

'would it were not so': Hypothetical Alternatives in *Hamlet*

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Hamlet begins with the problem of verifying reality: 'Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy, / And will not let belief take hold of him' (I.i.26-7).¹ The same concern is foregrounded by Hamlet's assumed madness: 'This is the very coinage of your brain' (III.iv.139). This ambiguity between real and imagined presence seems to anticipate the later philosophical debate, conveniently summarized by Whitehead, between objectivist and subjectivist constructions of reality. In his formulations, the subjectivist view maintains that 'the nature of our immediate experience is the outcome of the perceptive peculiarities of the subject enjoying that experience'.² In contrast, the objectivist position holds that 'the actual elements perceived by our senses are *in themselves* the elements of a common world; and that this world is a complex of things, including indeed our acts of cognition, but transcending them'.³

Yet, though the problem of distinguishing reality from 'fantasy' or mere 'coinage of the brain' recurs dramatically in the play, its deepest implication concerns, not the verification of reality, but the impulse to modify reality according to wish or hypothesis. From this point of view, as we shall see, Maynard Mack's justly celebrated mot — 'Hamlet's world is preeminently in the interrogative mood'⁴ — must be qualified. For an even more influential mood in the play is the subjunctive, which expresses supposition, wish, hypothesis, or possibility contrary to fact: 'would it were not so' (III.iv.15). Of course, this emphasis on the subjunctive mood must not be construed literally. My intention is not to undertake a grammatical analysis of the text, but instead to investigate the invocation, in Hamlet, of hypothetical

alternatives to 'circumstances' (II.ii.157) as they actually unfolded or currently obtain.

The term, 'hypothetical alternatives', is borrowed from Whitehead, whose discussion of them will introduce our own concerns. In a famous passage of *Process and Reality*, he points to the 'penumbra of alternatives' which colours the responses and attitudes of individuals to the reality they actually inhabit, whether or not they focus on these alternatives by 'conscious decision'. According to Whitehead, 'abstract notions, expressing the possibilities of another course of history' can influence or modify the perception of reality. With the reader's indulgence, I shall quote Whitehead's argument intact, because its ideas can help us isolate a crucial element in Hamlet which hitherto has remained 'undiscover'd country' (III.i.79):

For example, consider the Battle of Waterloo. This battle resulted in the defeat of Napoleon, and in a constitution of our actual world grounded upon that defeat. But *the abstract notions, expressing the possibilities of another course of history* which would have followed upon his victory, are relevant to the facts which actually happened. We may not think it of practical importance that imaginative historians should dwell upon such hypothetical alternatives. But we confess their relevance in thinking about them at all, even to the extent of dismissing them. But some imaginative writers do not dismiss such ideas. Thus, in our actual world of today, there is a penumbra of eternal objects [ideas], constituted by relevance to the Battle of Waterloo. *Some people do admit elements from this penumbral complex into effective feeling*, and others wholly exclude them. Some are conscious of this internal decision of admission or rejection; for others the ideas float into their minds as day-dreams without consciousness of deliberate decision; for others, their emotional tone, of gratification or regret, of friendliness or hatred, is obscurely influenced by this *penumbra of alternatives*, without any conscious analysis of its content.⁵

In this passage, Whitehead cites the Battle of Waterloo as an historical event which has become the catalyst for innumerable hypothetical alternatives or 'abstract notions,

expressing the possibilities of another course of history'. Precisely the same situation is invoked in the first scene of *Hamlet*, when Horatio suggests that Fortinbras' aim is to undo his father's defeat (or Waterloo) at the hands of Hamlet Senior: 'But to recover of us by strong hand / And terms compulsory those foresaid lands / So by his father lost' (I.i.105-7). Hamlet himself is intimately associated with hypothetical alternatives. A short list of examples will illustrate: (1) His 'grief', according to Claudius, indicates the wish that his father had not died and a consequent refusal to accept circumstances as they are: 'This must be so' (I.ii.94, 106). (2) His disgust at Gertrude's attachment to Claudius evokes the wish not to have been born of her: 'And, would it were not so, you are my mother' (III.iv.15). (3) But Hamlet's most obsessive preoccupation with 'abstract notions, expressing the possibilities of another course of history', concerns the wish for death: 'O that this too too sullied flesh would melt' (I.ii.129); 'You cannot, sir, take from me anything that I will not more willingly part withal - except my life, except my life, except my life' (II.ii.215-7); 'tis a consummation / Devoutly to be wish'd' (III.i.63-4).

