ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: The Dialectical Theory of Art in Kenneth Burke's Essays and Book Reviews of the Early 1920s and its Combination of the Existentialism of Jean-Paul Sartre and the Structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss

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In my dissertation, I argue that a dialectical theory of art is developed by Kenneth Burke in the first half of the 1920s that brings together through its own terms and principles two opposing philosophies that would not come into existence in themselves until the 1940s and 1950s respectively: the existentialism of Jean-Paul Sartre and the structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss. The development of this dialectical theory of art begins in 1920 with several of Burke's book reviews, including his first, "Axiomatics." It then continues with further book reviews and then essays, also including his first, through the middle of 1925, when it is completed by the twin essays "Psychology and Form" and "The Poetic Process." The dialectical theory of art that emerges from this series of works possesses four main parts. These are consciousness, intentionality, action, and true art.

Each part, in turn, consists of two opposing subdivisions that are meant to be combined and transcended. They are, in line with the four parts above, creativity / form, originality / communication, art-emotion / artistry, and art's advancement / beauty. These divisions and subdivisions are highly integrated and function to explain Burke's major position on how true art is produced and why it possesses an absolute value for universal judgment. My goal in establishing this dialectical theory of art is fourfold: to provide a framework for better understanding the early essays and book reviews as a coherent and unified whole, to revalue the 1920s as Burke's first important theoretical period, to provide good reason for bringing existentialism and structuralism forward into studies about Burke, and to offer the dialectical theory itself as the foundation of Burke's later theoretical developments and, hence, as a theory and model that may also be useful for acquiring a fuller understanding of Burke's theories after the 1920s, which span over half-a-century and have been addressed by multiple fields of study.

The Dialectical Theory of Art

in Kenneth Burke's Essays and Book Reviews of the Early 1920s

and its Combination of the

Existentialism of Jean-Paul Sartre and the Structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss

by

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DEDICATION

With the greatest love for my mother and father:

Teammates who shared my education

and made it the best it could be

from kindergarten and my first book report

all the way through to my teaching and this Ph.D.

Also for Panda June:

Who left her marks along this special path.

I will always wish we could start over

and do it all again.

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CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

Overview

In my dissertation, I argue that a dialectical theory of art is developed by Kenneth Burke in the first half of the 1920s that brings together through its own terms and principles two opposing philosophies that would not come into existence in themselves until the 1940s and 1950s respectively: the existentialism of Jean-Paul Sartre and the structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss. The development of this dialectical theory of art begins in 1920 with several of Burke's book reviews, including his first, "Axiomatics." It then continues with further book reviews and then essays, also including his first, through the middle of 1925, when it is completed by the twin essays "Psychology and Form" and "The Poetic Process." The dialectical theory of art that emerges from this series of works possesses four main parts. These are consciousness, intentionality, action, and true art. Each part, in turn, consists of two opposing subdivisions that are meant to be combined and transcended. They are, in line with the four parts above, creativity / form, originality / communication, art-emotion / artistry, and art's advancement / beauty. These divisions and subdivisions are highly integrated and function to explain Burke's major position on how true art is produced and why it possesses an absolute value for universal judgment. My goal in establishing this dialectical theory of art is fourfold: to provide a framework for better understanding the early essays and book reviews as a coherent and unified

whole, to revalue the 1920s as Burke's first important theoretical period, to provide good reason for bringing existentialism and structuralism forward into studies about Burke, and to offer the dialectical theory itself as the foundation of Burke's later theoretical developments and, hence, as a theory and model that may be useful for acquiring a fuller understanding of his theories after the 1920s, which span over half-a-century and have been addressed by multiple fields of study.

The essays and book reviews from the 1920s represent Burke's earliest theoretical pronouncements. This is because he did not begin publishing books on theory until the 1930s. The first was *Counter-Statement* (1930), followed by *Permanence and Change* (1935) and *Attitudes Toward History* (1937). In the 1940s, he added *The Philosophy of Literary Form* (1941) and *A Grammar of Motives* (1945), then, in the next decades, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (1950), *The Rhetoric of Religion* (1961), and *Language as Symbolic Action* (1966). The essays and book reviews from the 1920s are also underrepresented in the scholarship on Burke. This is because the theory books of his receive most of the attention. Selzer, in his biography of Burke, expresses this long standing tendency of Burkean studies: "Burke's tremendous contributions to literary and rhetorical theory after 1930 have for good reason attracted tremendous interest to that part of his life and work, and so scholars have understandably attended mostly to the theoretical and critical works in Burke's canon, most of them published after 1931, rather than to the critical and literary works that Burke produced before that time" (15). There is thus a dividing line drawn between the 1920s and the 1930s. Along this line, or because of it, the expression "early Burke" has come to mean by convention the Burke of the 1930s. A case in point is the article "Pivotal Terms in the Early Works of Kenneth Burke." In this, its authors state,

"We believe it is important to reexamine Burke's early works where his terminological development can be traced" (Blankenship, et al. 1). They then explain further: "By early works we refer to *Counter-Statement* (1931), *Permanence and Change* (1935), *Attitudes Toward History* (1937), and *Philosophy of Literary Form* (1941)" (1). This common approach to Burke's published works makes the 1930s the first significant period of Burke's theoretical development and leaves the 1920s, by default, beyond the far border of any ongoing academic conversations about Burke and theory.

As can be seen from the booklist, Burke had a long and fruitful intellectual career after the 1920s, publishing works for over half-a-decade. Several of these later works were published after he became aware of Sartre and Lévi-Strauss. Burke mentions Sartre and existentialism in several of his works post 1950. He does not mention Lévi-Strauss in any books, but he does mention him in several letters post 1960. Burke's response to Sartre can be summarized as negative. He does not consider his own work as existentialist or recognize any conceptual affinity with Sartre in particular. Burke's thoughts on Lévi-Strauss are neutral. In his letters, he acknowledges a possible similarity between himself and Lévi-Strauss, but also admits he does not know enough about structuralism yet to establish such a connection. A full account of Burke's comments on Sartre and Lévi-Strauss is offered in Appendix D of this dissertation. A shared timeline for Burke, Sartre, and Lévi-Strauss is also offered in Appendix C.

Burkean Studies on Lévi-Strauss and Sartre

Burkean scholarship has not picked up the ball and energetically pursued the possible relationship between Burke and Lévi-Strauss. The sole article to focus on this theme is

Rueckert's 1969 article "Kenneth Burke and Structuralism." In this article, in fact, Rueckert does not use any quotations from Burke or talk about any of his specific works. He does, however, identify in footnotes a handful of articles written by Burke. These articles, according to Rueckert, make Burke a structuralist based on their "systematic methodology" (22) for analyzing the language of texts. The earliest of these articles, "Othello: An Essay to Illustrate Method," was published in 1951. The other articles are "Fact, Inference, and Proof in the Analysis of Literary Symbolism (1954), "Goethe's *Faust*, Part I" (1954), "The Language of Poetry 'Dramatistically' Considered" (1954 and 1955), "Policy Made Personal: Whitman's Verse and Prose-Salient Traits" (1955), and "The First Three Chapters of Genesis" in *The Rhetoric of Religion* (1961).

Rueckert summarizes in his article the systematic methodology that Burke calls "Indexing" (25). It has, says Rueckert, four parts that are "designed to permit one to locate, describe, analyze, and interpret the four kinds of structure one finds in verbal works" (25). Rueckert goes on to identify the four structures: "These are structures of identifications, or what goes with what; structures of opposition and polarization, or what versus what; structures of progression, or what follows what; and structures of transformation, or what becomes what" (25). He also describes what each of these structures involve: "Identifications have to do with identity, with unified selfhood; oppositions have to do with otherness, with alienation, with antagonisms within and without; progressions have to do with time, flux, consciousness and destiny; transformations, the fourth part of the methodology, have to do with change, the will and redemption; with the whole coercive, transformational and creative powers of language" (26).

Years later, Frank Lentricchia's well-known 1983 book *Criticism and Social Change* addresses Burke and his relation to structuralism. It does so only in a small subsection (66-75), but, unlike the Rueckert article, is more concrete in its use of examples and quotations from Burke. Lentricchia's main focus in this subsection is Burke's *A Grammar of Motives* from 1945. This book, claims Lentricchia, "is full-blown structuralism well in advance of the French structuralist movement" (67). It is made structuralist by the theory put forward and applied there by Burke called "dramatism" (67). The theory of dramatism, as Burke describes it in *A Grammar of Motives*, "invites one to consider the matter of motives in a perspective that, being developed from the analysis of drama, treats language and thought primarily as modes of action" (xxii). The five key terms, known as the "pentad," are "Act, Scene, Agent, Agency, and Purpose" (xv). For Burke, "all statements that assign motive can be shown to arise out of them and to terminate in them" (xvi). In Lentricchia's view, "what Burke calls dramatism" is "what we would now, with hindsight, call structuralism" (66-67). It "constitutes the classic austerity of the structuralist ideal," for Lentricchia, because it focuses on "the internal legality of terminological rules that governs globally the production of texts" (69). The quotation that Lentricchia uses to illustrate this focus and its importance to dramatism is Burke's claim that "'We want to inquire into the purely internal relationships which the five terms bear to one another, considering their possibilities of transformation, their range of permutations and combinations—and then to see how these various resources figure in the actual statements about human motives'" (68-69). Lentricchia also adds Burke's overview: "'Strictly speaking we mean by a Grammar of motives [the pentad] a concern with the terms alone, without reference to the ways in

which their potentialities have been or can be utilized in actual statements about motives'" (69).

Burke, according to Lentricchia, goes on in *A Grammar of Motives*, to "indulge" in "the most extreme kind of structuralism" (69). This extremeness arises from Burke's stated intention for the use of the pentad: He wants to create a universal model of motives. In his own words, as quoted by Lentricchia, "'Our work must be synoptic...in the sense that it offers a system of placement, and should enable us, by the systematic manipulation of terms, to 'generate,' or 'anticipate' the various classes of motivational theory'" (69). For Lentricchia, such a synoptic system as described by Burke "violently synchronizes the historical process" (69). As such, by making this system his goal, Burke expresses an "extreme kind of structuralism" by promoting "a contempt for cultural and historic differences and particularities and changes" (69).

In this small subsection of *Criticism and Social Change*, Lentricchia, additionally addresses Burke's relation to poststructuralism. His main focus for this discussion is also *A Grammar of Motives*. He claims that this book has a double identity. It is structuralist based on Burke's "anticipation of Lévi-Strauss and company" and it is also poststructuralist based on the way Burke "forecasts the critique of structuralism mounted in the work of [Michel] Foucault and [Jacques] Derrida" (67). This double identity leads Lentricchia to refrain from calling Burke a structuralist. It also keeps him from simply using the label poststructuralist. Instead of either of these terms, Lentricchia proposes a hybrid term of his own design. He settles on identifying Burke as a "'critical structuralist'" (71). This title is just the right fit to Lentricchia because it "indicates not only his [Burke's] anticipation of structuralism but also its most recent critique" (71).

Lentricchia, in this subsection, also traces Burke's structuralist side back to the book immediately before *A Grammar of Motives*. "In a less systematic form," he says, "Burke's involvement with a structuralist method dates from the title essay of *The Philosophy of Literary Form*" (67). This long 137-page essay along with the book, which is composed of essays and reviews published by Burke between 1930 and 1940, was published in 1941. Lentricchia's example of the essay's structuralist method is its "exemplary analysis of the binary coordinates of Clifford Odets's play *Golden Boy*" (67). As Lentricchia describes it, the analysis shows the play "to be an expression of a binary code, a productive mechanism, or model of antithetical values behind the actual discourse of the play" (67). He also reports that "at a certain level of analysis, this binary code is even said [by Burke] to be an expression of the 'psychic economy' of Odets's mind—an economy that is in turn expressive of a larger cultural economy" (67).

"The Philosophy of Literary Form" is structuralist with regard to its theory as well as its method for Lentricchia. Burke, in the essay, calls his theory "a *theory of drama*" (103). The idea behind this theory is to apply the language of dramatic criticism to real life. As Burke puts it, "We propose to take *ritual drama* as the Ur-form, the 'hub,' with all other aspects of *human* action treated as spokes radiating from this hub" (103). The number of dramatic terms involved is smaller than the number for the pentad of dramatism. Burke identifies two: "situations and acts" (103). The significance, for Lentricchia, however, is the same as for the pentad: Burke adopts a structuralist focus that emphasizes the internal relations of his terms. The evidence or illustration Lentricchia offers is Burke's own words from the essay: "We are proposing it [ritual drama] as a *calculus*—a vocabulary, or set of co-ordinates that serves best for the

integration of all phenomena studied by the social sciences" (67).

Lentricchia, in this same subsection, also pushes Burke's structuralism back even further in time. This occurs in a single sentence. Lentricchia writes that "The statement of intention in the *Grammar* [*of Motives*] is structuralist through and through and a summation of where he has been as a thinker since [the 1931] *Counter-Statement*" (68). Lentricchia does not say anything more here about *Counter-Statement* nor does he address the ten years of reviews and essays during the 1920s that preceded *Counter-Statement*. It would appear, based on this sentence, however, that Lentricchia does not consider these earliest works of Burke to express or anticipate Lévi-Strauss and his structuralism. He draws the structuralist borderline at *Counter-Statement* and the start of the third decade.

Burke's structuralism as identified by Lentricchia and asserted earlier by Rueckert and even alluded to by Burke in his letters has not been further developed by Burkean scholarship, nor extended to the early book reviews and essays. These scholars have, though, extensively developed Burke's relation to poststructuralism and particular poststructuralists. Some of the works whose titles clearly emphasize this leap over Lévi-Strauss and his period of structuralism are "Writing as the Accomplice of Language: Kenneth Burke and Poststructuralism," "Under the Sign of (An)Nihilation: Burke in the Age of Nuclear Destruction and Critical Deconstruction," "Kenneth Burke and Roland Barthes: Literature, Language, and Society," "Symbolic Action and Discourse: The Convergent / Divergent Views of Kenneth Burke and Michel Foucault," and "Kenneth Burke and Jacques Derrida."

Comparisons between Sartre and Burke have fared even worse than those between

Lévi-Strauss and Burke when it comes to Burkean studies. It seems as if everyone has accepted Burke's own assessment that there is no connection between himself and Sartre. In fact, not until 1971 did an article make positive connections between Burke and Sartre, several years after Rueckert's "Burke and Structuralism." The article is "The Rhetorical Implications of the Axiology of Jean-Paul Sartre," by Karlyn Kohrs Campbell. She does not focus on Sartre and Burke as Rueckert had done with Lévi-Strauss and Burke. Campbell's main concern is Sartre or, more specifically, and as the title awkwardly suggests, to lay out the theory of rhetoric that she believes is implicitly expressed through the existentialism of Sartre. In her view, she will be the first to approach Sartre as a rhetorician. As such, her own rhetorical strategy for making her work understandable to her audience of rhetoricians is to explain Sartre and his rhetorical theory (as she sees it) "with concepts developed by contemporary rhetorical theorists" (156). The number of contemporary rhetorical theorists she employs is about one dozen and this is where Burke comes in: he is one of those theorists.

Campbell, however, uses Burke frequently to make Sartre and the rhetorical implications of his work less "alien" (155) and more familiar. The first time is within the context of dialectics. For Campbell, Sartre is a "dialectician" (156) in the same sense as Burke. As she puts it, "Like Burke,[...]Sartre distinguishes between the scenic order of motion, the providence of science, and human action, the providence of the dialectic" (156). The second time Campbell uses Burke concerns "the agency of language" (159). For her, Sartre's highest form of action (authenticity in his terms) requires an understanding of language's power. As she goes on to explain, "With Burke, he [Sartre] is committed to the notion that [and here she quotes from Burke using his italics]

'*consciousness of linguistic action generally*, is needed if men are to temper the absurd ambitions that have their source in faulty terminologies'" (159).

Campbell closes her article by introducing the kind of rhetorical criticism she believes would follow from Sartre's existentialism. She identifies this as a "dialectical system of rhetorical criticism" and offers "four basic characteristics" (159). Three of these characteristics she connects to Burke. The first characteristic of the dialectical criticism is that it "interprets the context and audience broadly in order to view discourses as part of an ongoing cultural dialogue influenced by persuasive forces which include other discourses, persistent social conflicts, and cultural values" (159). One example of this interpretation is offered from Burke. According to Campbell, "It appears in its most generalized form in *The Rhetoric of Religion* [1961] in which Burke argues that the terminology and symbolic strategies of theology form a typology for the study of symbolic action generally" (159-160).

The second characteristic is that dialectical criticism "seeks to discover" the "fundamental postulates about the nature of man, truth, and society" that are presupposed by or run implicitly below "what is ordinarily called persuasion or argumentation" (160). Again, Campbell turns to Burke for one example. According to her, "This form of criticism is illustrated by Burke's analysis of *Mein Kampf* [in his famous 1939 essay "The Rhetoric of Hitler's Battle"] as a bastardization of religious thought" (160). The third characteristic of dialectical criticism is when its practitioner "focuses on all forms of symbolic strategizing—definition, association, labelling, allusion, expectations created by form, repetition, etc., including connections which are made logically" (160). Burke is doing just this, says Campbell, when he "reveal[s] the unstated but implied propositions

associated with ‘titles’ or ‘epithets’” (160) in *A Grammar of Motives*.

The positive connection between Sartre and Burke introduced by Campbell as part of her article has yet to be singled out and further developed by Burkean studies. There still does not exist an article or book that focuses exclusively on Burke and Sartre. Some near misses, however, have been published. There are a few articles on Burke and philosophers who are considered pre or proto existentialists. These articles include “Burke and Nietzsche” and “Burke Contra Kierkegaard: Kenneth Burke’s Dialectic via Reading Søren Kierkegaard.” There is also a 1987 book on Burke and the main twentieth century German existentialist, whose masterwork Sein *und Zeit* (*Being and Time*) was first published in 1927: *Kenneth Burke and Martin Heidegger, With a Note Against Deconstruction*.

Kenneth Burke in Greenwich Village

As stated at the start, the 1920s have received the least attention in studies concerned with Burke and theory. Jack Selzer, in *Kenneth Burke in Greenwich Village* (1986), the first volume of his biography of Burke, makes this same point about both Burke’s theory and fiction. He tells his readers that “Burke’s tremendous contributions to literary and rhetorical theory after 1930 have for good reason attracted tremendous interest to that part of his life and work, and so scholars have understandably attended mostly to theoretical and critical works in Burke’s canon, most of them published after 1931, rather than to the critical and literary works that Burke produced before that time” (15). In my opinion, *Kenneth Burke in Greenwich Village* is the best counter to date of this deflection by Burkean studies from the 1920s. The volume achieves this by specifically offering, in

Selzer's words, a "more-or-less-linear narrative about Kenneth Burke's activities in the period from 1915 (when, fresh from high school, he arrived in the New York City area) to 1931, when he placed for publication his critical and theoretical book *Counter-Statement* and his experimental novel *Towards a Better Life*" (xvii). The effect of this alternative focus is that the invisible decade of the 1920s and its ghost-like works are made more visible to the scholarly eye. These works include Burke's early poetry, short fiction, *and* his literary reviews and essays.

For Selzer, Burke spoke as a modernist throughout the 1920s. This meant that, like those eclectic artists in all the mediums, his goal was to redefine art. The modernists did not, however, agree on a single version of the new modern art. For this reason, Selzer takes the position that it "seems more fitting to think not so much of Modernism but of modernisms--of a cultural development diverse and vital enough, even before 1930, to accommodate all sorts of difference" (3). One of these several modernisms was aestheticism. The core of this approach was a complete focus on the form within an artwork. This was Burke's own favored focus and his language. As Selzer expresses it, Burke was "committed above all in the first years of the 1920s to a rather pure aestheticism" (118), which placed him "in the tradition of [Gustave] Flaubert, Rémy de Gourmont, and the French Symbolists" (19). Like them, "he pledged himself to the literary avant-garde, to the invention of novel forms, and to the appreciation of form" (19).

The main publication to which Burke was personally and professionally connected during the 1920s was *The Dial* of Scofield Thayer and Sibley Watson. They had bought the political and literary publication soon after it had moved from Chicago to New York

City. The two immediately set a new narrower philosophic course for the works they published within its pages. As Selzer describes the result: "The very first issue of the new *Dial* […] had changed, fundamentally and famously, into a magnificently produced, far less political monthly, one committed to the cause of modern art and literature" (116). This specific "cause" was aestheticism. The focus of *The Dial* going forward was on the internal form of an artwork. Selzer quotes from Nicolas Joost's book on *The Dial* to emphasize the magazine's aestheticism: "'What *The Dial* sought [for itself and art] was aesthetic perfection, perfection in form, and it expressly decried a preoccupation with politics and social reform'" (118). Its only politics was the artistic politics of "art-for-art's sake" (5).

