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NICHOLAS WOLTERSTORFF

Philosophy of Art After Analysis and Romanticism

IT IS BEYOND DISPUTE that the glory of twentieth-century analytic philosophy is not revealed in the field of the philosophy of art. If one is on the lookout for analytic philosophy's greatest attainments, one must look elsewhere. Why is that?

Most of the major figures of analytic philosophy spent no time at all reflecting on the arts. As for the remaining ones, their reflections on art were rarely central to their philosophical work. The cultivation of the analytic philosophy of art was left almost entirely to figures of the second and lower ranks. Mainly, they applied to art lessons learned elsewhere. Nobody tried to apply elsewhere lessons learned in thinking about art—with the exception, perhaps, of those who applied lessons learned in thinking about poetic metaphor. The busy hive of analytic philosophy was never located in the field of philosophy of art. Why is that?

The answer cannot be that the priorities of the analytic philosopher mirrored the priorities of our culture, for in modern Western culture, art is no minor matter. So is it perhaps that what determines philosophy's attention to some component of culture is not prominence but crisis? Not that either; for in our century, art has not lacked for crises. It must be something in the character of analytic philosophy which accounts for art's minority status there, or strictly, something in the *relation* of the character of analytic philosophy to the character of art, or to the character of our modern ways of thinking about art. Perhaps the fit is poor.

I.

In a good many of his writings over the past decade or so, Richard Rorty has expounded the

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thesis that analytic philosophy, when it was still a movement and not merely a style, was a version of neo-Kantianism. That interpretation seems to me correct. Or at least what seems to me correct is that the "ideal type" (using Max Weber's concept of *ideal type*) of analytic philosopher was a neo-Kantian with empiricist predilections.

Philosophers hold and defend theses. But deeper in their thought than the theses they hold and defend are the pictures and images which govern and guide their holding and defending. Analytic philosophy has been governed and guided by the Kantian image of structure and content: a scheme of concepts applied to a given content. Kant regarded the content as "intuitions"—*Anschauungen*. Some analytic philosophers agreed. But others thought that what is given is not just our intuitions but also items in the world; and even more held that among our concepts are to be found some that apply not to our intuitions but to items in the world—to entities independent of our subjectivity. Kant also held that concepts *structure* intuitions and that experience is *constituted* by those structured intuitions: to experience a table is (under the appropriate circumstances) to *take* one's intuitions *as* a table; it is to *conceptualize* them *as* a table. Probably most analytic philosophers did not accept this structuring/constituting thesis concerning the working of concepts. But the conviction that in thinking and speaking we apply (some part of) our conceptual scheme to some content or other has been common coinage, as was the Kantian conviction that ultimately the content is *given* to us and that we *provide* the concepts. The human mind exhibits a duality of receptivity and spontaneity. Thought—and perhaps even experience—represent the interplay of these two dimensions: receptivity and spontaneity, the given and the

contributed, content and structure, awareness and concept.

Obviously there is much about our conceptual schemes and our intuitions that is contingent. But beneath the contingency there is—so argued Kant—necessity. There are connections of logical necessity among the concepts. In addition, it is necessary that human beings—or more generally, finite knowers—intuit space and time. And it is necessary that they conceptualize the intuitional given in certain ways. These modes of necessity constitute necessity's full scope. Beyond *de dicto* necessity, and *de re* necessity concerning the powers of intuiting and conceptualizing of finite knowers, there is no necessity. Further, *de dicto* necessity is not a feature of the metaphysical structure of things independent of finite knowers. It too has the status of being a limit on the powers of finite knowers; it is impossible for us to think of a proposition of the form $p \ \& \ -p$ as true. The laws of logic are the rules of thought. All necessity, then, can be thought of as pertaining to how we think and experience. Necessity is the limit on human spontaneity. This, I say, was Kant's view. Within analytic philosophy there was powerful impetus toward following Kant in this subjectivizing of necessity. Necessity represents the limits on thought, or language, or whatever.

This picture made available to Kant and the neo-Kantians an elegant way of delineating the task of philosophy among the "sciences." Philosophy deals with our conceptual scheme as such; the other sciences deal with the *application* of one and another part of that scheme. In philosophy, as Wittgenstein remarked, the scheme idles. More specifically, philosophy deals with the necessary structure of our conceptual scheme. Now necessity is ascertainable a priori; conducting experiments and taking polls is irrelevant to the discerning of necessity. Philosophy is thus an armchair enterprise. Philosophical knowledge is a priori knowledge. Rorty says that neo-Kantians regarded philosophical knowledge as apodictic (certain). And some did indeed not only regard genuine philosophical knowledge as a priori but as certain.

What questions do philosophers pose as they stand back to discern necessity in our conceptual scheme? Here one finds a sharp difference between Kant on the one hand and the analytic

philosopher on the other. Kant's preoccupying concern was to establish that every conceptual scheme of human beings will necessarily contain certain specific concepts, such as existence, necessity, and causality, and certain types of concepts, such as those of enduring objects and of qualities. In addition, he endeavored to show that there is an ineradicable dynamic in the constitution of us human beings which leads us to think of the intuitions given to us as reality putting in its appearance to us, and which leads us to think of that reality along certain quite definite lines—this in spite of the fact that *knowledge* of that reality is in principle unattainable for us. These views on Kant's part contain and produce deep paradoxes. Of these, the analytic philosophers were well aware. Accordingly, they did their best to keep the Kantian preoccupations at arm's length. They simply avoided the question of the extent to which we human beings can do our thinking with alternative conceptual schemes, insisting only that any viable conceptual scheme will satisfy the laws of logic.

With the Kantian preoccupations thus renounced, what was it that remained for philosophers to do? Philosophers would concern themselves solely with the *internal* necessities of our conceptual schemes, i.e., with the necessary relations holding among concepts. They would offer necessary and sufficient conditions for the application of concepts. They would *analyze* concepts. Philosophy would be the analytic of concepts. Philosophy would be conceptual analysis. As such, philosophy would finally become scientific. Its days of wandering in the sloughs of indecisiveness would be over. It would now at long last join the other sciences in the algorithmic settling of disputes.¹ At the core of the philosophical enterprise would be the activity of looking to see whether P does or does not entail Q.

What would be the point of this enterprise? What values would conceptual analysis serve? Two things especially were emphasized. The cause of clarity would be served; never has there been a philosophical movement which so prized clarity. We do not discern the logic of scientific discourse, do not discern the logic of moral discourse, do not discern the structure of one and another sort of fact. These structures are obscured from us. Language, especially

language outside of science, serves other purposes than to display for us the structure of the facts. One of the consequences of its service of those other purposes is that it conceals from us that structure. The task of the philosopher is to undo that concealment, to make the hidden manifest.

It was widely held, however, that this attempt to uncover the concealed would show that some of our language, instead of stating facts obscurely, states no facts at all. It is without sense: nonsense. Eventually analytic philosophers acknowledged that some of such language might nonetheless serve valuable human purposes. It might be useful for expressing our emotions, useful for marrying people, etc. But even then the conviction remained that some of it served no useful purpose whatsoever. Especially some of the talk produced by traditional philosophers was seen as *nothing but* nonsense, parading, however, under the guise of sense, hence obfuscation. Traditional philosophy contains "metaphysics." And so, just as in Kant, the problem of demarcation became central in analytic philosophy. Usually it took the form of trying to demarcate "genuine science" from "metaphysics." For it was assumed without question that mathematics and the hard sciences are paradigms of sense. There, rationality rules. There, rationality is embodied. If, on one's analysis of rationality, the hard sciences prove not to be rational, that is to be taken as evidence against one's analysis of rationality and not as evidence against science's rationality. The central version of the problem of demarcation became that of trying to demarcate genuine science from the pseudoscience of metaphysics.