These examples suggest that for Hamlet the fundamental disjunction is not to be or not to be, but to be or to be wish'd. Concern with 'delay' (III.i.72) is a primary means by which he ensures that the present situation drives preoccupation with alternatives to it. But as long as Hamlet persists in brooding on hypothetical alternatives ('What would he do / Had he the motive and the cue for passion / That I have?' [II.ii.555-6]), he defers achievement of the 'readiness' (V.ii.218) to confront circumstances as they are — to progress definitively, that is, from the subjunctive to the indicative mood.

Ironically, the Ghost, who launches Hamlet on the quest for revenge, is intimately associated with hypothetical alternatives. For it is feared that he might lure Hamlet to possible doom: 'What if it tempt you toward the flood, my Lord' (I.iv.69). Indeed, as a result of the various hypotheses made concerning him, the Ghost can be seen as trailing 'a penumbra of alternatives': 'The spirit that I have seen / May

be a devil' (II.ii.594-5). This linking of the Ghost with a malign spirit whose function is to deceive anticipates by just forty one years (assuming that Hamlet was written in 1600) Descartes' celebrated reliance on hypothetical alternatives in order to sustain his methodological doubt: 'I will therefore suppose that . . . a certain evil spirit, not less clever and deceitful than powerful, has bent all his efforts to deceiving me' ('First Meditation').⁶ For Descartes, hypothesizing the influence of the devil, so that the validity of all experience must therefore be doubted, leads eventually to a principle of certainty — namely, the fact that, in doubting, or, more precisely, in the act of thinking which doubting entails, the mind (or, more formally, consciousness) at least affirms its own existence: *cogito ergo sum*. Thus, Descartes exploits the hypothetical alternatives generated by doubt as a means of establishing indubitable truth.

As Windelband notes, Descartes bases the transition from hypothetical alternatives to truth on an 'analytic method [which] seeks . . . the *simple, self-intelligible elements*, out of which all else is to be explained'.⁷ In contrast, Hamlet bases the transition from hypothetical alternatives to truth on a synthetic method which verifies ideas through observation and inference. Indeed, in order to validate the allegations of the Ghost, Hamlet devises the experiment involving *The Murder of Gonzago*: 'The play's the thing / Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King' (II.ii.600-1). Just before the performance, he urges Horatio: 'Observe my uncle' (III.ii.80).⁸

But observation is not the only means by which Hamlet advances from hypothetical alternatives to truth. For, when dealing with moral truth (that is, goodness) instead of circumstantial truth (that is, fact), Hamlet eventually dispenses with hypothetical alternatives by acknowledging the possibility of purgation or regeneration. This transition is dramatically evident immediately after the performance of *The Murder of Gonzago*, when Hamlet confronts Gertrude regarding her 'shame' with Claudius (III.iv.81). Whereas initially Hamlet's moral revulsion prompted an unfilial

hypothetical alternative ('And, would it were not so, you are my mother' [III.iv.15]), after the intrusion of the Ghost Hamlet convinces Gertrude that there is no acceptable alternative to acknowledging her own fault: 'Repent what's past, avoid what is to come' (III.iv.152).

Meditation on death advances Hamlet's overcoming of recourse to hypothetical alternatives. During Hamlet's tour of the graveyard, death epitomizes that which cannot be avoided ('To what base uses we may return, Horatio!' [V.i.196]), whereas earlier it epitomized the wish to seek alternatives to that which cannot be avoided, namely the sufferings in life: 'The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks / That flesh is heir to' (III.i.62-3). Indeed, through 'readiness' (V.ii.218), construed as preparedness for death '[n]ow or whensoever' (V.ii.199), Hamlet emphatically moves beyond the reaches of hypothetical alternatives, and achieves the steadfastness to accept any alternative which, '[i]n happy time' (V.ii.201), might eventually occur: 'Let be' (V.ii.220). But even as Hamlet repudiates recourse to hypothetical alternatives, their lure remains. Indeed, at the moment of death, he reinvokes them, though in a way that ultimately expresses acceptance of the inevitable: 'Had I but time - as this fell sergeant, Death, / Is strict in his arrest - O, I could tell you - / But let it be' (V.ii.341-3). Ironically, after Hamlet's death, the highest praise which Fortinbras can bestow on him entails a hypothetical alternative: 'For he was likely, had he been put on, / To have prov'd most royal' (V.ii.402-3). Just one scene earlier, Gertrude similarly invokes a hypothetical alternative after Ophelia's death: 'I hop'd thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife' (V.ii.237).

