as much to the world as it does to the subject. With regard to the subject, it means that the overcoming of debt, in which immaturity is to be understood as self-imposed indebtedness, can only be undertaken within a relation to the other, which comes to define the subject. A relation in which the world, while integral to the structure of being-in-relation, is other to the subject while being the site of an original relationality. This is precisely what the maturing subject recognizes" (pg. 77-78)
 - ◇ *with regard to "defined by the 'standpoint' (of) the other" ...cf. S. Churchill & J. Reynolds, *Jean-Paul Sartre: Key Concepts*, pg. 170 - "He sees himself through the eyes of others, which in turn are conditioned by social structures alienating to him. As he internalizes the definitions and judgments of others, Genet makes them his self-definitions and judgments, resulting in his 'alienation'". The complication here is that, to Sartre, the other serves to alienate a part of me from me; therefore, 'becoming worldly', a being which recognizes (through their own reflection) their being-in-the-world (where, the-world is, for Benjamin, "place"), is, in part, alienating - thus possibly defeating the whole enterprise. https://www.binseelsnotes.com/files/ugd/d7b063_1a2ae3baaee448dfa0303baa616db8f9.pdf
 - ◆ "With regard to the world, what this entails is a transformation of the world such that it is no longer structured, for example, by superstition, that is, it is no longer defined for abstract singular subjects. As **the external**— here the world—**is already there within a relation, an originally present relation with subjects**, there is the need to think the world philosophically. Such a process, one made necessary by the description of the Enlightenment as 'the way out', can only underscore the claim that maturity, worldliness, and thus Enlightenment do not take the isolated individual as their locus. It should be noted that this transformation does not ascribe to the world an automatically positive value. The world is not thereby enchanted. It is simply that the world now awaits the possibilities that occur to the extent that it is no longer a place governed by superstition" (pg. 78)
 - ◇ *M. Heidegger, in *On The Essence of Truth*, uses the word 'comportment' as opposed to transformation - cf. pg. 5 - "Comportment stands open to beings. Every open relatedness is a comportment. Man's open stance varies depending on the kind of beings and the way of comportment" <https://aphelis.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Martin-Heidegger-On-the-Essence-of-Truth.pdf>
 - ◇ *with regard to "enchanted" ...cf. S. Mitchell, *Relationality*, pg. 24 - "Health for [Hans] Loewald is a state in which fantasy enchants objectivity, and the past enriches the present" https://www.binseelsnotes.com/files/ugd/d7b063_81ca4758a4154e8e961c347edb4a6b2f.pdf
 - ◆ "[Kant's] conception of movement and development stands opposed to revolution. Kant argues for this opposition in a number of different contexts" (pg. 79)
 - ◆ "**there is an important relationship between openness...and that which...[is] yet-to-be-determined**" (pg. 83)
 - ◇ "As regards the subject, the founding separation and imbrication with. in that subject, a set-up that marks subjectivity as being in-place and thus the presence of the affective, once taken together provide further justification for the argument that a defense of the Enlightenment - the Enlightenment as a project - is not to be ground in a defense of the right to act. Indeed, **the individual qua individual is not the locus of rights.** Moreover, and again, the individual is not primary. On the contrary, a defense of the Enlightenment has an importantly different point of departure. It is provided both by the founding division within (and as) the subject and by the subject as being-in-place. The single subject is the after-effect - marked as such - of this set-up. As a consequence of this configuration, **what has to be defended** - in any defense of the Enlightenment - **is the openness that is both the necessary precondition for activity, while activity is at the same time that which defines the openness in terms of a space of activity.** (It should be added that this openness is not an empty space to be filled.) Hence the continual need to equate the affective structure of subjectivity as involving the intersection of being-in-relation and being-in-place. **The distinction between the determined and the yet-to-be-determined as occurring within place defined in terms of a conception of openness shifts the locus of concern away from the primacy of the individual.** As a result, the individual - the individual being of course another name for a posited singularity that is assumed to be the bearer of the Enlightenment heritage - becomes as a result the after-effect. **The**

- individual is an after-effect of both place and relationality.** This repositioning of the individual, and the need to refer to both place and the after-effect to understand the presence of the individual, provide the terms in which to become possible to trace the way in which the distinction between 'maturity' and 'immaturity' is itself to be understood" (pg. 84)
- ◆ "As a beginning, the first point that needs to be argued is that **maturity does not entail the presence of the fully formed**. Rather, **maturity is more productively understood as the space in which the yet-to-be-determined encounters the necessity for the decision**. What structures this setting is the recognition that what is already there - given and thus already having a determining effect is the given as 'immature'. The given, in the process, comes to lose its quality as the human's natural setting. That setting is denaturalized precisely as a result of the awareness of its having the quality of the 'immature'. Only when it is recognized as such - that is, when what might have been taken to be a locus of norms is understood as the setting occasioning 'immaturity' - is there the possibility of its being overcome. **Awareness is therefore** bound up with the possibility of the continuity of maturity, where the latter is reconfigured as the continuity of the process of *becoming-mature*. (Emphasis needs to be given to becoming as signaling maturity as a locus of activity occurring in and as openness.) There is, of course, an important corollary here. Namely, that immaturity, precisely because it is bound by the interplay, for example, of prejudice and superstition, is actually the setting that is fully determined from the start. In other words, **what stands against maturity is the already-determined [so, already-closed-up-on-itself, thereby affording no room in which to wander through wonder (i.e., through reflection)]. Immaturity maintains the given** as nature. **Maturity**, therefore, the way in which it is possible - perhaps the only way it is possible - **demands the undoing of the given** where the given is that which is there as a self-imposed debt, namely immaturity as 'self-imposed immaturity', and in so doing occasions a departure from that state of affairs. (The recognition of the debt as self-imposed, a recognition stemming from the lived being of subjectivity, is the undoing of both fate and nature.) The interplay of this awareness and the related departure, when taken together, define the process in which maturity would be the discontinuous continuity of becoming-mature" (pg. 85)
