SHAME AND THE SHARING OF EXISTENCE

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by

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ABSTRACT

Our aim with this project is to re-animate shame, to argue that there are in fact two kinds of shame experience. The first, primary shame, refers to the exposure of the self by the primordial other, a moment prior to the interpolation of judgment and morality in which the self apprehends its object state before the other, fixed within its gaze. Primary shame is the revelation *that I am insofar as the other sees me*. Secondary shame, on the other hand, is the mobilization within the pale of society of this originary exhibition of self. Secondary shame is a social tool for the moralization, regulation, and standardization of citizens; it is an invidious derivative of the primary pronouncement of the affect. We have endeavored to give a phenomenological account of shame that frees it from the ideology of a strictly moral and moralizing teleology, one that opens shame to questions concerning animality, community, and ontology. Can non-human animals experience primary shame? Can we speak meaningfully about communities of shame? Is shame an irrevocable and constitutive aspect of all being-in-the-world? These are the essential concerns of this project. But perhaps, more basically, this project is an attempt to reflect upon, to re-cast and re-invigorate the significance of the role played by others upon the being of the self, to expose a veiled truth: that the being of each resonates with the being of all.

KEYWORDS

Keywords: Shame, Phenomenology, Ontology, Affect, Animality, Community, Responsibility, Morality, Darwin, Nietzsche, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Levinas, Derrida, Nancy, Bauman, Sedgwick.

And we can feel shame at being human in utterly trivial situations, too; in the face of too great a vulgarization of thinking, in the face of TV entertainment, of a ministerial speech, of "jolly people" gossiping. This is one of the most powerful incentives toward philosophy, and it's what makes all philosophy political.

Deleuze

For

Mae and Buds,

You have sometimes insisted, “a life is a life,” but you have always shown that it is more than that, that a life is multiple lives tangled terrifically together.

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SHAME IS NOT A MORAL MATTER

Shame is not a moral matter. What we mean by morality here is "good" or "bad" conduct, the emergence of the Kantian notion of "duty, " the societal institution of expectations about *how* one should act within the contractual parameters of the civil state. This is, of course, how shame is traditionally thought and written about, and how it is commonly experienced; as a matter of morality, as an affect closely linked to moral codes and decent behavior. We will, however, suggest otherwise. We will argue that shame in its most fundamental expression is free from the passing of judgment, free from interest in civil conduct, and free from the programs of ascetic ideals. We will claim that shame is first and foremost the experience of exposure, the revelation and objectification of the self before the other, the realization that all being is being-with, *that we are insofar as the other is,* and in other words, *that we are insofar as the other sees us*. Shame is not a moral matter; it is much more originary, much more essential: shame is a matter of ontology.

Before their eyes are "opened," before they "fall" into the world, their bodies seen, their "nakedness" disclosed, Adam and Eve are "both naked…and [are] not ashamed"(Genesis, 2:25). The great fall is our decent into the world. It is our coming into existence, our coming into subjectivity, both an emergence and a co-appearance. The dawn of self-awareness is awareness *of and before* the other, awareness granted in the mode of being-in-the-world-with-others. Shame marks the very upsurge of being-in-the-world; it initiates the tandem movement of self-consciousness and other-consciousness—the consciousness of self as other and other as self. When our eyes are opened, when we see the other who sees us in return, we know shame, and we know ourselves. Shame, then, is co-appearance, objectification and subjectification. It is the primary relationality of self and other. Shame is first this moment of revelation, of self-awareness and other-awareness, of co-essence. In this thesis we will contend that the first pronouncement of shame, shame in its rudimentary expression, is prior to its moral applications, to its regulatory capacities, and is essential to the constitution, the co-determination of the self and the other. Indeed, we will advance that self and other are forged in the crucible of shame.

At the outset, it is important to distinguish between shame and embarrassment or guilt. To feel embarrassed, that is, to be embarrassed about one's appearance in a given situation, embarrassed about the way in which one has appeared before others, is an experience of distance from the self; it is to stray, momentarily, from one's self. What causes the embarrassment of a particular incident is that it is a deviation, "out of the ordinary." Someone may say of an embarrassing experience, "it was not like me to act in such a way," or "I hope that never happens to me again." The self is not represented by the embarrassment he or she feels. Embarrassment is contextual; its conferral does not depend upon the self *per se* but rather on the scenario in which the self is found. Shame on the other hand is always *of* the self. It always refers back to the (contingent) being of the self. Shame is reflexive. The self is ashamed when its very selfhood is exposed. What is revealed in shame is the true self, not a mistaken, anomalous, or dependent reception of the self, but a penetrating and divulging exhibition of the very nature of the self. To experience shame is to experience oneself as seen, to experience the visibility *that is being-in-the-world*, not only an objectification in the gaze of the other, but also a consistency with, an identity with, that objectified self.

Shame is also dissimilar to guilt. While in guilt we do encounter a true representation of the self, unlike shame, guilt is purely epistemological. The feeling of guilt concerns the alignment of facts about the self. To feel guilty is to harbor the knowledge that one has transgressed or broken a law, rule or regulation. It is to feel the civil and juridical weight of one's contravention against a socio-political environment or a socio-cultural milieu. A *guilty act* is one that breaks with certain codes and expectations. A *guilty feeling* is one that acknowledges this fact. Guilt is a matter of self-knowledge. In contradistinction, shame is more than self-knowledge, shame implicates the being of the self, the whole being. Shame is ontological, not epistemological. Where guilt is an understanding one can have about the self, shame is a distinct way in which one experiences self, a distinct way in which one *is* self, specifically, *self as seen*. Shame and guilt are commonly conflated because they are both considered paragons of accountability, heralds of responsibility. But where the conferral of guilt is an exercise in debt calculation, the responsibility activated by shame is one of a much more insurmountable and irreducible kind. The conferral of shame, before it is wielded in the

interest of alienation and standardization, in the campaign for homogeneity, is an exercise in sharing; it is the coming-into-view of a basic truth: existence is inextricably shared.

The first chapter of this thesis entitled "Revelation and Mobilization" will be devoted to articulating a bifurcation in the experience of shame. We will argue that there are both primary and secondary shame experiences. Primary shame is the *mise en scene* of the primordial exhibition of the self before the other. The self is seen by the other and must reconcile with its "being seen" as a binding and insurmountable aspect of being-in-the-world. Secondary shame is the subsequent mobilization of this basic experience of shame from within the moral framework of society. In secondary shame, this revelatory affect becomes a social tool for managing the comportment of citizens, and as such is overlooked as a fundamental bulwark for the very constitution and cultivation of a relational subject. This chapter will focus on works by Charles Darwin, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Max Scheler, but will also consider the implications of this bisection in a number of contemporary scholars as well.

The second chapter, "Shame in the Face of What We Are," investigates a particular scene of shame conferral, one described by French philosopher Jacques Derrida as taking place between him and his cat. With due reflection and scrutiny given to texts by Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Emmanuel Levinas, we will deliberate upon this inter-species shame conferral and with reliance on his (Derrida's) own insights we will question the supposed conceptual and phenomenological abyss that obtains between "man" and so-called "animal." We will meditate over human and non-human experiences—of nakedness, responsibility, the face— and especially the experience of shame, criticizing the frequently asserted claim that shame straddles the threshold between "human" and "animal" existence. We will posit that perhaps it is only the experience of secondary shame that disharmonizes the qualitative commensurability of the encounter between a man and his cat, and that both, therefore, can experience primary shame.

The final chapter, "Being (in-common) as the Other Sees Us," will extrapolate our discussion of shame out towards the expanse of communal inter-subjectivity—the being-in-common of the shame subject. We will advance that not only does such a thing as a community of shame exist, but that each and every experience of community, all *sensus*

communus, involves a corresponding *sensus revelatus*, a sense of revelation, of being seen, an experience of primary shame. We will contend that being-in-common is equal to being-seen-in-common, and moreover that just as shame is experienced in its primary and secondary forms, so too is community divided between its primary, ontological, and secondary, bio-political, realities.

The intent of this project is to unfasten our understanding of shame, to treat shame not solely as a negative affect, not solely as alienating and disavowing, as a closing off of the self, but rather as an opening up of selfhood, as the point of departure from subject to inter-subject, as the apprehension of the circulation of the self within a field of others, as the enunciation of the "being-with." What is moral in the experience of shame is added to it by a societal impetus towards civility and generalizability. What is moral in shame is inessential. What is fundamental in shame, however, is our vulnerability to the gaze, to the very being of others, a concomitant sensitivity and responsibility, a vulnerability that is undeniably shared. What is fundamental in shame is that the self is not only fashioned by the other, by the otherness of the other, but that it is extended and complicated by the other. Not just foregrounded, but enriched and elaborated. To feel shame is to feel existence as shared, to destratify and inter-mingle in our being with others, to disseminate and radiate, to blazon the community of all for all.

Chapter 1
REVELATION AND MOBILIZATION

Guide them by edicts, keep them in line with punishments, and the common people will stay out of trouble but will have no sense of shame. Guide them by virtue, keep them in line with the rites, and they will, besides having a sense of shame, reform themselves.

Confucius

INTRODUCTION

Current perspectives in shame discourse are ambivalent. Shame alienates and debilitates, as well as congregates and innervates. On the one hand, owing to the psychoanalytic tradition, shame is a repressive and negative affect that not only restricts the flow and efficacy of the drives, but also, as E.H. Erikson claims in *The Life Cycle Completed* (1987), impedes the originary development of autonomy. On the other hand, most recently articulated in queer theory, shame is posited not only as a positive and protective affect, but also as "the place where the question of identity arises most originally and most relationally"(Sedgwick, 2009, 51). Both attitudes represent important considerations in the hermeneutics of shame, and both traditions have and continue to play a significant role in the landscape of identity politics. Neither perspective, however, addresses shame adequately. Neither considers shame in its fundamental ontological affectation, and therefore each only offer iterations, or versions of shame experience, that while deriving from a primordial phenomenology, are nonetheless inextricably entrenched in the vicissitudinal signifiers of sociality, civility, and subjectivity. In fact, shame scholarship in general seems to have misrecognized and misrepresented the originary nature of shame, skipping over the ontological grounds upon which shame first becomes a possible mode for being-in-the-world. Without accurately figuring these primordial circumstances in which shame is not only conferred but is first *conferrable*, we risk mistaking the cause of shame for its consequences, and therefore risk appropriating an altogether inaccurate and invidious definition and understanding of shame experience.