Burke and *The Dial* began the 1920s on the same page. They were on the same page philosophically in that they both focused on form along the lines of aestheticism. And, they were on the same page literally in that *The Dial* began to publish works by Burke during its initial year of rebirth under Scofield and Thayer in 1920. The first of his works it published was the short story "Mrs. Maecenas" (March 1920), which was only his fourth story to appear in print. In April, *The Dial* also published Burke's first book review "Axiomatics." In February of 1921, it added his first essay "Approaches to Rémy de Gourmont." By July of 1929, when *The Dial* closed, it had gone on to publish more of Burke's essays and book reviews than any other single publication during the 1920s. As Burke saw it, looking back from 1958 in a letter quoted by Selzer, "'I date my beginnings, decidedly, from the time when *The Dial* took my story 'Mrs. Maecenas' and from the several eventful years of my association with the magazine thereafter'" (115). Those "eventful years" went beyond Burke only being a contributing author. Burke also worked

at *The Dial* both unofficially and officially. His official service included multiple stints between the middle of 1922 and the middle of 1927 as assistant editor and acting managing editor.

Selzer accordingly gives special attention to *The Dial* and, as such, addresses numerous essays and reviews by Burke that it published. These articles, he argues, promoted, like *The Dial* as a whole, the aesthetic doctrine of the primacy of internal form. The first two essays Burke placed in *The Dial* are examples of this match. Both works, Selzer points out, celebrate aesthetes. Gourmont is the aesthete in the February 1921 "Approaches to Rémy de Gourmont"; Flaubert is the aesthete in the February 1922 "The Correspondence of Flaubert." As Selzer expresses it, "both of [these] artists portrayed by Burke "displayed a decided attraction for art for art's sake that was most congenial to *The Dial*" (119). Burke's reviews also offer examples. "The Critic of Dostoevsky" (1922), is, says Selzer, "another articulation of Burke's aestheticism, of his preference for formal achievement over realistic content" (120). An additional instance is "Delight and Tears" from 1924. This review, Selzer states, "underscores the value Burke placed on aesthetic innovation and experimentation" (123). Burke and *The Dial* were of one mind artistically and reinforced each other's enthusiasm for aestheticism when the two began the decade.

As the 1920s progressed, however, Selzer argues that Burke starts to philosophically separate himself from the aesthetic party line of *The Dial*. The two articles upon which he bases his claim are "Psychology of Form," which was published in *The Dial* in 1925, and "The Poetic Process," which was published the same year in *The Guardian*. In these key essays, according to Selzer, Burke "begin[s] to offer an alternative to pure aestheticism and to the doctrine of the autonomy of art" (132). Burke does this by

widening his intellectual focus from strictly the form within the work of art to form as it also exists and operates within the human mind. For Selzer, by adding this psychological dimension to his aestheticism, Burke was beginning "to forge his own independent direction in criticism" (132) and to offer something distinctly more than the standard and static aestheticism represented so far by *The Dial*. Selzer also judges these two essays as "Burke's most mature and independent contributions to the modernist conversation that he would offer before the Great Depression settled in" (136) during the 1930s. From these, Selzer moves directly on to the 1930s and Burke's first book of theory *Counter-Statement*.

The Freedom of Consciousness and the Structuring of the Unconscious

The main text of Sartre's existentialism is *L'Être et le Néant*, which was published in 1943 and translated into English as *Being and Nothingness* in 1956. It, along with Sartre's other works of this period, such as the essay *L'Existentialisme est un humanisme* (1946, translated into English as *Existentialism* in 1947) and the novel *La Nausée* (1949, translated as *Nausea* in 1965), led existentialism to the forefront of French philosophy immediately after World War II. A major concept of these works, and one of the defining concepts of Sartre's existentialism, is freedom. For him, as he famously phrases it in *Existentialism*, "man is condemned to be free" (25).

One way to understand freedom in Sartre's existentialism is to follow his investigation and begin with action. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre divides action by individuals into two required elements: withdrawal and intentionality. Of the two elements, withdrawal is primary and allows for intentionality. The definition of action can thus be

expressed by this formula: action equals withdrawal plus intentionality. Sartre uses the term "withdraw" to mean consciousness disengaging or separating itself from a current situation or reality that confronts it so that it can conceive of another situation in its place which does not yet exist. And, Sartre uses the term "intentionality" to mean the conscious aim or project of making present in the world the new situation conceived of through withdrawal. The example to which Sartre applies this definition is Constantine "creating a new residence [city] for emperors in the Orient" (560). As Sartre explains it, "The *intention* of providing a rival [city] to Rome can come to Constantine only through the apprehension of an objective lack: Rome lacks a counterweight; to this still profoundly pagan city ought to be opposed a Christian city which at this moment *is missing*" (560). This Christian city as "objective lack" or "*négatité*" (560), as Sartre also calls the non-real, emerges from Constantine's withdrawal from the given built world and then becomes the object that Constantine intends to build in the world and succeeds in doing by acting to found the great city of Constantinople. Sartre goes on to translate this and all actions so considered into the language of ontology: "from the moment of the first conception of the act, consciousness has been able to withdraw itself from the full world of which it is conscious and leave the level of being in order frankly to approach that of non-being" (560).

Sartre flows from action into his initial definition of freedom in *Being and Nothingness*. For him, freedom is "the first condition of action" (559). He means by this that humans must be free in order to withdraw from being, conceive of an objective lack in the realm of non-being, and make the realization of that lack their intended project. Sartre argues it this way: "as soon as one attributes to consciousness this negative power

with respect to the world and itself, as soon as the nihilation forms an integral part of the *positing* of an end, we must recognize that the indispensable and foundational condition of all action is the freedom of the acting being" (563). This freedom, Sartre continues, is inseparable or undistinguishable from the individual. It "is not," he says, "a quality added on or a *property* of my nature" (566). Instead, freedom "is very exactly the stuff of my being" (566). Freedom and being are one; they are an identity. To be, is to be free. Sartre is thus led to declare, "I am condemned to be free" (567). This sentence emphasizes for him that "no limits to my freedom can be found except freedom itself or, if you prefer, that we are not free to cease being free" (567).

Structuralism overtook existentialism at the forefront of philosophy in France in the late 1950s and remained so positioned until it was superseded in the 1960s by poststructuralism. The main text of Lévi-Strauss' structuralism is *Anthropologie structurale* (1958, translated into English as *Structural Anthropology* in 1963). He assembled for this collection fifteen of his previously published articles and papers and added two new articles. One included work is considered Lévi-Strauss' first structuralist work: the 1945 article "*L'Analyse structurale en linguistique et an anthropologie*."

A major concept upon which Lévi-Strauss grounds his structuralism is the structuring unconscious. One way to understand the core role and high status of the unconscious in Lévi-Strauss' structuralism is to begin with words or language, which is where Lévi-Strauss says he began. He traces the origin of his structural anthropology back to the development of structural linguistics. In the 1945 article "Structural Analysis in Linguistics and Anthropology," Lévi-Strauss identifies "the illustrious founder of structural linguistics" as "N. Troubetzkoy" (33). The structural linguistics that

Troubetzkoy put forward in 1933 has four main characteristics based on Lévi-Strauss' discussion: it breaks words down into their smallest units of meaning (called phonemes), it determines the meaning of each phoneme based on its relation to other phonemes with a larger system of phonemes, it discovers laws that structure the system of phonemes, and it locates the origin and application of those laws in the human mind at the unconscious level. For the structural linguist, these laws of the unconscious are the same for everyone. To be a human, is to structure language according to these laws of which one is unaware. Lévi-Strauss thus says, "The transition from conscious [as focused on by pre-structural linguistics] to unconscious is associated with progression from the specific toward the general" ("History and Anthropology" 20-21). The structural linguist, in other words, is discovering universal laws that apply to all languages. Individual languages that seemed unrelated and incomparable to one another are now related and comparable. They share the same law of the unconscious. These laws are fixed and even as a specific language changes over time, its underlying law of relations will remain the same.

Lévi-Strauss saw his social scientific goal as applying this method of structural linguistics to his field of anthropology or, as it was called in France, ethnography. This means that he treats all institutions of society (such as kinship and myths) the same way that language was treated by the structural linguist. Lévi-Strauss' structural anthropology thus proceeds by breaking down a social institution into its smallest or most elementary unit of meaning (above the level of phoneme), determining the meaning of each elementary unit based on its relation to other units within a larger system of those units, discovering the laws of those relations, and, finally and most importantly, locating the origin and application of those laws in the human unconscious. For Lévi-Strauss, then,

the unconscious does not only structure all languages. It also structures all social institutions and their specific contents. Moreover, like in the case of language, these laws are universal, making individual institutions that appear unrelated, expressions of the same unconscious system. Lévi-Strauss explains his structuralist position this way:

> If, as we believe to be the case, the unconscious activity of the mind consists in imposing forms upon content, and if these forms are fundamentally the same for all minds--ancient and modern, primitive and civilized (as the study of the symbolic function, expressed in language, so strikingly indicates)--it is necessary and sufficient to grasp the unconscious structure underlying each institution and each custom, in order to obtain a principle of interpretation valid for other institutions and other customs, provided of course that the analysis is carried far enough.
>
> "History and Anthropology" 21

For Lévi-Strauss, "far enough" means "deep enough" ("Language and the Analysis of Social Laws" 62). The anthropologist must go below the surface meanings of the institutions being studied. By so doing, the anthropologist will reach a "level" where it is "possible to cross from one [institution] to the other" or, as he also words it, where it is possible "to express the specific structure of each in terms of a sort of general language, valid for each system separately and for all of them taken together" ("Language and the Analysis of Social Laws" 62). This language can be thought of as the language or grammar of the unconscious.

In the following chapters, Burke's early essays and book reviews are interpreted in terms of these philosophies of Sartre and Lévi-Strauss. Sartre's concept of freedom and Lévi-Strauss' concept of structure compose the fundamental poles of the dialectical theory of art and are represented by Burke's concepts of creativity and form. Thus, it is by bringing creativity and form together that Burke also brings together the opposing philosophies of existentialism and structuralism. The essays and book reviews are

addressed in the chapters in the chronological order of their original date of publication, with two exceptions at the end. In this sequence, the dialectical theory of art can ideally be appreciated and understood both in terms of its contextual development and its full unified form as a systematic theory.

CHAPTER TWO:

1920 and 1921

The "Law" of Art

"Axiomatics" is Burke's first published book review, appearing in the April 1920 edition of *The Dial*. Two contraries or counter-poles are identifiable in the review with regard to artistic creativity. One of the poles is originality and the other pole is axiomatics or, in other words, the absence of originality in favor of following axioms. The review is primarily a critique of the absence of originality as it applies to those artists whom Burke labels, using the multiple hyphens that will become typical of existentialism, "immersed-in-lifers" (497) and to the contemporary state of the novel in his day. The description of the immersed-in-lifers is interestingly in line with Sartre's account of non-action in *Being and Nothingness*. The overview of the current novels is also in accord with how Sartre frames non-action.

The official subject of the review, as indicated below its title in *The Dial*, is John Cournos and his new novel *The Mask*. Burke, however, begins what will become typical of his reviews. He enlarges his critique beyond the artist and book at hand. He, in this case, applies his critique to all artists who are immersed-in-lifers and the works they produce. Burke initiates this shift from specific artist to generic type or class of artists in his very first statement about Cournos. "Mr. Cournos," he tells the reader, "is very seriously immersed in the moods of life" (496). The meaning of this characterization to

Burke is that Cournos valorizes emotions ("the moods") in both the process and the product of his art. He points this out using *The Mask*. As he reads it, the novel is "the redoing of a vivid personal experience" and is written "with all the fervor of a Dostoevsky," which involves "manipulating throbbing realities" (496).

Burke follows this characterization of Cournos with an explanation of why being immersed in the moods of life is inherently negative for any artist and for art as a whole. Immersion is negative because it prevents or deflects an artist from reflecting on the process and product of art. As Burke expresses it, in instances of immersion, "The violent surge of things to be said pushes one recklessly on, so that he [the artist] has no time for questioning his aesthetics" (497). The result is that the artist does not evolve art through his or her work. There is no originality. Art is axiomatic instead of creative because the artist unthinkingly accepts the status quo. "Standards," reports Burke, "have to be taken for granted" (497). And, then, speaking metaphorically, he adds, "if the house [work of art] is to be erected hastily [without reflection], we [the immersed artists] must grab the hammer and nails [techniques and themes] nearest at hand" (497). The houses or works built in this fashion are going to turn out the same as the houses or works that preceded them and those that are currently being erected all around them.

Sartre also speaks of immersion. In his 1943 discussion in *Being and Nothingness* of action, he contrasts immersion to withdrawal. For Sartre, as already mentioned in the introduction, withdrawal is the first step for action. A person withdraws from the world and by so doing conceives of a lack in the world. The person then intends to make this lack real and thereby acts to change the world. The opposite of this withdrawal is referred to by Sartre as being "immersed in the historical situation" (561). In these cases

of immersion, the person remains at the level of being and does not approach non-being. As such, the person does not conceive of any lack. To this person, their world is whole or full. There is nothing to add. The person accepts the world as the only world and, consequently, does not originate any intention of acting to change it or themselves. The examples Sartre uses in his short discussion on immersion involve workers. These workers are all situated within economic and political situations that exploit them. There, each worker's condition is one of suffering. The worker, however, does not withdraw from this historical situation in spite of its harshness on workers as a class. Instead, the worker remains immersed and only "apprehends it [the situation] in its plentitude of being" (561). This makes it impossible for the worker "to conceive of a social state in which these sufferings would not exist" or "even imagine that he can exist in it [the given state] otherwise" (561). In the worker's mind, there are no alternatives for himself or the world. "Consequently," says Sartre, "*he does not act*" (561). The worker accepts his condition as "*natural*" (561): "To suffer and to be are one and the same for him" (562).

Burke's early account of non-action in "Axiomatics" is thus very much in agreement with Sartre's existential explanation of non-action. This close relationship can be seen well by placing the artist who is an "immersed-in-lifer" next to the worker who is "immersed in the historical situation." The artist does not withdraw from his own emotions or the emotionalism valorized by the institution of art, just as the worker does not withdraw from his suffering or the political and economic institutions that cause that suffering. Instead, the artist remains at the level of being and does not approach non-being, just as the worker remains at the level of being and does not approach non-being. The artist, as a result, does not conceive of any lack. There is nothing missing or needing

to be made real with regard to creating art or the institution of art. The worker is similarly prevented from conceiving of a lack. There is nothing missing or wrong with regard to working or the institutions of work. The artist has no motivation and accompanying intention to act without a lack, just as the worker has no motivation and matching intention to act without a lack. The consequence for the artist is identical to the outcome for the worker: no action and no change. The artist reproduces the artist and the art expected by the existing institution of art through his creations. And, the worker reproduces the worker and work expected by the existing institutions of politics and economy through his labor.

Burke ends "Axiomatics" with a separate section that is set off from the preceding text with a skip of the line. In this section, Burke addresses the current state of the novel as a whole. His early presentation is easily framed or schematized in terms of Sartre's account of non-action. The contemporary novelists are immersed in their historical situation with regard to art. They recognize only the given dominant practices of how to write a novel and what form to give the novel. Burke expresses this current state of affairs when he says that the novel "has become astonishingly autocratic" and that even "Keen minds have accepted it as naively as the infallibility of a pope" (498). The novelists of his day are thus clearly not acting to evolve art through the novel. They are merely going through the expected or traditional motions and reproducing the novelist and novel as stipulated by the institution of art and its axioms. Burke describes this ritualization of creativity: "The French Academy goes on with its sterile coronations, and across the Channel ten (10) established reputations still heave their annual mountain" (498). In this account of Burke's, the novel is far away from originality and closer to the

axiomatic pole of artistic creativity.

For Burke, these novelists are preventing art from evolving just when it very much needs to evolve. The motivation or justification for this change is a lack. In Burke's view, there is a form of the novel or some form beyond the novel itself that is missing from the current state of art. As he puts it, "The novel is too rigid a form to express an age like the present" (498). He then projects an approximation of the form that artists should attempt to bring into existence through their work: "We need something that admits easily of interruption, digression, and the mounting of hippogriffs" (498-499). This is a call to artists for originality and action to evolve art. It runs counter to the current non-action of art. There are, however, a few artists who count as exceptions. Burke offers a list: "Huysmans, Gide, de Gourmont, Joyce, Lewis—I can think of no others who have showed any interest in even *stretching* the novel, unless Romains be added for safety's sake" (498).

Burke does not address any of these artists of action. The reader is left to reason that they have separated themselves from the current state of art and, thinking back to the first part of the review, are not immersed-in-lifers. The list, however, consists of many of Burke's favorite artists and he will go on to make several the subject of individual essays that will soon be published. In fact, de Gourmont is the subject of his first essay. In it, Burke examines de Gourmont in regard to what it means to be an artist who creates works that are original and evolve art.

The Transitional Space Between

In "Axiomatics," there are two clearly distinct poles with regard to creativity. There is

originality, which Burke prefers for artists, and there is axiomatics or the production of art that is akin to the art that already exists. In Burke's third book review, "A Transitional Novel," these two counterpoles are made into the endpoints of a continuum. This is done by Burke addressing a space between originality and axiomatics. The space can be called, drawing on the title of the review, the transitional space. The creativity continuum so formed can be drawn along this line:

<---------->
Axiomatic Art Transitional Art Original Art

Figure 1. Creativity Continuum.

To this continuum can be added the immersed-in-lifers and Burke's artists of change from "Axiomatics":

<---------->
Axiomatic Art Transitional Art Original Art

Immersed-in lifers Huysmans, Gide, de Gourmont
Joyce, Lewis, and Romains

Figure 2. Creativity Continuum Plus Artists.

The Sartrean concepts of action and non-action can be added too from "Axiomatics":

<---------->
Axiomatic Art Transitional Art Original Art

Immersed-in-lifers Huysmans, Gide, de Gourmont
Joyce, Lewis, and Romains

Non-action Action

Figure 3. Creativity Continuum Plus Non-Action / Action.

The novel that Burke is reviewing and that fits into and describes the transitional space on the continuum is *The Dark Mother* by Waldo Frank. This work, says Burke, "is decidedly a transitional novel" (6). He means by this that "it is neither the [a] novel, nor something distinct from the novel" (6). As such, *The Dark Mother* is located between axiomatic and originality. It represents a movement in the right direction according to Burke's creativity compass. It is an attempt by Frank to move away from axiomatics and to evolve the novel and art into something new and original. As Burke puts it, "Waldo Frank is *en route* for something or other" (50). Unfortunately, he does not get there this time with this book. Frank remains in the middle, unable to make the full evolutionary leap. In Burke's estimation, "Judged as a novel it does not satisfy; and there is nothing else to judge it by" (6).

The creation of original works that can make such a huge leap, as Burke measures it, is a major artistic challenge. Frank, for example, cannot overcome the use of cliché in his novel. "At present," says Burke, "his mind is still cluttered up with innumerable *clichés*, which may be true or may be false, but are *clichés* all the same" (6). To use an old expression, originality is easier said than done. Or, as Burke phrases it: "Of course, anyone can see beyond the *cliché*. The difficulty is to *produce* beyond the *cliché*" (6). Thus, intention is not sufficient for one's actions to yield successful results. One can, as Burke shows with Frank, act to evolve art without being able to evolve art.

The Creativity Continuum can now be further refined in terms of Frank, results from action, and the degrees of difficulty:

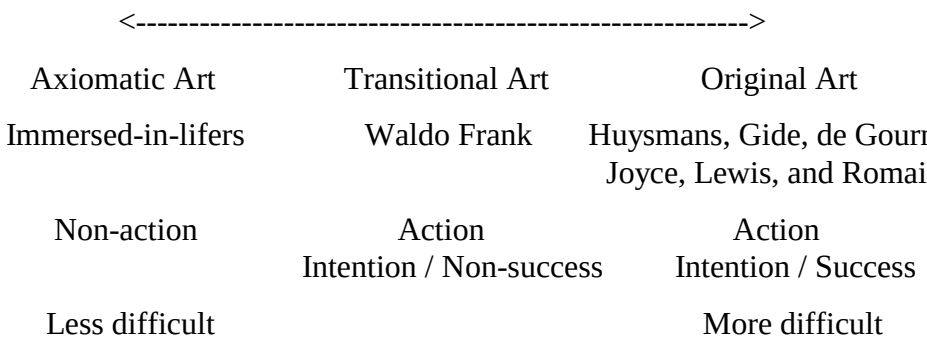

Figure 4. Creativity Continuum Plus Results and Difficulty.