 - ◇ "what [is made] clear is **the need to move from the individual to a type of totality, though it will be a sense of totality defined by the operative presence of the yet-to-be-determined**" (pg. 86)
 - ▶ "the mode of argumentation at work here concerns the way the centrality of the individual is displaced by the project of enlightenment. Kant is able to account for why given individuals remain 'immature'. **What emerges here is twofold: firstly a thinking of freedom and secondly a sense of totality**; the latter named by Kant as the "public" (pg. 86)
 - ◆ "Finally, therefore, the maxim *Sapere Aude!* [*Dare to know!*] presupposes both the necessity to twist free from 'rules and formulas' and the necessity for a space within which that can happen, that is, the public as the site of openness. The maxim therefore is the structural presence of the decision. **Any decision is an act that, while taking place within the yet-to-be-determined, becomes a determination that maintains that site as open**" (pg. 87)
 - ◇ "the subject is only ever present as the *after-effect* of the affective structure of subjectivity. A structure in which there is the *anoriginally* present relation between internality and externality. One way to understand that relation, following the Kant of the Enlightenment essay, is to note that what divides every subject is the relation between the private and the public. In addition, externality also figures as the inscription of a sense of the other into the subject, enduring, of course, as constitutive of subjectivity itself. That sense is addressed as much by the projected presence of the other person as it is by the other as the externality of place. In the case of the latter, **what this is taken to be definitive is the description of human being as being-in-place**. Acting therefore occurs within relationality: relations are acted out. A setting that structures in advance the criteria of judgment that any one act brings with it. Allowing for this position is to allow for the grounding of the ethical in the ontological. **Acting is being in the precise sense that it is the acting out of being-in-place**" (pg. 87-88)
 - "Finally, it is the introduction of time that marks the third element central to any consideration of the self within a structure of anoriginal relationality. Within this structure, the subject has both a relation to place as well as there being the incorporation of place within time. **The subject's being-in-place locates the domain in which affect occurs**, while at the same locating the interrelationship between affect and place within a conception of historical time. It is vital to add that it is 'a' conception of historical time precisely because place names the site in which different conceptions of historical time vie for supremacy-for example, the republican impulse encountering the monarchical, or the democratic encountering the temporality of either destiny or fate. Time is not just there as that which allows experience to be dated and thus to be given a merely chronological determination. Time eschews this reductive identification with chronology since the ineliminability of conflict, understood as the differing determinations in which historical time is lived out (and thus times are lived out), has different pragmatic determinations. What remains fundamental, therefore, is a politics of time. The experience of historicity, the historicity of the subject - and this is the case even if historicity has an abstract ubiquity, which would then become the way these experiences were lived out - have specific determinations. Again, **it is essential to be clear that within an affective structure of subjectivity, being a subject is not a singular determination that has necessary results. Rather, subjectivity is the living out of being a subject**. Hence relationality may seem to be a setting without content. However, that is not the case. The force of relationality is not a static given with a single determination. **Relationality is what it is in its being lived out**. A relational ontology is therefore inherently dynamic. Hence there is always the force of subjectivity or subjectivity as given within the interplay of forces. For example, it has to be noted that, precisely because of the conflict that defines the co-presence of different modalities of time as constitutive of the present, a conflict in which there is an ineliminable disequilibrium of power, force is itself always plural. There is, therefore, only ever a conflict of forces in which forces are from the start marks of different values and therefore of possible different judgments. Finally, therefore, **once relationality is understood as an already present condition composed of the three elements noted above, if only as setting its minimal conditions, these elements can be taken to form what has already been described as the affective structure of subjectivity"** (pg. 72-73)
 - "recalling the Enlightenment... is to recall the centrality of delimiting the philosophical absolutely in terms of the subject, opening up as a question what it is that being a subject means. This is, of course, the predicament of Enlightenment thinking in general" (pg. 74-75)
 - Chapter 4 - Democracy, Relationality, and the University (pg. 89)
 - "once the subject is taken to be present as an assumed and isolated singularity, it is overcome in the name of both relationality and place" (pg. 89)
 - "that abstraction is able to become the nation, while subjects take on the quality of citizens to the extent that citizenship is itself defined by membership of the nation state" (pg. 89-90)