This chapter seeks to establish an essential divide between primary and secondary phenomenologies of shame, advancing that shame is first and foremost the affective response to being seen, the embodied response to being "seeable"—the elemental prehension of the radical sharing of being. In other words, primary shame, that is, shame in its most basic expression, is a feature of the ontological and existential conditions in which the self apprehends that it is seen by an other and that an aspect of its very being is held by this gaze that sights it. Secondary shame, then, is the ensuing mobilization of this basic form of exposure before the other upon the advent of society. Secondary shame is closely linked to morality, and to civility, to regulating moral practices and the ardent and intrusive surveillance of a "civilized" society. We do not deny that shame indeed becomes the mediating conscience, exclaiming "guilt!" in the heart of the precocious young Freudian, or that it also comes to represent an existential station in which a social, cultural and political identity are fortified. We do contend, however, that the positive or negative dimensions of our experiences of shame are due entirely to the sometimes favorable, sometimes pernicious vagaries of societal and cultural interpretive and contextual conventions. We will argue that there are no congenital and coercive moral tendencies in the shame affect itself. It is our view that shame does not just reveal transgressional acts or aberrant social positions, but that before all else, shame is revelation, it is the experience of revelation, the disclosure of the self before the other. To feel ashamed is to know that we are seen, and further it is to know that an aspect of our very being is lodged and indelibly conscripted within the being of the other, within the penetrating gaze of the other who fixes us. We hope to show that shame is, at bottom and at its most proliferating and influential, the radical hallmark of inter-subjectivity.

To elucidate what is meant by primary and secondary shame, this chapter will be devoted to examining, at length, three integral philosophical explorations of both shame and the moral fortifications that organize themselves around the phenomenological bases of shame experience. First we will consider Charles Darwin's essay on blushing, self-attention, shame and modesty in *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (2007). Second, we will engage Friedrich Nietzsche's chronicling of the origin of the "bad conscience" in *The Genealogy of Morals* (2003). And finally, we will interrogate the protective function of shame in Max Scheler's *Person and Self-Value: Three Essays*

(1987). The intent of the analysis of these texts will be to demonstrate that even though the theoretical distinction between primary and secondary shame is not explicitly postulated within the conceptual parameters of the texts, each text characterizes shame implicitly according to a progression from a primary to a secondary experience of shame. We hope to show that in order to make sense of any evaluative claims about the purposefulness of shame, we must, first, recognize the constitutive ontological and phenomenological ingredients that make shame possible, that is, that make shame a component of not just a *kind* of being-in-the-world, but of all being-in-the-world (human and perhaps even otherwise). We must also accede that the function of shame as a place for the construction (or destruction) of a moral or social identity is bestowed in and through the subsequent and supplementary employment of shame within the pale of society, and, finally, that primary shame is a reconciliatory and constitutive affect for the being of the primordial self.

We will include in our analysis a variety of contemporary perspectives on shame in an attempt to display their congruent inability to adequately enunciate what is essential about the experience of shame. These texts also fail to base their reflection on the primary expression of shame. But we hope to show that these articulations still operate within the conceptual and linguistic circumscription of an essential divide between primary and secondary experiences of shame, and therefore still exhibit the germane gesture of shame as a cardinal subject for any theoretical analysis of being. In subsequent chapters we will explore in more depth what primary shame, as an imperative and indispensible actuality, means for the ontological configuration of the being who experiences it, that is, for any being who can experience itself as "seen." The forthcoming chapter, however, will endeavor to clearly evidence a fissure and contradistinction in the way shame has been a subject for theory. And while we are interested in exhibiting the contrast between shame as a feature of ontology and shame as a feature of culture, it is not our intention to dwell exclusively in such an opposition. We hope to contribute to and in pursuit of Elspeth Probyn's incisive question: "Is shame cultural or physiological, or does it—and this is my bet—demand a way of rethinking such oppositions?" (Probyn, 2005, 4).

This thesis aims to expand upon the rethinking of oppositions in shame discourse. The multifariousness of shame experience is crucial. The exposure of one or another kind

of personal trajectory, or the revelation of one or another kind of moral or social delinquency is an extensively trodden theoretical avenue, but one that has as yet failed to acknowledge that what shame discloses first and foremost is that being is shared, that each of our beings is plural, that being is irreducibly "being-with" and that the "being-with" of the self is constituted by a gaze. The self is seen by the other: this is the very debut of the self. Furthermore, the self must share its embodiment, must share its upsurge with a perceptual world that is inherently plural. As Jean-Luc Nancy maintains in *Being Singular Plural*, "Our being-with, as a being-many, is not at all accidental, and it is in no way the secondary and random dispersion of a primordial essence. It forms the proper and necessary status and consistency of originary alterity as such. *The plurality of being is at the foundation of Being*"(Nancy, 2000, 12, original emphasis).

ASSOCIATING THE BLUSH

Charles Darwin's book, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, is a detailed and eloquently argued account of the principles of expression and the inheritability of habitual and instinctual emotional responses in both human and non-human animals. As Matthew Rowlinson indicates, part of what this means is that "the memory that survives only as an embodied trace [can] ultimately [be] theorized as an inheritance whose origin is located not in the past of the individual but in that of the species" (Rowlinson, 2010, 539-540). The most intriguing consequence of this claim, at least for the purposes of our present discussion, is postulated in the final chapter of the book entitled "Self-Attention, Shame, Shyness, Modestly: Blushing," in which Darwin analyzes the seemingly all-too-human tendency to blush. Darwin begins the chapter by asserting, enigmatically: "Blushing is the most peculiar and the most human of all expressions" (2007, 167). The blush, for Darwin, is a connotative and emphatic beacon for the biological as well as social implications of shame confer-ability. In the blush we have a lighthouse, pregnant in its luminosity, shining through the hermeneutic fog obscuring the way through a sea of affectivity. In and through an analysis of shame that begins with the blush we can acquire a directional orientation. Following Darwin we will employ the communicative glow of the blush as a point of access into the rich depths of shame experience.

One of the most surprising claims of Darwin's theory of evolution—also one of the least accepted among contemporary psychologists—is the inheritability, the trans-generational transferability, of habitual responses. Rowlinson remarks: "The idea that the body is by inheritance partly foreign to itself is indeed quintessentially Darwinian" (2010, 540). Darwin espies that when some actions are readily associable with other actions and with certain states of mind, through the force of habit these associations can be converted into reflexes. Furthermore, he remarks that over the course of many years these associative responses become "so firmly fixed and inherited, that they are performed, even when not of the least use"(2007, 22). Shame, for example, has for generations been an impelling and assiduous convention in cooperation with the propriety of the "civilized" individual, and has, over time, been a habitual response to a variety of misplaced, mendacious and sometimes even superfluous courtesies that interest a greater societal decorum. If Darwin's claim is correct[1], then what were once particular social habits of shame conferral may have, over time, transformed into instincts. The result is that it becomes difficult to separate a particular experience of shame from the context in which it was originally conferred—or the ensuing contexts in which it became habitual. Rowlinson observes further: "Darwin characteristically represents instincts acquired in this way as useless to the species that bears them, and sometimes as actually maladaptive" (2010, 541). The experience of shame that is most easily recognized today, that has been most effectively codified and propagated may not only fail to represent shame in its purest form, but may also be an instinct that is actually maladaptive.

Additionally, when habits become instinctual and therefore commonplace they also become more difficult to recognize. Robert Metcalf alleges that "experiences of shame, from mild embarrassments to the aches of shyness to irreparable humiliations, are ubiquitous, and this ubiquity itself lends to shame a kind of invisibility" (Metcalf, 2000, 2). In a similar vein, Mark Lewis argues: "Shame is like a subatomic particle. One's knowledge of shame is often limited to the trace it leaves" (Lewis, 2003, 1187). One of the most recognizable traces, of course, being the blush. In this sense, however, often

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[1] It should be noted that there is significant dissent over this claim. Which emotions are biological, which emotions are sociological, or if such a sociological inheritance is even possible, are still hotly debated hypotheses. For instance, see *The Nature of Emotion: Fundamental Questions,* edited by Paul Ekman and Richard J. Davidson (Oxford University Press, 1994). For our present discussion what is most compelling about this conjecture is the ambiguity it leaves surrounding shame as an emotional affect.

when considering our own reactions to feelings of shame, we may in fact be in conversation with idiosyncrasies and sensitivities that more directly reflect the force of an acquired habit than any deeply personal or veritable relation to shame. Gunter Harry Seidler, in his book *In Other's Eyes: An Analysis of Shame,* considers whether "we can in fact speak of shame situations in the absence of the ability on the part of the subject to refer to these situations as such, and this without having recourse to psychodynamic concepts and notions of 'unconscious affects" (2000, 28). It is difficult to know to what extent an experience of shame ever simply exposes the individual experiencing it because our response to a shameful situation may affirm more about our sensitivity to a force of habit or a transient unconscious tension than about any authentically acute (or even faulty) sense of shame. Seidler continues, "It may well be that we are here in the presence of an insoluble methodological dilemma: the ego cannot, at one and the same time, both experience an experience and objectifyingly describe that experience" (57).

Moreover, not only does shame discourse pose a kind of self-questioning narrative, necessarily de-centering the primacy and authority of its subject, but the experience of shame itself can arise in questionable and perhaps arbitrary circumstances, dislocating any sense of the primacy of place one may want to attribute to its conferral. Darwin claims that "reflex actions (or all corporeal structures and instincts), when once gained for one purpose, might afterwards be modified independently of the will or habit, so as to serve for some distinct purpose"(2007, 23). Eve Sedgwick congruently argues that shame is "a kind of free radical that (in different people and also different cultures) attaches to and permanently intensifies or alters the meaning of—of almost anything: a zone of the body, a sensory system, a prohibited or indeed a permitted behaviour, another affect such as anger or arousal, a named identity, a script for interpreting other people's behaviour toward oneself" (2009, 59). For Sedgwick shame is a free floating radical generated from outside rather than inside the subject. It is a dynamic affect in circulation between beings, cultures, and even between times, that is radically formative and mercurial in its relations to bodies and peoples. For example, while shame may more originally, or more fundamentally be a physical and emotional response to the exposure of the body before another, over time the propensity to cover one's body, to shield oneself from the gaze of others, may undergo modifications quite independent of the will,

reflecting perhaps cultural revolution instead, and may result in the tendency to cover only certain parts of the body, those deemed "private" by the strictures of exterior proximal habit controlling institutions. Or more radically, and more unfortunately, the transformation of shame as a habitual reaction may result in the shaming of the exposure of certain kinds of bodies—bodies failing to uphold the normativity of their surrounding social scene.

In any case, the shame that manifests at the surface of society's relational field, the shame that is encounterable and familiar, is a deviant and often inimical variant of the underlying and primary inter-personal vulnerability, the primary exposure of the self, of the self's embodiment before the other, and indeed, before a plurality of otherness. It is only ever this subsidiary shame that we have direct access to in our everyday collisions with being-with-others, and as a result, our dealings with shame may often only be as conclusive as our susceptibility to the formation of habits. In adapting Kierkegaard's (1946) insight about the inexplicability of death, we may perhaps wonder here whether earnestness in shame can explain its structure and figure, or whether it always, instead, discloses nothing beyond the state of the explainer's innermost being?

We have so far simply tried to illuminate the nebulous and inchoate association that obtains between an individual experience of shame and the individual who experiences shame. Frequently, to describe shame is to divulge one's own relational history with the potent affect, and it is at the same time to miss the phenomenological soil into which being-in-the-world is invested and from which any experience that is fundamentally shameful can in the first instance be raised. Let us, therefore, return to and focus more closely on the blush. As Rowlinson declares, Darwin's "chapter on blushing, in particular, provides rich examples of somatic expressions implanted by the very institutions used to record them" (2010, 544). Not only is a blush readily raised upon the subject by the attention of the authority figure interested in its documentation, but it is also greatly intensified when further attention is paid to it. Wondering about someone's habit of blushing can cause them to blush, and drawing attention to this blush can perpetuate and exacerbate such a habit.