The Originality of de Gourmont

In "Axiomatics," Burke identified a handful of artists who were acting to evolve art through their original works. One of those rare and special artists is the featured subject and star of Burke's first published essay "Approaches to Rémy de Gourmont." Appearing in the February 1921 edition of *The Dial*, this portrait of de Gourmont further develops Burke's theory of originality. It does so by adding the concept of freedom, raising the issue of communication, and providing examples of how an artist separates from the world and its traditional meanings. The result is that the Original Art endpoint on the Creativity Continuum can be given a continuum of its own.

Burke starts with freedom. His aim for the opening of the essay, as he tells his readers, "is simply to emphasize the free basis on which de Gourmont began his writing, and what opportunities it might offer to an active [note the characteristic of action] mentality" (126-127). This freedom is inspired and represented by Stéphane Mallarmé and his theory of art. Burke formulates Mallarmé's theory as a combination of symbolism and idealism, which together, add up to an extreme individualism or, what

Burke refers to as "the reduction to absurdity of individualism in art" (125). It is extreme or absurd in Burke's calculation because the works it produces consist of a primary symbolism that only the creating artist can understand. Burke points to Mallarmé as the prime example: "there are certain poems of Mallarmé which we can only spy at quizzically, as one might look through a 'scope at Venus under favorable conditions" (125). These poems are art for only one person. Mallarmé is speaking in "his own tongue" (125). This is acceptable to Mallarmé, and those "young rebels" (126) who follow him, because his theory of art does not recognize communication as a goal for a work of art. In fact, his theory does not recognize art as the means for any end. Art is an end in itself. All that matters is the existence of the work and its own orbit. To be, for him, is sufficient justification for a work of art. Burke identifies this approach as "*L'art-pour-l'art*" or, in English, "Art for Art's Sake" (126).

Mallarmé is credited by de Gourmont with changing the course of his writing career. This change occurred in the late 1880s when de Gourmont began reading through *La Vogue* by Mallarmé. As relayed by Glenn Burne in his biography of de Gourmont, de Gourmont "was immediately captivated by what he described as a new 'aesthetic tremor' and an exquisite impression of novelty [in *La Vogue*] which left him filled with disgust for what he had previously written. In less than an hour, he tells us, his literary orientation was radically modified" (12). De Gourmont's new direction was away from the traditional art theories of his day and, as such, also away from acceptability. Mallarmé was viewed negatively as a renegade artist. His "fever of innovation," reports Burke in his essay, "was decried by the papas of the university under the name of decadence" (126). As such, by following Mallarmé, de Gourmont was knowingly placing

himself outside the boundaries of acceptable art. He was becoming, by their standards or theory, a "decadent" (126).

This extreme individualism is the "free basis upon which de Gourmont began his writing" (126-127). "It resulted," according to Burke, "in his [de Gourmont] being at liberty to develop his medium as he saw fit" (127). De Gourmont could, like Mallarmé, create works so freely that only he could understand their meanings. The language he spoke could justifiably go so far as to form his own private language. Literally, anything was possible as a so-called decadent. De Gourmont, however, did not follow Mallarmé to that extreme in Burke's view. Instead, de Gourmont limited his artistic freedom or, as Burke says, "checked the absurdity" (127) of pure individualism. The counterweight was communication. For Burke, "the unconscious intention behind his work [was] the desire to communicate" (127). Burke does not go into any detail about either "unconscious intention" or "communication." He does, however, identify "the result" of adding communication to freedom: "we have from de Gourmont some forty volumes of graceful and intelligent writing in a multitude of mediums" (127).

The distinction Burke makes here between Mallarmé and de Gourmont allows a continuum to be drawn just for originality. At one end are works that do not balance freedom with communication. They express total liberty and the consequential social incomprehensibility that is absurd. Mallarmé and his theory lead in this direction. At the opposite and preferred end are works that do balance freedom with communication. They possess "grace" and "intelligent writing." De Gourmont and his limited version of Mallarmé and his theory lead in this direction. The Originality Continuum can be pictured along this line:

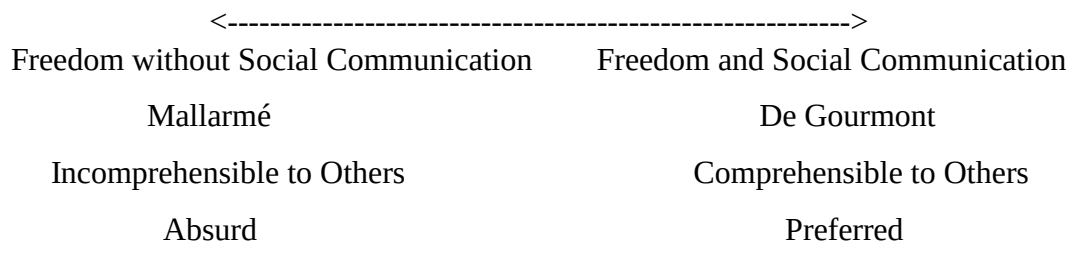

Figure 5. Originality Continuum.

Sartre, as discussed in the introduction, makes freedom the basis for action. In *Being and Nothingness*, for example, he asserts the "fundamental condition of all action is the freedom of the acting being" (563). Burke, in "Approaches to Rémy de Gourmont," is similarly and years earlier making freedom the basis of artistic action. It is, he says, "the free basis" (126) expressed in Mallarmé and upon which de Gourmont begins his writing. It offers both artists the "liberty" (127) to act to evolve art into any form they choose through their works. It also distinguishes both Mallarmé and de Gourmont and all decadent artists from the mainstream artists who do not act to evolve art but merely reproduce the status quo and uphold, in Burke's words, "the standard sterility of the Académie" (126).

In "Axiomatics," Burke spoke negatively about those artists he called "immersed-in-lifers" (497). He does not use the term in "Approaches to Rémy de Gourmont," but his account of de Gourmont makes it clear that de Gourmont is not, like the immersed-in-lifers, led by emotion. His philosophy on emotion, as Burke emphasizes, prevents emotion from taking over. De Gourmont practices and values detachment. Burke explains this using de Gourmont's own words on the subject: "'Detachment is the most aristocratic of all aristocratic attitudes... We should take part in the game, and with

pleasure, but not with passion. Passion disqualifies; it is proof of an elementary organization, without serious co-ordination'" (136). The main negative affect of the emotional approach for artists was, according to Burke, the acceptance of art's traditional axioms at face value. As he stated in "Axiomatics," "The violent surge of things to be said pushes one [the artist] recklessly on, so that he has no time for questioning his aesthetics" (497). De Gourmont is just the opposite of this in Burke's portrait of him. He is both a questioner and a rejecter of art's axioms. None were automatically accepted. Burke makes this clear in the essay, writing that "de Gourmont has little care for the profoundest aesthetic principle of modern democratic art" (135).

De Gourmont's philosophy of detachment was very successful. For most of his life, in Burke's estimation, "there was no element of social experience strong enough to disturb him with its prejudices" (127). Near the end of his life, however, a powerful exception irrupted. De Gourmont was not able to detach himself from the intense passion created by World War I. At that moment in time, Burke sadly reports, "de Gourmont had at last slipped against life, and had to suffer the overbalancing of his intellect by his emotions" (136). These emotions pushed him to write along the same one-track lines as everyone else in his native France who feared that their nation would be utterly destroyed by the invading German army. His works automatically lost their former originality. De Gourmont, in Burke's words, "joined the swarm *pour la patrie,* and trained his learned barrage upon the barbarians" (137). His works were now the expected "patriotic dogmatizing" (137). De Gourmont was no longer an individual; he had surrendered his personality to the mass emotion of the "swarm." The war turned him into an "Immersed-in-lifer" or, as Sartre would say, a "man immersed in the historical situation."

Burke still attempts to end his essay on a positive note. He predicts that if de Gourmont had lived through the war, he would have regained his balance of intellect over emotion and approached the war anew in his work with his typical and preferred detached attitude: "more discursive, with more emphasis on the purely theoretical and observational" (138). In fact, says Burke in his last sentence, de Gourmont was already, even before the war's end, planning a new "book entirely free of the war" (138).

The Originality Continuum Continued

The New York Tribune published "Dadaisme is France's Latest Fad" in its February 6, 1921, edition. In this essay, Burke attempts to give substance to this new art movement whose "byword," he reports, "is 'rien,' which means nothing" (F6). The account Burke subsequently offers expands his Originality Continuum. Mallarmé now assumes a roughly middle position instead of representing an endpoint. The new negative endpoint, opposite to the positive endpoint represented by de Gourmont in the name of communication, is the Dadaisme movement.

Burke presents Dadaisme as an artistic movement that coalesced after The Great War. Its artists share the general goal of wanting to turn traditional art on its head. This revolt against art by artists, Burke points out, "is not an absolutely new thing in modern art" (F6). Mallarmé is credited as the original anti-art artist. "Beginning with Mallarmé," writes Burke, "France, the nation of clarity, has developed a tradition of rampant obscurity" (F6). This tradition of anti-tradition, with Mallarmé at its head, has involved a "breathless succession of schools" (F6) since roughly 1885. The latest is Dadaisme. They, however, stand out. For Burke, "they have gone into the [anti-art] matter more

acutely" (F6) or, in other words, more radically. They offer the true opposite of traditional art through their art. As such, Burke speculates that the anti-art approach may have "reached its culmination in the Dadaistes" (F6).

In the article, Burke defines "individualism" as "expressing one's self to the exclusion of all other selves" (F6). If this expression is through a work of art, then only the artist and no one else can understand that work of art. In "Approaches to Rémy de Gourmont," Burke referred to this as "the absurdity of individualism in art" (125). He also identified Mallarmé as creating just such absurd works: "there are certain poems of Mallarmé which we can only spy at quizzically, as one might look through a 'scope at Venus under favorable conditions" (125). For Burke, Mallarmé "was his own world" and possessed "his own tongue" (125). In "Dadaisme is France's Latest Literary Fad," Burke identifies a form of individualism that is beyond the absurd. This new individualism is defined by him as "the expression of one's self even to the exclusion of one's self" (F6). In other words, artists create works of art that are not understandable by others or by themselves. The artist and the reader share the same quizzicality as they both peer through telescopes at Venus.

In Burke's view, the Dadaiste are creating these kinds of works that are beyond the absurd. "Each Dadaiste masterpiece," he reports, "must remain a puzzle to its owner, as it is a puzzle to any one" (F6). These artists are completely free. There are no external (social) or internal (individual) constraints. An artist does not have to communicate through his work with others or himself. "The joy of creation is here unlimited," says Burke. It is also, he goes on, "carried to the extent of anarchy" (F6). The artistic freedom practiced by the Dadaistes produces an anarchy with regard to meaning. Burke also calls

the consequence of Dadaisme "true chaos" (F6). This, however, is their artistic goal. They want to evolve art by replacing traditional art with an art of anarchy and chaos. As such, they celebrate taking artistic freedom and liberty as far as it can go and "rave smugly in the knowledge that they cannot understand themselves" (F6).

The Originality Continuum that arose in "Approaches to Rémy de Gourmont" can now be expanded in light of "Dadaisme is France's Latest Fad":

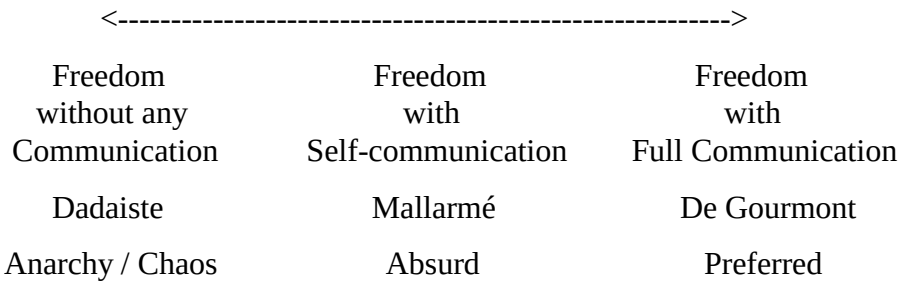

Figure 6. Originality Continuum Expanded.

Plus Intentionality

Burke publishes "The Modern English Novel Plus" in May of 1921. The official subjects of the review are two novels by Virginia Woolf: *The Voyage Out* and *Night and Day*. The true subject, however, is Burke's own theory of art. He uses Woolf's books to argue that artists must make originality the goal of their works if art is to steadily advance. It is not enough that a work include original elements. The artist must have also consciously sought to create elements unlike those of other novels. This means that Burke's ideal artist is one who acts in perfect accord with Sartre's definition of action. There is an objective lack and intentionality.

Burke praises *The Voyage Out*, which is Woolf's first novel. In it, he says, she "made

a distinct advance upon the representative modern English novel" (572). Her work thus adds something to the existing form of the novel that is new and original. The "plus" she adds, according to Burke's calculation, is quick and unexpected changes to the point of view within a scene. He calls this a "readjustment of the angle of approach" (572) and a "shift of attitude" (573). It is difficult for him to give it meaning just through a label, perhaps because it is such an unfamiliar style of writing, so he relies on examples. "This quality is to be found for instance," he explains, "in the passage where the ship on which the action of the novel is taking place is suddenly treated as it is seen by the passengers of the other vessels, so that it becomes simply 'a ship passing in the night'" (572).

Burke, however, is also critical of *The Voyage Out*. It has its "plus," but it also has its minus. This minus can only be diagnosed by examining the relationship between *The Voyage Out* and Woolf's second novel *Night and Day*. For Burke, these novels are opposites. This is because *Night and Day* does not add anything new and original to the standard form of the novel. In other words, it is not like *The Voyage Out*, a modern English novel "plus." It is only a plain modern English novel. In fact, Burke says that *Night and Day* supports the "Spenglerian doctrine" that art is in a cyclical decline as "Europe enters upon the winter of its civilization" (572). As such, it is "astonishing" (572) to Burke that *Night and Day* followed *The Voyage Out*. It should have come first due to its inferiority. If it had, he reasons, "one could explain very glibly that the first book was a mere blind tentative" (574). The reverse, however, is the true order. The superior novel precedes the inferior novel. Burke explains this by inferring that originality was not Woolf's focus or goal. If it had been, she would have appreciated and learned from her success in *The Voyage Out* and repeated or surpassed it in *Night and*

Day. She does not in Burke's view, so he says "it seems that Mrs. Woolf did not realize her own distinctions" (574). She was blind to the originality she achieved in her first novel.

Burke's interpretation of Woolf connects him again to Sartre's discussion of non-action in *Being and Nothingness*. For Sartre, action is motivated by a lack that one aims to make a reality. If there is no lack, then there is no motivation and no action. There is also no action in Sartre's theory if a lack is realized without that realization being the goal. In this view, "an action is on principle *intentional*" (559). A lack without intention does not count as action. Action is always a lack plus intentionality. Sartre illustrates the role of intentionality in distinguishing non-action from action with two alternative scenarios. "The careless smoker," he says, "who has through negligence caused the explosion of a powder magazine has not *acted*" (559). The explosion was clearly not a forethought or part of any plan. "On the other hand," Sartre continues, "the worker who is charged with dynamiting a quarry and who obeys the given orders has acted when he has produced the expected explosion; he knew what he was doing or, if you prefer, he intentionally realized a conscious project" (559).

Woolf, as Burke describes her, is exactly like the careless smoker. She does not act in advancing art with her first novel, just as the smoker does not act in exploding the powder magazine with his discarded match or cigarette. This is because it was not her intention to cause that advancement, the same way it was not the smoker's intention to cause the explosion. It was a matter of chance in both instances. The match or cigarette could have landed where it would burn out without any damage; *The Voyage Out* could have been written is such a way that it did not have any original elements to advance art, as was the

case with *Night and Day*. The smoker and Woolf would not have given such an alternative outcome any particular notice since neither had expected what actually did happen.

The obvious result of not acting to advance art is that art is not steadily advanced. Woolf is Burke's example. She moves art forward with *The Voyage Out*, but does not purposefully build on that novel to advance art another step in her next novel. Instead, she writes *Night and Day* as if *The Voyage Out* did not exist. As a consequence, *Night and Day* represents a retreat in the evolution of the modern English novel. It is a voyage back in. There is no telling when or how or, even, if she will write a future novel that equals or surpasses *The Voyage Out* when originality is a matter of chance instead of her intention. She is more than likely to produce many works that reinforce Herbert Spengler's theory that art is in its dying season of winter.

Woolf is not alone in leaving the advance of art to chance. In the review, Burke suggests that this is typical in art. Artists do not focus on originality and the advancement of art. The evidence he offers is the reoccurring forward-backward pattern in the sequential works of various artists. They, like Woolf, have their own versions of *The Voyage Out* followed by a *Night and Day*. Burke mentions several such artists. "The same calamity," he declares, making clear the detriment this has for art, "happened to Louis Wilkinson, who wrote *The Buffoon*, and then went scurrying back to the usual society novel of his countrymen" (574). This also happens to musicians. Burke adds that "it is only in their earlier compositions that [Alexander] Scriabine and [Claude] Debussy approach the Grade 3 A splendor of the Minute Waltz" (575).

Burke is thus using his critique of Woolf and her novels as a critique of art as a whole.

Her problem is also art's problem. Originality and the advancement of art are not appreciated and not made the ultimate end of artistic creation. In Sartrean terms, art lacks intentionality. Too many artists are like the careless smoker. They are not acting to advance art. Even if a new stylistic element is brought into being through a work, it is not the result of a conscious project. The consequence for art is a slow and haphazard advance at best.

Burke, however, also points to a logical solution. The intentionality missing from artists and their work needs to be appreciated and added. Artists will have to become more like the saboteur and less like the careless smoker. They will have to act to evolve art by appreciating the value of originality and setting the creation of original elements in their works as their highest goal. In this way, they can purposefully learn from each of their own works and more likely match or surpass the originality they achieve in any one work in the succeeding work. Art will thus have a steadier course of advancement. Works like *The Voyage Out,* for example, will follow works like *Night and Day* instead of the reverse that moves art backwards. This alternative sequence of increasing originality in an artist's works represents the "ideal development of a writer" (574) or any artist for Burke. As he puts it, a writer should begin "nearer the general level of writing" and, then, "after he had gotten himself really in hand," reach the stage in which he has "attained a complete consciousness of his intentions and a mediumistic equipment [artistic knowledge and skills] with which to embody those intentions" (574-575). An artist who so reflects on originality and makes its creation the project of his artistic craftsmanship is Burke's true artist. This artist will best ensure that art remains forever in the fresh Spenglerian season of spring.

Burke makes his theory of art more complex through this review. Originality now has two main dimensions: intentionality is added to the communication stressed in "Dadaisme is France's Latest Fad." As such the Originality Continuum drawn to represent Burke's conception of originality can be updated. The new form is a combination continuum and flowchart:

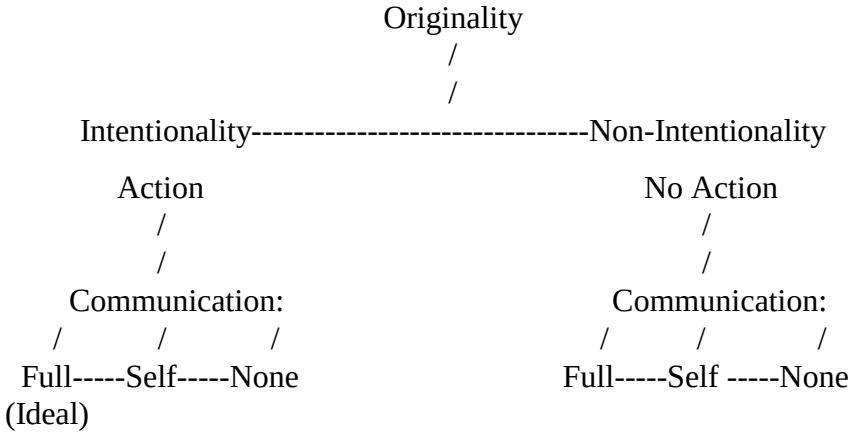

Figure 7. Originality Continuum and Flowchart.

In this, the ideal art is art that intends to advance art and has meaning for both the artist and society.