As these examples confirm, in the play the occasion of death involves profound ambiguity with respect to reliance on hypothetical alternatives. On the one hand, acceptance of mortality is the means by which Hamlet decisively overcomes recourse to hypothetical alternatives, and achieves readiness to accept inevitability, while remaining alert to unexpected shifts in immediate circumstance. But, on the other hand, the occasion of death triggers unbearable yearning for what

might have been and uncertainty regarding what might be. The character most devastated by this conflict is Ophelia who, following her father's murder, goes mad: 'Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be' (IV.v.43-44). In this state, Ophelia is associated with hope and patience, even though her mental predicament seems itself to mock the efficacy of these virtues: 'I hope all will be well. We must be patient' (IV.v.68). The linking of Ophelia with hope is reinforced by her connection with flowers, as when she distributes various species of them to Claudius, Gertrude, and Laertes and, later, gathers 'fantastic garlands' just before drowning (IV.vii.167). According to Panofsky (in his analysis of Titian's *Allegory of the Marquis d'Avalos*), a 'basket of flowers [is] the attribute of Hope because "Hope is the anticipation of fruits"'.⁹

In the context of a preoccupation with the subjunctive mood and the shadowing of reality by a 'penumbra of alternatives', the motif of hope in *Hamlet* gains deeper significance. For hope is the virtue that endures circumstances as they are, while awaiting eventual improvement: 'The object of hope is a future good, difficult but possible to obtain' (Aquinas).¹⁰ Indeed, it is possible that the play begins with an oblique allusion to hope, when Francisco complains, 'And I am sick at heart' (I.i.9). For Proverbs 13.12 states that 'Hope deferred maketh the heart sick', a quotation revived at the beginning of *Waiting for Godot*: 'Hope deferred maketh the something sick, who said that?'¹¹ The emphasis on hope in *Hamlet*, at least through the role of Ophelia, suggests the difficulty of overcoming reliance on hypothetical alternatives. Hope must endure things as they are in order to sustain its commitment to what they can become in the future. The present is not transformed into the occasion of wishing or doubting, but remains an opportunity to rely on the inner resources of forbearance, fortitude, and constancy ('I am constant to my purposes') — a condition facilitated by belief in 'providence' (V.ii.197, 215). Though Hamlet does achieve this condition, he remains susceptible to relapse, as when succumbing momentarily to misgiving just before

the duel with Laertes: 'Thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart; but it is no matter' (V.ii.208-9).

In this context, a central problem of the play emerges. Whereas, as we have seen, Descartes had recourse to doubt in order to establish certainty, the solution in *Hamlet* is not so simple. In the play, there is no certainty in life whose condition is to be 'mortal and unsure' (IV.iv.51). But neither is there certainty 'in the mind' whose condition is far more precarious than that of the Cartesian *cogito*. Whereas, according to Whitehead, the Cartesian 'mind seems to be confined to its own private world of cogitations', for Hamlet such confinement would be threatening: 'O God, I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space — were it not that I have bad dreams' (II.ii.254-6).¹² But when we remember that, in the 'To be' soliloquy, dreams are no more than hypothetical alternatives to the 'heart-ache' (III.i.62) of life, the threat of being 'bounded' in the mind becomes clearer. For it now entails, or at least implies, susceptibility to the hypothetical alternatives which the mind, 'in a fiction, in a dream' (II.ii.546) conceives. Dreams are one hazard to which the mind in *Hamlet* is exposed. Madness is another. But like dreams, madness is also explicitly associated with hypothetical alternatives, as when Hamlet instructs Horatio and Marcellus on how *not* to react when witnessing his 'antic disposition': 'Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase, / As "Well, we know", or "We could and if we would"' (I.v.180, 183-4).