If one knew nothing directly of the movement itself, the image evoked by my description of analytic philosophy would probably be that of the philosopher wandering about aimlessly in the field of concepts, analyzing whatever struck him as unclear. In fact, analysis was not a directionless enterprise. In the first place, it was, above all, three areas of thought and discourse that drew the attention of the analytic philosopher: scientific discourse, the discourse of private morality, and discourse about knowledge and rationality. Secondly, in the first and last of these, especially, two deep assumptions determined the direction of attempts at analysis. For one thing, attempts at analysis were di-

rected by pervasive adherence to foundationalism with respect to knowledge. Knowledge, it was assumed, has a foundational structure: some of what we know is known immediately and everything else that we know is known because we know it on the basis of that. What we know immediately, we are certain of. And we are certain of something because at that point we are directly aware of reality. This is *the given*. Secondly, attempts at analysis were directed by what may be called *concept constructivism*. All concepts, it was widely assumed, either apply to what we are directly aware of or are constructed out of such concepts by simple logical operations. The direction of analysis was foundationalist and constructivist.

II.

Analytic philosophy as I have described it has now almost entirely disappeared. Images central to the project have been widely discarded; assumptions fundamental to it have come under attack and have been widely rejected. Rorty, especially, has offered a narrative of the demise—a narrative which argues that analytic philosophy deconstructed into pragmatist-Hegelianism. Shortly I shall discuss the Rortian narrative. But first, let us return to our question as to why it was that analysis never flourished in philosophy of art.

Ever since the early romantics, it has been a commonplace that high culture in the West has a science side and an art/humanities side, and that these two coexist in tension. C. P. Snow's well-known writings on the matter served to express, for our own times, a thesis already a century and a half old. Analytic philosophy emerged from the science side of our culture; almost all of its great figures were trained in science or mathematics. It was about that side of culture that they were knowledgeable, and it was in that side of culture that they were interested. Often they went so far as to express the conviction that the primary business of philosophy was to uncover the "logic" of science. And, as already mentioned, many of them embraced the goal of making philosophy itself finally scientific. Analytic philosophy was to be "scientific" philosophy. Hans Reichenbach in *The Rise of Scientific*

Philosophy caught the spirit. In the preface he said that:

The present book . . . maintains that philosophic speculation is a passing stage, occurring when philosophic problems are raised at a time which does not possess the logical means to solve them. It claims that there is, and always has been, a scientific approach to philosophy. And it wishes to show that from this ground has sprung a scientific philosophy which, in the science of our time, has found the tools to solve those problems that in earlier times have been the subject of guesswork only. To put it briefly: this book is written with the intention of showing that philosophy has proceeded from speculation to science.²

Given these attitudes, it was entirely to be expected that the standard advice given to fledgling philosophers would be to study more science and math. Nobody counseled studying more art. And likewise it was entirely to be expected that graduate departments would be especially welcoming to those who already had extensive training in science and mathematics.

Beyond this, there was something plainly ill-fitting—so it would appear, at any rate—between the project of analytic philosophy and the reality of art. The goal of the analytic philosopher was to uncover the structure of our conceptual schemes. Now in fact science consists of a great deal more than a conceptual scheme—even more than a body of theories expressed with a conceptual scheme. But at least theories and concepts are prominent in science. Art is different. Buildings, paintings, string quartets, sculptures, dances: How is the analytic philosopher to get a purchase on these? Where are the conceptual schemes? Where are the languages? In poetry and fiction and drama there is of course language, in the most straightforward sense. But the romantic tradition had long warned that here language works differently, so differently that it isn't even referential. In short, it is not evident that the philosopher committed to conceptual analysis has much of anything to do when it comes to art.

Two different strategies were adopted for coping with this difficulty. Of one, Monroe Beardsley was the most noted practitioner. Beardsley's strategy was to call attention to the difference between art and art criticism, and then to propose that aesthetics, instead of remaining the philosophy of art or the philosophy of the aesthetic dimension, should become the

philosophy of art criticism. For in art criticism, one has that on which the analytic philosopher can practice his craft, i.e., a conceptual scheme. Thus Beardsley gave to his major book, *Aesthetics*, the subtitle *Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism*.³ He said, in the opening paragraph of the introduction, that:

There would be no problems of aesthetics, in the sense in which I propose to mark out this field of study, if no one ever talked about works of art. So long as we enjoy a movie, a story, or a song, in silence—except perhaps for occasional grunts or groans, murmurs of annoyance or satisfaction—there is no call for philosophy. But as soon as we utter a statement about the work, various sorts of questions can arise (p. 1).

And in summarizing his delineation of the field he said that,

In the course of this book, then, we shall think of aesthetics as a distinctive philosophical inquiry: it is concerned with the nature and basis of criticism—in the broad sense of this term—just as criticism itself is concerned with works of art (p. 6).

Philosophical aesthetics, he said, “deals with questions about the meaning and truth of critical statements” (p. 7).

To conceive of aesthetics thus is to place it at a remove from the phenomena of art and the aesthetic. To all but the most hardened analytic philosopher that will already give pause. But perhaps it is more important to observe that the foundationalism and constructivism which gave point and direction to the work of analysis in philosophy of science had only a rather weak grip on the “Beardsleyans” in aesthetics. For example, vast amounts of time and energy were devoted to devising analyses of the concept of *work of art*. For sheer boringness, the results of these endeavors have few peers. Something interesting might have turned up if philosophers had looked into the emergence of our (modern) concepts of *the arts* and *works of art*. When and where did these concepts emerge? Why? What intellectual and social purposes did they serve? Do those purposes remain viable? Have the concepts attached to the words “an art” and “a work of art” remained steady over the years or have they altered? If they have changed, why have they changed? All such historical inquiries would, however, be regarded by the neo-Kantian analytic philosopher as mucking around in the contingent. The analytic

philosopher of art, like his fellow analytic philosophers, practiced his craft with resolute ahistoricism: slicing into the conceptual scheme of art criticism at a certain moment in its history, never asking why that scheme had arisen and developed as it had, attempting just to offer analyses of the concepts critics use and uncover criteria for the warranted assertion of the statements they make, scarcely guided in his analyses even by the doctrines of foundationalism and constructivism.

There was, as I have mentioned, a second strategy for developing an analytic philosophy of art—a strategy which expanded the notion of language and then treated works of art as examples of language, on this expanded concept. Of this strategy, Langer and Goodman have been the foremost practitioners, though it must at once be said that in their writings on art, neither one has been a typical analytic philosopher. Langer argued that the language of art is an iconic language, and that works of art iconically express and communicate the dynamic dimension of the emotional life. Not surprisingly, she was attacked on the ground that an iconic language is no language. Goodman, by contrast, argued that the languages of art are entirely conventional, not at all iconic; conventionally established denotation was for him the central concept. The price he paid was to leave thoroughly obscure how and what such things as pure music and abstract painting denote. In the field of music, Goodman devoted almost all of his attention to the language of *scores* for music and said almost nothing about any supposed language of music. And in general, his contention that the arts present us with specimens of conventional (not iconic) language led Goodman to focus his attention on representational art and on notational systems for the arts, and to neglect what falls outside this net.

III.