Withdrawing Oneself

Burke follows "The Modern English Novel Plus" a few months later with "The Editing of Oneself." The book under official review is *The Mystic Warrior* by James Oppenheim. It is composed of a story, written in free verse, that traces the life of a poet from his youth to his first book of poems (pages 9-115). It also has a separate short essay added to the end of the book in which Oppenheim discusses form (pages 117-119). Burke takes advantage of this division, as unbalanced as it is (107 pages to 3 pages), by dividing his review into two parts. In the first part of the review, Burke addresses the

story of *The Mystic Warrior*. In the second part, he gives almost equal space to a discussion of Oppenheim's essay and its subject of form. This allows him to continue his own trademark of enlarging his focus from just the book at hand in a review to his own theory of art. The theoretical issue this time is realism. Burke criticizes realism and opposes it to symbolism in the name of creativity. The way Burke describes this realism-symbolism opposition, the two sides can be understood as representing the two sides that Sartre sets against one another in his discussion of withdrawal from the world: being and non-being.

Burke describes the essay added by Oppenheim as a meta-commentary. Oppenheim discusses form in art as it specifically applies to *The Mystic Warrior*. Burke quickly summarizes Oppenheim's points. Oppenheim states that the growing popularity of realism in art is leading fiction to increasingly concentrate on the "material of the author's life" to such an extent that fiction is (and here Burke uses Oppenheim's own words) "becoming a 'mere thinly disguised autobiography'" (234). This is accepted by Oppenheim; he even embraces it. For him, says Burke, the "natural consequence" is for fellow artists to keep moving in this direction of realism and to "give over the [heretofore] thin disguise and write frankly of ourselves" (234). The formal product that would eventually emerge from following Oppenheim's artistic course is a transformation or mutation of genre: fiction would become full autobiography. Artists would come to write novels that as accurately as possible recount their own lives just as Oppenheim has moved closer to doing in *The Mystic Warrior*.

The discussion itself is "gratifying" (234) to Burke; he values reflection by artists. The message of that discussion, however, is another matter entirely. Burke believes that

Oppenheim is misdirecting artists to the detriment of art. Artists who follow Oppenheim's recommendation and begin writing fiction as autobiography would, according to Burke, evict themselves and fiction from what he considers art. The reason that Burke gives for this is that autobiography (based on realism), like realism itself, is a form that does not promote the human creativity and originality that defines true art. As he expresses it, "The real objection to the frankly autobiographical 'fiction' is that the mere editing of one's accidental experiences offer so little opportunity for an imaginative aggressiveness, a sense of line, mass, organization, and the like" (234). Then, he goes on, "At the very start the emphasis is placed on information rather than presentation, and as such belongs either to journalism or Wednesday prayer meeting, but not to art" (234-235). Art is not composed of reporting or confessing the details of what has happened to a person for Burke. This is outside of art's borders. The fact that realism has reduced the novel to such a form as autobiography indicates to him the "imminent bankruptcy of realism" (234) as a guiding literary philosophy.

Burke, again, offers novelists an alternative course of development in his review. Instead of going from realism to autobiography or, in other words, from the realism of fiction to the realism of nonfiction; novelists should follow those artists, who, at the start of the twentieth century, went from realism to symbolism, such as the French symbolist poets. This, according to Burke's literary sextant, is the superior course of development for the artist and art because symbolism inherently includes creativity and originality. It is also, for him, the more natural course given his definition of man. As he expresses it, "The reason for this [choice of symbolism over autobiography] is that realism, by putting man face to face with facts *per se*, awakens over again his primitive need for animism, or

correspondences; since man is constitutionally averse to the sterility of mere facts, and when they are placed before him in all their barrenness he must immediately make something else of them" (234). Man performs this making of something new and original with symbols.

One way to understand Burke's argument in "The Editing of Oneself" is in terms of Sartre's concept of withdrawal and the distinction it draws between non-being and being. In *Being and Nothingness*, as discussed, Sartre makes withdrawal the ground of action. This means that "from the moment of the first conception of the act, consciousness has been able to withdraw itself from the full world" and "to leave the level of being in order frankly to approach that of non-being" (560). It is here in non-being that an individual apprehends a lack that serves to motivate action. Those who do not withdraw are those "immersed in the historical situation" (561). In this state, one only "apprehends it [the world] in its plentitude of being" (561). A person does not even start to approach non-being and, as a result, does not apprehend a lack that will motivate action for change.

The realism and autobiography that Burke opposes in "The Editing of Oneself" promotes immersion in the historical situation. They are a form and approach that keeps the artist focused on the world exactly as it has been and continues to exist. The artist remains strictly at the level of being. In fact, the closer the artist is to emulating a camera or other mechanical recording devise the better, the more he or she is an artist. The main criteria here is not creativity, but correspondence. In contrast, the symbolism Burke favors over realism promotes withdrawal. It is a form that leads artists to "make something else" (234) of the facts than what is simply given. The artist must thus leave the level of being and approach non-being. It is here that he has the "opportunity for an

imaginative aggressiveness, a sense of line, mass, organization, and the like" (234). The criteria for judging these qualities is originality.

In Burke's theory of art, then, the best course for artists is not "the editing of oneself," which is what he calls the autobiographical style that Oppenheim wants novelists to fully adopt. The best course is instead what can now be called the withdrawal of oneself. The artist must withdraw from the world like in symbolism. This is the practice that leads to the originality and creativity that defines true art and artist in the judgment of Burke.

Beyond the Given

Burke's last essay of 1921 is "The Art of Carl Sprinchorn." In this short one and three-quarter page article appearing in *The Arts*, he attempts to identify exactly what it is that makes Sprinchorn's paintings stand out as true art. The ensuing discussion frames Sprinchorn as just the type of artist that Burke positively argued for in "The Editing of Oneself." Sprinchorn is someone who, to use Burke's words from that earlier review, "make[s] something else" of the "mere facts" at hand through "an imaginative aggressiveness, a sense of line, mass, organization, and the like" (234). As such, Sprinchorn can also be thought of as a fitting portrait of an artist who withdraws from the world in the Sartrean sense of leaving being and approaching non-being.

Burke begins the essay with "a broad mass of trees" (158). He then indicates that there are two approaches to painting these trees as a forest. One is realism. The painter focuses on all the "photographic detail" (158) of the forest. In this approach, the painter passively accepts and presents the forest exactly as it is. The forest is nothing more than the sum of its parts. The other approach is the one that characterizes Sprinchorn. He

focuses on "the discovery of a likeness between the object painted and some other object" (158). This likeness, says Burke, has "no name" when painted by artists, but "would be called a simile, or a metaphor" (158) if done by writers using words as their medium. In this approach, the painter actively shapes the forest into something it is not. The forest is now more than the sum of its parts or, as Burke expresses it, "more than a forest" (158). It could, for example, be "the forest as a river" (158) instead of merely a forest qua forest. In this painting of the forest-river, there would be "currents of trees swirling about and intermingling, with sluggish pools along the edges, and other movements as steady and as solid as a freight train on the horizon" (158). An artist of such a painting would express the creative characteristic Burke ascribes to his ideal artist in "The Editing of Oneself": "correspondences" (234). When confronted by "mere facts," the artist will "make something else of them" (234). An example of one such correspondence is the forest as a river in "The Art of Carl Sprinchorn." The artist takes the mere facts of the forest and makes them into a forest-river on the canvas.

Sprinchorn is also a craftsman of form for Burke. The painter not only searches out two objects that are related to one another, but he has the skill by which to present the two as an original union or, in Burke's approving words, of "arranging those gorgeous fluxes" (159). Burke only touches on this technical skill at the very close of the essay, saying it "brings up the possibility of a whole new article" (159). So, he does not go into any detail. Even his main illustration is only one sentence. In regard to the painting "Snow-Figure," Burke points out that "the authentic vitality of the picture is acquired by the drawing together of his hurrying lines, one object serving to transmit the flow more intensely to the next, and so on, culminating in a triumphant *tutti gii insturmenti*" (159).

This seems enough, however, to see that such a painting would express another quality that Burke expects from his ideal artist as defined in "The Editing of Oneself": "an imaginative aggressiveness, a sense of line, mass, organization, and the like" (234).

Sprinchorn, in Burke's words at the close of the essay, is "going beyond the requirements of his subject" (159) when he so skillfully presents the subjects of his paintings as seamless metaphors. It is just this "going beyond," Burke adds in conclusion, that "is the characteristic quality of Sprinchorn's art" (159). It is also, interestingly enough, a characteristic that Sartre assigns to the human imagination.

The imagination or, more fully, "a consciousness capable of *imagining*" (233) is addressed by Sartre in his second published work, the 1936 *L'Imagination*, which is translated in 1966 as *The Psychology of the Imagination*. Sartre argues in this study that in order "For a consciousness to be able to imagine[,] it must be able to escape from the world by its very nature, it must be able by its own efforts to withdraw from the world" (240). If consciousness could not so withdraw from the world around it, then consciousness would always and only perceive things as they are. Such a consciousness would be trapped in and by the real. It would, says Sartre, "contain only real modifications aroused by real actions" (240). As a result, "all imagination would be prohibited" (240) since the imagination is made up of the unreal. Consciousness, however, can withdraw from the world. This enables it to posit things that are different from things as they are. It does this, in Sartre's words, by "going beyond" (240) or "surpassing" (241) the real. These new things beyond the real are the unreal of the imagination that involve "a certain trait of nothingness in relation to the whole of reality" (238).

Sprinchorn's art, as presented by Burke, can be explained and deepened in terms of Sartre's account of the imagination. The painter uses his imagination to withdraw from the world. For example, he withdraws from the forest in order to conceive of the forest as a river or, more uniquely, as a forest-river. If he did not so withdraw, he would only perceive the real. The forest would only be a forest as a forest. It would be the forest as seen and painted by a realist artist. Sprinchorn, however, can go beyond his subject, "surpassing" the real that is the forest. He can imagine the unreal. This is how he is able to conceive of the forest-river, whose unreality gives it "a certain trait of nothingness in relation to the whole of reality" (240).

Sprinchorn's art can thus be justly thought of along Sartrean lines as art of the imagination. The subjects portrayed in his paintings are not, however, completely unreal. Burke points out that although Sprinchhorn comes close to being an abstract painter, there is "one important difference" (159). This difference can be understood as communication. Sprinchorn does not create a work that is so original that it cannot be understood by others. Burke explains it this way: "He manages to put on canvas both the object and his interpretation of it. The thorough-going abstractor would have given us the interpretation alone" (159). In the forest-river painting by Sprinchorn, for example, the viewer would recognize that the subject of the painting is a forest. The painting would not just be received as a "chaos" (158) of currents, swirls, and other movements along with small areas of stillness. The painting would offer a meaning that Burke says would be "understood as clearly as a law" (158). Sprinchorn's art, in this way, is the art of the imagination, but not of the imagination run amok. It is art of an imagination tempered with communication.

A diagram of Sprinchorn's art and its relation to other approaches to art and Sartre's account of the imagination can be drawn along these lines:

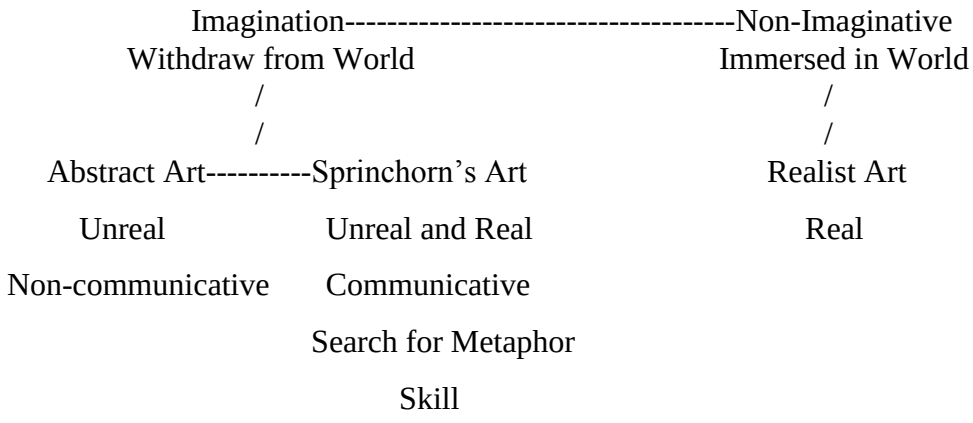

Figure 8. The Imagination and Art.

CHAPTER THREE:

1922 and 1923

Historic Message versus Universal Methods

Burke addresses a book about the writer Romain Rolland by Stefan Zweig in his second book review of 1922. The review, "Heroism and Books," published in the January edition of *The Dial*, is only two pages long, but it importantly adds to Burke's theory of art by introducing the idea that art possesses a universal quality that allows a work to be judged across time. It is this quality that Burke will later connect or evolve into his conception of form and the beautiful in art.

In "Heroism and Books," Burke distinguishes two ways to evaluate a work of art. One way is in terms of its "historical [...] importance" (92). This is the approach Zweig takes in his book. "Rolland and his work," says Burke, "are interpreted here almost exclusively in terms of the war" (92). Zweig does this by focusing on the "message" (93) of Rolland's works. His aim is to determine whether or not the message was the best message for the time now that it is possible to look back with twenty-twenty hindsight at The Great War. Zweig approves of the strong antiwar message and thus greatly praises Rolland as a significant artist to the extent that Burke says he is "lionizing" (92) him.

The other way to evaluate art, according to Burke, is in terms of its "artistic importance" (92). This involves going beyond the message of a work and focusing instead on the "methods" (93) used by the artist in the work. Zweig does not do this. Burke says, he "turns constantly away from Rolland's methods to rhapsodize on his

message" (93). This direction of focus is a problem to Burke because he considers the message of an artist as "the mere starting point of art" (93). The advanced criteria that truly defines art is the methods used by the artist to present the message. This should be the main focus. In fact, for Burke, the meaning of the message is immaterial. An artist can use an excellent method to present any message. Thus, one artist could use an excellent method to send a message "to glorify war" and another artist could use an excellent method to send a message "to denounce it" (93). Equally, a poor method could be used by artists to present messages that are later considered significant or misguided. The message does not make the method, nor does the method make the message. As such, to judge a work based on its message is not the same as judging it based on its method. Zweig, for Burke, is an example of someone who makes this kind of error. Zweig praises Rolland on the basis of his antiwar message and, thus, overlooks what Burke considers his inferior method of presentation. "Rolland," Burke asserts, "is seldom talented" (93). The most Zweig can thus claim from the antiwar message that Rolland put into his work during the war, according to Burke, is that Rolland was "a great man," not that he was "a great artist" (93). In order to claim that Roland was a great artist, Zweig would have to argue that Rolland had a great method.

This artistic approach can also be thought of as the ahistoric approach. This is because Burke is speaking here as if the quality of a work's methods, in distinction from the significance of its message, can be evaluated without reference to the particular times of the work. Skillful writing during World War I is the same as skillful writing today. As such, the artistic approach implies the existence of a standard for methods that is universal and allows works from different periods to be compared against each other on

the same scale of true "art-values" (93). The book review thus leaves off with form positioned to serve as this universal value.

Form and Beauty

The month after "Heroism and Books," Burke publishes the essay "The Correspondence of Flaubert," also in *The Dial*. In this essay, he tells the reader that "the really essential subject of the letters" is Flaubert's "aesthetics" (150). The aesthetic theory that Burke goes on to discuss can be thought of as his own aesthetic theory. This is because Flaubert was Burke's ideal literary artist and the artist he most wanted to follow and, even, become, at the start of the 1920s. For instance, when Burke was on the verge of leaving college to commence his writing career, he wrote a letter to Malcolm Crowley, dated June 6, 1918, that stated, "shall get a room in New York and begin my existence as Flaubert" (Selzer 60). In another letter to Crowley, dated June 21, 1919, Burke exclaims about his summer cottage, "What a place for an American Flaubert!" (Jay 67). The discussion of aesthetics in "The Correspondence of Flaubert" accordingly confirms and expands Burke's position on method in "Heroism and Books." It additionally goes into enough detail on form to establish a correspondence between the aesthetic theory presented in the essay and the aesthetic theory expressed by Sartre in his early existential period. The essay is significant as well for introducing beauty and connecting it to form.

In "Axiomatics," Burke was critical of emotionalism. He did not believe that artists should valorize the emotions in the process or product of art. Instead, he wanted artists to step back from their emotions and reflect on the methods of their works. De Gourmont

was an example of such an artist. In "Approaches to Rémy de Gourmont," Burke pointed out that de Gourmont practiced "detachment" (136) and that "there was no element of social experience strong enough to disturb him with its prejudices" (127). The detachment is one reason, for Burke, de Gourmont was such an original and skillful writer. Burke also emphasized the importance of so overcoming the emotions very succinctly in the review "Chekhov and Three Others," published in January of 1922. There he described a talk reported between Chekhov and another artist: "their conversation drifting imperceptibly from life to art, from the emotions of the artist in nature to the victory over those emotions which the artist scores in his work" (2).

Flaubert similarly attains victory for Burke. In "The Correspondence of Flaubert," Burke claims that "The most striking implication of the letters with respect to his art-methods is that his emotions are paralyzed [overcome] by his intelligence" (151). Flaubert is an artist who approaches his work reflectively and is "inclined to make of literature a study, the posing and solving of a problem, which is primarily an intellectual process" (151). Burke also identifies this approach as involving a "critical consciousness" (152). Flaubert describes a novel-in-progress in these terms in a passage quoted by Burke: "'I incline a good deal towards criticism. The novel I am writing has been sharpening that faculty of mine, because it is above all else a work of criticism, or rather, of anatomy'" (152). It is thus a work that takes art apart by focusing on such intellectual and formal matters that Burke terms "beginnings, transitions, suspensions, [and] attainments" (152).

Burke, in "Heroism and Books," argued that art should be evaluated on the basis of its method instead of its message. What matters, in other words, is not what is said, but how

it is said or presented. The form of a work is the measure of its true virtue. Flaubert, as Burke describes him in his essay, approaches art from this same angle. He privileges method over message in his work. In fact, Flaubert wants to take this as far as possible. He wants to create a work that is all method and no message. This is his ideal form, the form he is trying to bring into existence in the art world. Flaubert expresses this intention within an 1852 letter quoted by Burke. There, Flaubert writes, "'the thing that I should like to do, would be a book about nothing, a book without any exterior tie, which would sustain itself by the internal force of its style...a book which would have almost no subject, or at least in which the subject would be almost invisible'" (154). For Burke, this is supporting evidence that Flaubert (like himself) "realized...technique was the profoundest element of art, sitting immediately against the deepest roots of the art-nature" (155).

The main quality that stands out from the ideal art form that Flaubert describes in the quotations selected by Burke is necessity. From these, it sounds as if form is supposed to function like a law of nature upon the message which is like the random matter it arranges and controls. In the previous quotation, for example, Flaubert writes that the form he seeks would "sustain itself by the internal force of its style" (154). In another quotation from another later letter included by Burke, Flaubert expands on this with a rhetorical question:

> I remember having experienced thumpings of the heart, having felt a violent pleasure, in contemplating a wall of the Acropolis, a wall stark naked.... *Eh bien!* I wonder if a book, independently of what it says, cannot produce the same effect? In the precision of its groupings, the rarity of the elements, the polish of the surface, the harmony of the *ensemble*, is there not here some intrinsic virtue, a kind of divine force, something eternal as a principle? 155

Burke along with Flaubert would answer in the affirmative. Sartre, too, would answer with a yes during his early existential period, since he began with a theory of art that similarly has necessity at its core.

This aesthetic theory is quietly expressed by Sartre in his 1938 novel *La Nausée*. The work is presented as a diary written by Antoine Roquentin. He speaks for Sartre and his existential philosophy. The purpose of the diary, according to Roquentin, is to record his experiences in an attempt to discover why he is increasingly being overtaken by feelings of nausea. The answer he comes to near the end of the diary is that human existence is absurd. As he records it, in the English translation of the book, "I had found the key to Existence, the key to my Nauseas, to my own life. In fact, all that I could grasp beyond that returns to this fundamental absurdity" (129). By absurd, he means that existence is unnecessary. "The essential thing," he writes, "is contingency" (131). For him, "one cannot define existence as necessity" (131). This contingency of existence is the cause of his nausea. When he senses that the world around him is unnecessary, the feelings of nausea arise.