 - "While **both being-in-common and being-in-place are anoriginal conditions**, it is because they are non-determined that what can never be precluded is the attempt to give that anoriginally non-determined setting an 'origin' that will take the form of retroactively attributed singular status. What this means, of course, is that **the 'origin' will only have occurred after the event and will as a consequence take on the form of a founding singularity. The origin is always a secondary occurrence that takes the anoriginal as its conditions of possibility, because the singular occurrence depends upon the presence of the anoriginality of the plural event. The attribution of an origin will, therefore, necessitate the effacing of the anoriginal plurality in the name of an original singularity. Its originality is of course *posited***. With regard to the nation, what this means is that its presence as founding is, of course, mythic. Hence place, in losing its quality as defined by the continuity of the yet-to-be-determined, becomes as a consequence the land of a 'people' (where the latter is a singular determination taking on an essentialized form). Again, this has to be understood as a possibility that can only ever occur after the event. Such a **place is predicated upon the non-**

- determined status of being-in-place**; however, that founding status always brings with it a founding ambivalence. One result of that ambivalence is that it can lead to the non-determined being refused, and as a consequence a place invested with a singular and thus unchanging quality. It should go without saying that this is an investment after the event" (pg. 91)
- "recovery, that is, of an already present thinking of the yet-to-be-determined as that which organizes the complex relation of place and commonality, and therefore a recovery of relationality. Central to the argument of this chapter is that support for such a project, namely one that takes the **yet-to-be-determined as the point of departure**" (pg. 92)
 - "the democratic as involving the placedness of human being and therefore anoriginal relationality, rather than as defined exclusively in terms of individual rights...is that integral to both is the centrality of the yet-to-be-determined. **The latter is the condition** that has to be maintained while still allowing for the necessity of the decision. Calculations and the decision are not incompatible with the yet-to-be-determined precisely because the latter is the set-up that occasions decisions" (pg. 92)
 - "what matters is a site defined in terms of an openness secured by the continuity of the yet-to-be-determined" (pg. 93)
 - **"being-in-place and being-in-relation...[hold] open the continuity of the yet-to-be-determined..."** (pg. 93)
 - "the nation has reality" (pg. 93)
 - "acting is not a solitary activity...not only does activity - in virtue of being activity - demand a space, because activity is always already placed, but it also necessitates both modes of relationality and a sharing of the space of activity...Activity, once it has to be lived out, is, in fact, spatial. Activity presupposes therefore a version of being-in-place...In other words, the activity of one becomes the activity of all, because the 'all' is all the ones. Active selves, therefore, have to encounter each other. That encounter presupposes the place of the encounter. There is a reciprocity between acting and placing insofar as both eschew definition of the self in terms of a self-referring singularity" (pg. 95)
 - "In other words, **the 'concept of right' already presupposes an original form of 'relation' that holds of necessity between 'free beings'**. Indeed, an integral part of Fichte's argument in the Foundations of Natural Right concerns the complex way that individuals stand in relation to a sense of the whole and thus in relation to others. The importance of the formulation, therefore, is that **right**, to the extent it is maintained, **is no longer defined in terms of an 'individual' but in terms of a relation**. The presence of this relation does not deny the importance of the (I). Morality, for Fichte, as Bykova has argued, still assumes that 'the (I) is self-legislative and it has its self-concept as a law to be fulfilled'. Nonetheless, what the incorporation of relationality brings to the fore is the problem of restraining and restricting that (I)" (pg. 96)
 - **and, this makes sense, as wherever there is a right there, too, is a duty held by other's to affirm such a right.*
 - "The move from Rousseau's commitment to a relationship between education and the "state of nature," for example, emerges at the precise point at which the topos in which education is located is redefined in terms of 'culture'. It should be noted that this departure from nature - in regard to which it should be added that nature is only a construct; thus nature is only present as a type of artifice - is one significant mark of what might be called the advent of modernity" (pg. 99-100)
 - "For Fichte, the question of the being of human being is answered by both the evocation of reason and reason's relation to progress. **Reason, therefore, is not just a posited presence. It is inextricably bound up with the need for its own development**" (pg. 102)
 - "[For Fichte] 'skill' and its interarticulation within and as "culture is linked to what is described as the "end" (or "vocation") of human being. That "end," which is the project that human beings give to themselves, is defined in terms of perfectibility...Perfection, more accurately perfectibility, is the attempt to live the life that reason demands. However, precisely because **human beings do not exist 'in isolation'**, any consideration of human being as though that entity could be understood as isolated has to engage with the necessity to understand this 'end' and thus its realization as an 'end' as occurring within the setting created by the ineliminable setting of human sociality, where what occurs within that setting has a symbolic quality that is determined by the (I) as 'striving', though also by the ineliminability of modes of relationality. **For Fichte, sociality (society) is 'the relationship in which rational beings stand to each other'**. The location of rational being in terms of a founding (if not foundational) relationality can be read as decisive. It points to the presence of a form of anoriginal reationality to be recovered" (pg. 103)
 - ◆ **as much as humans do not exist in isolation, neither, too, do they ek-sist in isolation - they are intimately connected.*
 - "Fichte is clear concerning the nature of the social. He links it to what he refers to as 'human drives'" (pg. 103)
 - ◆ "the social drive is one of human being's fundamental drives. Human being *is determined* to live in society; he ought to live in society. One who lives in isolation is not a complete human being. He contradicts his own self" - Fichte (pg. 103-104)
 - "the space opened by the necessity of non-identity comes to be effaced through modes of sameness" (pg. 107)
 - "non-identity gives rise to a form of complementarity" (pg. 107)