In her book, *Blush: Faces of Shame,* Elspeth Probyn remarks, "if you're interested in and care about the interest of others, you spend much of your life blushing"(2005, x).

Although this is an agreeable conclusion, as it stands, it is somewhat misleading. It is not simply an interest in others that causes blushing. Or in other words, it is first our ability to blush that initiates our interest in others. The blush raised by primary shame as an originary and pre-reflective reaction to the primordiality of our being-with-others is made possible because of a proto-inter-mingling of embodied subjectivities and it is the prime cause of any subsequent reflective interest in others. To be interested in others is to relate our histories of blushing. It is to focus our experiences of increased circulation—experiences due to a vulnerability of exposure in a field of others—but it is not accurately an explanation for why we blush.

For Darwin, both shame and the tendency to blush involve a particular "habit," namely, the habit of self-attention. Even for an individual who is blind and not at first conscious that they are observed, Darwin remarks that once one has impressed upon this individual the knowledge that they are observed it "greatly strengthen(s) the tendency to blush, by increasing the habit of self-attention" (2007, 168). Shame, too, as Carl Schneider acknowledges in *Shame, Exposure and Privacy*, "opens up a new level of consciousness of the self. The undivided self in action gives way to the doubled self. Shame is an act of self-attention" (Schneider, 1977, 25). It is the knowledge that one is seen, the consciousness of self before other, that raises the blush and gives expression to primary shame. It is not a disruption of our interest in others, a breach in moral decorum or a trespass of societal strictures that motivates shame in its primary formulation. It is rather the awareness of one's exposure, that is, the knowledge that one is seeable and indeed seen by another, and therefore in a very intense sense both objectified and responsible for one's objectification, that first causes the infiltrating and disorientating self-awareness of shame. The shameful reducibility of the self is not due to moral depravity, but is primarily due to the discover-ability and display-ability of the self before the gaze of the other. To come to attention as an objectified self, exhibited at the end of the other's look, is to set the necessary and sufficient conditions for primary shame. It is toward this basic ontological circumspectivity, this pre-moral and pre-societal opening-up of the self before the other, that we feel the attention of contemporary discourses on shame should be directed.

The fact that blushing only occurs on certain areas of the body, such as the face, and not over the body as a whole, illustrates a key difference between primary shame, i.e., ontological shame, and secondary shame, i.e., moral or cultural shame. The location in which blushing is most intense reveals and delineates the particularity of the focus and influence of the customs of moral etiquette, the ritual re-enactment of only certain kinds of self-attention. The areas of the body most actively associated with self-attention, areas sensitive to honorific social practices, are the ones that will be most readily affected by the blush of shame. Acknowledging the delicate locality of the blush, Darwin argues: "the attention of the mind having been directed much more frequently and more earnestly to the face than to any other part of the body, probably affords a sufficient explanation [for why the face is the most expressive location of the blush]" (2007, 170). The face, the seat of the gaze, is where the sense of exposure has historically been its most beseeching, and shame exacts itself on exactly the region of the self that has, evolutionarily, been the receptor of the most persistent self-attention. That the notion of "human dignity" has throughout a history of philosophical and political articulations found a most luminous source in the face is not lost on our examination of shame; we will take a closer look at the question of the face in discourses on shame in chapter two when we deconstruct the intimacy between shame and "human dignity" in phenomenological philosophy.

Darwin explains, however, "it is not the simple act of reflecting on our own appearance, but the thinking of what others think of us, which excites a blush" (2007, 176). The habit of self-attention is not cultivated in solitude, it is not mechanized alone by reflection on or observance to codified moral statutes. It is, rather, a vulnerability to, or more basically, a *condition of*, inter-subjectivity, i.e., of being-with-others. In apprehending the other before whom the self is other, the self is driven to an unbearable and unexpected realization of its contingent subjectivity. That the other thinks of us, or first sees us, brings home the paralyzing and hollowing sense in which an aspect of our being, a portion of the ontological steps from which we ascend into the world of perception, is lodged within a look that is not our own. Gershen Kaufman claims, "the root of shame lies in sudden unexpected exposure," that in shame we "stand revealed as lesser, painfully diminished in our own eyes and the eyes of others as well" (1985, 13). The revelation here that painfully diminishes the self is not necessarily transgressional: it

is first and foremost an ungrounding of self as subject, or perhaps the sharing of grounds between self and other, a sharing out of which subjectivity is first grounded, an exposure of the self as inter-subject. The root of shame is the exposure not only of the self, but of the limitations of selfhood, of a shared and vulnerable being-in-the-world, contingent upon the otherness before which it is exhibited.

Primary shame cannot be conferred in solitude. Absolute solitude, the physical and cognitive confinement of a consciousness at terms with itself, is necessarily a mode of being that *follows from* the inter-subjective revelation of primary shame. Absolute solitude is still home to the enactment of a basic moral sense, for austere consideration and cardinal moral virtues. The isolated self is still a moral self, and can still be a guilty self, but in absolute solitude, there is no such experience as shame. In solitude an individual can be at odds with a prescriptive understanding of her own guilt in relation to the surrounding civil state in which she finds herself, presently alone, but this individual cannot experience shame in relation to her guilt so long as she remains in solitude. Shame concerns our appearance before others, or, as we have argued, *that* we must appear before others. As Darwin remarks, "in absolute solitude the most sensitive person would be quite indifferent about his appearance," (2007, 176).

As a rule, we generally associate what is shameful with what is trangressional. To feel shame is to have committed a violation, to stand deviantly against the moral intentionality of one's social and cultural context. But in primary shame, it is not the specificity of one's contravention that is first arresting and disarming; what typifies primary shame, what makes it both significant and agonizing is the obtrusive and undeniable severity that it bestows upon the constitutive presence of otherness and the gaze of others. The transformation of the self, the manifestation of self as other and other as self, the perforating force of the look, the other that is seen seeing, is what is pertinent to any experience of shame, it is what makes shame possible, makes it a mode of being-in-the-world. It is what inextricably entangles the self in otherness, and what initiates the self's interest in others.

When Darwin notes that the turning away or lowering of the eyes in shame follows "the conviction that (one) is intently regarded; and (one) endeavours, by not looking at those present, and especially not at their eyes, momentarily to escape from this

painful conviction," he is closing in on what is phenomenologically rudimentary about shame (2007, 178). To be fraudulent or traitorous is not to be ashamed, it is to be guilty of fraudulence and traitoriousness. Whereas to be *seen* as one who is fraudulent or traitorous may well bring home a sense of shame. What transfigures the epistemological quality of a guilty act, i.e., the understanding that one has committed a moral or social fault, into the ontological quality of a shameful act, i.e., the understanding that one is the very being who has committed the fault, is the notion and apprehension that one is seen. Mark Lewis upholds that "Darwin repeatedly made the point that shame depends on sensitivity to the opinion of others, *whether good or bad*," and that for Darwin "personal appearance, and not moral conduct, was what produced blushing" (2003, 1182, emphasis added). It is our view that prior to the emergence of a "civil state," the human animal still turned away and lowered its eyes in shame when it experienced itself as seen, when it experienced the becoming-phenomenal of its being in the eyes of the other. The "un-civilized" human animal still experienced primary shame, still felt the unquestionable contingency of the "being-with."

In her essay "Shame in the Cybernetic Fold," Eve Segdwick notes in reference to affect theory pioneer, Silvan Tomkins, "Tomkin's theory of affect originated with his close observations of an infant in 1955; he was able to locate early expressions of shame at a period (around seven months) *before the infant could have any concept of prohibition*. Many developmental psychologists, responding to this finding, now consider shame the affect that most defines the space wherein a sense of self will develop" (1995, 501, emphasis added). The proto-typical moment of shame experience is not a moment of prohibition. It is rather the recognition that any sense of selfhood is predicated on the presence of the other. As Carl Schneider professes, "Shame…is not 'just a feeling,' but reflects an *order of things*" (1977, 20, original emphasis). Shame as it is widely recognized and discussed is a secondary (social/cultural/political/moral) application of this primary ontological feature. Desire for concealment in shame is a direct affective response to the circulation of the self within a field of others, a response to the fact that insofar as we are, we are alongside others, and therefore we are, also, seen-alongside-others, a response to the fact that being seen is part and parcel of being-in-the-world. The

moralization of shame—secondary shame—is the socio-cultural mobilization of this fact, founded upon a desire for standardization, for the homogenization of citizens.

The following objection may be raised: even if one grants that shame *originates* in and through the ontological occasion in which I am seen by the other, shame *has become* a mechanism for the observances of moral and social protocols and should be addressed as such. It makes little sense to demand that shame be recognized, thought of, and articulated in a phenomenological mode that no longer represents its current and therefore most relevant applications. In other words, shame is now an inextricable function of cultural conventions and the identity forming repercussions therein, and should be contemplated and communicated as such. Shame should not be considered in its larval formulation, but as that very iteration which it presently and almost exclusively enjoys enunciation. To call for a return in shame analysis to a preliminary experience of shame, one might argue, is tantamount to asking a painter in the midst of capturing a sunset, using reds and oranges to reflect the conflagration of light in the sky, to include in her portrayal a consideration of what the sky looked like when the sun was rising earlier in the day. Will the painter not respond that the earlier state of the sky is not of her present concern, for what she is painting is a scene of an altogether different aesthetic, a scene on display before her *now*, one that deserves her attention as such? Or, indeed, should the painter not precisely have prior skies in mind when capturing the phenomenological essence of the ephemeral sky? In seizing the vast and overwhelming scenery of the skyline at sunset perhaps it would pose an advantage to be intimate with the range of its diverse and transient appearances, with the temporal and aesthetic vagaries of the backdrop as a whole. One must be familiar with the spectrum of colors conveyed during the day, of the diverse impressions bestowed upon diverse subjectivities gazing from bellow, one must appreciate the underlying principles of light refraction that authorize the mellifluous ebbs and flows of environmental aesthetics in order to do justice to the sky. To capture shame, that is, to represent shame on a theoretical canvass, requires a similar intimacy with its temporal and genealogical transitions, with its vicissitudinal and multifarious affectations. As Nietzsche professes, "We have given things a new color; we go on painting them continually. But what do all our efforts to

date avail when we hold them against the colored splendor of that old master—ancient humanity?" (1974, 197).

Shame as it is currently understood is incipient and transitory, in the way the sunset is an incipient and transitory representation of the sky. An essential element in the scenery of shame conferral has been overlooked. Moreover, the moral deployment of shame is being wielded according to particular social agendas, and in ways that are detrimental to the very identities it is meant to protect and inform. While shame may well be a *requisite* space for the formation of a political and social self, in order to affect change in the way shame is deployed, heteronomously, and instrumentalized for the exertion of moral and civic influence over the self, over a plurality of selves, we must with due approbation and acquiescence, acknowledge that shame is a *pre-requisite* space for the formation of the inter-subjective self, the self among others. Shame is first the realization that being is shared, indeed, it is precisely sharing revealed, the revelation therefore that all beings stand responsible for the vulnerability of all others.