Though the foundationalism and constructivism which served to give direction to analysis in the philosophy of science played little role in the philosophy of art, it must not be inferred that the philosophy of art in the analytic style was lacking in definite character. On the contrary, the analytic philosophy of art has for the

most part been a species of the romantic philosophy of art. In Beardsley's case, it is easy to see why: criticism, whose language Beardsley set it as his task to "analyze," was itself for the first part of our century predominantly a species of romantic criticism. But the same has been true for those not committed to the "Beardsleyan" approach. The ideology of romanticism has reigned for most of our century over our customary modes of thinking about art.

I propose to make this thesis seem plausible—demonstration would require a book—by summarizing the account of the romantic art theory offered by Tzvetan Todorov in his recent book, *Theories of the Symbol*.⁴ To anyone acquainted with the analytic philosophy of art, the romanticism of it will then be evident. The advantage of my following Todorov's discussion, sometimes even to using his very words over offering my own account, is that the suspicion that I am slanting the account for the purpose of defending my thesis (that the analytic philosophy of art is a species of the romantic philosophy of art) is thereby rendered less plausible.⁵

Todorov opens his discussion by taking as paradigmatic the thought of an early romantic, Karl Philip Moritz. The dominant theory of art before the romantics was of course the imitation theory. Moritz introduced the radical innovation of changing the traditional subject of the verb "to imitate." It is not the *work* which imitates but the *artist* who imitates, and the artist imitates by producing works. What he thereby imitates is the creative productivity of nature. The born artist, writes Moritz, has to create as nature does. Other romantics preferred to speak of *God* as that which the artist imitates; "the artist has become a creator God," said Herder. And yet others moved fluidly back and forth between Nature and God as the artist's model in creativity.

A corollary of the view that the artist creates like unto God or Nature is that "the accent no longer falls upon the relationship of representation (linking the work and the world), but upon the relationship of expression, the one that links the work and the artist" (p. 154). The romantic philosophy of art became preeminently a philosophy of artistic creation: creation is self-expression. And above all, what artists express is their emotions.

A second corollary is that “in this new framework, the work of art has in common with nature the fact that each is a closed totality, a complete universe. . . . The resemblance no longer resides in the appearance of similar forms, but in the possession of an identical internal structure: the relationship of the constituent parts is the same, only the coefficient of the size varies. The work is not the image but the diagram of the world” (p. 154). The artwork is thus conceived as a microcosm of the great macrocosm. “Like the world, the work of art is a self-sufficient totality. . . .” (p. 155).

Nonetheless, the romantics regarded the work of art as signifying. Indeed, says Todorov, we might say “that all the characteristics of a work of art are concentrated in a single notion, which the romantics will later call *symbol*” (p. 161). “The nature of the beautiful object,” remarks Moritz, “consists in the fact that the parts and the whole become expressive and significant, one part always through another and the whole through itself. . . .” (p. 159).

But if the significance of the work lies in its organic unity, what does it signify? What else indeed but itself, somehow? Again, Moritz: “An authentic work of art, a beautiful poem, is something finished and completed in itself, something that exists for itself, and whose value lies in itself, and in the ordered relationship of its parts. . . . He who can ask, after reading them, ‘What does the *Iliad* signify? What does the *Odyssey* signify?’ must be little moved by Homer’s lofty poetic beauty. —All that a poem signifies is found in itself” (p. 162). As Todorov remarks, “Signification in art is an interpenetration of the signifier and the signified; all distance between the two is abolished” (p. 162). Todorov records some of the intense struggle of the romantics to explain and articulate this notion of the symbol.

Running throughout the romantic theory of art is the notion of the autonomy of the work. Creation as self-expression and the autonomy of the work are the two deepest themes in romantic aesthetics. In turn, the doctrine of the autonomy of the work had two sides. We have been looking at one side: the significance of the work of art lies entirely in its interior relationships. It is a hermetic totality. But there is another side: the work of art is *useless*. It has no purpose, no reason for being, outside of itself. Works of art

are not for doing things with. Works of art are not for accomplishing something with. They are not to be soiled with the grime and sweat of human toil. They are intransitive.

These two phases of autonomy, of the work as bearing its significance within itself and of the work as useless, were closely linked in the minds of the romantics. Says Moritz, the concept of uselessness “is all the more easily and all the more closely linked with the concept of beauty, to the extent that this latter also needs no purpose, no reason for being outside itself, but possesses its entire value and the goal of its existence in itself” (p. 155). Of course this is just to declare the fact of a connection, not to explain it. Moritz, in his attempt to specify the connection, says that “where an object lacks external utility or purpose, these must be sought in the object itself, if this object is to arouse pleasure in me. . . . To put it in different terms: seeing a beautiful object, I must feel pleasure uniquely for its own sake; to this end the absence of external finality has to be compensated for by an internal finality; the object must be something fully realized in itself” (p. 157). “The autonomy of a totality is a necessary condition of its beauty” (p. 159).

These two romantic themes—of creation as self-expression and of the work as autonomous—have also been the great themes of the analytic philosophy of art, though the latter, indeed, has much outweighed the former in importance. The slogans still echo: intentional fallacy, affective fallacy, implied narrator, disinterested contemplation, uselessness.

IV.

But works of art are not useless, or so I have argued in some of my own work in the philosophy of art.⁶ They are some of the most useful things we human beings possess. We use music to lull babies to sleep and to accompany the hoeing of cotton. We use poetry to entertain children and to address the gods. We use representational painting to impress the public with the wealth of patrons and to celebrate the founding events of religions and nations. And so forth, on and on. Works of art are not piled up in closets of discard nor tossed on the trash heaps of inutility. They are to be found in the fabric of human action. They are used.

One response would be that though works of music may indeed be used to do such things as lull babies to sleep, if thus used they are not works of *art*. Brief reflection, however, shows this response to have the consequence that probably nothing is a work of art. A more subtle and guarded response would be that works of music, when used to lull babies, are not functioning qua works of art. Strictly speaking this is, of course, not so much a response as a change of topic. The claim was made that works of art are useless. When it was observed that works of music, poetry, painting, etc., are obviously not useless—it being assumed that these are works of art—the new point was made that the uses pointed to are not examples of treating the work as a work of art. But let us run with the change of topic.

What is this phenomenon of *functioning as* (being treated as) a work of art? Quite clearly, it is functioning as an object of perceptual contemplation. Many would say that it is narrower than this, that this is just the genus—that functioning as a work of art is a *species* of functioning as an object of perceptual contemplation. Perhaps so. But in any case, when treating something as a work of art occurs, then the work no longer serves merely as an instrument of some action but as an object of attention in its own right.

But then why isn't treating something as a work of art a way of *using* it? Isn't contemplating something perceptually, whatever be the benefit that one expects to ensue from such contemplation, a mode of using it? It would be a mistake to hang the romantic theorist by the noose of ordinary usage. Of course it's a mode of use. But the romantic theorist wishes to emphasize the difference between this use and other uses—the difference between attending to this object so as to make one's acquaintance with it, and using it as a medium. And beyond stressing the difference between this use and other uses, the romantic wishes to emphasize the importance of this use.