 - "once again, that the non-identity of the scholar and society - where that non-identity marks the presence of a founding and irreducible relation - which gives rise to this apparent either/or, involves the opening of a space. Moreover, it is an opening in which space can be thought in terms of being-in-place. However, that opening is not a mere occurrence - an occurrence that would have been a single event. That space is in fact a spacing. While formally it is a spacing that is defined by the non-identity of the 'scholar' and 'society', it should be added that, precisely because it is a spacing, it has to involve activity. Here there is a return to the consequences of Fichte's evocation of 'activity', namely **subjectivity as relationality**. Spacing, a space of allowing, is the holding open of a domain of activity, where the holding open is itself an activity. As such, there is a doubling of activity. If the second sense of activity - the holding open - can be understood as the work of society in its complex interconnection with the work of the state, then what this involves is the continual identification and reidentification of that end as its end. Ending as a holding open. This results in a set-up in which the end is not given but is the subject of a negotiation, which is itself potentially without end. That sense of an end without a determined end- becomes a definition of the democratic. Democracy as the site that allows for its own continual reinvention" (pg. 109)
 - Chapter 5 - Justice, Love, and Relationality (pg. 113)
 - "If relations between subjects presuppose modes of relationality - a setting in which subjects are also to be construed relationally in terms of their own internality as much as in terms of external relations - the question that then has to be addressed concerns the quality of these differing modes" (pg. 113)
 - "relationality has neither a unique form nor an abstract quality. Within this setting, the subject is present as differing modalities of the plural event. Once relationality becomes a central concern-and here it is relationality as an ontological condition-then the actuality of relations needs to be named. Integral to that process is the naming of defining aspects of this relation as the ethical. **The ontological setting of being-in-relation is the setting of the ethical. As a consequence, any thinking of the ethical is already a thinking of relationality**" (pg. 114)
 - "While morality takes the singular individual - often recast as the 'moral agent' - as the locus of its concerns as such, ethics, at least insofar as the term is being used here, already presupposes both relationality and commonality" (pg. 114)
 - "...man is by nature a political animal. And therefore, men, even when they do not require one another's help, desire to live together all the same, and are in fact brought together by their common interests in proportion as they severally attain to any measure of well-being" - Aristotle, *Politics*, pg. 78 https://oll-resources.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/oll3/store/titles/579/0033-01_Bk_SM.pdf
 - ◆ "The overall result is that this short passage from **Aristotle is to be read as defining commonality - that which is shared - in terms of the anoriginality of being-in-place**. As a result, what emerges from Aristotle, emerging also as a prompt for thought rather than functioning as an end itself, is a founding interarticulation of being-in-place and being-in-common. Within this setting the individual can only ever be an after-effect. A position that will have been marked in advance by the already present

status of relationality as it concerns both the subject as an anoriginally complex singularity and the subject as always already relational and therefore present equally as a modality of the plural event" (pg. 115)

- ◊ *cf. D. Binseel, *A Demonstration on (O)bjectivity*, pg. 6 - "humans are a commonality in-themselves, and it is for this commonness which serves as the foundation for objectivity (i.e., semblance of harmony between...) with respect to how each relates to each other 'through' their activities. Commonality serves as the establishment for objectivity in that it's what's common-between things, pointing to a lack in subjectivity. It is this commonality which is, in a sense, isolated from, outside of or beyond, not being wholly dependent upon, the subject itself - this non-dependability is the criterion for objectivity. Each human has a subjectivity which, if not for anything else, sets the ground for objectivity"
https://www.binseelsnotes.com/files/ugd/d7b063_5badcd681ad94ca0bf2e5fdc33bf6bea.pdf
- "The anoriginality of relations, hence the insistent presence of being-in-place, comprise the setting within which the question of modes of relationality has to be posed. One of those modes concerns love and friendship. Of interest in regard to both is the sense in which they can be linked to either a generalizable or universalizable position" (pg. 115)
- "The expression **being-at-one-with** is used throughout this chapter to signal what might be described as **an abstract state of relationality**, which has already been understood in terms of the *yet-to-be-determined*. The relation, in this context, is announced by the use of the term 'with'. To the extent that being-at-one-with is defined in terms of unity or Sameness - 'one' as either a posited origin or a projected unity - then it signals a state of affairs in which being-with necessitates a relation defined in terms of an effaced internal spacing such that relationality is itself a form of identity relation. What is at work therefore is a projected unity of self and other that excised relationality and that took that identity as original. **This is the structure, as will become clear, that is enacted within Hegel's conception of love**" (pg. 117)
 - "being-at-one-with is defined in terms of unity and Sameness..." (pg. 117)
- "As will be argued, this is the precise point at which a concern with love gives way to one defined by justice. Moreover, this repositioning is mirrored in the move away from the 'ethical' - defined by the centrality of the individual and his or her rights - to one that begins with the anoriginality of relations. What this opens up therefore is the possibility of a different conception of being-at-one-with. However, **once the 'one' is reconfigured such that it defines a relation that maintains difference and thus inscribes spacing within it, there is a fundamental shift in how relationality is to be understood**. Rather than being posited and assumed as a static dimension of human being-and thus a human's being - it comes to be lived out. This is the move from immediacy to mediacy. Once being-at-one-with is positioned such that both the 'one' and the 'with' are defined in terms of a founding plurality (that is, a plural event that is itself a locus of activity), then loving Niobe would entail a different conception of life. **This is a definition that takes the setting of being-at-one-with and the reworking of its ontological basis in which there is a move from the singularity of relation**, in which an initial affirmation of relationality becomes its having been effaced within and by love, **to the repositioning of relationality in terms of what has already been described as the anoriginal relationality of the plural event. This is the recovery of relationality**. What is at stake here is the relation between self and other in which forms of spacing play a fundamental role" (pg. 117-118)