There is, however, a cure. Sartre offers an alternative world: art. In *Nausea*, the world of art is represented by the jazz song "Some of these Days." This is Roquentin's favorite song: "The one I like" (20) and the one he repeatedly requests be played on the phonograph. The way he describes the song makes it stand out from the everyday world of the absurd. The song is not contingent; instead, it is necessary. It possesses a form that gives a necessity to each of its individual notes and their relations to one another. Roquentin is expressing this internal necessity when he writes, for example, that the "notes" obey an "inflexible order" (21). This "inflexible order" creates another kind of

time for Sartre. The time of the everyday world is described by Roquentin as having a gelatin like quality. He says, "it is made of wide, soft instants, spreading at the edge, like an oil stain" (21). The time of the song, in contrast, is solid, hard. Roquentin calls it a "band of steel" and a "ribbon of steel" (21). The sequence of notes so locked together in the song accordingly "seems inevitable" (22). What transpires in the song occurs as if it has to happen and as if everything before in the song has led to that precise occurrence. For Roquentin, "so strong is the necessity of this music: nothing can interrupt it" (22). It must be and will always be exactly as it is. Even if the record playing the song were to wear out or break, "the melody stays the same, young and firm, like a pitiless witness" (176).

Roquentin requests this song be played during an attack of nausea at a cafe. When the song is over, he records the results: "What has just happened is that the Nausea has disappeared" (22). He also sees the world in a new way through the influence of the song. The world, like the song, now seems necessary instead of absurd. Everything is solid, meaningful, and meant to be just as it is. This includes his own life. The random events of the past years become a "rigorous succession of circumstances" (23) that have a set course and destination, like the "inflexible order" of notes in the song. The change caused by the song, however, eventually wears off and the contingency of his own life and the world returns, but while the feeling lasted, Roquentin felt "happy" (26). The course of action Roquentin settles on because of the song is to give up the study of history, which had been his focus, and become an artist. His intention is to write a book whose form will create necessity after the model of "Some of these Days." This book will, in his words, "be beautiful and hard as steel" (178).

Burke, in his essay, also emphasizes that Flaubert equates beauty with the ideal form he is seeking for his artistic works. The quotation Burke uses from Flaubert for this has already been drawn on in part. Now the very beginning can be added: "What seems beautiful to me, the thing that I should like to do, would be a book about nothing" (154). Later, in the same quotation, Flaubert echoes this by saying, "The most beautiful works are those which contain the least matter" (154). Burke does not go on to discuss the issue of beauty and form, but by joining the two through Flaubert, he has connected beauty to his universal measure of art. This gives beauty a universalism or absolutism. As such, when Flaubert asks, "is there here [in a work's form] some intrinsic virtue, a kind of divine force, something eternal as a principle?" the answer could be an affirmative: it could be beauty. Beauty could be that virtue, force, and principle.

The two alternative approaches to art that Burke has set up at the start of 1922 through "The Correspondence of Flaubert" and the previous "Heroism and Books" can be summarized together along this dividing line in terms of concepts, themes, and people:

Artistic Approach	versus	Historic Approach
methods		messages
form		matter
universal (ahistoric)		particular (historic)
Burke / Flaubert		Romain Rolland
Sartre /Roquentin		--
internal necessity		incidental qualities
beauty		--

Figure 9. Artistic versus Historic Approach

Beauty in Depth

Two months after "The Correspondence of Flaubert," Burke publishes his next essay,

his fifth, which is about another writer whom he greatly admires and recognizes as a model artist. "André Gide, Bookman," as it is titled, goes into much more detail about the relationship between beauty and art that Burke introduced so briefly in "The Correspondence of Flaubert." Here, in his new essay, Burke, through Gide, opposes beauty to truth. In so doing, he locates beauty outside of the real world (and the genre of realism) and inside the fictional world created by artists in their works. As such, the freedom of the artist to withdraw from the world leads not only to originality and the advancement of art, but also to the beautiful.

Burke points out at the start of the essay that Gide approaches art "with a more of less definitely elaborated system of aesthetics" (155) in mind. The basis of this aesthetics can be understood as an ontological division. On one side is being. It consists of the world. On the other side, is non-being. It consists of the world created by the artist. Burke draws the line in these terms: "M. Gide is first of all a literary man, whose basic principle is that books are one thing and life another" (155). The goal of the artist is thus to present non-being through art. Consequently, the artist cannot remain at the level of being. Such an artist would only be able to copy the world and life, to mirror existence in his or her works. The artist must instead withdraw from being and approach non-being. In this way, the artist will be able to envision or imagine a new world and practices of life that are different from the present and past. Burke describes this goal: "In other words, he [Gide] accepts Mallarmé's teaching that the artist aims to create a distinct cosmology, to make whatever kind of world offers the richest opportunities for his particular gifts and interests" (155).

This ontological division leads to and supports another division: truth versus beauty.

On the side of the real world is truth. On the side of the fictional world of art is beauty. The artist's focus should thus not be on truth, but on beauty. As Burke puts it, Gide is also following Mallarmé's teaching "to be interes[t]ed in beauty and let truth take care of itself" (155). Truth only matters, from this point of view, if one is attempting to copy the world point for point. In these cases, a work will be justly valued based on how truthfully or closely it corresponds to reality as it is or has been in the past. If, on the other hand, one is an artist or "literary man" or "bookman," like Gide, and is attempting to create a highly original world, then beauty is what matters. In these cases, the work will be justly valued based on the degree of beauty the artist has bestowed upon his or her fictional world.

Burke describes Gide's books *Le Voyage d'Urien* and *Les Nourritures Terrestres* as premier examples of this premeditated aesthetic system. In these, Gide is not concerned with truth in the sense of recreating the known world. He is creating his own world, foreign like a distant moon. It is not a book of our Earth. There is no gravity of realism to hold his creativity down and constrain his stylistic possibilities. As Burke expresses it, "M. Gide has been free to create effects in a thorough and consistent manner that would have been weakened immeasurably had he been bullied by the need of verisimilitude" (155). These "effects" add up to beauty. Gide's unfettered artistic style bestows beauty upon his world. Burke is clear: "one who enters this individual universe [of Gide's] finds it beautiful in a way in which nothing else is beautiful" (156). This, for Burke, proves that "Fidelity to life is at best one side of art; there are just as many possibilities—if not more—in a purely unreal world" (156).

In this aesthetic system described and promoted by Burke, beauty possesses an unusual

ontological status: it is a very real quality or existent of an "unreal world." The world of the artist is imaginary and based on non-being, but the beauty of that world is treated like truth in the physical world of being. This means that Burke believes that just as one can objectively determine whether or not something in the world is true or false, one can objectively determine if the qualities of an artist's work are beautiful or not. Beauty is not subjective. It is a measure that allows works of art to be measured and compared against each other across time and space. This being so, beauty is granted by Burke's point of view an absolute and universal existence apart from the imaginary at the same time it is part of the imaginary.

The Structure of Beauty

Burke publishes the review "*Fides Quaerens Intellectum*" one month after his essay on Gide. The official subject of the review is the new book *The Religion of Plato* by Paul Elmer More. Burke, however, characteristically goes beyond More's book to develop his own theory. The main subject of the theory is beauty. He furthers the discussion about the concept of beauty that he started in earnest in "André Gide, Bookman." The role Burke assigns to beauty in this new review and the language he uses for beauty makes Burke sound more and more as if he were approaching beauty from a structuralist point of view. More's book is about Plato, so Burke shifts his own focus from the process of artists to "examining the process of the philosopher" (529). This process, Burke points out, was described by the Scholastic school of philosophy as "*fides quaerens intellectum*" (529). They applied this formula to their own work, but, for Burke, it can apply to all philosophies since in this regard "there is no philosophy but scholastic philosophy" (529).

He translates the Latin formula as "an emotional predisposition seeking its parallel in logic" (529). The formula and translation put forward a two-part division for philosophy that very generally corresponds to the two-part division that is central to structuralism. For Lévi-Strauss, as discussed, the human mind has two levels or dimensions: the unconscious and the conscious. In the unconscious are permanent laws that structure the way an individual consciously thinks about the world. As such, Lévi-Strauss says in "History and Anthropology" that the "unconscious activity of the mind consists in imposing forms upon content" (21) perceived or expressed by the conscious activity of the mind.

The formula *fides quaerens intellectum* can be thought of as parallel to this unconscious-conscious pair of structuralism. The *fides* or emotional predisposition is like the unconscious dimension. It is below or behind the level of thought and in itself is not articulated. The *intellectum* or logic is like the conscious dimension of the mind. It is thought whose subject is the world. The role of the *fides*, like the role of the unconscious and its laws with respect to the conscious, is to shape the *intellectum*. This is expressed by the verb "seeking": Burke says the *fides* is "seeking its parallel" (529) in the *intellectum*. In regard to philosophy, then, the formula *fides quaerens intellectum* means that the *fides* gives form to the particular content that composes each philosopher's system of thought. Burke expresses this functional arrangement when he offers this example: "Spinoza, in other words, began with the emotion of his metaphysics, with his *fides*, and then sought logical cogency, *intellectus*, in his method of geometrical demonstration" (529).

Burke goes on to suggest (beyond the Scholastics) that the *fides* in the formula *fides*

quaerens intellectum can be thought of as beauty. In this way, he makes the "love of beauty" (530) the emotional predisposition that is located behind or below every philosophy and, thereby, gives it the structuralist-like role of shaping the content of every philosophy. Beauty, for Burke, is thus more primary than any other concept focused on by philosophers or claimed by philosophers to be their fundamental concepts. These include the concepts of the good and the true that are traditionally addressed by so many philosophical systems. As Burke makes clear, "in the great triad of the good, the true, and the beautiful, both the good and the true are treated merely as subdivisions of the beautiful" (530). Beauty thus gives shape to whatever a philosopher concludes about ethics and epistemology.

This applies, in Burke's view, to Plato. To him, Plato's philosophy is primarily shaped by beauty. Burke makes this point in the review, which he also presents as a counter to More's claim that Plato's philosophy is primarily shaped by religion or a "spiritual urge" (528), when he states that Plato's "ideology had best be looked upon as subordinate to his love of beauty" (53). Burke calls this way of looking the "attitude of aesthetic priority" (530). It makes beauty the *fides* or emotional disposition of the philosopher. It also makes beauty the main measure of philosophy. In the case of Plato, for example, his philosophy should be appreciated and judged in terms of "[t]he beauty of the whole" rather than from the accuracy of all its parts or "statements alone" (530).

Burke, then, wants philosophy judged the same way that he has stated in earlier articles he wants art judged: in terms of beauty. This makes philosophy a branch of art and transforms the philosopher into the philosopher-artist. It also gives philosophy a quality that Burke gives to art: timelessness. Beauty, for Burke, is an absolute that allows

works of art to be judged and compared across time and space. As such, when philosophers shape their philosophies into beautiful philosophies, they give those philosophies this same universality. Burke emphasizes this with reference to Plato. "As a creator of beauty," Plato had a "capacity to touch on permanent standards at a time when his facile contemporaries [principally the Sophists] could see nothing but flux" (530). This has allowed the philosophy of Plato to endure down through the centuries even after the particular arguments of his Greek philosophy have long gone out of fashion.

The Danger of Freedom

Burke's first book review of 1923 is "Realism and Idealism." The title refers to Burke's main claim about the book he is officially reviewing, *The Reform of Education* by Giovanni Gentile. For Burke, Gentile is arguing that realism should be replaced in education by idealism. The position Burke takes in the review is that idealism will not change education or society for the better. He supports this contrasting view to Gentile's study with two distinct critical interpretations of idealism and its history. One is at the start of the review (paragraph one) and the second is at the end of the review (paragraphs six and seven). Both of these critiques read as if they were written separately and brought together in piecemeal fashion to create this review. As such, the review can be thought of as having three parts, with only the middle part (paragraphs two through five) directly addressing *The Reform of Education* and realism.

The first paragraph / part of the review can be described as offering a case of life imitating art with extremely negative political consequences. The force at work in both

art and life is the philosophy of idealism with its valorization of subjectivity and promotion of complete volition of the will. The consequence of this individual freedom on art is stated by Burke in only a single but dense sentence: "It [idealism] has reached its artistic *reductio ad absurdum* in the countless individualistic universes of the modern artist, each artist carefully cherishing his own bias like a precious gem, each *willing* his own world" (97). This can be expanded on or unpacked by returning to Burke's second published essay. There, in "Approaches to Rémy de Gourmont," Burke gave an account of the way idealism affected Mallarmé and his small circle of rebel artists. Idealism made it so that "each man was his own world" and "should have his own tongue" (125). As such, these artists produced works that were incomprehensible to everyone except that artist who created the work. Burke pointed to Mallarmé: "there are certain poems of Mallarmé which we can only spy at quizzically, as one might look through a 'scope at Venus under favorable conditions" (125).

Idealism's affect on the world, according to Burke in "Realism and Idealism," is parallel to this affect idealism has on art. Its "strong emphasis on the creative will" (97) leads peoples to create nations that are like the works of the idealist artists: private or closed universes. Idealism, in other words, leads to nationalism. "It was no mere accident," writes Burke, "that Hegel," whom he identified as the source of idealism in the arts in the earlier 1922 review "The Consequences of Idealism" (449-450), "was the official philosopher of a rising Prussianism, or that idealism has been flourishing during the last century, which marks the highest concentration point of the nationalist spirit" (97). For Burke, such "nationalist spirit" goes hand-in-hand with "imperialism" (97) and ends in nation against nation conflict. World War I is his proof. In his view, at the global

level, idealism reached its "*reductio ad absurdum* in the cataclysm of the late war" (97).

In the third part of the review (the last two paragraphs), Burke focuses anew on idealism. "Of idealisms," he begins, "we now have two kinds: optimistic idealism and pessimistic idealism" (99). The division is Burke's. The adjectives "optimistic" and "pessimistic" are also his. The idealism he is dividing is specifically the idealism of *The Phenomenology of Spirit* by Hegel. Burke does not mention Hegel or his famous treatise by name, but many of the expressions Burke uses to describe idealism in this part match the theoretical vocabulary that uniquely distinguishes *The Phenomenology of Spirit* and its idealism. These Hegelian expressions in the review include "creative spirit," "thought itself out," "mis-seeing," and "time-spirit" (99).

For Burke, optimistic idealism and pessimistic idealism form a sequence. The first in the sequence is optimistic idealism. At this stage of idealism, the individual subject is defined as "a free creative spirit" and a "creature of triumphant free will" (99) who shapes the world according to his (mis)beliefs about himself and the world. Burke is greatly critical of this unlimited volition. As he puts it, "one may legitimately question whether this is, after all, the highest imaginable type of freedom" (99). The reason he gives is that the promotion of this absolute freedom would support and celebrate ("envy") "a lunatic who thought he was king of the universe, and strutted about grandly with a feather duster tied to his coat" (99).

The second in the sequence of idealisms is pessimistic idealism. At this stage of idealism, the free creative spirit of the individual is thought of as the expression of a larger and independent spirit or, what Burke calls, "the time-spirit" (99). Burke is highly critical of this kind of idealism because it takes away too much human freedom.

Individuals, from this point of view, are not agents or actors, but the "acts" (99) of this larger spirit of the times. They can only create or shape the world "in accordance" with their particular "civilization" or "period" (99) in world history. This, for Burke, is "nothing short of determinism" (99). In fact, he asserts that it has become "the bleakest philosophy of determinism on record" (99).

Burke does not go on to offer a corrective to idealism in this review. The world of nations earlier and the individual in society here are left with the negative consequences of unlimited volitionalism. If, however, life does imitate art, which Burke is implying by making the world a macrocosm of art, then perhaps his theory of art, may also offer a political theory, so that the solution Burke has previously offered for idealism in art, is also be an effective treatment for idealism's negative consequences for the world and the individual in society. In his art theory, the artist needs to temper or balance absolute freedom with beauty. This beauty should be the goal of the artist in his or her works. The reason is that beauty is an absolute and, as such, will prevent the artist from creating works that are like a private world understood only by the artist and adding up to form what Burke calls in this review "the countless individualistic universes of the modern artist" (97). Perhaps, Burke would also suggest that nations need to similarly counter their freedom with beauty by making beauty the goal of their politics. In this way, the politician, like the artist, would not create a nation that is a closed world unable to be understood by other nations and unable to understand other nations. Perhaps, Burke would also suggest that the freedom of Hegel's idealism be conjoined with beauty, such that optimistic idealism and pessimistic idealism could be made to give way for another idealism, called beauty idealism. This would ideally allow the individual to live a better

life safely between the unfettered lunatic king of the universe and the slave of the time-spirit just as the artist creates between the chaos of Dada and the axioms of the academy.

Dis-Artopia

Burke's last article of 1923 is "Chicago and Our National Gesture." In this, he returns to the issue of nationalism. He had last discussed nationalism in "Realism and Idealism." There, in the first part, he blamed idealism for its role in the rise of nationalism in the world. "It was," he claimed, "no mere accident [...] that idealism has been flourishing during the last century, which marks the highest concentration point of the nationalist spirit" (97). He also spoke of this national spirit as an evil spirit that led to imperialism and war. In this new essay, Burke addresses nationalism's affect as a movement within art, with a special focus on contemporary America and those whom Selzer, looking back in his biography of Burke, calls "literary nationalists" (31). The goal of these nationalist's, as Burke expresses it at the start of "Chicago and Our National Gesture," is "finding truly representative authors, authors who express the essence, the distillation of America" (497). It is precisely this goal that Burke opposes in his essay. He does not believe that writers and critics should primarily desire or promote the development of a uniquely American art. The "chief objection" he offers to "the doctrine of a national literature" (500) is that it takes away artistic freedom and originality.

The loss of freedom takes place because the doctrine of literary nationalism turns artists into, what Burke calls, "hundred percenters" (500). He uses this expression to emphasize that the goal of these artists is to pursue a form of art in their individual works that is one hundred percent the same as the form of art that is recognized as representing

their particular nation. In America, according to Burke, the representative works are those by the poet Walt Whitman. He, with his free verse, is the model for red, white, and blue art. As such, artists are directed by nationalism "to be imitative of Whitman" and give their works "Whitmanite qualities" (500). The more completely they copy his style and so make the "certain [artistic] gestures which must be repeated" (500) by all American artists, the closer they are to being recognized as true artists. There is in American nationalism, then, no room for artistic creativity by the artist. Ironically, by forcing artists to copy Whitman, who portrayed the diversity and multiplicity in America, art is denied diversity and multiplicity itself. Artists can only use one form—the Whitman form. They are disincentivized from introducing their own forms or making personal stylistic gestures. If they did, their works would stylistically vary from the works that represent the nation. They would not, in such cases, "be counted among the hundred percenters" (500). This would locate them outside the official borders of true art. As such, the hundred percenters can be equally thought of and called zero percenters in terms of originality. This is because, for them, when it comes to creativity, less is better and none is best. Burke expresses these two sides of the doctrine of literary nationalism by stating, "It prevents spontaneous development by prejudicing the artist into following paths which have been laid out for him" (500). These patriotic paths are well-worn paths that lead the artists of a nation away from artistic freedom and individuality and towards determinism and complete uniformity with each other.

The "National Gesture" that Burke refers to in the title of his essay is thus a gesture that he adamantly opposes. He does not want artists to imitate an official style in an attempt to create a collection of works that fit within the specific borders of a national art.

This is why Burke also refers to these required gestures as "a set of prescribed grimaces" (500). For him, the conforming required by literary nationalism is a deforming of the creative expression of each artist. As such, Burke does not want the art of America to be only American art or for true artists in America to be defined as American artists. This would make America the land of the un-free artists and the home of art that cannot risk originality.

CHAPTER FOUR:

1924-1925

Withdrawal and the Love of Beauty

The emotions, for Burke, can deflect artists away from a concern with beauty in their works. He expressed this plainly in "Axiomatics": "The violent surge of things to be said pushes one [the artist] recklessly on, so that he has no time for questioning his aesthetics" (497). There is, however, also an emotion, according to Burke, by which the artist must be affected during the creative process in order to produce beautiful works. This is an emotion that requires the artist to withdraw from the world and the emotions of the world. Burke makes this higher level emotion the theoretical topic of his short 1924 review "Deposing the Love of the Lord."