A parting of the ways now confronts us. One can explore this use. Kant's *Critique of Judgment* was the first great example of such exploration. More precisely, Kant explored the somewhat more narrow phenomenon of perceptual contemplation conducted for the sake of aesthetic delight. Alternatively, one can turn in

the other direction and explore the arts—something Kant did not much do. We have seen that such exploration, if it is to be at all faithful to art, must renounce the dogma of the uselessness of art, of the autonomy of art. Perceptual contemplation is a use. And more importantly, perceptual contemplation has rarely been either the sole intended, or actual, use of examples of the (fine) arts. Though our poets do indeed want us to notice their words, they also want to say things and want us to notice what they are saying. Though our painters want us to notice the design, they also want to represent things and want us to notice what they represent. The notion that all works of art are autonomous or were meant to be treated autonomously is the great romantic illusion. The illusion lives on, in, among other places, the failure to distinguish between aesthetics and the philosophy of art. Humanity's art has nothing special to do with aesthetics. And aesthetics has nothing special to do with art.

All this is almost foolishly obvious when pointed out. The untenability of the other side of the autonomy doctrine is almost equally obvious. Creators of works of art do not merely struggle to devise organically unified images; they do not even merely struggle to devise organically unified images which are objective correlates of their emotions. They struggle to embody social, material, and cultural realities within their works.⁷ And poets do not merely create symbols whose only mode of signification is self-signification. In his "Eleven Addresses to the Lord," John Berryman addressed God, and referred to God and to Polycarp and to the apostle John.⁸ And writers of fiction do not merely create fictional narrators who then monologically say all that is said by the words of the text. Often writers themselves say what is said by the words of their texts, though of course in doing so they may engage in literary pretense. They may speak through poetic masks. We can, after all, pretend about ourselves.⁹

To make these points is to canvas only some of the ways in which philosophers of art have tried to defend the thesis that works of art are autonomous, hermetic totalities, and to hint at only some of the reasons for thinking that the thesis, in almost all its manifestations, is false. Works of art do not all function autonomously nor are any of them autonomous totalities.

Why have we thought otherwise? Surely we have thought otherwise because we have been *schooled* to think otherwise. For most of us, that schooling occurs in the course of our induction into the attitudes and practices of our institution (social formation) of high art. Our institution of high art is oriented around the perceptual contemplation of art, and then, especially, around perceptual contemplation for the purpose of aesthetic delight. One enters the institution by learning how to listen to music, and learns at the same time to overlook or denigrate the fact that music has many other ways of entering our lives than serving as the object of attentive listening; one enters it by learning how to look at paintings, and learns at the same time to overlook or denigrate the fact that visual representation and design have many others ways of entering our lives than by serving as the object of attentive looking; one enters it by learning how to read poetry, and learns at the same time to look past or demean the many other ways poetry has of entering our lives than by serving as the object of attentive reading. The romantic theory of the arts, I suggest, is best thought of as the ideology of our modern Western bourgeois institution of high art. The institutional realities of high art have combined with romantic theories of art to produce that picture which has shaped the analytic philosophy of art.

V.

In *Literary Theory: An Introduction*,¹⁰ Terry Eagleton remarks that

one might very roughly periodize the history of modern literary theory in three stages: a preoccupation with the author (Romanticism and the nineteenth century); an exclusive concern with the text (New Criticism); and a marked shift of attention to the reader over recent years. The reader has always been the most underprivileged of this trio—strangely, since without him or her there would be no literary texts at all (p. 74).

An implication of our discussion above is that the move from a focus on the artist to a focus on the work should not be viewed as a move out of the ambit of romanticism. The same cannot be said for the move to focus on the reader. And Eagleton is by no means alone in suggesting that what unifies the disparate, polemical, con-

tentious body of recent criticism and theory is a focus on the reader. Jonathan Culler, for example, uses the same thesis to organize his *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism*.¹¹

Or have we been fooled by appearances? Has recent theory not really moved out of the ambit of romanticism? In many of the “post-structuralists,” the romantic themes are still there, oriented now around the reader, however, rather than around the creator. The creative freedom of the reader has replaced the creative freedom of the author-artist as the center of reflection. Indeed, for some theorists the reader has become little short of a free creative artist, with the text no more than an initiating occasion. It is less than clear that the reader’s presence on stage for the last quarter century represents the end of romanticism. And already voices are raised saying that it is time once again to bring the author-artist into the picture.¹²

Whirl is king: from artist to work to receiver and back again to artist. Surely it is time for us to break out, to start over, to somehow find a way of approaching art which no longer focuses successively on artist and work and receiver, but instead holds all these in view simultaneously, and does so in such a way as to answer the call, now increasingly heard, to take account of the social embeddedness of whichever of these one has in the center of one’s attention: artist, work, receiver.¹³ I suggest that we approach art from the angle of the social practices of art. Let me explain, and in my explanation, let me follow, fairly closely, Alasdair MacIntyre’s explication of the idea of a social practice in his *After Virtue*.¹⁴

A practice is an activity of a certain sort—characteristically, an activity which involves the manipulation of material of one kind or another in one way or another. That material will usually reflect technological developments in society. Thus practices interact with technologies: technologies are themselves embedded in practices, but apart from that, practices require technologies and new technologies suggest new practices.

Secondly, a social practice is an activity which requires learned skills and knowledge for its performance. Some things we are born able to do; others, we naturally acquire the ability for

doing in the process of maturation. Not so with the skills enabling practices. They must be learned (most of them, anyway). And to a large extent the skills and knowledge requisite are not just picked up on our own but are taught to us by others, sometimes by modeling, sometimes by explicit verbal instructions. In this way, among others, practices are inherently social.

Furthermore, in the case of a practice the new learner confronts a situation in which the requisite skills and knowledge are in good measure already being exercised by practitioners of the practice. When the knowledge and skills necessary for the performance of a practice become complex, critics and consultants and professional teachers put in their appearance, and some of these will not themselves be practitioners. Some may themselves not even have the skills necessary for being practitioners. But in addition to all such instructors, there will be a body of practitioners which the new learner joins. Characteristically the same will have been true, earlier, of those current practitioners.

Thus a practice is an ongoing activity into which new members are inducted. Practices have histories; they have traditions. As MacIntyre remarks, "To enter into a practice is to enter into a relationship not only with its contemporary practitioners, but also with those who have preceded us in the practice, particularly those whose achievements extended the reach of the practice to its present point. It is thus the achievement, and *a fortiori* the authority, of a tradition which I then confront and from which I have to learn" (p. 181).

In that last sentence, MacIntyre alludes to the fact that when an activity is a practice, those who engage in the activity, along with those who teach the activity, will regard some performances of the activity as better than others. There will be standards of excellence operative within the activity whereby some people are judged to farm better than others, some people are judged to skate better than others, etc. To be inducted into the practice is not just to pick up the skills and knowledge requisite for its performance but also to be taught the current standards of excellence for the practice. As MacIntyre puts it, "A practice involves standards of excellence and obedience to rules. . . . To enter into a practice is to accept the authority of those standards and the inadequacy of my

own performance as judged by them. It is to subject my own attitudes, choices, preferences, and tastes to the standards which currently and partially define the practice. . . . If, on starting to listen to music, I do not accept my own incapacity to judge correctly, I will never learn to hear, let alone to appreciate, Bartok's last quartets" (p. 177). The learning of the standards of excellence operative within a practice does not usually occur by way of learning formulated criteria of evaluation; the *formulation* of criteria is a difficult and sophisticated task. The learning in question occurs far more often by way of modeling and casual hints.

In thinking about the standards of evaluation operative within a practice, it is of prime importance not to think of them as an unshakeable monolith. Often there will be critics of the current standards. Often different practitioners will operate with somewhat different standards. And in most practices, the standards will have changed over the course of history, sometimes subtly, sometimes dramatically. Such changes will often call forth new knowledge and new skills, and these in turn will often suggest new standards again. Innovations in knowledge, in standards, and in skills, nourish each other; among these three there is a circular process of discovery and innovation. Practices alter and expand our human modes and degrees of achieving excellence.