When Darwin remarks, "the breach of the laws of etiquette, that is, any impoliteness or gaucherie, any impropriety, or an inappropriate remark, though quite accidental, will cause the most intense blushing of which a man is capable," he is offering an endorsement of secondary shame (2007, 180). But as we are now familiar with the incisive rupture of primary and secondary iterations of shame, we can grasp that it is, rather, the fact that this particular man, caught authorizing a breach in the laws of etiquette, is *seen* and also must *be* that very being who is reduced by the moralizing gaze of others that first makes this most intense blush possible. In a statement similar to Darwin's, Gershen Kaufman, in *Shame: The Power of Caring*, claims, "The central idea to keep in mind is that the process by which shame originates in my view always involves some kind of severing of the interpersonal bridge" (1985, 18). But just like Darwin, what Kaufman's remark ignores is the role of shame in the construction of the interpersonal bridge in the first place. It is primary shame that manifests this interpersonal bridge. To be seen by the other, to lean over against the alterity of the other, is to activate the commensurability of inter-subjectivity. The activation of an "interpersonal bridge" is first the exposure of the self before the other, and therefore, it is first primary shame.

As Darwin begins to conclude his analysis of shame, the chronology of the divide between primary and secondary experiences of shame becomes abundantly more pronounced. He postulates that blushing "depends in all cases on the same principle; this principle being a sensitive regard for the opinion, more particularly for the depreciation of others, *primarily in relation to our personal appearance, especially of our faces; and secondarily, through the force of association and habit, in relation to the opinion of others on our conduct*" (2007, 182, emphasis added). Darwin perspicaciously signals a progression between two experiences of shame, beginning with a reactive sensitivity to personal appearance before others—the exposure of the self before the other—and through the habitual practices of moral customs, eventuating a receptivity to the reflection of our moral conduct in the eyes of others or of society at large, a progression from a pre-reflective to a reflective shame. In both stages of shame, Darwin advances that it is, initially, a regard for the depreciatory opinion of others that raises a blush, that brings home a sense of shame, but as we have proposed, Darwin has not considered the primary phenomenological ordering of the instance of shame conferral in which it is first a sensitivity to the regard of the other in general, and secondly, a sensitivity to the appreciatory or depreciatory regard of that other that incites the habitual production of the blush.

Lewis also distinguishes between two kinds of shame, suggesting that shame behaviours "are elicited by two classes of events: those related to specific physical events, like exposure…and those related to thoughts about the self" (2003, 1189). Lewis admits, in congruence with our own thesis, "while both classes [of shame] have been recognized, they have not been separated, in part because no careful analyses of the cognitive aspects of shame have been undertaken" (1189). It is towards such an analysis that we emphasize the co-determining yet contra-positional relationship between primary and secondary shame. In agreement with Darwin, primary shame does indeed involve the disclosure of the appearance of the self before the other, but as we have argued, shame is not first some consequence in the demarcation of rules. Shame begins as an originary mode in the ontological make-up of being-in-the-world. Primary shame is felt by a self that tends towards others, a self that in its being leans over against a field of others, that is engendered, even, by the gaze of the other. As such, it is the primordial appearance of the

self before the other that causes an original sense of shame. With due associative intentionality and habitual focus our appearance before the other becomes anchored in the social and cultural practices of our environment, and further, it eventually becomes rooted in the moral carriage of that environment, but these are elaborations and complications of what it means to appear before others, secondary associations of a primary affect. Primary shame is the ontological condition that inaugurates appearance and exposure as constitutive features of being-in-the-world. Gunter Seidler posits that the negative attribution in shame "is a restricting, secondary determination that is not an intrinsic element of the basic configuration [of shame] but is incidental to it" (2000, 41). Darwin does correctly follow the conversion and evolution of shame from a primary to a secondary articulation, and aptly points to the primacy of appearing before the other in the experience of shame, but he mistakes an early consequence of shame for its cause, and falls prey to the traditional diagnosis that the most influential dimensions of shame experience are the moral determinations that are incidental to it, and thus fails to situate shame in a befittingly foundational ontology.

CONSCRIPTING THE "EVIL EYE"

That one is both seeable and seen is the primordial condition in which a sense of shame is first conferred. *How* one is seen within the social and moral systems of behavioural regulation of a given cultural milieu is a secondary handling of the phenomenon of shame conferral. This raises the question: How did shame come to be mobilized in this way, as a systemic and responsive affect for the surveillance and regulation of individuals within the "civil state"? Kaufman asserts that while "shame originates interpersonally, primarily in significant relationships, …[it] can become internalized so that the self is able to activate shame without an inducing interpersonal event" (1985, 8). If this is true, how is it that the inter-existential grounds of shame conferral have been so displaced that the primordial other has been subjugated, subtended under the ascendent and internalized abstraction of the moral court? Or more particularly, how is it that the experience of shame has been so abused in its social application that it can been used to disenfranchise, de-naturalize, debase, and debilitate "deviant" citizens,

all the while still soothing the conscience of all who have acquired a keen regard for its traditional tactics of conferral?

Secondary shame has instigated a kind of existential masquerade, the wearing of a mask of modesty, a "sense of shame." The subjects of this shame have a right to know what kind of mask they are wearing. The masks we learn to wear within our civil state, within our fields of sociality, the vestiges with which we have concealed ourselves before the gaze of the other, have their origin in the revelation of our being before others, a revelation with capricious and disparate connotations within the socio-cultural realm. As Seidler advances, the locus of shame "will at all events be within the subject experiencing shame; but in the course of the experience of that affect that subject will assume different positions in relation to its own self" (2000, 3-4). It is in the differing positions of the self in relation to itself that secondary shame is most readily observable, and we will attempt now to answer for how it is that shame has both endured and enforced such radical transmogrifications.

In answering these questions, we will examine Friedrich Nietzsche's exploration of the inception and development of the "bad conscience" and its effects upon the "animal man" in *The Genealogy of Morals.* It should be noted that by "bad conscience" Nietzsche does not explicitly nor exclusively refer to shame in the way we have here construed it. For Nietzsche the "bad conscience" is the turning in against the self, the internalization of the external moralizing influences of society. Included in this notion, then, are shame, guilt, modesty, humility, asceticism, and all forms of self-regulation. But we must keep in mind that what Nietzsche is analyzing and critiquing is, essentially, the regulation of the self as its appears before the other, that is, the self's apprehension of its exposure and the exploitation of its desire for concealment. Hiding, covering up, or other forms of inconspicuousness and modesty, including the careful observance of rules, are sufficiently and equally attempts to conceal the self. Additionally, as Seidler affirms, "the indispensible precondition for experiencing shame is the ability to assume a self-limiting position, i.e., an observer position consisting in the internalization of the outside object and the gaze of that object" (2000, 6). There is a parallelism, then, between Nietzsche's "bad conscience" and our articulation of secondary shame. The genesis of the bad conscience as enunciated by Nietzsche is exactly coextensive and inter-animating with

the mobilization, systematization, and internalization of the unveiling and unfolding of the self, revealed before the look the other, a look cloaked in moralizing authority. The institution of the bad conscience is revealed by a secondary process, a secondary methodology for the treatment of primary shame.

Gerhart Piers claims, "Of all the more organized forms of intrapsychic tension, those manifested in the feelings of guilt and shame are possibly the most important ones, not only in emotional pathology, but quite generally in ego development, character formation, and socialization"(1971, 15). For Nietzsche, "the very essence of all civilization is to train out of man, the beast of prey, a tame and civilized animal, a domesticated animal, it follows indubitably that we must regard as the real tools of civilization all those instincts of reaction and resentment" (2003, 23-24). What propagates the essence of socialization and civilization is the habit of concealment, the instinctual veiling of conspicuous being, of unsuitable composure, enacted in and through the experience and deployment of secondary shame. Consequently, it is in recognizing the potency of shame as a civilizing force that the human animal began to harness and manipulate the pervasive influence of shame. The "animal human," prior to the history of civilization, in apprehending itself objectively, discovered that its being-in-the-world was seeable and therefore traceable and pursuable by the other, and in effect learned the value of concealment. The "human animal," on the other hand, after the dawn of civilization, captured and domesticated under the rule of civility, has been made to look upon itself objectively with the "evil eye" of ascetic traditions, and in effect has learned that to comply, to acquiesce to the chains of capture and to the bonds of confinement, is also a means of becoming safely concealed. The mask of shame, a "sense of modesty," a response to the experience of secondary shame, conceals us from the gaze of others, curbs our susceptibility to being seen, and reveals the captious nature of shame at the level of "civilized" society.

In primary shame what is most disorientating is the awakening of the self to the awareness that its being, at its most intrinsic and constitutional level, is shared, that is, that the intelligible reality of being is secretly contained within the ungraspable confines of the being of the other. The vulnerability posed by this awareness is also a responsibility. That I am seen and that I am as I am seen, that is, that I am the very being

who is grasped by the other, is to say that I am responsible for my being in so far as it has been glimpsed, corralled by the look of the other. Primary shame is also a primary announcement of responsibility: response-ability, literally, as the ability to respond to the revelation of my being in and for the other. For Emmanuel Levinas responsibility is the exposure of the self before the supplicating face of the other. This responsibility is antecedent to the freedom of the self, antecedent to all representation; it is "a passivity more passive than all passivity," and "is precisely a saying prior to anything said" (Levinas, 1998,15, and 43 respectively). Jacques Derrida explains that, "Levinas wants to remind us that responsibility is not at first responsibility of myself for myself, that the sameness of myself is derived from the perspective of the other, as if it were second to the other, coming to itself as responsible and mortal from the position of my responsibility before the other" (2008, 47). The exposure of the self before the other, the very arrival of selfhood, is a responsibility, a response in the name of the other, in the name of otherness, a first contraction of the otherness of the self and the selfness of the other. Responsibility for the other is responsibility for the nakedness of existence—a nakedness revealed by primary shame.

From here we can trace the subsequent conversion that takes place across the phenomenologically distant zones of primary and secondary shame. The habitual, and indeed ontologically necessary, association between shame and responsibility, between exposure before the other and responsibility for the other, initiated in primary shame has installed an active sense of responsibility within the societal reception and projection of secondary shame. Levinas argues: "The exposure to the other is not something added to the one to bring it from the inward to the outside. Exposedness is the one-in-responsibility" (1998, 56). The ontological response-ability here construed, and the primary shame that produces it, are originary modes of being-in-the-world, but they have their parallels in secondary shame as well. Shame in accordance with the moralization of the self is equally an exposure of the responsibility of the self, of a self that must answer for the moral implications of its actions. We can see how easily one could mistake the judgment inflicted on the shameful citizen as a cause and not a consequence of shame. Seidler points out, "In the literature there is unanimous agreement that a shame situation is invariably a judgment situation" (2000, 35). Indeed this mistake is frequently made,

and the notion of responsibility in shame, the practice of responding to and for the other from within a place of exposure further impairs our ability to distinguish between shame as ontological principle and shame as social tool. It is as secondary shame that shame is almost universally expounded. But we are adamant, following Nietzsche, that the judgmental skewing of the revelatory gaze is a residuum of the veneer of society and civility, and cannot account fully for the primacy of shame in the being of all beings-alongside-others.