 - "being just on the one hand and either loving or befriending on the other hand are not simply radically different undertakings; rather, they bring importantly different senses of being a subject and as a result differing modes of being-in-relation into play" (pg. 120-121)
 - "for Hegel... the word understood as 'law', enjoins a necessary distance. **Thus [law] yields spacing at the heart of relationality, a spacing that defers the closing and unifying processes that love demands** within the way Hegel construes love's presence and thus its philosophical work. A distancing therefore in which the specificity of each—justice, love—would need to be rethought in terms of actual and therefore real difference, where difference exists as a question and thus is linked to activity (life), rather than either an identity or an opposition. Here is an important intimation of a fundamental distinction between love on the one hand and the opening up of law to the necessity of its negotiating the presence of justice on the other. Justice involves the inherently incomplete and the inevitability of modes of incompleteness. The incomplete in its relation to justice has a twofold determination. In the first instance, there is the inescapability of what has already been defined as the recalculable, a position that defines calculation in relation to the incalculable, where the latter is to be taken as the ground of recalculation. It is this setting that gives the decision both its force—it is present as a decision and not the result of pure immediacy—and opens it up to its own contestability. Secondly, the incomplete can be understood as the spacing that constitutes relationality and in which activity-speaking, deciding, and so forth—both sustains relationality and demands the furthering of the incomplete. Were it to do so, then justice—as bound up with spacing and speaking and therefore invoking an implicit recognition of relationality, because speaking cannot be thought outside its own relation to an always possible response, what might be described as the placed finding of voice—would have distanced itself from the demands and consequences of love. **A distancing moreover in which justice, in setting itself apart from love, holds open to the possibility of a radically different conception of love**. Here there will be a relation to justice; however, neither love nor friendship would play a role in setting its preconditions. The contention is that what the figure of Niobe can be taken as staging is the position that **justice can only really emerge at the moment in which relationality is no longer defined in terms of love (Hegel's love)**" (pg. 122)
 - "speech as an activity demands relationality, precisely because it is the mark of a form of relationality. Moreover, speech - speaking as an act - will also bring place into play. Speaking is a placed activity" (pg. 123)
 - "[Hegel] introduces the central elements that occur in any response to the problem of the relationship between particularity and universality when they occur within the setting created by the presence of an equation of universality with abstraction. What needs to be taken up therefore is the relationship between this identification and recognition" (pg. 124)
 - "**Sublation, the process of canceling yet retaining, is fundamental to Hegel's understanding both of the development and of the projected elimination of modes of internal spacing**. Here there is a twofold movement. (That movement is both the process and the result of sublation.) First, there is the presentation of that which is always more than mere particularity; this is the "domain of Spirit." In the second instance, that to which the work presents itself is defined by the Spiritual (and is thus intuited on the level of Spirit). **Intuition is the means by which being-at-one-with, when it is defined strictly in terms of Sameness, comes to be enacted**. What the latter point establishes is that subjectivity is equally the location of simple particularity, the particular as what is defined by 'real existence' as well as that which lifts the particular from its particularity, namely, the relationship between particular and universal... This conception of *being-at-one-with*, one in which particularity undoes itself - an undoing that is a form of retaining in and with the universal - is, for Hegel, the state of love" (pg. 124-125)
 - ◆ "The sublation of the worldly, its sacrifice, thus sublation as a form of philosophical thinking needs to be understood, because of the necessary link between sublation and a determined end, as a logical sacrifice" (pg. 126)
 - ◆ "The 'ideal' therefore, even if it functions at a distance from the modes of actualization, cannot be disassociated from that state of being-at-one-with in which the process announced in the formulation is presented here in terms of an activity of 'reconciliation' that is at the same time a sublation of 'particularity' and therefore needs to be understood in this context as a form of sacrifice" (pg. 127)
 - "In willing itself the soul is able to overcome its prior identification with particularity. Hegel's formulation is importantly precise. He notes that the 'soul wills itself in an other' and then goes on to argue that this act of willing, on the part of the soul, is defined by a form of externality. **Being-at-one-with is the self-overcoming of the reduction of self to particularity**... There is, therefore, an abandoning and recovery of the soul. This twofold movement is the 'characteristic of love'. This love is 'spiritual depth'. Moreover, it is love 'without desire' and as such provides the spiritual in human being with the possibility of 'reconciliation', that is, a return to self

as a mode of completion that is at the same time that which becomes both a form of completion and thus enacted propriety. This possibility, a complex of modes of self-instantiation through sacrifice, is, of course, not worldly love." (pg. 127)

- ◆ "reconciliation involves the soul's work; work as suffering. The soul suffers... **Suffering therefore has a necessary utility**" (pg. 128)
 - ◇ *cf. C. Sharma, *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*, pg. 59-60 - *The Four Noble Truths (arya satya)*