The way we evaluate what goes on in practices is, of course, directly connected to what we find desirable in those practices. Here it is important to distinguish between goods *internal* to activities and goods *external*; and correlatively, between engaging in an activity for external goods, that is, goods which are only contingently attached to that activity and which can in principle be attached to a wide variety of significantly different activities (e.g., profit, fame, self-satisfaction), and engaging in an activity for *internal* goods, that is, goods which can only be achieved by engaging in this activity or one closely similar. The internal goods in question may either be *products* of the activity or *experiences* which come our way in the course of engaging in the activity; in the case of farming, for example, they may either be foodstuffs or the pleasurable experience of working the soil.

Since we are not analyzing the notion of a

social practice for its own sake but for the sake of illuminating the social practices of art, let me content myself with pointing out one last feature of such practices, connected directly to the preceding point. In the course of the history of a practice, new internal goods may come to light and old ones become unattractive. A fundamental feature of social practices is this plasticity with respect to internal goods and goals, and indeed external. There is no such thing as *the* purpose of farming, of painting, of figure ice-skating. There may of course be some abiding goals inherent in these practices; but what is just as important to observe is that the goals as a whole, of those who participate in practices, shift. MacIntyre's example of the point is a good one for our purposes. Consider, he says,

the practice of portrait painting as it developed in Western Europe from the late middle ages to the eighteenth century. The successful portrait painter is able to achieve many goods which are . . . external to the practice of portrait painting—fame, wealth, social status, even a measure of power and influence at courts upon occasion. But those external goods are not to be confused with the goods which are internal to the practice. . . . Originally in medieval paintings of the saints the face was an icon; the question of a resemblance between the depicted face of Christ or St. Peter and the face that Jesus or Peter actually possessed at some particular age did not even arise. The antithesis to this iconography was the relative naturalism of certain fifteenth-century Flemish and German painting. The heavy eyelids, the coifed hair, the lines around the mouth undeniably represent some particular woman, either actual or envisaged. Resemblance has usurped the iconic relationship. But with Rembrandt there is, so to speak, synthesis: the naturalistic portrait is now rendered as an icon, but an icon of a new and hitherto inconceivable kind (pp. 176-77).

It will be obvious by now that the various arts-of-making which we classify as *fine arts* are examples of social practices—*paradigmatic* examples. Take, for example, the activity of painting: clearly this is an ongoing activity with a history and tradition which requires knowledge and skill for its practice. And though we no longer have a guild system for training new participants in the practice, nonetheless young would-be painters begin their careers by absorbing a good deal of the knowledge and skill—and yes, the goals and standards of evaluation—of those currently engaged in the practice. Nowadays fledgling painters almost al-

ways take painting courses taught by painters. Furthermore, the practice continues its uninterrupted course through profound changes in the knowledge, the skills, the standards of evaluation, and the goals of its practitioners, as well as through profound disputes and disagreements on goals and standards. The existence of those changes, disputes, and disagreements is connected with the emergence of new internal goods and the disappearance of old ones, along, indeed, with the emergence of new external goods and the disappearance of old ones. What is characteristic of the practice of painting among us is the ebb and flow of new internal goods aimed at by our painters. A great innovator comes along, and suddenly new possibilities are opened up for this ancient practice of painting, whether now it be the practice of representational painting that we have in mind or the practice of abstract design painting.

My examples (and MacIntyre's) have focused on composition practice. But it should be obvious that we find in the arts not only long-enduring compositional practices but also *reception* practices, and in the so-called performing arts, *performance* practices; and that the artist normally composes her work for insertion into those reception and performance practices. She composes it not just in the weak, readily acknowledged sense of being motivated by the desire that it function in such practices, but in the strong sense, that her desire that it fit into these practices *loops* back so as to guide her composing.

Consider, for example, the activity of reading poetry. Reading poetry is an ongoing historical activity which we teach novices to perform. We induct them into the practice, mainly by way of school education. We teach them the requisite knowledge and skills for reading poetry; and we impart to them a feel for the difference between better and worse ways of reading, and of better and worse kinds of poetry. Further, we all recognize that there are goods internal to the reading of poetry, goods which can only be achieved by reading poetry; and anyone acquainted with the history of literary theory knows that the goods which readers have tried to achieve in reading poetry have varied widely across history. Today the goals and standards of reading are much contested. Literary theory of the last twenty-five

years is the scene of the contest.

Indeed, not only have the goods pursued in reading poetry varied, and not only are they contested; we must recall here the point made earlier, that *reading* poetry is but one of many uses to which poetry can be and has been put. The social practice of receiving and using poetry is not today, and never has been, confined to reading.

VI.

Philosophy of art after romanticism must historicize romanticism. Instead of accepting the romantic claim that now, finally, art has come into its own and its essence been revealed in thought, it must insist that romantic practice and thought in the arts represent just one stage in those interlocking ever-changing social practices which are the arts. Romantic ideology is not the philosophy of the end of time in art. It is a polemic, couched in essentialist and eschatological terms, in favor of certain ways of conducting the social practices of art and against other ways.

But though the way ahead for philosophy of art after romanticism is to historicize romanticism, it does not follow that the way ahead is to become a species of historicism, or, as Rorty calls it, of pragmatism. To see what else it might become, we must glance now at the fall of analytic philosophy. Rorty has offered a narrative of that fall. But another, quite different, narrative is also possible. To set the stage, let us briefly rehearse Rorty's narrative, as offered in his *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*.¹⁵

Analytic philosophy, says Rorty, cannot be written without one or the other of such related distinctions as the necessary and the contingent, the analytic and the synthetic, the structural and the empirical, the philosophical and the scientific. "If there are no intuitions into which to resolve concepts (in the manner of the *Aufbau*) nor any internal relations among concepts to make possible 'grammatical discoveries' (in the manner of 'Oxford philosophy'), then indeed it is hard to imagine what an 'analysis' might be" (p. 172). Accordingly, says Rorty, the story he wants to tell is "how the notion of two sorts of representations—intuitions and concepts—fell

into disrepute in the latter days of the analytic movement" (p. 168). In Rorty's narrative, Quine and Sellars become the central figures in the demise of analytic philosophy and the emergence of its successor—pragmatism.

The conviction that there is some sort of "given" on which the mind imposes its concepts was never very firm in the analytic tradition, says Rorty. In "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind,"¹⁶ Sellars launched an all-out attack on what he called "The Myth of the Given"; but this was just the culmination of a good many queries and hesitations. By contrast, the distinction between the necessary and the contingent went unquestioned until the publication of Quine's "Two Dogmas of Empiricism."