Nietzsche perceptively remarks, "This is simply the long history of the origin of responsibility. That task of breeding an animal which can make promises, includes…the more immediate task of first making man to a certain extent, necessitated, uniform, like among his like, regular, and consequently calculable" (2003, 35). In the secondary manipulation of shame, giving human dignity the refining affectation of responsible conduct, "man [and woman and other], with the help of the morality of customs and of social strait-waistcoats, we made genuinely calculable" (36). The advancement and corruption of shame from its primary to its secondary forms is the precursory movement of the human conscience from an unabbreviated self-and-other-awareness towards the contaminated and calculable self-governing conscience. The power over one's self, an auspicious quality in nature, potentiating the concealment of inimical exposure of one's being-in-the-world, becomes, in and through the transactional exchange of punishment for responsibility in civil society, a domesticated instinct, charged with the surveillance of the self, the "making-conscientious" of the shameful individual. A sensitivity to the distressing intrusion of the gaze of the other, resulting in a primary apprehension of one's phenomenological presence within the ungraspable alterity of the other, is converted into a sensitivity to the predominant customs of self-attention, that is, to the refinement and morality of one's socio-cultural environment.

Seidler proposes, "the other perceived by the ego constitutes the relevant limit which, after re-appropriation of the gaze, manifests itself between ego and self within one and the same person" (2000, 56). The encounter and interaction with the primordial other in primary shame, a profound ontological denuding of one's contingency before the other, raising reconciliatory propensities in the self, inciting an unquenchable interest in others, is what propels and proliferates the infliction, in secondary shame, of a moralizing

and abjectifying application to the process of shame conferral. When Nietzsche remarks, about the conscience of the "sovereign man," that "this power over himself, over fate, has sunk right down to his innermost depths, and has become an instinct, a dominating instinct," he is gesturing towards the foundational reach of the conscience. The conscience, while absorbing the strict incumbencies of moral and social conventions, still refers back to the innermost depths of a being coming to terms with the disclosure of its being before others, a being coming to terms with the vulnerability and responsibility that characterize the sharing of its being-in-the-world. The conscience of the "sovereign man" is that of a being who is seeable and who has been seen, who must engage in the elaborate and reconciliatory odyssey of inter-subjectivity (2003, 36).

Nietzsche claims, "the cardinal moral idea of 'ought' originates from the very material idea of 'owe'," and we can point to an analogous origin in the genealogy of secondary shame (2003, 39). The shame-inducing gaze of the primordial scene of shame conferral is a convincing mechanism for driving home the conviction that one has done wrong, or that one has *been* wrongly, in the sense that one's being is thought of or "seen" as aberrant or perverse in particular social circumstances. The punishment of the individual who 'owes', who has a debt to pay, is made all the more unbearable and transformative if it is impressed in and through the gaze of others, and through the ancillary coercion of the regulating societal conscience represented in that gaze. In this sense, to be punished for one's debt by the admonishing judgment of the gaze of one's peers is eventually to feel that one's exposure before others, the primary shame of the exhibition of one's being before others, itself stands strictly against the strictures of one's social environment. It is to feel indecent in one's disclosure before the other and thus to equate feelings of exposure or nakedness with feelings of moral transgression. Nietzsche argues, "punishment is in this stage of civilization simply the copy, the mimic, of the normal treatment of the hated, disdained, and conquered enemy"(2003, 46). And so it is with a disdainful look, and the infectious sneer of enmity, that we galvanize a sense of shame in those who owe, and it is in this way that we provoke and animate an air of morality, judiciously appearing as the protective mask of social refinement, from within that experience of shame. Secondary shame is the carving of an "ought" onto the trunk of a primary production of inter-subjective relationality. Where, primarily, shame is a matter

of finding oneself revealed at the end of another's look, having one's very being partake in the abyssal dissolution of self and other, it is alternately, in its secondary construction, a matter of finding oneself before a moral judgment, that is, standing "deviantly," in relation to the sensibilities of one's cultural neighborhood.

Nietzsche diagnoses that "the darkening of the heavens over man has always increased in proportion to the growth of man's shame before man," blaming "the diseased refinement and moralization, thanks to which the 'animal man' has at last learnt to be ashamed of all his instincts" (2003, 42). The ritual punishment of the self by the gaze of the other, in the service of nascent and insipid moral laws has engendered a habitual association between shame and malfeasance, and due to the persistence of this employment, it is this kind of shame experience that has been inherited and interiorized over time. It is in reference only to disobedient or scandalous occasions that shame has found its most frequent examinations. Even claims about the positive and protective nature of such an identity coddling affect are still only characterizations of shame as an effect and consequence of the conditions of a moral environment, a morality that Jane Geaney (2004) accuses of conflating the moral superiority of "internality." She argues: "Internality may signify moral autonomy, but if the price of moral autonomy is moral motivation that stems from excessive self-focus, then [it]…is not necessarily to one's credit" (116). Furthermore, it is our contention that the ecology of shame conferral predates the conception of human moral codes, that it is a fundamental aspect of being-in-the-world-with-others that has frequently and pertinaciously been misapprehended and misconstrued in the interest of ascetic ideals. It is the residue of such bouts of ideological internality and conviction that has concealed the true and foundational anatomy of shame experience.

Just as the typification of any experience of fear—instilled by social institutions to harvest a certain kind of fearful preoccupation with otherness and the unknown—inevitably refers to a basic anticipatory attitude and a primal aversion to dangerous or disagreeable outcomes, any typification of shame also refers necessarily to a basic affect, that is, the feeling of exposure before the other. For Thomas Keenan, shame "signifies involvement in a social network, exposure to others and susceptibility to their gaze" (2004, 436). The clearer we are about the social and cultural systems that have been

established using shame as an intrinsic implementation, the more easily we can catch sight of shame in its primary form, and therefore the more appropriately we can assess the current make-up of contemporary civility and the miscalculations it has made of shame. Perhaps we can heed Nietzsche's claim in *Beyond Good and Evil*, intended, we believe, not so much in admonishment as in encouragement, that "to be ashamed of one's immorality is a step on the ladder at the end of which one is ashamed also of one's morality" (1997, 48). Moreover, perhaps we can grapple, too, with Walter Berns' question: "But what if, contrary to what is now so generally assumed, shame is natural to man, in the sense of being an original feature of human existence? What if it is shamelessness that is unnatural, in the sense of having to be acquired?" (1975, 48). It is only in acknowledging just how precisely shame is a phenomenon of ontological severity—an affect of both moral and immoral involvement, beyond good and evil—that we can offer meaningful and beneficial insights into the experiences of those who are acutely impacted by shame. For Nietzsche, the bad conscience—a suitable analogue for secondary shame—is "the serious illness which man was bound to contract under the stress of the most radical change which he has ever experienced—that change, when he found himself finally imprisoned within the pale of society and of peace" (2003, 56). Secondary shame, if it is an illness, is one that can be better understood with almost pathological recourse to its primary figuration, its larval form.

To attribute the propensity for concealment in shame to moral disobedience, and in doing so, to set up a system of self-regulation whereby the self transfers the power of the revealing gaze of the delimiting other onto itself, is to inculcate a conviction in the shamed subject that it is not just exposure that causes shame, but that it is moral transgression in and of itself that is the veritable and potent cause of shame. This way, when assessing our own experiences of shame, we look first for a breach in the moral or social order and not for a moment of denudation or disclosure, a feature much more likely the culprit, and much more authentically the cause of the rise and influence of our shame. And so not only does shame through its secondary societal application become affiliated in this system with the refuse of moral practices, but furthermore, it becomes fully appropriated, requiring that in any experience of shame there be a concomitant moral judgment. In primary shame, our instinct is to hide, to cover ourselves, to keep out of

view of the infiltrating gaze of the other, a gaze in which we are grasped, in a sense captured, and exposed. But it is a gaze that in the last analysis accounts for an aspect of our being-in-the-world, a gaze that reveals to us that we are indeed profoundly inter-subjective, that we cannot escape our responsibility for the other, or our vulnerability before the other. In secondary shame, however, our instinct is to hide from ourselves, to espy the ways in which we have fallen short of an ideal self, a perfectly moral and standardized version of ourselves. In secondary shame we are captured in another way, by the pale of society, by a question of social and political identity, and we are therefore asked to give up the profound and constructive intimacy between being-in-the-world and being-with-others in favor of a new-found intimacy between being-in-the-world-according-to-societal-norms and being-with-others-according-to-such-norms.

PROTECTING THE BODY "AS LIVED"

We will now examine the final text of this chapter, a publication by Max Scheler entitled *Person and Self-Value: Three Essays*. As Robert Metcalf assesses, for Scheler, "true shame is not primarily inhibiting or repressive, but is fundamentally positive and constitutive of subjectivity per se" (2000, 7). We shall discover, however, that Scheler's conception of shame, though fundamentally positive in contrivance, also employs an implicit repression of non-traditional or non-religious lifestyles, and therefore relies on an exploitation of the moralizing disposition prevalent in the public reception of secondary shame. Nevertheless what is most exigent about Scheler's analysis is the productive and constitutive role he assigns to shame in the emergence of subjectivity. Moreover, uncovering the shamed subject in Scheler's dialectical model of shame conferral ultimately reveals a binary system similar to our own projection of primary and secondary shame. In this final section we hope to concretize our diacritical phenomenology of shame: first as the revelation of the extended and embodied self before the primordial other, and second as the revelation of the standardized and civilized self before the moralizing other.

Scheler begins the essay by classifying shame as a disharmony between two competing human dispositions. He holds that "to the origin of the feeling of shame there

belongs something like an imbalance and disharmony in man between the senses and the claim of spiritual personhood and embodied needs" (1987, 5). Already we can see in this proposed imbalance in "man" that shame is meant, for Scheler, to rectify a dissonance in the phenomenological claims made between our moral and our bodily selves. We can anticipate, then, that even when Scheler will speak favorably of the repercussions of a keen sense of shame, his conception of shame is one focused entirely on a capacity to regulate and modify the self, a conception much akin to our own secondary shame. There is a subtler and more penetrating typology, though, pervading Scheler's characterization of shame, one that displays an awareness of the ontological significance of the appearance of the body before the other (or the self as other) and the dynamics of this condition of visibility to the experience of shame. We hope to devote most of our attention towards this impression.