<https://ia800804.us.archive.org/25/items/IndianPhilosophyACriticalSurvey/Indian-Philosophy-A-Critical-Survey.pdf>
 - ◆ "In the context of their self-presentation, neither grief nor pain allows for their own self-overcoming. They endure as modes of presence without forms of reconciliation. As such, they endure - an endurance that for Hegel constructs their historicity - as incomplete. Hence they are defined by the impossibility of that conception of being-at-one-with that is itself determined by both completion and reconciliation, where both terms engender necessary forms of finality. They are constructed as those with whom any form of reconciliation is impossible. **They become figures that cannot be loved precisely because they are held outside a conception of love defined as the unity of self and other and therefore of being-at-one-with as determined by Sameness**. This is of course the construction of a form of an outside for which inclusion in the universal is impossible. This is of course another possibility within abstract universality, namely its withdrawal and thus the refusal of inclusion. The outside is positioned in terms of a constructed and thus enforced without-relation. It is of fundamental importance to note that the counter-measure to this set-up is not based on the argument that the other or that which is positioned outside ought to be included after all, what would ground such a position? Rather, the counter-measure has to be based on the position that the construction of such an outside-again it is a constructed position that demands its own enforced continuity- is premised on the effacing of an original relationality. Accepting an original relationality as that which prompts the counter-measure amounts to grounding the ethical in the ontological, whose parameters are given by the always-to-be-determined nature of the interplay of being-in-relation and being-in-place. As such, the ethical acquires a different sense of necessity" (pg. 128-129)
- "This is the precise context in which it becomes possible to return to the structure that organized both the inclusion of Mary and the exclusion of Niobe, namely, what has already been identified as that conception of **being-at-one-with that generates an understanding of relationality that began to define it in terms of particularity and universality**. The lead here is provided by Walter Benjamin. While the context concerns a commentary on a poem by Brecht, Benjamin suggests that what emerges within the structure of friendship, as that which defines its structure, is that it does not lead to 'overcoming the spacing constituting human relationality, rather it brings it to life'. What this means is that **friendship is a holding apart. Friendship is a relation in which difference is maintained** such that the condition of maintaining a 'loving recognition' is that the elements constituting the relation remain both distanced as well as structured by founding an ineliminable dissymmetry and therefore a being-at-one-with where the 'one' and the 'with' both identify and enjoy a founding sense of irreducibility in which 'one' can never be the other. Pace Hegel, therefore, **friendship and love both presuppose the retention of particularity - a non-sacrificial particularity - within relationality. Friendship and love are forms taken by the anoriginality of the plural event and therefore involve a constitutive distancing - a distancing within and as a relation**. With friendship that distance is brought to life rather than overcome. The incomplete is maintained. Once Niobe is positioned no longer as always outside a relation in which her particularity would have been subsumed, but within a relation of life, a fundamental transformation occurs. Not simply is she able to be loved, but, allowing for a setting in which she could be loved - a space of allowing, a space allowing love - entails an enlivening of the world. An enlivening that would depend upon her location within the place of human being. Speaking as the sounding of being-in-place. However, **speech should not be understood as an end in itself. What matters is not the right to speak but the possibility of speaking. That possibility depends upon the presence of a space of allowing. Allowing for speech becomes an affirmation of the relationship between space and being-in-relation**" (pg. 138)
 - *'brought to life' means 'made us of', which indicates 'distance between' (i.e., difference) as valuable. It for being of value that we, in turn, maintain our friendships - or, the distance found (in) friends. Furthermore, 'overcome' means 'surpassed' (or, in the language of Sartre 'depassed' or 'negated' or 'transcended'). And, 'maintain' means 'to affirm', where what we affirm is 'made to stand'. This 'where' is the common ground which conjoins each (i.e., friends) who stand in relation.*
- Chapter 6 - Anonymity and Fear (pg. 139)
 - "Action that marked the identification of justice and revenge as occurring within the structure of immediacy that fate demands is, as has already been noted, justice's abnegation. **Threats are always imposed from without. Moreover, threats continue to have the effect of positioning subjects precisely because subjects are threatened**. While universality may be thought to liberate subjects from subjection, precisely because the argument to which that would be the conclusion is premised upon the effacing of already present particularities as given within an original relationality, universality will also appear as a threat. Moreover, and now as a straightforwardly philosophical position with both ethical and political implications, because **universality is an after-effect** - one dependent upon necessary excisions - it could never be an original condition. It could only ever become 'original' through its being posited as such (and is thus not original at all). This would therefore be a positing that demands the necessary effacing of the anoriginal" (pg. 139)
 - **"The 'granting of civil rights', to recall Hegel's terms, is the gift that creates the feeling that precludes the feeling of finitude** (where the latter is understood as a determined form of specificity). As such, the subject must remain unmarked. However, as will be suggested, it is precisely this set-up that creates the problem. The problematic element within it emerges for the following reason: to the extent that the granting of civil rights creates the 'feeling', what is given is itself accompanied by an ineliminable remainder, namely, the possibility that what has been granted may be withdrawn. **The threat of withdrawal has an effect. As a threat, it cannot be separated from the creation of fear**. Even if that withdrawal were never to take place, its presence as a continual possibility creates the conditions for fear. Fear is felt. Fear will always be felt. Fear exists in relation to a potentiality for deprivation. **To the extent that the withdrawal of rights attains varying degrees of actuality, then fear, as a form of potentiality, defines more than the condition of subjectivity. The subject is active. Fear has the capacity to take over its life. The subject would come to live in fear**" (pg. 143)