Analytic philosophers did not follow Kant in his claim that some necessary truths are synthetic, i.e., that there are, in Kantian parlance, *synthetic a priori*. For them, the necessary/contingent distinction coincided with the analytic/synthetic distinction. Indeed, probably most of them viewed these distinctions not only as coincident but as identical. The concept of the necessary just *is* the concept of the analytic; the concept of the contingent just *is* the concept of the synthetic. Though attempts to explain the analytic/synthetic distinction were many and diverse, there was something of a consensus around the conviction—now to use Quine's words—that synthetic truths are "grounded in fact" and *analytic* truths are "grounded in meanings independently of matters of fact."¹⁷ One of Quine's purposes in his essay was to attack this distinction as untenable. The conclusion he drew was that "for all its *a priori* reasonableness, a boundary between analytic and synthetic statements simply has not been drawn. That there is such a distinction to be drawn at all is an unempirical dogma of empiricists, a metaphysical article of faith."¹⁸

Rorty's narrative thus far points to the destructive consequences, for analytic philosophy, of Quine's and Sellars's work. The scheme-content picture must be surrendered and the conviction undergirding foundationalism—that certain of our beliefs and assertions are certain and hence privileged because they report a reality to which we have direct access, viz., meanings and the intuitional given—must be given up. But Rorty continues his narration

by pointing to what he sees as the positive, forward-looking element in this same work of Quine and Sellars. Here he treats them together; they both, on his interpretation, affirm “epistemological behaviorism,” or pragmatism. We do indeed regard various reports about our inner life as certain. But “for Sellars, the certainty of ‘I have a pain’ is a reflection of the fact that nobody cares to question it, not conversely” (p. 174). So too we regard “all men are animals” and “there have been some black dogs” as certain, and Quine thinks, says Rorty, that an anthropologist would not be able “to discriminate the sentences to which natives invariably and wholeheartedly assent into contingent empirical platitudes on the one hand and necessary conceptual truths on the other” (p. 173). But this certainly too “is a reflection of the fact that nobody cares to question it, not conversely.” According to epistemological behaviorism, says Rorty, “rationality and epistemic authority” are not to be explained by reference to meanings and experiential givens, to which we have direct access. “Quine thinks that ‘meanings’ drop out as wheels that are not part of the mechanism, and Sellars thinks the same of ‘self-authenticating non-verbal episodes’ ” (p. 174). Rationality and epistemic authority are to be explained “by reference to what society lets us say, rather than the latter by the former.” And this, says Rorty, is the essence of epistemological behaviorism, or pragmatism. The rules of the language game in which we participate allow us to say certain things under certain circumstances and not other things under those circumstances; warrant and entitlement are always and only by reference to some such rules. We can probe the historical origins of such rules, the relative usefulness of such rules, the relation of such rules to the structure of the brain, etc. But what we cannot do is “ground” such rules in a reality which we apprehend. “To be behaviorist in the large sense in which Sellars and Quine are behaviorist is not to offer reductionist analyses, but to refuse to attempt a certain sort of explanation: the sort of explanation which not only interposes such a notion as ‘acquaintance with meanings’ or ‘acquaintance with sensory appearances’ between the impact of the environment on human beings and their reports about it, but uses such notions to explain the reliability of such reports” (p. 176). “For

the Quine-Sellars approach to epistemology, to say that truth and knowledge can only be judged by the standards of the inquirers of our own day is not to say that human knowledge is less noble or important, or more ‘cut off from the world,’ than we had thought. It is merely to say that nothing counts as justification unless by reference to what we already accept, and that there is no way to get outside our beliefs and our language so as to find some test other than coherence” (p. 178).

Rorty’s reading of the character and history of analytic philosophy is that once again the fundamental Kant-Hegel dialectic has come into play. At the end of the nineteenth century, Western philosophy was Hegelian in its general character, with pragmatism being the characteristically American manifestation of this. At the turn of the century this Hegelianism was overwhelmed with a new surge of neo-Kantianism, the great figure in the Anglo-American world being Russell, that on the Continent, Husserl, and with Frege as common patrimony.¹⁹ But once again the Hegelian dynamic asserted itself, undercutting the assumptions of twentieth-century neo-Kantianism, appearing somewhat earlier on the continent than in the ambience of analytic philosophy; but it has now appeared in the pivotal work of Quine and Sellars, so that once again there is a coalescence between European and Anglo-American philosophy. Once again, our human conceptualizing is properly seen as historicized; once again, the notion of there being limits on our conceptualizing and our thinking (these limits constituting necessity) is discarded; only this time, instead of history being seen as the attempt of Hegel’s Reason to realize itself, history is seen as the attempt of human beings to find what *works*.

This, I say, is Rorty’s narrative of the history of analytic philosophy; call it the pragmatist-Hegelian narrative. But a supplementary narrative, a *Realist* narrative, must be added. The Realist agrees that classic analytic philosophy was a species of neo-Kantianism—a species which absorbed some of the major themes of John Locke. The Realist also agrees that the probing of some of the assumptions of analytic philosophy which took place at the hands of such as Quine and Sellars has led to the emergence of a mode of thought which is pragmatist-Hegelian in its orientation—plus, of course, has

also led simply to bewilderment in many. But the Realist contends that Rorty's narration stops too soon and is too myopic. Pragmatism is not the only successor to analytic philosophy. There is another successor. That other is Realism. The Realist refuses to participate in the dialectic of Kantianism and Hegelianism. He questions assumptions common to both. Analytic philosophy has split in two.

Locke held that though there are real essences, we know nothing of them. We know only of nominal essence. In other words, Locke held that though there is both necessity *de re* and *de dicto*, we know only of necessity *de dicto*. For example, though we know that something, to be gold, must be yellow and malleable, we do not know and cannot know, of any actual lump of stuff, whether or not it is essentially gold. Kant, as we have already seen, moved beyond Locke to deny that there is any *de re* necessity to be known (this, at least, was Kant's official position; in fact he appears to offer a vast anthropological essentialism). In this, classic analytic philosophy followed him. And the pragmatist-Hegelians have taken the last step of denying that there is any necessity at all.

Now Quine was well aware of the traditional claim that there is *de re* necessity; he professed, however, to find the notion unintelligible. He understood the claim that cyclists must have legs—*must*, that is, to be cyclists; but the claim that someone *had* to be a cyclist, or *had* to be a person, or whatever—of that, he could make no sense. However, in his seminal papers of the sixties, Saul Kripke proposed a way of making sense of necessity which included a way of making sense of *de re* necessity. Kripke resurrected the Leibnizian notion of possible worlds; and then suggested that a proposition is necessarily true if true in all possible worlds, and that some property belongs to the essence of something if it has that property in all possible worlds in which there is that thing. Kripke himself did not offer an ontology of possible worlds; on that, there have subsequently been various suggestions. One of the simplest and least problematic is that of Alvin Plantinga.²⁰ Possible worlds are states of affairs—highly complex ones—so complex as to be complete, in the sense that, if some state of affairs S is a possible world, then for every state of affairs S*, S either

includes or precludes S*.

In some of his later work, Kripke went on to argue that not only do we know some of the essential properties of things, but that the project of natural science can be seen, in good measure, as the attempt to discover the essences of various natural kinds and of various stuffs, e.g., of water. This was the first blow to the old Kantian insistence that necessity is a priori and contingency a posteriori. But more generally, the characteristic Kantian blur between epistemology and ontology, when it came to matters of necessity, was undone. That blur was as essential to Quine the pragmatist as it was to Kant. For Quine took the notion of necessity to be the notion of what we would never give up; he then argued that probably, for everything which we believe, there is some circumstance or other under which we would give it up. The Realist, however, holds that all such epistemic notions as feeling certain of, being willing to give it up under no circumstances whatsoever, etc., are different from the notion of necessity. Of some propositions which are in fact necessary and with which we are acquainted we may be very uncertain; it would not take much at all to push us into giving them up. Indeed, some we may already have given up, to the extent not only of not believing them but of believing them false. There is nothing even puzzling about the notion of believing to be false a proposition which is in fact necessary. Furthermore, the Realist does not identify the necessary-contingent distinction with the analytic-synthetic distinction. Qua Realist, he doesn't even have a view on whether they coincide. Indeed, he can live happily with the consequence that nothing like the Kantian analytic-synthetic distinction can be made out. For the issue of whether it can be made out is just the issue of whether all *de dicto* necessity is analytic or whether some is synthetic. But the attention of the Realist is not focused on species of *de dicto* necessity. It's not founded on *de dicto* necessity at all. His contention is rather that in addition to *de dicto* necessity there is *de re* necessity, and that with some of this *de re* necessity we are acquainted. Indeed, he regards *de dicto* necessity as being, at bottom, a species of *de re* necessity. For *de dicto* necessity consists of propositions being essentially true, i.e., being true in all possible worlds in which they exist. Thus Quine's "Two

Dogmas of Empiricism," which the Pragmatist sees as decisive, the Realist sees as misguided, as spinning out the consequences of assumptions which ought to be discarded rather than elaborated.