Viewed from this angle, the great task of Hamlet is to relinquish his fastness 'in the mind' where he is paradoxically vulnerable to its 'weakness' (II.ii.597), and engage more directly with the immediacy of his own experience. By dispensing with subjunctive musings, 'readiness' can respond more productively to emergent circumstance, reacting to what actually happens instead of thinking up desirable alternatives to it. Yet, as Hamlet's own backslidings right up to the moment of death indicate, unwavering readiness remains perhaps 'beyond the reaches of our souls' (I.iv.56). Indeed, even the Ghost insinuates a

hypothetical alternative, when delivering his chilling *aposiopesis*: 'But that I am forbid / To tell the secrets of my prison-house, / I could a tale unfold' (I.v.13-5). No doubt his stint in Purgatory will ensure that this tendency is 'burnt and purg'd away' (I.v.13), along with the rest of his demerits. For in 'heaven', at least as construed 'in our circumstance and course of thought' (III.iii.82-3), there is no more need for hypothetical alternatives, since any alternative to heaven is bound to be worse. Moreover, as we have seen, the contrary of heaven — namely, Hell — has already been associated with the fostering of deceitful hypothetical alternatives, through the agency of 'the devil' (II.ii.595).

From this perspective, recourse to hypothetical alternatives (or 'abstract notions, expressing the possibilities of another course of history') appears in the play as a human failing or innate 'fault' (I.iv.36) which, if left unchecked, can end up 'mining all within' (III.iv.150) and hampering a character's effectiveness in dealing with reality. Hamlet is a case in point. His acute sense of 'fate' (I.iv.82) makes him resent that he was chosen to complete such a daunting task: 'The time is out of joint. O cursed spite, / That ever I was born to set it right' (I.v.196-7). The sheer enormity of his mission intensifies his already evident discontent with the unfolding of life ('It is not, nor it cannot come to good' [I.ii.158]), with the result that he seeks relief in death. But it is important to remember that in the 'To be' soliloquy, unlike in the first soliloquy delivered *before* receiving the revenge imperative, the question of suicide is now formulated as a disjunction: to be or not to be. Yet the terms of this either/or disjunction are themselves respectively construed as *not to be wished* and '*to be wished*' (III.i.64, my emphasis), with the latter (the hypothetical alternative 'to be wished') imagined as a state of endless dreaming in which the mind has no control over its own content. The ironic implication here is that excessive recourse to hypothetical alternatives, as a means of avoiding the impinging demands of life, is itself a suicide of the rational faculty whereby it forfeits the 'capability' (IV.iv.38) to deal with concrete circumstance. In this regard,

hypothetical alternatives can constitute '[d]angerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds' (IV.v.15).

But, as Whitehead observes, hypothetical alternatives *will* breed in human minds. They are something we cannot eliminate: 'Thus, in our actual world of today, there is a penumbra of eternal objects [ideas], constituted by relevance to the Battle of Waterloo'. The same tendency '[t]o cast beyond ourselves in our opinions' (II.ii.114) applies in *Hamlet*. Yet 'abstract notions, expressing the possibilities of another course of history', can operate in another way — one that involves, not merely hypothesizing alternatives, but actively striving to implement them. Indeed, to a great extent the plot of *Hamlet* is driven by just such striving. Fortinbras, as we have seen, is suspected of intending to reverse the 'course of history' as it relates to his father's personal Waterloo or defeat at the hands of Hamlet Senior. Similarly, Hamlet himself construes the revenge imperative as a means of reversing the 'damn'd defeat' suffered by his father with respect to losing his 'property and most dear life' (II.ii.565-6). Here, to interpolate the words of the Player King, it is indeed true that '[p]urpose is but the slave to memory' (III.ii.183). Indeed, the imperative of memory is much repeated: by Ophelia in her madness, for example: 'pray you, love, remember' (IV.v.173-4); by the Ghost's valediction: 'Remember me' (I.v.91); and by Hamlet in Ophelia's closet: 'He falls to such perusal of my face / As he would draw it' (II.i.90-1).

Overcoming the need to formulate hypothetical alternatives to the course of history requires a new attitude toward the past and hence a new function for memory. In the play, loss of the past — or loss suffered in the past — can engender more than hypothetical alternatives concerning the course of history. Loss of the past can also enable a superseding of the past and the achievement of a wider perspective on the movement of time: 'Where be his quiddities now, his quillities, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks?' (V.i.97-8). In this regard, John Dewey's dictum is relevant: 'Maturation and fixation are polar opposites'.¹³

Indeed, Hamlet does progress from seeking the past with 'veiled lids' (I.ii.70) to understanding the past in terms of a larger scheme, where innumerable alternatives, pertaining respectively to innumerable individuals, are ultimately harmonized by the unfolding design of providence. Here the unfolding of time provokes, not hypothetical alternatives concerning past possibilities unrealized, but faith in a temporal process of co-ordination, beyond the comprehension of 'our course of thought' (III.iii.83).