 - "Granting, dispensing, and conceding rights creates an economy that has a necessary externality. An externality that is, of course, formed by and thus held in place by the economy of abstraction. Fear is the consequence of the reality, be it real or imaginary, of that withdrawal. **What is created by that withdrawal is anonymity**. What is feared - and the insistent reality of that fear is a determination of modernity - is what will be described as *becoming anonymous*. Allowing for this formulation underscores the necessity to view anonymity as a state that is produced and will always bear the mark of that production. Marked in advance, anonymity is not bare. The process of becoming anonymous is not the positing of 'bare life'. Anonymity, it will be suggested, does not occur because of abstraction. On the contrary, anonymity is the result of abstraction's withdrawal; the withdrawal of that which had been granted. As such, 'terror' would name the concrete practices emerging from sustaining the creation of actual anonymity. Prior to turning to an analysis of the relationship between fear and anonymity, it is essential to stay with the subject who feels. Only by clarifying the role of feeling will it be possible to understand the importance of the distinction between abstraction on the one hand and anonymity on the other" (pg. 144-145)
 - "The exercise of this right [to pardon criminals] is located within the positioning of the monarch. Indeed, the right 'arises from the sovereignty of the monarch'. This means that what defines this particular sense of sovereignty, to give an initial definition in the negative, is that here sovereignty is not delimited by questions pertaining to rights. In other words, at work here is a conception of sovereignty that, while taking on the capacity to exercise a right, that is, the right to pardon criminals, is not itself determined by a conception of right with greater generality. **Sovereignty is positioned outside the sphere of rights in order that the monarch can act within them**. Indeed, §282 of the *Philosophy of Right* finishes by reinforcing the presence of a form of sovereignty in which sovereign legislation may occur even though the sovereign is necessarily external to

the legislative act. This becomes clear in the description of the monarch's 'sublation of punishment', which is the act of pardoning, as that which 'can only come from the ungrounded decision'. That decision is the act of sovereignty, a decision that can only be made by the monarch. The making of it presupposes the monarch's externality in relation to the domain of rights. In a sense what is at work here is a monarchical logic that is in fact a form of sovereignty. While sovereignty is defined in terms of externality, **what is external is not just given, posited, as though it had both ontological and temporal priority.** The contrary is the case. **Externality and internality are both produced positions.** What may appear to be outside the law is produced by the manner in which what counts as the law creates its own outside. This is a point of fundamental importance. As such **there is no actual position that is outside the law** except in terms of its having been produced as law's outside (and production always leaves its mark). What is significant about this positioning of externality, the monarch as sovereign externality, is that contingency is inscribed within it as a necessary element. The 'groundless decision', precisely because it is 'groundless', is essentially contingent. **Externality has a necessity. Sovereignty has its own self-justifying power.** It is precisely that within this setting what is contingent is the decision made by the sovereign. The appeal to the monarch is an appeal to take particularity and finitude into consideration. As a result, **that appeal can be neither based on nor argued for in terms of universality, nor can it have 'right' as its ground.** The monarch's response must always be contingent. In other words, the demands of finitude can always be ignored. Finitude, as it is understood in this context, lacks insistence because it is not proper to what has already been identified by Hegel as the 'nature' of 'man', namely that 'man' is 'essentially a universal'" (pg. 148-149) *cf. G. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right* <https://historyofeconomicthought.mcmaster.ca/hegel/right.pdf>

- *****I stopped reading here due to the author inability to make clear what he was proposing. This has been the most frustrating book to read.*****
- Conclusion (pg. 217)
 - "The contention of this book is straightforward. Relationality, now understood in terms of an original relationality, has always been a possibility within the history of philosophy. Nonetheless, it is often excised to position modes of singularity as primary. However, that excision can be undone such that the recovery and possible affirmation of relationality becomes philosophy's other possibility. Uncovering that original relationality presupposed its presence as a potentiality, and therefore integral to its recovery was the development of what are called counter-measures. If there is philosophical invention, then it is found in a capacity to work with the recovered. **Recovery is an opening that has to be thought in terms of what has already been described as the yet-to-be-determined.** Each of the preceding chapters had clearly identified projects. Rather than reiterate their conclusions, which were themselves orientated around the recovery of differing modes of an original forms of relationality, a possible conclusion - and it should be added that it would have to be one among many insofar as the project established by the centrality of a relational ontology is intended to have extension beyond instances of its recovery - can begin with a return to the way texts and already established positions figured within the preceding chapters. One of the greatest challenges that continues to endure within the project of writing philosophy is how to work with the tradition. To assume that the tradition is just there to be investigated reduces it to the status of the simply given. And yet what does it mean to turn to Descartes, Hume, Kant, Fichte, and Hegel to provide that through which contemporary philosophical work continues? It goes without saying that there are different ways of answering this question. Indeed, the European philosophical tradition can be understood in terms of those differences. **Here what took place was the identification of the ways in which there was either an effacing or an affirmation of original modes of relationality.