There is a long tradition, going back at least to Plato, which holds that it is the business of the philosopher to discover and contemplate the structure of the realm of necessity, that such contemplation is of higher worth than anything else we human beings can do, and that it can serve to direct our lives in the world. After first subjectivizing necessity, Kant, in his own way, perpetuated this tradition. The sort of Realist I have in mind rejects it. Of course, it's true that that Platonic picture of the philosopher's task is *compatible* with modal realism. It is not, however, *compelled* by it, and it should, in my view, be rejected. The Realist is happy to embrace, along with the Pragmatist, Sellars's rough-and-ready formula for the task of philosophy: to discuss how things, in the most general sense of the term, hang together, in the most general sense of the term. What in part distinguishes the Realist is his conviction that to speak with any amplitude of how things hang together, we will have to speak of necessity *de re*. Necessity and essence are features of reality. The new Realist wishes to break that ancient bond between the necessary and the important. It is more important to discover the contingent social practices of art than to find the essence of art, if, indeed, art has an essence. The new Realist breaks as firmly as does the Pragmatist with the Platonic-Kantian notion that philosophers are students of necessity.

We have seen that the Realist breaks with the Kantian notion that necessity marks the bounds on human intuiting, conceptualizing, and judging. He breaks with this notion not by following the pragmatist-Hegelian line of saying that there are no such limits, but rather, by being a Realist concerning modality. But there is another rejection that the Realist executes which goes perhaps even deeper.

Kant held that we have no intellectual intuitions, no awarenesses other than sensory awarenesses—sensory of course comprising for him inner sense as well as outer sense. Kant's way of construing concepts fit this contention: Concepts are not apprehensions of predicables but modes of organization of intuitions. Intui-

tions are given to us; we provide the concepts. More specifically, we impose modes of organization on the disparate intuitions. The outcome of this creative blending of the given and the imposed is knowledge. Here, then, is the origin of that picture which has so powerfully dominated analytic philosophy, the picture of scheme and content, of organizing structure and intuitional given.

The pragmatist-Hegelian has various reasons for rejecting this picture. Perhaps the deepest is that he finds it incoherent. What is this stuff to which the conceptual scheme is applied? Kant thought that whatever conceptual scheme we applied would always and necessarily have the same fundamental structure. Others have spoken of alternative conceptual schemes. Either way, says the pragmatist, the picture is the same, i.e., that of applying a conceptual scheme to some stuff. But any way of thinking of that stuff already involves the use of a concept. Kant spoke of it as intuitions. That is already to conceptualize it, namely, as intuitions. Others preferred speaking of the scheme as applied to the world. But *world* too is a concept. The whole idea of a world out there, or of intuitions in here, waiting to be conceptualized, is hopelessly incoherent. Better to scrap the whole idea; it would be world and intuitions well lost. We must allow to sink into us the full force of the fact that we cannot get outside our concepts, or, if one prefers, our language. Philosophers suggest "that there is some way of breaking out of language in order to compare it with something else. But there is no way to think about either the world or our purposes except by using our language."²¹ We dwell, all of us together, in the prison house of language, or of concepts. That is the image which irresistibly comes to mind when the pragmatist speaks. Of course the pragmatist would reject the image. For we cannot think of anything as being outside this prison. And what kind of prison is a prison with nothing outside? No prison. Better to use images of freedom. The inescapability of language is the inescapability of freedom. We must learn to live with pure contingency. Pragmatism

is the doctrine that there are no constraints on inquiry save conversational ones—no wholesale constraints derived from the nature of the objects, or of the mind,

or of language, but only those retail constraints provided by the remarks of our fellow-inquirers. . . .

I prefer this . . . way of characterizing pragmatism because it seems to me to focus on a fundamental choice which confronts the reflective mind: that between accepting the contingent character of starting-points, and attempting to evade this contingency. To accept the contingency of starting-points is to accept our inheritance from, and our conversation with, our fellow-humans as our only source of guidance. . . . Our identification with our community—our society, our political tradition, our intellectual heritage—is heightened when we see this community as ours rather than nature's, shaped rather than *found*, one among many which men have made. . . . James, in arguing against Realists and idealists that "the trail of the human serpent is over all," was reminding us that our glory is in our participation in fallible and transitory human projects, not in our obedience to permanent nonhuman constraints.²²

The Realist sees things differently. Though he too rejects the scheme/context picture, he does so for a reason very different from that of the pragmatist-Hegelians. For him, the basic picture is not that of taking something as so-and-so, i.e., conceptualizing something as so-and-so; but rather, that of *recognizing* something as what it is, of becoming acquainted with it. We do not just *take* some unnameable protean stuff *as* a duck. We recognize the duck before us to be a duck, sometimes, anyway. The Realist rejects the Kantian claim that we have no intellectual intuitions. He holds that there are predicables and propositions (states of affairs), and that of many of these we have a grasp. He thinks of concepts (some of them, anyway) as graspings of predicables. And he holds that some of the predicables that we grasp are instantiated and are known by us to be instantiated. Reality, though not made by us, is thus also not alien to us. Concepts are not mental representations screening reality from us. Neither are they modes of organization imposed on unorganized protean stuff. The image of conceptualizing some given stuff—doing something to it, taking it as so-and-so, imposing a mode of organization on it—is wrong, admittedly relevant for some of our contact with reality but not for all and not for what is most basic. The pragmatist-Hegelian does not remove what is wrong about this image by proposing that we scrap the notion of a stuff taken in various ways and keep just the *takings*. The smile does not come without the cat.

Neither does the Realist think of believings as inclinations to assert, these governed solely by the rules of the social game (horizontally, as it were). He holds that when we believe, there is something which is the object of belief—a state of affairs. And he holds that some of the states of affairs which we believe to be the case are in fact the case. We are at home in the world, without having made it.

So at bottom, the reason the Realist does not see necessity as merely the limits on the ways we can take things, is that he does not regard the phenomenon of us taking things a certain way as at the bottom of things. We can take a design as either a duck or a rabbit. But what it really is, then, is a design—neither a duck nor a rabbit.

Much more could be said by way of delineating and advocating the position which I have been calling realism, but this must suffice.²³ Not one but two coherent philosophical visions have emerged from, and superseded, analytic philosophy in its senescence. One is the pragmatism which Rorty eloquently propounds—essentially one more manifestation of the Hegelian response to Kantianism. The other is realism, which refuses to participate in the Kant-Hegel dialectic and instead rejects assumptions shared alike by Kantians and Hegelians. Pragmatists and Realists agree in rejecting the picture of a scheme of necessities imposed on a given of contingencies. They agree in rejecting the notion that the philosopher is a specialist in necessity. They agree that philosophy is not apodictic. And though the Realist, *qua* Realist, is not opposed to classical foundationalism and concept constructivism, he is, in my judgment, well-advised to share the pragmatist's opposition to these. But from there on, they part ways. For the Realist holds that there is a reality "out there," a reality which includes necessity, to which we can be faithful or unfaithful in our beliefs—not just a social game whose shifting rules we can follow or not follow. Indeed, he regards rules, along with the persons who obey or defy them, as also part of the reality "out there" to which, in our beliefs, we can be faithful or unfaithful.