Humanizing Hamlet

It is useful to relate this discussion of hypothetical alternatives in the play to Hamlet's seminal question: 'What is a man' (IV.iv.33). The tendency to resort to hypothetical alternatives, to devise ways of revising the present or refusing to accept and deal with its actual circumstance, is a natural 'defect' (I.iv.31), liable to engender 'habits evil' (III.iv.164) which must be curtailed or renounced, just as Gertrude is exhorted to resist Claudius or as the players are urged to avoid hamming: 'O reform it all together' (III.ii.38). The attitude toward death is crucial in this regard. On the one hand, death is the quintessential hypothetical alternative to a subject seeking to replace the task of the present with 'the possibilities of another course of history'. On the other hand, death is the quintessential necessity in life: 'all that lives must die' (I.ii.73).

As we have seen, Hamlet at first embraces hypothetical alternatives, especially those concerning the complete avoidance of life, either through ending life — 'tis a consummation / Devoutly to be wish'd' (III.i.63-64) — or eliminating his prior involvement in it altogether: 'O cursed spite, / That ever I was born to set it right' (I.v.196-7). In the latter alternative, Hamlet echoes Job's imprecation regarding the night wherein he was conceived. As we have also seen, through 'readiness' Hamlet eventually quells his penchant for hypothetical alternatives, and heroically participates in the unfolding of history, instead of seeking refuge in other

possibilities. The magnitude of his triumph can be measured by brief reference to two literary counterparts, both drawn from the twentieth century.

The first of these is Eliot's persona, J. Alfred Prufrock, who encloses his life inside an obsession with hypothetical alternatives: 'Would it have been worth while'.¹⁴ Through indulgence in hypothetical alternatives and the refusal to move beyond them, Prufrock explicitly contrasts himself with Hamlet: 'No! I am not Prince, nor was meant to be'.¹⁵ The second counterpart is Beckett's Unnamable whose very existence is formulated in terms of hypothetical alternatives: 'Where now? Who Now? When now? Unquestioning. I, say I. Unbelieving. Questions, hypotheses, call them that'.¹⁶ The hypotheses succeed each other in a self-negating series, each subverting its predecessor: 'affirmations and negations invalidated as soon as uttered, or sooner or later' (p. 291). In this way, the hypotheses enable, not understanding, but protraction of the 'perplexity' (p. 294) from which they derive: 'hypotheses are like everything else, they help you on' (p. 404).¹⁷

Through delay, Hamlet pursues his own version of this project, by reducing his present to a distressed series of questions regarding its origin or antecedent cause: 'I do not know / Why yet I live to say this thing's to do' (IV.iv.43-44). But he does not remain in this predicament. Eventually, Hamlet not only acts, but in doing so instills the awareness that all actions have historical consequences which engender future circumstances that, in turn, will require address. This is seen very clearly in Horatio's acceptance of the mission to defer suicide — or perhaps forego it altogether — in order to explain the history leading to the present circumstance of corpses littering the floor: 'lest more mischief / On plots and errors happen' (V.ii.398-9).

From the moment Hamlet sees the Ghost, he believes in the reality of personal fate: 'My fate cries out' (I.iv.82). But he does not yet understand the implications of that fate. His ultimate fate is to understand 'the directing creativity' of Providence (to interpolate Tillich's phrase).¹⁸ To do this, he

must abandon hypothetical alternatives: the subjunctive mood in life. For the construction of hypothetical alternatives to the outcome of history or past events obscures and resists recognition of the encompassing pattern in which the actual unfolding or sequence of events participates. Indeed, the root aim of hypothetical alternatives — construed as 'abstract notions, expressing the possibilities of another course of history' — is, not to affirm the totalizing complex of events unfolding in time, but to go back in time and revise antecedent details. Indeed, Hamlet is twice explicitly associated with 'backward' (II.ii.204) movement: first regarding his 'intent / In going back to school in Wittenberg' (I.ii.112-3) and later when leaving Ophelia's closet 'with his head over his shoulder turn'd' (II.i.97).