** In other words, the presence of an original relationality and thus a thinking of the plural event were shown to be at work within those texts. However, it is vital to add an important rider—a rider established via the argumentation that took place in relation to the presentation of "abstraction" in Chapter 1—namely that both "**the plural event**" and "**an original relationality**" **have neither a unified nor an already determined presence. Relationality not only has different modalities, but it also has a more complex relation to the presence of power.** Were either the plural event or original relationality to have a unified or singular presence, then both would have had an essential nature that would have been particularized in different texts. Working through the detail of actual texts to uncover the work of either the plural event or an original relationality indicated that all that could ever be present were both in their particularity. In a way, therefore, each of the chapters was an enacting both of the originality of relationality and the impossibility that the relational could ever have lent itself to processes of universalization or have a generalized abstract presence. The starting point in each instance was that both universalization and the positing of abstraction are not only marked by their own eventual impossibility, but it is also the case that they are premised on the elimination or effacing of relationality and plurality. Remembering that neither relationality nor plurality is semantic and that both are taken therefore to attest to the effective presence of the ontological.). **What emerged from an engagement with texts was the possibility of showing the different ways in which the affirmation of relationality was bound up with attempts to efface it.** However, its presence was only ever as an original state of affairs; hence its anoriginality. However, there is the more general question that arises in this context, namely, could there be a philosophical project that did not take the presence of texts as providing the point of departure? In other words, might it not be possible to write philosophy as though the presence of the texts that comprise philosophy's history had been suspended such that all that took place as philosophy was the presentation of "pure" thought? The assumption would be that it was possible to present philosophy in ways that have not been encumbered in advance by the texts that comprise philosophy's history. The answer to the questions has to be in the affirmative. Of course, it is possible to write without a litany of references to history; indeed, it is possible to proceed completely unencumbered. However, the naivety inherent in such an approach emerges once relationality is taken to be central. The moment a term from philosophy's history is deployed, the moment a mode of thought that has a history occurs, then what is announced is a relation. What this means is that any one single statement—thus any particular—is already relational. The question that then emerges concerns whether or not that already present relation, the relation of which the particular utterance is always already an after-effect, is to be given philosophical priority or not. **The project of this book assumes that not only is relationality an always already insistent presence, but also that its originality demands that both the relation and originality be thought.** Once this demand is taken as the point of departure, what then emerges is the possibility of uncovering an already present thinking of relationality within the history of philosophy. (Be that thinking affirmative or not.) **The recovery of relationality can then be articulated within the more general metaphysical claim that particulars are always already in relation. Indeed, particulars are only ever the after-effect of relations.** The question then is how that process is to be understood. In part, this book can be read as an attempt to begin to respond to this final question. To the extent that relationality is given priority, there are important implications. However, the force of these implications depends upon the recognition that relationality is ontological. Even though it repeats aspects of the position that has been advanced systematically throughout the preceding, it remains important to clarify again how this claim is to be understood. **Ontology insofar as the term appears here identifies existence. What exists exists in relation.** Relationality will always have specific determinations. For example, the existence of self and other is such that any self is an after-effect of the network of relations in which it is located. Moreover, it is a network that is reworked through the continuity of coming into relation. This set-up has profound implications for a theory of ethics. Not only does it locate agency within relationality, but the assumption that relationality is an original also locates the ethical within a set-up in which the anoriginality of relationality furnishes the grounds of judgment. **Ontology therefore will always precede ethics.** Equally, **relation can be thought in terms of place.** Moreover, the co-presence of both place and a network of relations will work to reposition any possible philosophical anthropology in terms of the interarticulation of what can be described as being-in-common (the network of relations) and being-in-place. What the latter formulation—being-in-place-indicates is that the anoriginality of a relation to place is such that the being of being human cannot be separated from being-in-place. There are of course other determinations. What is important, however, is that a claim about the identity of a particular and thus of a singularity—where the claim pertains to the existence of that particular—is already to identify a particular within relationality. This is not just what it means for a particular to be a particular. More emphatically, it is what it is for a particular to be a particular. Concluding therefore by "opening relations" entails concluding with the affirmation that relationality has an insistent if fragile presence (fragile precisely because its anoriginality can always be denied), which defines questions of futurity in terms of modalities or recovery that are always to be determined. The yet-to-be-determined, however, is not a pure opening. Positing of pure opening toward the future would be another version of the effacing of

relationality. Rather, maintaining relationality as open is to affirm the ineliminability of a founding event of plurality" (pg. 217-220)

d. Further Readings:

- .