Burke, in this, is reviewing the book *Selected Religious Poems of Solomon Ibn Gabirol*. His poems, in Burke's judgment, lack beauty. As he puts it, "the documents of his religious fervor seldom flower" (162). Notice that Burke does not even call Gabirol's works poems. He calls them "documents," which for Burke, means a text that does not possess form or beauty. In "The Critic of Dostoevsky," for example, Burke writes that "The document *per se*, being neither beautiful nor unbeautiful, falls into quite another plane of considerations from purely aesthetic ones" (673). Burke grants that Gabirol is sincere in his love of the Lord. This, however, is only the start of art and not sufficient in itself to write excellent poetry about such love. According to Burke, and he makes this

the "moral" (162) of his review, "The poet must possess the whole sincerity of his subject if he is to produce art, and the poet must have something *beyond* sincerity to [actually] produce [the] art" (162). This "something beyond" is what Burke calls "the art-emotion" (162). It is a positive emotion for form and the creation of beauty. The poet must have a passion about the techniques for arranging and presenting his or her subject matter. This is necessary for the artist to produce a beautiful work. Gabirol does not have this emotion. At the level of mechanics, he is passionless. This is why, for Burke, his poems are not beautiful. They are merely "documentary": "The great bulk of his lines are at best neutral; they are mere labels of religious experience, the signs without the persuasion, the typical rather than the excellent" (162).

For Burke, then, art is not an emotionless pursuit. The artist does not withdraw from the world and cease being an immersed-in-lifer in order to become a disembodied intellect free from all passions. The artist, in fact, can now be clearly appreciated as withdrawing from the world in order to acquire a new passion for his or her work. Reflection or a questioning of aesthetics goes hand-in-hand with a love for aesthetics. It is mind and feeling. An artist is ideally moved by the idea and process of arranging and presenting his or her subject matter in a beautiful form. This art-emotion or love of beauty is the creative energy that pushes the true artist forward in Burke's theory of art.

The Structuralist Constant

Burke's only essay of 1924 is "Notes on Walter Pater." He will later revise this essay for inclusion in his first book of theory, the 1931 *Counter-Statement* (9-15). The revision will be clearer than the original. It will be much less like a collection of notes and it will

not be divided into six sections by asterisks. The revision, however, will also omit some of the original essay. This omission includes the entire first section. In this original introduction, Burke leads into his discussion of Pater through a series of descending steps. He offers three interrelated definitions that move from the general to the specific. The first concerns humankind, the second concerns artists, and the third concerns Pater. This missing section is important because the definition of humankind, upon which the other two definitions are based, is in line with Lévi-Strauss' definition of humankind. Also omitted from the 1931 revision are statements Burke makes in the fifth part of the original essay about beauty in relation to his introductory definitions. These statements are significant because they define beauty in structuralist terms.

In Lévi-Strauss' structuralism, the human mind is defined as a constant. It is such a constant in the sense that the unconscious laws of the mind that structure reality are identical within every mind. Lévi-Strauss expresses this view in the article "The Effectiveness of Symbols." There, he says, "these laws are the same for all individuals and in all instances where the unconscious pursues its activity" (203). He also expresses this view in "History and Anthropology," when he states his belief that the "forms" imposed by the mind upon the "content" of the world "are fundamentally the same for all mankind--ancient and modern, primitive and civilized" (21). It is only the content of the forms and its laws that change in Lévi-Strauss' structuralism. Thus, for example, languages vary greatly in their symbolic content, but all obey the same "structural laws" ("The Effectiveness of the Symbol" 203). Tales and myths are the same. For Lévi-Strauss, they offer a wide variety of symbolic content across time and geography, but underneath the stories, deeper down, they are structured by the same formal laws. As

such, all languages are related just as all tales and myths are related. In a 1977 radio discussion, Lévi-Strauss defined structuralism in terms of these constants of the mind and culture: "Probably there is nothing more than that in the structuralist approach; it is the quest for the invariant, or for the invariant element among superficial differences" (*Meaning and Myth*, 8).

Burke begins "Notes on Walter Pater" with a definition of man. For his first sentence he states, "It seems that man, once he became man, has remained a constant, 'progress' being a mere change of emphasis, a stressing of some new phase of this constant" (53). This definition is very much in line with Lévi-Strauss's definition of man. Both recognize that man possesses a permanent dimension. Burke calls it "a constant" and Lévi-Strauss calls it "the invariant." Both also stress the existence of this permanence across history. Burke says it has been the same ever since "he [man] became man" or, in other words, since he made the evolutionary leap. Lévi-Strauss says the permanent is the same for "ancient and modern" and "primitive and civilized." Both definitions also treat change similarly: it is a secondary occurrence that is distinct from the permanent. Burke expresses this in several ways. He places the term "progress" in quotation marks. This suggests that progress is not truly progress. Change is not the change that goes so far as to transform man into some kind of new man. Burke also refers to the change as a "mere change of emphasis, a stressing of some new phase of this constant." The term "mere" minimizes the magnitude of change. The "emphasis" that is changing suggests that what is changing is the point of view on the permanent, not the permanent itself. The reference to "new phase" further supports this by pointing to the moon, which appears to change as it passes through its monthly phases based on the way it is lit in the night sky by light

from the sun. Lévi-Strauss makes clear that change is secondary and apart from the permanent by referring to changes as "superficial differences." For Burke and Lévi-Strauss, then, man is a two dimensional being: There is the permanent and there is that which changes. Moreover, it is this permanent that makes the man of the present the same as the man of the past and the man of the future.

Burke flows next into a definition of the artist. This definition is related to his definition of man. The artist ideally puts into his or her work both dimensions of man: that which changes and the permanent. Each dimension, moreover, gives the work a different, but essential quality. The artist puts the changeable into his or her work by representing the phase of the constant that is currently stressed by society. This dimension gives the work the quality of uniqueness. The phase is very specific. A different society or the same society at a different point in time is expected to emphasize a different phase. As such, there is plenty of opportunity for originality by the artist. Burke expresses this when he states, "Each new condition, each new combination of forces, each new economic-intellectual situation, produces some new possibility of artistic excellence" (53). The artist puts the permanent into his or her work by also representing the constant itself. This dimension gives the work the quality of universality and creates the works "lasting value" (53) because it is the same across time and place. Burke calls the artist who can express both dimensions "deeply contemporaneous" (53). This description gives the picture of two levels. On the top is the contemporaneous. This is the changeable phases of the constant that vary with history and social geography. At the lower level, deeper down, is the constant that is outside of time and place. The artist who is "deeply contemporaneous" is Burke's true artist. These artists are able to pass through

the top level of their "age" and "touch" the deeper level where Burke, in perfect structualist form, locates "the constant of humanity" (53).

After, man and artist, Burke moves to Pater. The first thing he does is identify Pater as a deeply contemporaneous artist. In Burke's words, "In Pater we find not the literal paralleling of his times, but this deeper contemporaneity" (53). Pater thus represents both change and the permanent in his art. If he had focused only at the level of his times ("only paralleling his times"), he would express only the changeable phases of the constant that occur in society at the surface. He, however, switches from a horizontal focus to a vertical focus that directs him below the times to the deeper level of the timeless: "the constant of humanity." This, Burke adds, makes his art "the resolution of his times" (53). The meaning of the term "resolution" is not specified, but its main *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* definition is "the act or process of reducing to simpler form" (978). This suggests that the constant Pater succeeds in touching is a simpler form than the multitude of the phases of the constant that are constantly being built on top of it by this or that society.

In the fourth part of the essay, Burke addresses beauty. It comes up in a discussion about Pater's "use of ideology" or "ideas" (57) in his books. For Burke, Pater does not focus on the "argument" (57) offered by an ideology. If he had, his books would likely be counted among those that "attain the mere superficialities of the contemporary" (57). They would, in other words, remain only at the surface of society, running parallel to the times. Pater, according to Burke, focuses instead on the "flavor of beauty" (57) of an ideology. In this way, his books go below the surface of society and the times. As Burke announces it, "Here, certainly, is an instance of that deeper contemporaneity which I have

mentioned" (57). This statement was omitted from the 1931 revision for *Counter-Statement*, but is significant because it identifies beauty with "the constant of humanity." Beauty is either a quality of the constant or the constant itself that the true artist seeks to touch.

Burke and the Mind: Background

"The Psychology of Form" and "The Poetic Process" are two essays of 1925 that move Burke's theory of art the closest it will come in the 1920s to a structuralist position on the human mind. The essays themselves form a pair. They were intended by Burke to be part of a three essay set. He composed "The Psychology of Form" and then "The Poetic Process" in late 1924 and early 1925. He did not write the envisioned third essay (Selzer 144-145). The two finished essays ended up being published in reverse order in different magazines: "The Poetic Process" in May in *The Guardian* and "Psychology and Form" in July in *The Dial*, which had turned down "The Poetic Process" (Selzer 144). Burke later, in 1931, included these two essays in his first book of theory *Counter-Statement*. There, Burke returned the essays to their original sequence: "The Psychology of Form" precedes "The Poetic Process." It seems logical, given their original order of composition as part of a single project and Burke's later ordering of the essays in *Counter-Statement*, to address "Psychology of Form" and then address "The Poetic Process."

But, before beginning on "Psychology of Form," another much earlier article by Burke warrants attention. It has not been recognized that "Psychology of Form" is very closely related to and draws directly from the 1922 book review called "The Critic of Dostoevsky" for its key concepts. Burke had envisioned "Psychology and Form" and

"The Poetic Process" to be part of a trinity of works. By beginning with "The Critic of Dostoevsky" in a discussion of "Psychology and Form" and "The Poetic Process" such a three-part set is very neatly formed.

In "The Critic of Dostoevsky," Burke is officially reviewing two new novels by J. Middleton Murry: *Still Life* and *The Things We Are*. He dutifully makes Murry and his works the exclusive topic of his discussion for the first three paragraphs, which is about one-third of the article. But, when Burke reaches the fourth paragraph, he is once again "automatically" (672), to use his transitional term and justification, launched into a larger discussion of literary theory. This time, the main topic is the ideal positive relationship that should exist between science and art versus the current negative relationship that has in fact developed between science and art. The key distinction Burke introduces in describing these relationships is expressed through his conceptual pair psychology of subject-matter and psychology of form.

Science produces a type of work or text that Burke calls "the document" (673). These documents convey "almost pure information" (672). By "pure," Burke means that the information is given little or no added form by the scientist. It is, in Burke's words, "a hodgepodge rather than a schematization" (673). The goal of the document and its author is primarily to reveal these raw facts. Burke calls this scientific preference for seeing and communicating about the world "the psychology of subject-matter" (672). The rise of such science as a distinct discipline, according to Burke, should be positive for the arts. His reasoning is that science's strict focus on the subject-matter of its documents should leave art free to move beyond just revealing raw facts about the world in "hodgepodge" fashion. In Burke's words, one would normally expect a "flourishing of science [...] to

purge literature of any documentary obligations" (673).

This "purge," however, has not occurred. In fact, just the opposite has taken place. Science has become, in Burke's estimation, "a burden" to art "rather than an instrument of liberation" (673). The reason is that art has made science its model. As Burke puts it, focusing on writing, "literature was swept into a sympathetic movement" (673). The artist has adopted a psychology of subject-matter and aims to create works of art (think realism) that are science-like documents. Artworks that are not of a documentary type are now rejected by the current thought on art for their lack of pure information. Burke gives such an example from his day of this way of thinking and judging: "We find both Mr. Matthew Josephson and Mr. Burton Rascoe, for instance, objecting to [James] Joyce because there are more psychoanalytic facts to be obtained from the reading of Kraft-Ebbing or Freud than from *Ulysses*" (672). He then amplifies the absurdity (tragedy) of this by continuing on with a prediction about the future if art moves further along this pro-document path: "And I trust soon to hear these Messrs objecting to Cezanne because his paintings do not contain nearly so much data on trees as can be found in a bulletin of the Forestry Department" (672).

The novel, for Burke, has definitely followed the pro-science trend in literature. It has been swept up and become dominated by a psychology of subject-matter. This began, according to Burke's timeline of literary history, with the novels of Dostoevsky and extends to the two new novels by Murry. Thus, when Burke says he is "The Critic of Dostoevsky" in the title of the review, he means that he is a critic of the "tradition" (674) that has developed in the novel due to science. The basis for his criticism is the non-aesthetics of the document. Subject-matter alone, in Burke's opinion, has nothing to do

with beauty. As such, documents offer a collection of data that is "neither beautiful or unbeautiful" (673). The novelists who are influenced by a psychology of subject-matter produce books that are just like these documents. They emphasize the collection of data and overlook the creation of beauty. Burke offers a long passage from *The Things We Are* as an example of the psychology of subject-matter in the novel. He then comments on the passage, stating, "Perhaps the author [Murry] has established whether it is hate or envy. But I take liberty to assure the reader that he will not care. The information is there; but the issue hardly seems a contribution to beauty" (673). Burke places the document "into quite another plane of considerations from purely aesthetic ones" (673). The novelists, by "giv[ing] too much attention to the document" (673) have placed the novel into this same non-aesthetic plane.

The alternative to a psychology of subject-matter is identified by Burke as a "psychology of form" (672). Its focus, as the name indicates, is the form that is given to facts rather than the facts themselves. Burke prefers this psychology for the artist. The reason is again aesthetics. In his opinion, form involves or is beauty. As such, the novelist who adopts a psychology of form will aim to create works that are beautiful. Burke offers a long passage from *Still Life* as an example of the psychology of form in the novel. He then comments on the passage like before with the other long passage: "Murry has given us a mechanism of beauty. A programme is officially announced; a blare of trumpets has been sounded. Similarly in *Macbeth* when the porter scene follows the murder scene this is no documentary *coup* [that is, not just facts for the sake of facts], but a purely functional one" (674). Murry, like Shakespeare, has produced beauty in his work by giving the facts a form that has "functional value" (674) within the text. This is, Burke

goes on to say, "really the primary quality of art" (674). The document tragically takes this quality of beauty away from art and Murry "attains it too seldom" (674).

Burke's review is thus a plea to artists. He does not want art to be subsumed by science. He wants art to stand apart from science. The way to achieve this positive separation is for artists to return the ideal of the document back to scientists and stop valuing pure information. Science can then go on devoting itself to the collection of facts based on a psychology of subject-matter while art resumes its proper course and freely devotes itself to form and the creation of beauty based on a psychology of form. This, according to Burke's literary theory, would draw the perfect dividing line between science and art by keeping the works of art squarely and separately in the plane of aesthetic considerations.

Psychology and Form and Eloquence

Burke begins the 1925 essay "Psychology and Form" with an extremely long description of the fourth scene of the first act of *Hamlet* with regard to the way Shakespeare leads up to the first appearance of the ghost. Burke gives this meeting so much attention (about one and one-half pages) because he believes it is a perfect example for defining and connecting psychology and form and, as he adds later in the essay, eloquence, which is a synonym he uses for beauty. The detail Burke offers in this essay goes beyond the limited discussion of how formal beauty functioned in "The Critic of Dostoevsky." It also moves this key function more deeply into the human mind.

Form and psychology, as Burke uses the terms here, represent the two sides of a work of art. The form, as usual, refer to the inside. It is the shape the artist give the subject-

matter of a work. The psychology refers to the outside and has a new emphasis. It is the "psychology of the audience" (35) with regard to a work. In the essay, Burke argues that these two sides of a work, the internal and external, are intimately connected: form is united with the psychology of the audience. The nature of the connection is functional. Form ideally appeals to an audience's psychology such that the audience responds favorably, which can include intense positive emotions, to the presentation of the work. Burke describes this connection several ways. One way is very often quoted: "form is the creation of an appetite in the mind of the auditor, and the adequate satisfying of that appetite" (35). Another way refers back to *Hamlet* in general terms: "If, in a work of art, the poet says something, let us say, about a meeting, writes in such a way that we desire to observe that meeting, and then, if he places that meeting before us—that is form. While obviously, that is also the psychology of the audience, since it involves desires and their appeasements" (35).

The problem, in Burke's opinion, is that this important connection has been broken or, more accurately, abandoned. This has occurred for the same reason Burke gave in "The Critic of Dostoevsky" for the artists being deflected from the psychology of form and toward the psychology of subject-matter: the rising influence of science on artists. In "Psychology and Form," according to Burke, "The flourishing of science has been so vigorous" over "the last century" that it has altered our "understanding of psychology in art" (36). Instead of understanding the psychology of art in terms of form, it is now understood in terms of subject-matter or, as Burke phrases it here, "as the purveying of information" (36). A work is thus judged quantitatively on its amount of its raw facts. That is what matters instead of the quality of the "technique" (36) and the way the facts

are shaped and presented. An example of this scientific "taste" (36) in art is the same as the example Burke used in "The Critic of Dostoevsky." He reports that "a contemporary writer has objected to Joyce's *Ulysses* on the ground that there are more psychoanalytic data available in Freud" (36). Burke also extends this way of judging art to the paintings of Cezanne, as he did in "The Critic of Dostoevsky": "one might, similarly, denounce Cezanne's trees in favor of state forestry bulletins" (36).

Burke moves on from science to a discipline he did not address in "The Critic of Dostoevsky": music. The way Burke describes music, it is the opposite of science. Music is also the art that can most resist the influence of science and its psychology of information. This is because music "by its nature" (38) involves the psychology of form, which is why it is the opposite of science. "Here," says Burke, "form cannot atrophy" (38). He explains this with only a single sentence: "Every dissonant chord cries for its solution, and whether the musician resolves or refuses to resolve this dissonance into the chord which the body cries for, he is dealing with human appetites" (38). This sentence warrants closer attention because it offers a key for better understanding what Burke has in mind by a psychology of form. It also allows for that understanding to be connected to Sartre's existentialism and Lévi-Strauss' structuralism.

A musician selects and arranges the notes for a musical work from a musical scale. The scale contains certain notes called root notes. These are notes that any series of notes from the scale need to begin and end on in order to sound complete to the human ear (and mind). If the root note is not the end note, then the series of notes will sound incomplete and unsatisfying. In these cases, the last note or chord will not be, in Burke's word, "resolved" into the root note or chord. It will instead leave the listener hanging, waiting,

because the non-root note always points towards the root note within a scale. This fact of music provides a key to understanding how the psychology of form functions for Burke. The form is an arrangement of subject-matter that is like an arrangement of notes of a scale. This arrangement of subject-matter ideally begins and ends so that it will be experienced by the audience as complete and satisfying, as if the work ended or resolved into its root note like in music. Burke's example of the meeting can be read along this line: The poet promises a future meeting. If the poet writes skillfully, he will arrange the elements of his work so that the future meeting becomes like a root note that the audience will expect and desire as the natural conclusion or resolution of the original promise. When it finally occurs, the appetite of the audience will be satisfied.

Burke's appeal to music in "Psychology and Form" parallels Sartre's appeal to music in *Nausea*. Both theorists are attracted to necessity. As previously discussed, Sartre uses music in *Nausea* as an alternative to the contingency of existence. Roquentin feels that there is no reason why the world around him is the way that it is. It could just as well be different. The only exception he finds is music, which is represented by the jazz song "Some of these Days." Its melody of notes sound to him as if their arrangement were necessary and had to be just as it is. From beginning to end, the notes form a path that he says, "seems inevitable, so strong is the necessity of this music" (22). Burke's interest in music is based on this same necessity. The notes of the musical scale have to be arranged according to fixed rules and follow a certain course of development. For example, a song that begins with an E chord must involve other notes that lead to another E chord on which to end. Similarly, a promised meeting between Hamlet and the ghost must eventually take place. In art, for Burke, form is valuable because it is the expression or

formation of these necessary relationships between a work's various elements or subject-matter.

Burke, however, unlike Sartre, goes on to connect form to the psychology of the audience. This moves Burke into the realm of structuralism. It does so by suggesting that the necessity expressed by the arrangement of matter in a work of art corresponds to a form that in some way exists a priori in or as part of the human mind. Thus, the musical scales were not created by the Greeks so much as they were discovered or realized. The relationships they recorded between the notes express relationships that are properties of human thought. A root note is a root note in the human mind, not just on paper or parchment. In this sense, Burke's psychology of form makes form and its necessity a dialectical interaction between artwork and the inherent psychology of its audience. This is why he says that when it comes to the "relationship between psychology and form [...] one is to be defined in terms of the other" (35).