Scheler professes, "It is only because the human essence is tied up with a 'lived body' that we can get in a position where we *must* feel shame; and only because spiritual personhood is experienced as essentially independent of the 'lived body' and everything that comes from it, is it possible to get into the position where we *can* feel shame" (5). Though appealing to a higher metaphysical personhood whose essence is independent of the "lived body," and thus evoking a spiritual dimension to the genesis of shame that is beyond the scope of this thesis, Scheler does recognize, or at least implicate, the foundational revelation, the coming into view or perceptibility of the "lived body" or the "body-as-lived" as a primary component in the originary production of shame. Here Scheler includes that it is the exposure of the "lived body" *as such* that makes shame not only something we must feel, but essentially and primarily, something we can feel. The co-extension of embodied subjectivities is the exposure of the "being-with," and it makes shame an existential reality for any being-in-the-world. Shame, indeed primary shame, is inextricably elemental in the phenomenology of the "body-as-lived," that is to say, in the very ontology of bodily obtrusion, of being-a-bodily-extension-in-the-world-alongside-bodily-others. Shame conditions the nature of our visibility before others, and therefore commissions our inter-penetration and inter-animation in a field of others. There is a phenomenological concurrence between the "lived body" and the feeling of shame, and Scheler has evoked this relation from the outset.

This dualism between spiritual and bodily self, enacting an abyss between two orders of being, is central to Scheler's depiction of the onto-genesis of shame. Shame, then, manifests out of a reconciliatory effort made across the dual meta-hierarchically stationed selves of one individual, and not, as we have heretofore argued, across the borders of self and other (although, we suspect Scheler's distinction between bodily and spiritual selves can be interpreted as an equivalent process of othering). There is, however, an important commonality between the language of Scheler's dualism and that of our radical inter-subjectivism pertaining to the role of shame in "bridging" the distance between (bodily) self and (spiritual) other (self). Scheler remarks that "one feels in one's depths and knows oneself to be, a 'bridge,' a 'transition' between two orders of being and essence in which one has such equally strong roots that one can not sever them without losing one's very 'humanity'" (6). Primary shame is this awareness of one's rootedness both within one's own being and within the being of the other. Shame is this coming to grips with the relatedness of being, with the transitional character inherent to all being-in-the-world, discoverable at the end and in the very projection of the other's gaze. Shame is the apprehension that being is really a confluence of being-self and being-other. The piercing gaze of the other, for Scheler, comes from a transcendent self—an ideal spiritual self—but invokes precisely this relation between the primordial self and other. For Scheler shame is internally motivated. The spiritual self decries against the exterior moral influence of the public, but there is a blurring of boundaries between self and other in his diagnosis of shame, especially considering the metaphysical mettle of Scheler's spiritual self. Caught within the gaze of the other, the ashamed self is revealed as extending beyond the boundaries of self-same ontology, reaching over into the being of the other (self).

Jane Geaney, in a paper on shame in early Confucianism, clarifies that shame is not simply either motivated by exterior or interior forces. She argues that "a shamed self illustrated by blurred personal boundaries is not as conductive to arguments about shame being internally motivated. If the boundaries of the self are not clearly defined…then it seems unlikely that anyone would develop a rigid ethical distinction between internal and external motivation. It would make as much sense to say shame is internal as external, but to insist on either would be odd" (2004, 113-114). While we have interpreted the

spiritual other lurking in the heart of Scheler's shamed self as the internalization of an inherited and habitual self-moralization enacted from within society's pale, as an introjection of secondary shame, we insist that primary shame involves both interior and exterior motivations in the sense that the boundaries between self and other are radically and necessarily blurred in its experience. It is not important, however, for us to track the circumstantial autonomy or heteronomy inherent to Scheler's account of shame. It is much more valuable to locate at the heart of this and every discourse on shame an ultimate and prerequisite disclosure and dissemination of the self (and its "lived body") before the gaze and extension of the other—whether other be conceived as spiritual self or simply as a neighborly other—and to note, as Kaufman does, "It is as though through the eyes we can see into one another, perhaps even experientially enter the other's skin and so come to know him or her from the inside" (1985, 59).

Scheler, in fact, endorses a version of primary shame, one he calls "bodily shame." He likewise upholds that "it is, first of all, the very function of bodily shame to cover and veil, as it were, a living individual" (6). For Scheler shame is inherent to the process of individuation wherein sexual or bodily drives, along with the sexual organs, are subordinated under the higher functions of the nervous system and its central nervous organs. From plant to animal, on an evolutionary schema, Scheler claims that there is a progression of concealment of the sexual organs actualized in nature, and suggests that "one could speak here of an almost objective phenomenon of shame" and further that shame feelingly intends "a subordination of sexuality under a whole of life" (10). While we hesitate to agree that nature is complicit in the shaming of the propagatory impulses of its plants and animals—it seems more likely that what is called "natural" is indeed the opposite, involving the voracious celebration of all instinctual and propagatory exploits—we can appreciate the significance of this contiguity between shame and the exposure of the sexual organs. (In the following chapter we will devote a section of commentary to nakedness and the sense in which non-human animals, absolutely naked in the sense that their sexual organs remain constantly exposed, are said to be unable to enter into a "state of nakedness," and are also, therefore, said to be unable to experience shame.) This objectification or naturalization of shame is nevertheless worthwhile because it is indicative of certain aspects of our conceptualization of primary shame.

Scheler goes beyond our own classificatory sketch of shame in his inclusion of sexuality as a drive becoming-subordinate in primary shame, but there is perhaps an element of truth to the primacy of covering one's sexual organs before the other (and perhaps such a truth would hold, too, for the experience of some non-human animals as well). But what is most informative about this account is that Scheler's articulation of shame does indeed commence from an ontological base, that is, from the supposition of a primary phenomenological exchange comprised exclusively of the announcement and exposure of the body of the self before the other, of the lived body before the living other. It is here that we can properly witness the genesis of each and every experience of shame, it is here that we can grasp the true uncoveredness of our shameful selves, our bodily, visible and discoverable selves, and therefore it should be towards this "here" that any analysis of shame should be intended, and not, as is most frequently the case, in the direction of the social and cultural significations—or convolutions—of prevailing schemes of interpretation and valuation.

A "sense of shame" appears to evince an imperative moral character in human sociality, it manifests in our everyday experience as a protective affect keeping a distance between the subject and the many potential inimical transgressions lurking in the wings and shadows of the ever corrupting "exterior." Or, put another way, *secondary shame* demonstrates surface level proclivities in human beings on a social and cultural level of interaction, but fails to promote the constitutive dimensions of shame. By conceiving, as we have endeavored to do here, of a primary scene of shame conferral, we can begin to promote shame as an affect that is prior to and yet goes beyond the level of culture, that radiates beyond the interactive tendencies of the socio-political self, we can appreciate that shame has its origin in the ontological bulwarks of the self as it arrives at self-consciousness through the discontinuities of the horizon of alterity, arriving, universally, in stark display and shared vulnerability. Primary shame evidences an existential truth about the being-in-the-world of the primordial self and other, it is at bottom the revelation of ourselves, that is, our plural singularities, in the world.

Scheler approaches such a conception of shame, alleging: "But one *specific* meaning of the term shame shows that shame is a feeling which belongs to *feeling ourselves*. For in all shame there is an act of '*turning to ourselves*'" (1987, 15, original

emphasis). In order to turn to ourselves we must first be coming from somewhere else. Feeling ourselves in shame is a coming to the self from the other, coming to self as other. For Scheler it is as a barrier that shame covers the self, essentially a mechanism for the conservation of the self, for protection against "outside" influence. In general and everyday sociality, according to Scheler, the value of the individual is pitted against the valuation of the public, and without an intractable sense of shame, one risks being corrupted by the profanity of the public sphere. Scheler argues that "shame is a counter-reaction grown into a feeling; it is the 'anxiety' of the individual over falling prey to general notoriety, and over the individual's higher value being pulled down by lower values" (17-18). Here Scheler signals a progression from a primary instance in which shame is simply a counter-reaction, to a secondary instance, a transformation of shame into a feeling of anxiety towards the debasing of the higher values of the self by the "general notoriety" and depravity of societal others. But while he is correct in aligning the mobilization of shame with a secondary and societal impetus that is, at bottom, indifferent to the specific and idiosyncratic values of the individual, he has over-stated his position by assuming that in every desire for concealment provoked by shame, there is an inherent and accompanying moral virtue that it seeks fundamentally to protect. Scheler has simply set one moralizing regime against another and insisted that shame is and can only be the guardian of just one. Why couldn't shame just as easily be construed as an affect for the protection of "lower values" against the domination of the "higher values"? We can, for instance, imagine a culture critical or dismissive of ascetic behaviour, and therefore scornful of the "higher values" to which Scheler appeals. Moreover, these "higher values" would be exactly what shame is meant to protect the individual against. What are touted as "higher values" in one cultural setting could easily be the "lower values" of another. The valuation that is perpetually supplemented to the backdrop of any experience of shame is an arbitrary incorporation of the conventions particular to the contextual environment of a given reception of shame, and may even be, after all, a maladaptive habituated propensity.

Sedgwick remarks, "the contagiousness of shame is only facilitated by its anamorphic, protean susceptibility to new expressive grammars" (2009, 61). We have argued that it is this anamorphic susceptibility that makes shame such a formidable

mechanism for the standardization of citizens. But does this not suggest that shame is a dynamic and basic affective contagion independent of the expressive moral grammars in which it finds articulation, specular in its manifestation, reflecting first both self and other prior to their emersion in the relativism of cultural valuation, but then reflecting arbitrarily whatever values have become susceptible or useful in its conferral? Shame as a "counter-reaction," as Scheler has referred to it, is a reaction to being seen, to having one's being revealed before another and aligned alongside that otherness, there are no intrinsic social or moral values that attach to and, in any original sense, that motivate this first instance of shame. It is true that shame eventually, and deeply, involves an adherence to the customary social and moral habits of a culture, but this is as a consequence of generations of specific and habitual cultural reception, the association of certain behavioral tendencies within the fundamental structural schemas of shame. That one can have such an intimate compulsion to hide or cover oneself when overwhelmed by a feeling of exposure or disclosure before the other is an exceptional and communicative aspect of being-in-the-world, and is rightfully analyzed at length for its manifold consequences within given socio-cultural landscapes. But it is our opinion that without properly acknowledging this primordial scene of shame conferral, we will continually fail to characterize both the positive, protective and constitutive aspects as well as the negative, destructive and ancillary dimensions of shame experience. To re-animate and revitalize the shame subject, we need to carefully determine the way in which primary shame is mobilized towards its secondary associations.