Recourse to hypothetical alternatives and belief in providence are mutually exclusive in another way. Hypothetical alternatives increase the threat of meaninglessness, because they result from the refusal to accept the consequences of history and the present reality resulting from them: 'How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable / Seem to me all the uses of this world!' (I.ii.133-4). In contrast, belief in providence assures that, whatever happens, the unfolding of 'a man's life' (V.ii.74) has a purpose, linked essentially but beyond human comprehension to a pattern harmonizing the unfolding of all lives, even that of a 'sparrow' (V.ii.216). In this dispensation, 'no situation whatsoever can frustrate the fulfillment of his ultimate destiny' (Tillich).¹⁹ But, in *Hamlet*, the individual *contributes* to his or her own destiny. For example, Claudius cannot be saved if he won't 'repent' (III.iii.66), nor can Gertrude achieve rehabilitation if she won't '[r]efrain' (III.iv.167). What the individual does or fails to do fructifies in the fulfillment of purposes 'beyond the reaches of our souls' (I.iv.56), for they exceed or transcend what any individual can construe or predict. In *Hamlet*, the great paradox of belief in providence is that conviction in the end-shaping activity of divinity is founded on conviction in the rough-hewing 'inner directedness' of man (Tillich).²⁰

NOTES

- ¹ *Hamlet*, ed. Harold Jenkins (London and New York: Methuen, 1982), III.ii.20-2. All quotations from *Hamlet* pertain to this edition, and will be indicated parenthetically in the text.
- ² Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (1925; New York: Mentor, 1948), p. 84.
- ³ Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, p. 84.
- ⁴ Maynard Mack, 'The World of *Hamlet*', *Yale Review* 41 (1952), p. 504.
- ⁵ Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology*, ed. David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne (1929; New York: The Free Press, 1978), p. 185 (my emphasis).
- ⁶ Rene Descartes, *The Meditations Concerning First Philosophy*, in *Philosophical Essays*, trans. Laurence J. Lafleur (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964), p. 80.
- ⁷ Wilhelm Windelband, *A History of Philosophy*, 2 vols., trans. James H. Tufts (1901; New York: Harper & Row, 1958), II, 392.
- ⁸ It is interesting to note that Hamlet, in a love letter to Ophelia, employs his own version of methodological doubt in order to arrive at certainty: 'Doubt thou the stars are fire, / Doubt that the sun doth move, / Doubt truth to be a liar, / But never doubt I love' (II.ii.115-8). But as Skulsky observes, the reasoning here is faulty; for not all of its propositions are equally indubitable. We can add that some of the propositions involve analytic or *a priori* truth (e.g. 'Doubt truth to be a liar'), but others involve synthetic or *a posteriori* truth (as regarding astronomical phenomena). See Harold Skulsky, "'I Know My Course": Hamlet's Confidence', *PMLA* 89.3 (1974), pp. 477-86; 485.
- ⁹ Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (1939; New York: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 162. However, Ophelia is conventionally associated with memory. See Marjorie Garber, 'Hamlet: Giving Up the Ghost', *William Shakespeare Hamlet*, ed. Suzanne L. Wofford (Boston: Bedford Books, 1994), p. 311; and Kent Cartwright, *Shakespearean Tragedy and Its Double: The Rhythms of Audience Response* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991), p. 125.

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- ¹⁰St. Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1952) I-II, 17, 1, Resp.
- ¹¹Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, trans. Samuel Beckett (New York: Grove, 1954), p. 8.
- ¹²Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, p. 132.
- ¹³John Dewey, *Art As Experience* (New York: Putnam, 1934), p. 41.
- ¹⁴T. S. Eliot, 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock', *Collected Poems: 1909-1962* (London: Faber, 1963), pp. 13-7.
- ¹⁵For analysis of Prufrock in these terms, see Eric P. Levy, 'The Romance of Self-Pity and Self-Doubt: A Study of "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"', *Yeats Eliot Review* 13.1-2 (1994), pp. 1-6.
- ¹⁶Samuel Beckett, *The Unnamable*, trans. Samuel Beckett, in *Three Novels by Samuel Beckett: Molloy, Malone Dies, The Unnamable* (New York: Grove Press, 1958), p. 291. Further references to this work will be indicated parenthetically in my text.
- ¹⁷For analysis of *The Unnamable* in these terms, see Eric P. Levy, 'The Unnamable: The Metaphysics of Beckettian Introspection', *Journal of Beckett Studies* 5.1-2 (1996), pp. 81-105.
- ¹⁸Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1963), III, 372.
- ¹⁹Tillich I, 267.
- ²⁰Tillich I, 267.