Burke makes eloquence the topic of the final third of his essay. There, he uses it for the same aesthetic dividing line he drew in "The Critic of Dostoevsky." For him, eloquence does not apply to works of information that focus of facts (that is, subject-matter) rather than form. Eloquence only applies to works that focus on the form instead of the facts. It is the arrangement of these facts by the artist and not the facts themselves that are eloquent. The degree of eloquence, as Burke describes it, varies with the "intensity" (44) of the appetite and the resolution of that appetite it produces in an audience. The greater the eloquence, the higher the intensity; and the poorer the eloquence, the lesser the intensity. For Burke, it is the works with the highest intensity that have the most appeal. An example of great eloquence and its corresponding high

intensity is identified by him as the ghost meeting in *Hamlet*. Shakespeare introduces the expectation that Hamlet will meet the ghost. He then teases the audience with several instances that seem perfect for the ghost to appear, but the ghost does not manifest itself. This progressively builds up the appetite in the audience for the meeting between the two so that when it does finally occur, this "temporary set of frustrations" has "serve[d] to make the satisfactions of fulfillment more intense" (35). Shakespeare, Burke goes on, then begins anew, as skillfully eloquent as usual for the bard of Stratford: "At first desiring solely to see Hamlet confront the ghost, we now want Hamlet to learn from the ghost the details—which are, however, with shrewdness and husbandry, reserved for [the later] 'Scene V.—Another Part of the Platform'" (35).

Earlier in the essay, Burke made a union of form and psychology. As he said, "one is to be defined in terms of the other" (35). Now, in the third part of the essay, Burke adds eloquence to this union that connects work and mind. All three can be defined in terms of each other. He expresses this late in the essay when he says, "we [meaning him as author] have made three terms synonymous: form, psychology, and eloquence" (43). This suggests that he places eloquence not only in the form of a work, but also in the psychology or mind of the audience. In these two locations, it functions as "the basis of appeal" (40), bringing together work and audience, and keeping them together over time, as the work is enjoyed over and over through many a "repetition" (40), like a rereading of *Hamlet* or replaying the song "Some of these Days." This supports Burke's claim that eloquence "is simply the end of art" (44) and leads him to the more powerful and twice repeated statement that eloquence is also "its [art's] essence" (43 and 44).

The Law of Beauty

"The Poetic Process" is more overtly structuralist than "Psychology and Form." Burke jumps in by emphasizing and explaining right away that form is in the human mind. He does this by using the form of a crescendo. For him, a crescendo is the arrangement of "different material" so that it will "embody the principle of the crescendo," which he defines as the "gradual rise to a crisis" (281). The "different material" or, in other words, subject-matter, comes from the world of the artist. Two general examples are "A shoots B in crescendo" and "X weathers a flood and rescues Y in a crescendo" (282). In these cases, the world provides the details of the shooting and the rescue for the artist to select and arrange within his or her work. This is the way, according to Burke, that an artist will "particularize, or individuate, the crescendo in any of the myriad aspects possible to human experience, localizing or channelizing it according to the chance details of his own life and vision" (282). The "principle of the crescendo," in contrast, comes from the mind itself. It is internal, not external. Burke expresses this in his explanation for the presence of the crescendo in art: "the work of art utilizes climactic arrangement because the human brain has a pronounced potentiality for being arrested, or entertained, by such an arrangement" (281). This means that for Burke the crescendo is used by artists because "we 'think' in a crescendo" (281). The quotation marks Burke puts around "think" suggest that this is not free thinking, but a thinking in accord with a fixed pattern. This is supported very strongly when Burke refers to forms repeatedly as "innate forms of the mind" (282 and 284). In fact, Burke reaches his apex of structuralism when he further elevates these "innate forms" to the status of "laws" (282 and 284).

Burke goes on to list some of the forms of the mind that he recognizes in addition to

the crescendo. They are "contrast, comparison, balance, repetition, disclosure, reversal, contraction, expansion, magnification, [and] series," all of which he subsumes as minor divisions" under the "two major forms, unity and diversity" (282). For him, none of these forms (including crescendo) have any "emotive value" (282) in themselves. They do not, in other words, have any force of appeal so long as they are only principles of the mind. There, they are strictly neutral. It is only when subject-matter is chosen and arranged by the artist into one of these forms that the form "can play upon human emotions" (282). Now, the form is activated. It has, by being "externalize[d]" (286) or made concrete by its subject-matter, acquired the force of appeal that can move an audience. The force of the appeal of the form will however vary. It depends on the skill and craftsmanship of the artist in selecting and presenting the subject-matter. As Burke states it, "technique makes the vigor, or saliency, or power of the art-work by determining its arrangement" (286). An example of great skill identified by Burke in "Psychology and Form" was Shakespeare and the way he selected and presented the material that built up to the eventual meeting between Hamlet and the ghost.

After introducing form and placing it securely in the mind, Burke turns to the purpose of art. He does so in his description of self-expression. For him, self-expression can be of "two kinds" (287). The first kind primarily, if not exclusively, focuses on the self. An individual expresses his or her current emotion for the sake of expressing that emotion. It is, to a great degree, automatic and without reflection. Burke calls this self-expression "the uttering of emotion" (287). He is also critical of its popularity in modern art. As he puts it, "Self-expression today is too often confused with pure utterance, the spontaneous cry of distress, the almost reflex vociferation of triumph, the clucking of the pheasant as

he is startled into flight" (287). This type of self-expression, which would be the expression of the immersed artist and idealists, has little concern with others, with an audience, or with communication. The second kind of self-expression identified by Burke focuses beyond the self. An individual seeks "to provoke emotion in others" (287). Burke, accordingly, calls this self-expression "the evocation of emotion" (287). Its aim, unlike the uttering of emotion, is communication. The artist thinks in terms of an audience to be moved. In Burke's opinion, it is this second type of self-expression that should be emphasized in art. The artist must not only have a statement or emotion to emit, but "a desire to produce effects upon his audience" (288). This definition of the artist and art leads Burke to beauty because for him "beauty is the term we apply to the poet's success in evoking our emotions" (291).

In "The Poetic Process," Burke identifies two types of beauty. They can be distinguished as a relative beauty and an absolute beauty. The relative beauty is based on the symbol (or symbols) used in a work. For Burke, the artist normally begins the poetic process in response to a personal mood. The artist is emotional about something. Then, the artist "generates a symbol to externalize" (289) this emotion. Burke refers to this as "the translation of his [the artist's] original mood into a symbol" (289). This symbol, according to Burke, can appeal to an audience if it also expresses their immediate mood. As he explains, "This symbol, I should say, attracts us by its power of formula [...]. If we are enmeshed in some nodus of events and the nodus of emotions surrounding those events, and someone meets us with a diagnosis (simplification) of our partially conscious, partially unconscious situation, we are charmed by the sudden illumination which this formula throws upon our own lives" (291). The result of this charm of the symbol is that

we call the work in which it is contained beautiful.

The absolute beauty, in contrast, is based on the form used in the work. It, for Burke, involves much more than just the symbol itself. The beauty of the symbol concerns "the ramifications of the symbol" (291). The beauty of the form concerns "the manner in which these ramifications are presented" (291). Burke also expresses this by saying that "beyond the message [the symbol], there is style [form]" (293). The form will appeal to an audience if it is skillfully constructed by the artist. In these cases, according to Burke, "it will be the technical, rather than the symbolic, elements of the poet's [artist's] mechanism that I shall find effective in evoking my emotions" (291). The result of this evocation is that Burke or anyone similarly approaching a work from the angle of mechanics, will call the work which contains such elements beautiful.

The beauty of works based on symbols is relative because symbols change. A symbol, in Burke's view, will only maintain its charm and appeal for as long as it captures the particular situation and matching mood in which an individual is enmeshed. As soon as that situation is superseded by another situation, then the original symbol will be superseded by a new symbol. Symbols are temporal. They come and they go. Burke makes this point by explaining that "when the emphasis of society has changed, new symbols are demanded to formulate new complexities, and the symbols of the past become less appealing of themselves" (292). At this time, the works that the original symbols influenced people to call beautiful lose their bloom. Their beauty fades with the emotional power of their symbol to move people. New works with new symbols will replace them in the public's eyes and ears and these works will be thought of as the new beautiful.

The beauty of the form, on the other hand, is absolute because the forms are permanent. The material and symbols that they arrange will vary, but the form itself does not change. A crescendo, for example, as an innate principle of the mind, is always a crescendo, be it a shooting crescendo or a flood-rescue crescendo. For Burke, if such a crescendo is skillfully constructed by an artist so that its technical elements are emotionally powerful, then the work that contains that crescendo will always be judged beautiful based on that excellence of form. It does not matter the current situation of the audience. The form is atemporal. As long as the human mind remains the same human mind, the beauty of a form will remain the beauty of the form. It is for this reason that Hamlet's meeting with the ghost will forever be replayed on an infinity of stages for an endless stream of unique audiences.

CHAPTER FIVE:

CONCLUSION

The Dialectical Theory of Art

A general schematic of the dialectical theory of art that is developed by Burke in his book reviews and essays from the 1920s "Axiomatics" to the 1925 "The Poetic Process" can be drawn along these lines. It consists of four main divisions. Each of these divisions is composed of two opposing subdivisions that are combined and transcended. The first three main divisions add up to produce the fourth main division.

1. Consciousness	1a. creativity (withdrawal / lack) (1b. form (structuring / laws)
2. Intentionality	2a. originality (advance art) (2b. communication (understandable / moving)
3. Action	3a. art-emotion (passion for aesthetics) (3b. artistry (skill / intensity)
4. True Art	4a. advance art (original) (4b. beautiful (universal)

Figure 10. Dialectical Theory of Art.

The starting point of the dialectical theory of art is consciousness. There are two opposing dimensions or functions of this consciousness: creativity and form. The creativity is the freedom of the artist to withdraw. The artist can step back from the rules

or axioms of art as well as from the world and all of the emotions of the world. It is a reflective state. It is here that the artist can question his or her aesthetics. This is a consciousness that is no longer only immersed in life. The immersed consciousness left behind, as it were, accepts the status quo. The axioms of art are taken for granted and the passions of the moment push the artist forward without rest and the opportunity to consider matters of aesthetics. The artist remains at the level of being. A free, non-immersed consciousness, in contrast, can move from pure presence or being towards non-being. It is here that the artist can conceive of art and a world in their imagination that is different from the current art and world. This unreal art and world will possess something that is missing from or lacking in the real art and world.

The formal dimension or function of consciousness is the basis upon which the artist structures the world. The artist can select and arrange the subject-matter of a work so that it expresses one of the limited number of forms that exist within the human mind. These forms of the mind are a priori principles or laws that define the ways that subject-matter can be related to other subject-matter. They provide only the how, not the what. The subject-matter can vary and is determined by the artist based on his or her own interests and particular circumstances. The forms do not have any emotive power in themselves. They are neutral as pure forms of the mind. They only acquire emotive power when they are used by an artist to construct a relationship between specific subject-matter in the world. Then, the form is activated, as it were, and can appeal to an audience since all minds are predisposed to understand and respond to these innate forms. An artist can ignore order. He or she can create a work that is all subject-matter and no form. In such a work, everything and anything is included. It is a hodgepodge of raw facts and

unrelated data. There is no selection and no arrangement. The work will have little or no appeal to an audience based on the way human's naturally think.

Intentionality is the second major division of the dialectical theory of art. The artist must have a dual aim. The artist must aim to produce a work that is original and advances art and the artist must also aim to produce a work that is both understandable and moving to an audience. It is not enough for an artist to be original. The artist has to do something more than just bring into existence some new artistic element that was lacking in art. The artist must make it his or her goal to be original and advance art. In this way, the artist will more likely produce a sequence of works that are increasingly original as the artist focuses on and learns from practice more about originality. As a result, these works will smoothly and steadily advance art. If the artist does not have this intention, then art will not make the same progress. The artist may be original in one work and then, because originality is not his or her focus, will not be original in the succeeding work. As such, art will not advance in a steady forward march. Instead, the advance will be choppy, often going backwards, haphazard, and much slower.

The artist must also aim to produce a work that is understandable. This means that the artist cannot be too original or completely new. In such a case of extreme individualism, which is based on idealism, the artist would speak only to him or herself. No one else would understand the message of the artist's work. The work would exist like a distant planet that people puzzle over as they peer at it through a telescope. In even more extreme or absurd cases, such as Dada, the artist may not even understand his or her own work. The artist would be in the same quizzical state as everyone else who confronts the work. In addition to understandability, the artist must also aim to produce a work that

moves others. It is not enough for an artist to express his or her own emotion. The true artist goes beyond this and seeks to affect the emotions of others. This will, like the requirement of understandability, help counter individualism and its emphasis on pure self-expression by creating an outward or social orientation in the artist.

The third dimension of the dialectical theory of art is action. Artists must act to carry out their intention to advance art and communicate with others through their works. Both depend on form. As such, artists must act to develop the formal qualities of their works. This is not easy to accomplish; it is very difficult. Action alone does not guarantee success. An artist must also act with artistry or, in other words, with the technical knowledge and skill for arranging and presenting the subject matter of a work so that it best expresses a form. The higher the level of an artist's artistry, the greater is the intensity of the form of his or her work and the more it consequently affects and appeals to the emotions of an audience. The unacceptable alternative to acting with artistry is acting through direct inspiration. In this mode, artists do not have any concern with form. Artists just express themselves in whatever way they feel or are possessed in the moment. Burke distinguishes this approach from artistry in the 1922 essay "Last Words on the Ephebe" by saying it is "the minimizing of deliberation and training, and the over emphasizing of the inspiration hot from the fire" (897). He also says that because of it, "Expression becomes untrammelled expression" (897). This mode is a problem because it is cold to aesthetics. As Burke puts it in another 1922 essay, "Art and the Hope Chest," "The excessive appetite is of itself positively inimical to the production of beauty" (102).

The act of artistry is not, however, free from all emotion, nor should it be. Artistry involves or gives rise to an emotion of its own. The artist must possess or be moved by a

passion for the formal qualities of art and their realization in his or her work. This is the art-emotion or as Burke also calls it in "Art and the Hope Chest," "the aesthetic emotion" (897). It emerges when the artist steps back from the emotions of the world. Burke does not say much about this emotion, but it is the lead emotion that propels the actions of the true artist toward form and beauty.

The fourth main division of the dialectical theory of art is the sum of the first three main divisions. When consciousness, intentionality, and action all come together along with their respective subdivisions of creativity / form, originality / communication, and artistry / art-emotion, then the result is true art. This highest level of art consists of works that both advance art and are beautiful. The work advances art by being original. It brings into existence through the creativity of the artist some element or angle of approach that is lacking in current art. In this way, the work does not repeat the past. It goes beyond the status quo. The work may stretch a current form of art, such as the novel. Or, it may be so original that it creates a new genre for the specific time and place of the work. Burke describes such a special textual work in the 1924 book review "Ethics of the Artist": "There are certain books which are the result of a *genre*, and these books are understood and appreciated best after we know the aesthetic conditions under which they arose. There are other books (much rarer) [that is, true art] which serve to justify a *genre*, so that the aesthetic conditions are understood and appreciated best after we know the books" (421, my underline).

A work is beautiful in terms of its form. It possesses a form through the craftsmanship of the artist that greatly appeals to and emotionally moves an audience by the intensity it produces in the creation and satisfaction of an audience's expectations and desires. This

beauty ranges from the form of the sentences (the style) to the form of the work "*in toto*" (411), as indicated in the 1924 book review "Engineering with Words." This beauty is ahistoric. The subject-matter of the form will change over time and across geography. Particular symbols will come and go with circumstances. Messages will be reinterpreted and revalued. The form, however, is a constant. It corresponds to principles within every human mind. As such, formal beauty is a universal that transcends all periods and places. This also makes beauty the permanent quality for distinguishing true art and artists. It is an absolute measure. Artists are thereby pointed away from approaches and other fields of potential influence that do not recognize or emphasize form and beauty in their works, such as realism and science. In these, truth rather than beauty is valued: a work must contain facts or representations that correspond to the physical world. Finally, and most importantly, as the measure of true art, beauty is also the essence of art. A beautiful work expresses or is this very rare essence.

Consequences of the Dialectical Theory of Art

The dialectical theory of art has four main consequences for the study of Burke. First, it unifies the early essays and book reviews. It is easy for these works to appear largely unrelated for a number of reasons. Each was originally presented as an independent work, addressing its own topic or book. The theoretical statements that Burke added to many of the articles likewise varied in theme and often introduced new vocabulary, definitions, and distinctions. Finally, the essays and book reviews were published in different periodicals and across a number of years. The dialectical theory of art counters these very real centrifugal forces. It does so by providing the framework or code or, even,

la langue, that pulls the essays and book reviews together into a single coherent system. These seemingly divergent articles can now be interpreted as developing the interrelated divisions and subdivisions that work to create and define the dialectical theory of art.

The second consequence is that the dialectical theory of art revalues the 1920s. As mentioned at the start, the expression "early Burke" has come to mean the Burke of the 1930s in Burkean studies. Their works typically overlook or barely see the early essays and book reviews of the 1920s in favor of focusing on the 1930s as the first meaningful period of theory for Burke. They begin, in other words, with his books of theory rather than his articles published before these books. The dialectical theory of art counters this particular periodization of Burke's theorizing. It distinguishes the essays and book reviews of the first half of the 1920s as expressing Burke's first complex and highly integrated theory. As such, it pushes the meaning of "early Burke" back ten years, before any of his theory books, to the second decade of the 1900s. This new timeline makes the 1920s the first significant period of theory for Burke.

The third consequence is that the dialectical theory of art establishes strong reason for both the existentialism of Sartre and the structuralism of Lévi-Strauss to be considered in future studies of Burke. In his own statements, Burke put a distance between his ideas and those of existentialism in general and Sartre in particular. Burkean studies have mostly accepted his self-imposed separation. They have also given little attention to the relationship between Burke's theories and structuralism. The dialectical theory of art challenges both of these separations. It does so by bringing existentialism and structuralism together into a highly structured and balanced union within Burke's works. This union is expressed by the four subdivisions of the dialectical theory of art. Each

subdivision, as discussed, is composed of two distinct elements that it interlocks. In each case, one element is existential and one element is structural. They can be diagramed along this line:

	Existential	Structural
Consciousness:	Creativity	Form
Intentionality:	Original	Communication
Action:	Art-Emotion	Artistry
True Art:	Advances Art	Beautiful

Figure 11. Existential and Structural Subdivisions.

Burke's dialectic theory of art, then, is a dialectic of existentialism and structuralism. It very precisely combines concepts and principles offered by both so that it ultimately forms a theory of art that is more complete than either existentialism or structuralism alone. Burke was thus not only ahead of his time, he was also ahead of Sartre and Lévi-Strauss in terms of his fullness of vision.

The fourth and final consequence is that the dialectical theory of art may itself play a useful role in future studies of Burke. This is so because, as Burke's foundational theory, it can help to better understand his later theories. The 1935 book *Permanence and Change* is a case in point. In this, Burke switches from a focus on the artist and art to a focus on the individual and society. He does this by treating the individual as if he or she were an artist and society as if it were a work of art. In a letter to Malcolm Cowley, dated September 22, 1933, during the early days of composing *Permanence and Change*, Burke defines man as "homo poeta" and writes that this "is the central and most pliant concept from which to frame our concept of purpose and our use of instrumentalities."

Accordingly, in *Permanence and Change*, he selects poetry as the primary metaphor for his sociological theory. As he expresses it, "If there are radical changes to be made in the State, what metaphor can better guide us than the poetic one as to the direction in which these changes must point?" (267). The transformation of artist or poet into the Everyman suggests that the theory that Burke develops in *Permanence and Change* may also involve a parallel transformation. An interesting hypotheses would be that Burke transforms his original dialectical theory of art into a dialectical theory of life. The divisions and the subdivisions would remain similar, but the new goal would not be limited to beautiful art: it would extend its circumference outward to a beautiful world.

APPENDIX A

Chronology of Essays and Book Reviews Published by Burke from 1920 through 1925

Essays and reviews addressed at length in my text are indicated with an asterisk.

Essays are indicated with an "e" and reviews are indicated with an "r."

1. "Axiomatics"* r (April 1920) *The Dial*
2. "Alcohol in the Eighties" r (October 1920) *The Literary Review*.
3. "A Transitional Novel"* r (November 1920) *The Literary Review*.
4. "Felix Kills His Author" r (December 1920) *The Literary Review*.
5. "Approaches to Rémy De Gourmont"* e (February 1921) *The Dial*.
6. "Puritans Defended" r (February 1921) *The Literary Review*.
7. "Dadaisme is France's Latest Literary Fad"* e (February 1921) *N.Y. Tribune*.
8. "The Modern English Novel Plus"* r (May 1921) *The Dial*.
9. "The Bon Dieu of M. James" r (June 1921) *The Freeman*.
10. "Untitled review of 'Pens for Wings'" r (June 1921) *The Freeman*.
11. "The Armour of Jules Laforge" e (August 1921) *Contact*.
12. "The Editing of Oneself"* r (August 1921) *The Dial*.
13. "Modifying the Eighteenth Century" r (December 1921) *The Dial*.
14. "The Art of Carl Sprinchorn"* e (December 1921) *The Arts*.