Scheler argues that shame "represents the being and justification of the intimate self and the detachment from public judgment" (20-21). He is correct, shame is a justification prior to the passing of judgment. "Public judgment," in primary shame, can be interpreted as the leaning over against the self of the alterity of the other. The experience of primary shame, though a reflection of the co-determining and inter-mingling of subjectivities is also a partitioning of being. It is also a reflection of the irreducible singularity of the self in its exposed circulation within a field of others. The other not only fixes the self within its gaze but does so from a irrecoverable and unaccountable perspective, from a phenomenological vantage that is insurmountable and inaccessible to the self (20-21). While shame discloses the proximity and complicity of

the other it still involves a certain experience of detachment. For existence to be shared there must be distinct beings doing the sharing. This notion of separation is essential to any act of sharing, especially in the context of shame. For Gunter Siedler the other is "something strange, alien, something that in connection with a person may be termed alterity [that] has made its appearance within the experiential dimension of the subject, an unknown entity with the sole characteristic of being 'alien,' 'unfamiliar,' something which at this first encounter is not explored any further but like a snail's feeler touched by a fingertip causes the subject to withdraw and turn back upon itself" (2000, 40). The intimate self is here inundated with alterity, with an undeniable desire to hide, to conceal itself, conceal its singularity from the planes of otherness, to detach from the other and from its revelation before and within the other. In exhibiting the intimate attachment between self and other, primary shame can bring about a strong desire for detachment, an intense feeling of detachment, but we must be careful not to characterize this longing for separation as the proto-reaction or proto-compulsion of a moral self, of a self that has committed a moral blunder or is seeking detachment from public judgment. The desire for concealment in primary shame is due to an unadulterated exposure before the other and within the otherness of a plurality of others. The longing for solitude of a moral "delinquent" is a secondary affectation attributed to shame by a morality of customs and in accordance with extensively interiorized or intensively exteriorized values of a given cultural context.

Scheler maintains, in addition to the justification in shame of the intimate self, that a "lack of shame thus punishes with disgust—according to a law eternally inscribed in our hearts and which no arbitrary act can defy" (24). This disgust is drawn from without by an encircling societal *ethos*, and from within by a reflexive evaluation by the self. While Scheler may be referring to a spiritual disgust, this disgust is meaningless unless it is mirrored, that is, reflected from within the bodily self. An ideal self-concept is imagined and constructed in strict accordance with the same social and moral strictures through which shame is activated and maneuvered as secondary shame, in the subsidiary operation of shame's revelatory force. Bernard Williams imparts in *Shame and Necessity*, "[Shame] requires an internalized other whose reactions the agent can respect…[who] embodies intimations of a genuine social reality—in particular of how it will be for one's

life with others if one acts in one way rather than another" (1993, 102). This, of course, refers to the phenomenology of secondary not primary shame. The punishing disgust that one may feel for acting with a "lack of shame" is equi-congenital with the employment of secondary shame—in its socio-cultural saliency as a consuming desire for social concealment, that is, for inconspicuous societal existence—as an admonishing and regulating tool for the regulation of individuals. Disgust with oneself is not built-in or implicit within the primary economy of shame conferral, it is added in the process of making shame useful in "civil" society, a process by which a "civilized" society actively equivocates between one's desire for concealment due to existential exposure and one's desire for concealment due to deplorable or scandalous exposure, conflating the fact *that* one is seen with experiences of *how* one is seen.

Scheler's conception of shame, however, still operates as a binary system consisting of a projection from primary to secondary shame. For Scheler, shame has two essentially different forms: "bodily shame," or vital shame, and "psychic shame," or spiritual feelings of shame. Moreover, he posits that every feeling of shame is comprised of two conscious functions: "a lower one which is value-indifferent (and automatic in its process) and by which a decisively positive striving is posited; and a higher, value-selecting and value-discovering one (whose process is less automatic and, therefore, more flexible)" (27). The value-selecting function of consciousness in the experience of shame is a feature of the subsequent and indoctrinating administration of shame according to a current of moral conduct within a given cultural space, a field of others projecting a trajectory of values to be taken up by the intimate self, a trajectory of desires that the self must either align itself with, or, in shame, hide itself from.

If Scheler's higher, value-selecting function of consciousness in shame is meant to operate exclusively from inside the self, not only must this higher inner self be immaculately autonomous—absolutely unabbreviated, that is, uninfluenced, by the surrounding public—but it must also protect the bodily self from the many corrupting and sensual influences of that public. This dichotomy only works, however, if we are willing to seriously suppose a dualism of body and mind. The moment we ask where the spiritual self obtains the criteria for its value-selecting edict from, Scheler must answer, either, that it is ordained by an ineffable spiritual kinship with an authorizing god, or that it is simply

acquired according to the prerogative and authority of the proximal cultural regime. In either case, it is not the feeling of shame itself that introduces value-selection; it is rather the consequential reception and interpretation of shame by the other that signals the interpolation of morality within any experience of shame.

The distinction between primary and secondary shame is later communicated, in Scheler's discourse, as one of epistemology, and in a way this is where his examination of shame departs most clearly from the associative transference of Darwin's account. Scheler posits, "Shame is not understandable because there must have been an earlier experience of it to be reproduced only upon the occasion of another's shame. We understand shame because its inner structure is shared" (39). Significantly, Scheler points here to the foremost relevancy of our articulation of primary shame: that as a constitutive aspect of being-in-the-world, primary shame is inherently and perhaps instinctively, inter-subjective; it is intrinsically shared. Perhaps, then, not only would it make sense to speak of the possibility for communities of shame—groups of people united not by the evasive, dismissive and generalizable plurality of pride, but by the shared and exposed singularity of shame—but it would be necessary that all coming together, all community forming interaction, indeed all relationality, be predicated, in one way or another, on an experience of primary shame. If, as Jean-Luc Nancy claimes, "*being-with is Being's own-most problem*," and that "the task is to know why and how this is so," we believe that the experience of primary shame is a fundamental mode for the interpretation and reconciliation of all communal experiences (Nancy, 2000, 32, original emphasis). The proto-reaction in shame of an intense desire for concealment underlies and pervades all communal interactivity (More on this in chapter three where we will argue that the dynamics of visibility are inextricable from the dynamics of communal interaction, that the way in which we are seen, that is, the ways in which we are shamed, whether within intimate face-to-face relations, or in accordance with the more abstracted levels of imagined cultural communities, are constantly ordering the ways in which we experience ourselves communally).

Scheler concludes that "nature presents us with this one set of alternatives: shame or disgust," and that the "forgetting [of] human dignity through shamelessness is only followed by the punishment of disgust" (77). If we are to avoid the eminently value-

laden impetus of Scheler's ultimatum while still approaching the ontological thrust of his set of alternatives, we can interpret that by shame, here, Scheler, at bottom, refers to the positioning of the self over and against a horizon of alterity. Shame is the self-conscious (other-conscious) attachment between one's existential upsurge and that of the other. Conversely, disgust here signifies a detachment of self and other at the level of consciousness, a detachment in the circuit of circumspection and environmentality of the self. Here, the self does not recognize its inter-connectedness with other selves, it ignores its dependency upon the other, it dismisses its being-for-others. Disgust can be interpreted as the distancing of the self from the borders of otherness, the interiorization of the self, and a dismissal of the primacy of being-with. What we have called primary shame is the natural (factical, ontological) awareness of the constitutive precedence of the other. To "choose" shame, as Scheler has presented it—though we would not suggest, especially following Darwin's insights above, that it is always so clearly a matter of choice—is to recognize the role of otherness in the formation of selfhood—to be self such that the self *is* for others. (Shamelessness, then, we could typify as the disavowal of the self's reliance on the other, but this notion in itself would require a chapter of its own, and would extend our discussion beyond the limits of our current project). If there is an element of disgust manifest in the absence of shame, however, it is conferred, as Nietzsche described, by societal institutions that deal in the governance (punishment and surveillance) of individuals, a governance that is delimited by a surrounding—and to some extent imaginary—cultural jurisdiction. Any turn away from the other is yet always still a concomitant turn towards some new figure of otherness. So long as the self is, so too is the other, and moreover, so too is an other who has fixed the self within its gaze.

CONCLUSION

What Scheler's alternative ignores is that disgust is the economy of secondary shame, that in appealing to the coercive and refining influence of disgust, he has ultimately appealed to the subsidiary mobilization of shame as an assurance of the unilateral influence of shame towards ascendency (progression, standardization, generalization). Scheler administers inconsistent flights of shame, one towards the self, the other towards the soul, and has called them by different names: the former, a

proposed alternative to shame he calls disgust, the latter, simply shame. These phenomenologies of shame share an ontological base which is here neglected and without which any analysis of shame can only ever be physiognomic, revealing the look, the appearance of a "sense of shame," revealing the cultural mask, without ever exposing its primary form underneath. As Williams affirms, "the root of shame lies in exposure in a more general sense, in being at a disadvantage: … in a very general sense, a loss of power" (1993, 220). Without the vocabulary and conceptual diversity of our present articulation of primary and secondary experiences of shame, despite working within the framework of an ontological and cultural iteration of shame, Scheler, just as Darwin and Nietzsche, can only offer an unsatisfactory antinomy between the shame of the factical, vulnerable, responsible, seeable upsurge of the "lived body" and the shame of the disrupting, disharmonic, de-valued, social body, the shame of not just the self's embodiment before the other, but of the dissonance such an embodiment may cause socio-culturally.

Shame is for Scheler a protective affect; shame protects the self from the disgust of *being* "deviantly," of an ignoble relation to one's cultural community. What he has missed is that shame is, rather, a primordial experience originating at the very foundation of community, at its advent, that shame is part of the infrastructure of all relationality. Scheler is uncomfortable with the proximity between the spiritual and protective shame of the self and the disgusting and degrading notoriety of the public that complicates that self, but, as Schneider affirms: "Our discomfort with shame reflects our lack of comfort with the reality of our inter-dependence" (1977, 138). Scheler has misapprehended or at least has been unclear about the role of the other in the conferral of shame. In primary shame, as Geany points out, "the other does not function as a judge, and it does not represent social norms" (2004 114). It is through shame that one first comes to recognize selfhood and otherness, to face the other (or the self as other and the other as self). It is in this recognition of the other, through one's primary shame, that one emerges as a self, a self perceiving the mellifluous parade and plurality that is being-in-the-world, a self alienated and disorientated, a self included and reciprocated. Indeed, primary shame is the exposure of the self to the plenum of perception, the plenitude of inter-subjectivity, revealed before the other seen seeing, vulnerable and responsible for this other with

whom its vulnerability is shared. Shame is self-attention projected from multiple sources, it is the ungrounding realization that being is ultimately and unalterably being-with.

In the following chapter we will endeavor to scrutinize the relationship between shame and humanity and animality, with the aim of troubling the idiomatic typification of shame in philosophical, particularly phenomenological, discourse as the distinctive trace of the superiority of human over non-human existence. We will argue, following Jacques Derrida, in favor of the view that some animals have access to the experience of primary shame, and further that the various refusals made against non-human animals in philosophical rhetoric intimate more about the vagaries of secondary shame and the personalized theoretico-relational perspectives of those authors to particular non-human animals than they do about any sacrosanct theo-ontological limit that obtains between what calls itself "man" and calls the other "animal."

Chapter 2
SHAME IN THE FACE OF WHAT WE ARE

Shame makes human beings of us, shame of uncleanness. Adam and Eve: the founding myth. Before that we were all just animals together.

J.M. Coetzee

The cat has your tongue. At the same moment I say to someone: Say meow. Someone other than you and me. Say just exactly meow. Then I read that the cat has your tongue and your words are licking. Milk. I'm not surprised that you're ashamed. I'm surprised that you shame me.