VII.

The world within which the social practices of art are played out includes, as the Realist sees

it, necessity and possibility and impossibility, and properties and actions and kinds and states of affairs. Down through the ages, for example, one of the things done with works of art (with some, not all) is world-projection. Never will the projected world of a work of art be our actual world, that is to say, never will it be that possible world which is the actual world. The actual world is too vast for projection. And usually what the artist projects is not even, in its totality, *part* of the actual world. Usually, in its totality, it is a merely possible state of affairs; and sometimes, in its totality, an impossible state of affairs. The writers and tellers and presenters of fiction project worlds.

In the course of fictionally projecting a state of affairs, the fictioneer will often refer to countries, persons, events, etc. which do or did exist. Customarily in those cases, the world of the work will include states of affairs which cannot occur without those entities existing. In that way, the world of the work is anchored to those entities. The world of a work of art is not a self-contained, hermetically closed, phenomenon. But in addition to this, the writer will delineate for us *types* of entities: person types, country types, city types, etc. Some of these are the fictional characters of fiction.

I think an adequate ontology of types will yield the conclusion that writers do not create characters but select and delineate them, just as I think an adequate theory of states of affairs will yield the conclusion that writers do not create states of affairs but take note of them and call them to our attention. What underlies the possibility of fiction is the human capacity for envisagement.²⁴

On such a view as here alluded to, world-projection is not a way of worldmaking. But neither is it, as the old view would have it, a mode of imitation. If we reject romanticism in the arts and approach art from the side of its social practices, and if the philosophy of art we then develop rejects the Kantian-Hegelian dialectic and adopts instead a Realist orientation, then we will see the social practices of art as dealing not just with actuality but with possibility and impossibility, and not just with particulars but with properties and actions and kinds. The fictioneer neither makes a world nor imitates a world, but selects from the vast realm of possibility and impossibility a segment there-

of, a "world," for us to consider. Among the many benefits of a Realist philosophy of art is that it offers us a cogent and powerful way of explaining what it is to project a world.

¹ Cf. Moritz Schlick, "The Turning Point in Philosophy," in A. J. Ayer, ed., *Logical Positivism* (New York, 1959), p. 54: "I refer to this anarchy of philosophical opinions which has so often been described, in order to leave no doubt that I am fully conscious of the scope and weighty significance of the conviction that I should now like to express. For I am convinced that we now find ourselves at an altogether decisive turning point in philosophy, and that we are objectively justified in considering that an end has come to the fruitless conflict of systems. We are already at the present time, in my opinion, in possession of methods which make every such conflict in principle unnecessary. What is now required is their resolute application."

² Hans Reichenbach, *The Rise of Scientific Philosophy* (University of California Press, 1963).

³ Monroe Beardsley, *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism* (New York, 1958).

⁴ Tzvetan Todorov, *Theories of the Symbol*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cornell University Press, 1982).

⁵ Two recent articles by Richard Shusterman ("Analytic Aesthetics, Literary Theory, and Deconstruction," in *The Monist* 69 [1986]; and "Deconstruction and Analysis: Confrontation and Convergence," in *British Journal of Aesthetics* 26, no. 4 [Autumn 1986]), might be thought to make this thesis questionable from the very start. Shusterman there argues, cogently in my view, that the rise of analytic philosophy of art was in part a reaction to the aesthetics of Croce. Two points of clarification must be made, however. When I say that the analytic philosophy of art is a species of the romantic philosophy of art, I mean that analytic philosophers of art have thought about art along basically romantic lines, not that the philosophical style and presuppositions have been romantic. The analytic philosophy of art, like analytic philosophy in general, was always a species of neo-Kantianism. Accordingly, and secondly, the reaction to Croce should not be seen as a rejection of romantic ways of thinking of art but as a neo-Kantian reaction to a species of Hegelianism. (I follow Charles Taylor, in his books on Hegel, in not regarding Hegel as himself a romantic but as reacting to various fundamental themes in romantic ways of thinking generally.) Analytic philosophy rejected Croce's Hegelianism, and should be seen as one of the many moves in the Kant/Hegel polarity; it did not reject Croce's romantic picture of art, though indeed it tended to emphasize different themes from the romantics than Croce emphasized.

⁶ See especially my *Art in Action* (Grand Rapids, 1980), Part I.

⁷ See my "The Work of Making a Work of Music," in Philip Alperson, ed., *What Is Music?: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Music* (New York, 1987).

⁸ See my "Art Texts Autonomous? An Interaction with the Hermeneutic of Paul Ricoeur," in *Aesthetics: Proceedings of the 8th International Wittgenstein Symposium* (Vienna, 1984).

⁹ See my *Works and Worlds of Art* (Oxford University Press, 1980), Part Three, Section X.

¹⁰ Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (University of Minnesota Press, 1983).

¹¹ Jonathan Culler, *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism After Structuralism* (Cornell University Press, 1982).

¹² See, for example, Linda Hutcheon's review of Reiss, Said, and Eagleton, in *Diacritics* (Winter 1983): 32-42.

¹³ See, for example, Edward Said's call, in the introduction of *The World, the Text, and the Critics* (Harvard University Press, 1983) to set texts in the context of their generating social realities.

¹⁴ Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame University Press, 1981).

¹⁵ Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton University Press, 1979), p. 172.

¹⁶ In *Science, Perception and Reality* (New York, 1963).

¹⁷ W. V. O. Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism," in *From a Logical Point of View*, second edition, revised (New York, 1963), p. 20.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹⁹ Richard Shusterman's discussion in "Analytic Aesthetics, Literary Theory and Deconstruction," pp. 22-38, makes clear that the same thing happened in philosophy of art. Croce was the great Hegelian; and the analytic reaction to him was typical in its charge of dreary woolliness. See

especially the articles by Gallie and Passmore in W. Elton, ed., *Aesthetics and Language* (Oxford, 1954). It may be worth repeating that on my interpretation, the reaction to Croce did not represent a rejection of a fundamentally romantic way of looking at art but the rejection of a Hegelian way of articulating the romantic vision, in favor of a neo-Kantian, analytic, way.

²⁰ See A. Plantinga, *The Nature of Necessity* (Oxford University Press, 1974).

²¹ Richard Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism* (University of Minnesota Press, 1982), p. xix. Compare this passage, in *ibid.*, p. xxxix: "So the question of whether such a post-philosophical culture is desirable can also be put as the question: can the ubiquity of language ever really be taken seriously? Can we see ourselves as never encountering reality *except under a chosen description* as, in Nelson Goodman's phrase, making worlds rather than finding them?"

²² *Ibid.*, p. 165-66.

²³ For more detailed discussions of the realist/anti-realist (pragmatist) debate, see my "Realism and anti-Realism: How to Feel at Home in the World" in *Proceedings of the Catholic Philosophical Society* (1985); and "Are Concept Users World-Makers," in James Tomberlin, ed. *Philosophical Perspectives, I: Metaphysics, 1987* (Atascadero, CA, 1987).

²⁴ These ideas about projected worlds and fictional entities are developed in detail in my *Works and Worlds of Art*.