15. “Chekhov and Three Others”* r (January 1922) *The New York Times Book Review*.

16. “Heroism and Books”* r (January 1922) *The Dial*.

17. “Untitled review of *Introduction to Mythology*” r (January 1922) *The Freeman*.

18. “The Correspondence of Flaubert”* e (February 1922) *The Dial*.

19. “Heaven’s First Law” r (February 1922) *The Dial*.

20. “André Gide, Bookman”* e (April 1922) *The Freeman*.

21. “*Fides Quaerens Intellectum*”* r (May 1922) *The Dial*.

22. “Untitled review of Greek-Vase Painting r (May 1922) *The Freeman*.

23. “Last Words on the Ephebe” e (August 1922) *The Literary Review*.

24. “Enlarging the Narrow House” r (September 1922) *The Dial*.

25. “The Consequences of Idealism” r (October 1922) *The Dial*.

26. “The Critic of Dostoevsky”* r (December 1922) *The Dial*.

27. “Art and the Hope Chest” e (December 1922) *Vanity Fair*.

28. “Note on *Der Sturm*” r (January 1923) *Secession*.

29. “Realism and Idealism”* r (January 1923) *The Dial*.

30. “Engineering with Words” r (April 1923) *The Dial*.

31. “Chicago and Our National Gesture”* e (July 1923) *The Bookman*.

32. “Immersion” r (May 1924) *The Dial*.

33. “Notes on Walter Pater”* e (August 1924) *1924*.

34. “Disposing the Love of the Lord”* r (August 1924) *The Dial*.

35. “Ethics of the Artist” r (November 1924) *The Dial*.

36. “Delight and Tears” r (December 1924) *The Dial*.

37. “Dada, Dead or Alive” e (February 1925) *Aesthete 1925* (Spoof Journal).

38. “After Dinner Philosophy” r (March 1925) *The Dial*.

39. “The Poetic Process”* e (May 1925) *The Guardian*.

40. “Psychology of Form”* e (July 1925) *The Dial*.

41. “On Re and Dis r (August 1925) *The Dial*.

42. “A New Poetics” r (September 1925) *The Saturday Review of Literature*.

43. “Codifying Milton” r (November 1925) *The Dial*.

APPENDIX B

Distribution of Essays and Book Reviews by Year Published by Burke from 1920 through 1925

Year	Number of Reviews (r)	Number of Essays (e)
1920: r r r r /	4	0
1921: r r r r r r / e e e e	6	4
1922: r r r r r r r r r / e e e e	9	4
1923: r r r / e	3	1
1924: r r r r / e	4	1
1925: r r r r / e e e	4	3
Total:	30	13

APPENDIX C

Shared General Timeline for Burke, Sartre, and Lévi-Strauss

1897: Burke is born.

1905: Sartre thrown into world.

1908: Lévi-Strauss is born.

1916: Burke studies at Ohio State University for one year.

1917: Burke studies at Columbia University for one year.

1920: Burke publishes first four book reviews.

1921: Burke publishes first four essays and six more book reviews.

1922-1925: Burke publishes nine essays and twenty book reviews.

1929: Sartre earns *Agrégé* in philosophy from the Sorbonne. Finishes in first place after failing the exam in 1928 for being too original.

1931: Lévi-Strauss earns *Agrégé* in philosophy and law from the Sorbonne.

1931: Burke publishes his first book of theory, *Counter-Statement*.

1935: Burke publishes *Permanence and Change*.

1936: Sartre publishes *L' Imagination*, translated and published as *The Psychology of Imagination* in 1966.

1937: Burke publishes *Attitudes Toward History*.

1938: Sartre publishes *La Nausée*, translated and published as *Nausea* in 1964.

1941: Burke publishes *The Philosophy of Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action*.

1943: Sartre publishes *L'Être et le Néant*, translated and published as *Being and Nothingness in 1956*.

1945: Burke publishes *A Grammar of Motives*.

1945: Lévi-Strauss publishes "L'Analyse structurale en lingusitique et en anthropologie," translated and published as "Structural Analysis in Linguistics and Anthropology" in 1963.

1950: Burke publishes *A Rhetoric of Motives*.

1953: Lévi-Strauss publishes "Linguistics and Anthropology."

1958: Lévi-Strauss publishes *Anthropologie structurale*, translated and published as *Structural Anthropology* in 1963. This is his collection of articles.

1961: Burke publishes *The Rhetoric of Religion*.

1966: Burke publishes *Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature, and Method*.

APPENDIX D

Burke on Sartre and Lévi-Strauss

The early book reviews and essays of Burke predate Sartre and his wave of existentialism by over a decade and Lévi-Strauss and his structuralism by over two decades. Burke, however, had a long writing career of over half a century and published several of his major books during the 1950s and 1960s. These all postdate the Sartrean wave and a few of the latest coincide with the succeeding structuralist wave. Burke refers to Sartre or existentialism several times in his later works. He only refers to Lévi-Strauss and his structuralism in a very few late letters that have been published and in one book review from 1973.

Burke first mentions existentialism by name in his 1950 book *A Rhetoric of Motives*. "Consider," he says, "the Existential movement in France" (254). Then, he goes on, "Rhetorically, it could serve well during the period of Nazi occupation" (254). The reason he identifies for this successful rhetorical service is the movement's concept of freedom. The French existentialists develop a new "kind of 'pure' freedom by a reworking of [Søren] Kierkegaard" (254). This pure freedom effectively counters linguistically the non-freedom physically imposed upon the French by the Nazi occupiers. As Burke expresses it, "It [pure freedom] offered dialectical devices whereby Frenchman could be 'substantially' free while being subject politically" (255). The Nazi occupiers could control every aspect of one's life, but they could never control or take away the

freedom the existentialists locate in one's very being.

Burke immediately continues his short discussion in this book of the French existential movement with an incorrect statement. He says that their concept of pure freedom "was the freedom of 'suicide,' with the motives of attack being turned back upon the self, such purely private and recondite authority being eulogized as godlike" (255). In fact, it was just the opposite. Freedom for the French existentialists was the freedom of life. They completely rejected suicide. In *Being and Nothingness*, for example, Sartre gives the issue of suicide only a single full paragraph. There, it is summarily dismissed. As Sartre settles it, "Suicide cannot be considered as an end of life for which I should be the unique foundation" (690). Albert Camus, who rose along with Sartre on the leading edge of French existentialism addressed suicide in a long essay published in 1943 called "Le Mythe de Sisyphe" (translated into English in 1955 as "The Myth of Sisyphus"). There, he says at the start, "Judging whether or not life is or is not worth living amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy" (3). The answer he develops through the essay is that life is worth living: "the point," he announces, "is to live" (65). In the preface added to the 1955 English edition, Camus reemphasizes his conclusion: "The answer, underlying and appearing through the paradoxes which cover it is this: even if one does not believe in God, suicide is not legitimate" (no page number).

Burke also addresses existentialism in the 1953 prologue he added to the second edition of his 1935 book *Permanence and Change*. He leads into his statements on existentialism with a general characterization of the conditions under which *Permanence and Change* was originally written. There was a double crisis. First, the country was in crisis: "This book, *Permanence and Change*, was written in the early days of the Great

Depression, at a time when there was a general feeling that our traditional ways were headed for a tremendous change, maybe even a permanent collapse" (xlvii). Second, Burke was himself in danger of "falling apart": "Not knowing quite where he was, this particular author took notes on 'orientation.' Not being sure how to read the signs, he took notes on 'interpretation.' Finding himself divided, he took notes on division (or as he calls it in this book, 'perspective by incongruity'). Looking for some devise by which to reintegrate the muddle, he asked about the possibility of a resimplification" (xlvii). The recorded result was *Permanence and Change*. He treated his crisis by writing a book about crisis or, more specifically, about decisions made under the conditions of crisis. The "Crisis decisions" (xlviii), as he calls them, "involve an unsettling, an attempt (or temptation?) to think in ways to which the deliberator was not accustomed" (xlvii). They also "involve internal conflicts that are to some extent experienced as 'guilt'" (xlviii).

Burke next draws a line in the prologue between *Permanence and Change* and existentialism. He does so because of his opening characterization of *Permanence and Change*. Burke obviously believes it sounds too much like existentialism and, maybe, fears that the reader will think he is trying to rhetorically frame *Permanence and Change* to be read as part of this new popular movement. Thus he tells his reader, in a paragraph long disclaimer, that this is not his intention. As he begins the interruption of his characterization, "However, the author [Burke] would by no means here attempt to present his brand of 'Crisis-thinking' in current Existential terms" (xlviii). He would never do such a thing, he goes on, because "the reader would only too quickly discover that the book does not fill the bill" (xlviii). Burke does not go into detail about why *Permanence and Change* does not "fill the bill." He only gives two general reasons. The

first is that *Permanence and Change* is about communication. The "original title" of the book "was 'Treatise on Communication,' and it was written in that spirit" (xlviii). He also adds, "So, all told, concerned with words above all, when things got toughest he [Burke] thought hardest about communication" (xlvii). This difference implies that Burke does not believe that existentialism is concerned with communication; it has another spirit for him. The second reason *Permanence and Change* does not fill the existential bill is biographical. Burke does not specifically identify French existentialism in what he says here, but he certainly alludes to it by his reference to war and occupation. The growing semi-humorous flavor of Burke's statements also suggest that he is making fun of existentialism. The full passage runs:

> The author wrote in no country occupied by a foreign invader. Though he had an almost magical fear of destitution, he never passed up a single meal for lack of funds. He saw no new vision on the battlefield. He had not been tied in the cellar as a child, with rats crawling over him (though he had a bad fall). If he was frightened, to a large extent, it was by Hallowe'en pumpkins that he himself had hollowed out, and had carved with snaggle teeth, while the eerie glow he saw was something he had put there. xlviii

Burke draws another line between himself and existentialism in his 1961 book *The Rhetoric of Religion: Studies in Logology*. This time, "the negative" (17) is the grounds for the separation. In Burke's view, negatives do not refer to things that are real. Instead, they arise and exist only as fictions created by language. He expresses this definition of the negative when he says, "the negative is a particularly linguistic invention, not a 'fact' of nature, but a function of a symbol system, as intrinsically symbolic as the square root of minus one" (20). "Existentialists, such as [the German Martin] Heidegger and Sartre," Burke continues, fail to recognize that negatives are so unreal. Instead, they display the reverse "tendency to reify the negative" (20). This is the case with the negatives

"nothing" and "nonbeing." The existentialists treat these fundamental concepts of theirs as if they were real by giving them what Burke calls a "quasi-positive substantiality" (21). To them, nothing and nonbeing are as much of a fact as something and being. From Burke's linguistic or symbolic point of view, that equation is completely without warrant: Nothing and nonbeing have no more substance than the square root of minus one.

Burke goes on to point out that a "natural view" or "positivism would simply dismiss such operations [by Heidegger and Sartre] as sheer nonsense" (21). For Burke and the logology or new science of words that he develops in *The Rhetoric of Religion*, however, the issue is more complicated. In his logological view, the reification of the negative is an inherent characteristic of language. As he expresses it with specific regard to Heidegger, "such 'transcendental' operations as the Heideggerian idea of 'Nothing' may reveal in their purity a kind of Weltanschauung that is imperfectly but inescapably operating in all of us" (21). In more general terms, humans as "symbol using animal[s]" (21) are condemned to reify the negative and believe that nothing is something. Logology, for Burke, thus cannot dismiss this false belief or "comedy" (21) out of hand. Rather, it must take it "seriously" (21). Logology's approach, as Burke metaphorically describes it, is to "watch [the reifications of the negative] as carefully as a Freudian psychologist watches the nonsense of a patient's dreams" (21). This further divides Burke from the existentialists by making him the doctor and placing them in the diminished role of dreaming patient who needs his treatment and higher knowledge in order to understand and overcome their psycho-linguistic condition.

Burke addresses existentialism again further on in *The Rhetoric of Religion*, but only incidentally. He points out that "French Existentialists such as Sartre, and the proto-

Existentialist, Dostoevsky" were "motivated" like "André Gide" by an interest in "motiveless crime done not for material gain but for its own sake" (96). He also says here that "Sartre and Dostoevsky (and another proto-Existentialist Nietzsche) bring out the ways in which (as with the Superman, or the cult of suicide) a human being attains the equivalent of the godhead (in being absolute master of one's own destiny)" (96). No further discussion of either point is offered by Burke. It shows, however, that Burke still has the incorrect belief expressed earlier in *The Rhetoric of Motives* that French existentialism promotes suicide.

Burke also speaks, albeit in two sentences, about existentialism in his 1963 article "The Definition of Man." In this essay, which he later uses as the first chapter of his 1966 book *Language as Symbolic Action*, Burke continues to express his unfavorable opinion of existentialism's reification of the negative. "The Existentialists," he states, "amuse themselves and bewilder us with paradoxes about *le Néant*, by the sheer linguistic trick of treating nothing as an abstruse kind of something" (10). Burke's use of the French word for nothing, "*Néant*," suggests that he is thinking specifically of the French existentialists and probably of Sartre whose main work was titled *L'Être et le Néant*. The only other comment Burke makes here about the existentialists and their treatment of nothing is "Its good showmanship" (10). In the context of "amuse themselves" and "bewilder us" and "linguistic trick," this seeming complement is likely meant by him as the polar opposite of good philosophy. It also suggests a dishonest intention. In *The Rhetoric of Religion*, the existentialists were victims of a natural tendency of language to reify negatives. Now, they are showmen performing a complicated act of illusion with their rhetoric of nothing that has only entertainment value.

Burke does not address Lévi-Strauss or structuralism in any of his books. He does, however, mention both in several of his published letters and he touches on the structuralists in one later book review. The first mention is in a letter to William Rueckert dated January 13, 1968. Burke writes that an American woman "in Paris sent me a dissertation she did (in French) on the structuralists" (Rueckert 2003, 121). "I haven't read it yet," he goes on, but "at a glance I got the impression that she thought they had been pretty much anticipated by our domestic brands of criticism" (121). Two such critics she appears to focus on in her comparison are Erick "Erikson" and Burke or, as Burke refers to himself in the letter, "De Burp" (121). In this letter, Burke also asks Rueckert for a copy of the paper he is writing on him (Burke) and the structuralists.

In another letter to Rueckert dated January 30, 1968, about two weeks later, Burke talks about the paper Rueckert had since sent him as requested. In an unflattering comment about Rueckert's work, Burke assesses his own familiarity with structuralism: "I didn't know anything about French Structuralism *before* reading your paper on Kenneth Burke and Structuralism. But *after* finishing it I know still less" (129). Rueckert's paper would be published the following year in *Shenandoah*. Burke probably gained little from it since as Rueckert says in a footnote in that article, it was based on a talk and remains "very condensed, extremely abstract and almost completely without examples" (19). Burke's statement here in 1968 that he himself does not know anything about structuralism provides good reason why structuralism is not addressed in any of his books: they were all written before 1968.

Burke specifically mentions structuralism and reveals an interest in Lévi-Strauss roughly two weeks later in a letter to Rueckert dated February 8, 1968. He indicates that

in order to understand structuralism, he is going straight to the source. "Incidentally," Burke writes, "I have been tinkering a bit with Lévi-Strauss, in ptikla [particular] his stuff on totemism" (131). He then adds a little more: "I read him this way: Each tribe has its particulars, but they all embody the same universals. However (and I wasn't sure whether this would be his or mine), though the same universals would apply universally, they do so with a difference because the particulars set up conditions local to particular particulars" (131). Burke then moves on to kinship systems in the next paragraph, telling Rueckert, those systems are "beloved by anthropologists" because, "as I sees [sic] it," those systems express "the ambiguous relation btw. [between] logical sequence and temporal sequence" (131), which Burke adds is also an interest of his.

About four years later, Burke addresses Lévi-Strauss in a letter to Malcolm Cowley dated June 1, 1972. He begins by suggesting that he plans a full study of Lévi-Strauss by referring to him and his work as "a momentous job to tackle" (Jay, 381). The reason for this prospective "job" appears to be his similarity to Burke. As Burke explains, "somethinks" (sic) Lévi-Strauss' "approach is often quite in the same groove as mine" (381). Approach, however, is not the same thing as success. Burke adds in parentheses the qualification: "although, so far as I have read, he strikes me as but *aiming at* the same target that I have hit in the middle with my distinctions between mythology and logology" (381). Burke then points to another possible similarity. This time the subtle qualification is that he (Burke) said it first: "I haven't yet read enough of him to see how his use of analogies from music squares with my stuffo [sic] on 'chord' and 'arpeggio,' aired as early as [his book] *Philosophy of Literary Form* [published in 1941]." But there seems to be a basic overlap there, too" (381). Burke also points out that all the ethnographic detail

Lévi-Strauss includes in his works makes his arguments and ideas "rhetorically unanswerable as Niagara Falls" and leaves the reader "exhausted" (381).

Burke ends the letter to Cowley by going into detail about another connection he sees between himself and Lévi-Strauss. This connection is what Burke calls their "general lineup" (381). The lineup of Lévi-Strauss is specified by Burke as "(1) physical and political geography; (2) economic; (3) social and family organization; [and] (4) mythological" (381). Burke then directs Cowley to his (Burke's) lineup. It is expressed in Burke's 1962 article "What are the Signs of What? A Theory of Entitlement," which was originally published in the journal *Anthropological Linguistics* and then used as a chapter in his 1966 book *Language as Symbolic Action*. The lineup consists of (1) "natural order," (2) "verbal order," (3) "sociopolitical order," and "supernatural order" (374 in *Language as Symbolic Action*). Burke goes on in the letter to estimate "My third and fourth would closely correspond with his third and fourth. My first would include both his first and second (though a bit that he includes under 'political' in his first would fit better as part of my third)" (381). "The most noticeable difference," according to Burke, "is that he [Lévi-Strauss] has no equivalent for my second, though he necessarily deals with it from start to finish" (381). "*Tentatively*," Burke goes right on, "the methodological issue seems to center in this difference, though he deals [at] considerable length with the verbal resources as such" (381). Greater certainty is expected to come when Burke pursues the matter further in the future, which is indicated by his "Well, we'll see" (381).

The next year, Burke mentions structuralism in a book review. The untitled review is published in *The New Republic* in 1973 and concerns the book *The Sovereign Ghost* by

Dennis Donoghue. The reason structuralism comes up is that it is a major part of the book's argument. In *The Sovereign Ghost*, Donoghue presents and judges "two rival positions" (71). One position he refers to as "Romanticism" (39). It focuses on the faculty of imagination and believes that its creative power is the expression of complete human freedom. The other position he refers to as "Structuralism" (39). This term is meant by him to chiefly stand for "a body of theory concentrated upon the works of [Ferdinand de] Saussure, [Roman] Jakobson, and Lévi-Strauss" (78). The theory, as he describes it in his book, focuses on language and treats the individual as being determined by external codes or systems. Donoghue favors the romantic position as represented at its apex by William Wordsworth and Samuel Coleridge. As such, he privileges the imagination, as they do, as "man's highest and noblest attribute, a sublime power" (1). The problem, as he sees it, is that structuralism has displaced romanticism and is now the new "mood of our time if not the dominant spirit of our age" (78). As a result, and to his dismay, "the concept of imagination is under attack" (35). Language, system, and determinism have arisen under the banner of structuralism and are charging forward, driving imagination, creativity, and freedom into retreat.

In the review, Burke identifies structuralism as Donoghue's nemesis. As he reports, "behind his [Donoghue's] various comments there are his uneasy differences with the "'structuralists'" (30). Burke then puts together a series of quotations from *The Sovereign Ghost* that portray structuralism as the antithesis of creativity and freedom based upon its focus on language. The structuralists, Burke begins, "'maintain that in speaking we are more the slaves than the masters of our language' and 'are used by language at the very moment in which we think ourselves most independent in the use of

it'" (30). He then continues, "The structuralists would 'insist that the tokens of creative freedom are illusory, that instead of free acts we are witnessing formal operations of language'" (30). Burke ends his portrayal of structuralism to Donoghue with "And Mallarmé's later style 'is congenial to structuralists because it presents itself as a network of simultaneous relations and does not imply a source more mysterious than language itself'" (30).

Burke does not go on in the review to say anything else about structuralism either from Donoghue's point of view or his own. All he offers is these quotations from *The Sovereign Ghost*. They do the talking. There is no hint of Burke having made any further progress in the "momentous job" of studying Lévi-Strauss that he had told Rueckert about in the June 1, 1972 letter.

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