Roger Kelly & Birgit Kempker

INTRODUCTION

Now that we have, to a certain extent, delineated the temporal and topographic distances between primary and secondary shame, ontological and existential divergences—differences in repetition—between two fundamentally disparate experiences of shame, we will particularize the scope of our analysis and examine a specific scene of shame conferral, a shame recounted by Jacques Derrida (2008) in *The Animal That Therefore I Am*. We will try to stay as close as possible to this individual scene of shame, a shame that obtains between Derrida and his cat. In so doing, we hope to bear witness to a startling limitation, indeed, to the very figuration of a limit, the declaration made by a tradition of thought and the philosophical texts therein that shame configures the limit, the threshold, between human and animal kind, between human and animal being-in-the-world. In the interest of phenomenological accuracy—and in reaction and contravention to the inconsonant portrayal in philosophical texts of "the animal" as a general singular figure—our analysis in this chapter will draw, for the most part, on a singular event, the unique existential positioning of a man and his cat, a peculiar place of activity and insistence. We will evoke the being of only one particular (with one brief exception) non-human animal: a cat. Here, we hope to behold the primary and secondary implications of shame as they are experienced and conferred between a singular man and

a singular cat. We hope to observe the conceptual crudeness and ineptitude with which a philosophical tradition has announced the shame between them, and we hope to espy the various and alluring connotations that spring from this nebulous affect, shared in its primary form, imposed in its secondary form.

This chapter takes as its starting point a response to a response, a reflective shame that is ashamed for being ashamed. In *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, Derrida recounts an encounter he has daily with his cat. In this encounter he is apprehended, naked, under an animal's gaze. Derrida feels shame, first, because he is seen, seen in a state of nakedness, revealed and reduced by the objectifying gaze of another being. He feels the incalculable permeation of a pre-reflective shame, the acute call of primary shame. But in a secondary departure, and a reflective return, this shame is turned in against itself—and burdened with all the judicative reproach of secondary shame—at the very moment when he recognizes that the being before whom he is ashamed is an animal, indeed, a cat. Derrida, in detecting the specialized otherness of his cat, an otherness that confronts him from beyond the borders of human otherness, reflects upon the ontological distance of this cat, its separation from the parameters, the boundaries, of human society and human community. He thinks the abyss of this displacement, this "animal" existence, lingering at the border, the frontier and periphery of an inter-subjective arena where shame and other regulating and civilizing customs are commonly practiced. For Derrida this secondary response, this secondary shame, is "specular," "unjustifiable," and "unavowable," and this encounter with a particular creature induces him to call into question the conceptual fissure between "humans" and "animals," a fissure that has been millennia in the making by a philosophical tradition that has consistently and perpetually refused to acknowledge the unabbreviated being of non-human animals with any phenomenological veracity. Invoking the whole history of philosophy, Derrida charges: "They have taken no account of the fact that what they call 'animal' could look at them, and address them from down there, from a wholly other origin" (2008, 13). And so it is from here, standing before an animal, before a cat, that is not simply seen, but that is seen seeing, seen returning the gaze that sights it, returning also the request for recognition of the human gaze, returning, finally, the shame of self before other, it is from here that we ask: From whence this shame?

This chapter seeks to show, in and through a detailed exploration of a particular experience of both primary and secondary shame, and through the chronicling of an array of phenomenological and philosophical accounts of the encounter between self and other (drawn from Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, and Levinas), that the shame that is persistently included in discourses typifying and figuring animality, is shame in its secondary iteration, shame as a figurative horizon delimiting the boundaries between (civilized) human and (non-civilized) non-human existence, shame wielded as a tool for the regulation of "human" behavior and the domestication of "animal" instincts. With this very particular scene of shame, a routine rendezvous between Derrida and his cat, an encounter that provokes Derrida to wonder if it is here, before this "animal" that "Thinking perhaps begins," we will advance that certain non-human animals, more specifically, that a certain cat, has access to shame, to the phenomenal planes of shame conferral, and to the constitutive experience of primary shame (Derrida, 2008, 29). We will deny the claim made by the artifice of secondary shame, the claim that humanity and animality emerge on opposite ends of a phenomenology of shame, arguing instead in favor of the claim made by the schema of primary shame, the claim that being-in-the-world, being in its most fundamental expression, is characterized by inter-subjective revelation, by the exposure of one being before another, by shame as a vulnerability shared by innumerable beings, across an indeterminate array of species. We hope hereby also to enact a re-configuration of the role of non-human animals in philosophical discourse, to speak only of certain animals in certain contexts, and not of "the animal," not of this ideal and illusory foil for the figure of "man." We hope hereby, as well, to describe a distinct experience of shame involving a distinct cat, a cat in its irreducible singularity. So let us ask again but this time more explicitly: From whence this shame that would have us condemn and deny both the animality from which we are descended and a non-human animal adjacent, a cat, with whom we share an ontological neighborhood?

ORIGINS AND ENDS

With heavy reliance on the existential philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre, we will begin by briefly reconsidering and perhaps re-intensifying the situation, or scene, in

which primary shame is raised, re-casting and re-mobilizing the conceptual economy of chapter one. To be ashamed is, primarily, to experience oneself as an object for the other. Primary shame, before any feeling of judgment, before any civilized gathering or ordering, is exposure and dependence, it is the unveiling of one's being-in-the-world-for-others, the realization of one's object-state before the infringing gaze of the other. Being-for-others, then, is the first existential by-product of being-with-others, a tending towards others resulting from the anterior state of total immersion in otherness. Primary shame is the phenomenal manifestation of being-with-others and incites the realization of one's being-for-others. Shame is the recognition that one *is* as one is seen. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre holds that to feel shame is to be "ashamed of myself as I appear to the Other" ([1943], 1992, 302). In shame an aspect of our being is revealed, we are not only seen by the other, but we *are* as we are seen, namely, we are the object captured by the other's gaze. Primary shame, then, is the limit between the freedom of the self and that of the other, or rather, it is an immolation before any freedom, it is the horizon of possibilities between self and other, the calculating boundary between what the self is and what it is not. Sartre posits, "in order for me to be what I am, it suffices merely that the Other look at me" (351). Thus the infiltration of the other, the leaning over and weighing down of alterity against the upsurge of our existence, is the existential filling-in of our being. The other, standing opposite us, not only being fixed by our gaze, but in fixing us in return, constituting the very directionality and intentionality of our look with an ungraspable and interceding look of its own, bestows upon us the profound and rounding impetus of our shared existence.

By seeing and conferring upon the self the object state that conditions its being-for-others, the other holds within its being, within its look, the discrete wholeness, the secret plenitude of the being of the self, the uncontainable and unreachable amplitude of a being that is radically shared, a being that is irreducibly being-alongside-others. It is only in and through an encounter with the other, in and through the revelation of our object-state and our shame, that we can grasp the unanimous and essential contingency of inter-subjectivity. Therefore, aspects of our being not only depend upon the indeterminate, that is, infinite, distance between self and other, but our very being-as-a-whole is constituted

by this abyssal limit. It is co-determined between our subjectivity and the subjectivity of the other before whom we are seen and ashamed.

In reference to Sartre, Robert Metcalf argues, "To be susceptible to feeling shame gives the lie to my solipsistic pretense, for it is a confession that I am subject to the regard of others, that I am, so to speak, unable to be self-respecting independent of the respect of others" (2000, 12). "In shame," says Sartre, "I discover my foundation outside myself" (349). In primary shame, the primordial state of being-looked-at, the self is confronted by the foundation of its very being, by the exteriority, the otherness, that is at once both an aspect and the origin of its being-in-the-world. Our concern presently is with this otherness, this region that is both neighborhood and neighbor. We are interested in the nature of this otherness and the nature of its other. Our transcendence is transcended by the other, says Sartre, but we are impelled to ask: which other? Which one? What degree of otherness is permissible? What degree of proximity is appropriate? For Sartre, "the Other is present everywhere, below me, above me, in the neighboring rooms," and therefore, "my possibilities do not cease to 'die,' nor do the distances cease to unfold toward me in terms of the stairway where somebody 'could' be, in terms of this dark corner where a *human presence* 'could' hide" (370, emphasis added). The other, then, is human, must be human, must have a human presence. But why? Is it only the human other who can look at us and transcend our transcendence from the vantage of a gaze we are susceptible to but cannot grasp? Is it only the human other who gives the lie to our solipsistic pretense? Why can't a cat inhabit the alterity outside the self? Why can't a cat expose our nakedness to the world and to ourselves with its gaze?

For Gunter Seidler, Sartre's analysis of shame "lacks any appropriate consideration of reciprocity, it fails to describe the whole process in terms of the perspective of the other" (2000, 35). It is the perspective of the other that entangles us presently. It is the perspective of a non-human other that entangles us, that traps *us* for a change, a perspective that, according to Derrida, is sufficient for the conferral of shame, but a perspective that also, according a number of other authors (Bataille, Pascal, Levinas, etc), is insufficient in this regard, insufficient precisely *in its regard*, in the pregnancy, intelligibility, and consequence of its gaze, of its ability simply to look back.

So, what if our constitutive shame—this originary shame that positions us within an ontological neighborhood—is shame before the penetrating gaze of a non-human other? What if it is a cat that holds the secret of our being-as-objects, that fixes the secret of what we are? Derrida firmly answers that "as with every bottomless gaze, as with the eyes of the other, the gaze called 'animal' offers to my sight the abyssal limit of the human: the inhuman or the ahuman, the ends of man" (2008, 12). Our ends, the brink and destination of what is meant by the title, "human," originate in a thinking made possible in and through the gaze of the other, and there is no difference, for Derrida, in the bottomlessness of the gaze called "human" and the gaze decidedly refuted as "animal." In either case, what is at once both unattainable and inescapable is the abyssal limit of our being-for-others, the horizon of our being-in-the-world-as-human, the possibility of the impossibility of being human, our ends and our origins, our nature as object for the other, the mortality of our own humanity—what Sartre refers to as "the radical negation of [our] experience" (1992, 310). John Berger professes, "All theories of ultimate origin are only ways of better defining what followed," (1991, 8). Indeed, in shame we endure a primordial inauguration at the very border between what we are and what we are not, between what we can be, namely, human, and where this process of becoming begins and ends, namely, in the eyes of another. We are configured, designated, granted ontological post, and announced, under this gaze that sights us, be it human or even more wholly other than that, even more wholly abyssal, and therefore even more clearly delimiting. The immeasurable gaze that uncovers this ontological necessity in us is an original existential attitude and is concurrently an original experience of shame. Human or non-human, this other that refuses our look with the materialization of its own gaze unequivocally and without consent exposes what we are and causes in us an original sensation of shame, an altogether essential experience of primary shame.

"The eyes of an animal," remarks Berger, "when they consider a man are attentive and wary" (1991, 4). Certainly, the eyes of Derrida's cat are attentive and wary, and what is more, they are communicative and responsive, they situate Derrida within a phenomenon of shame conferral and offer him a glimpse of the "ends of man." If Sartre fails to take into account the perspective of the other, then we may perhaps charge that philosophy as whole has, historically and in general, failed to take into account the

diverse perspectives of an array of non-human others. Berger continues, "animals are always observed. The fact that they can observe us has lost all significance. They are the objects of our ever-extending knowledge. What we know about them is an index of our power, and thus an index of what separates us from them. The more we know, the further away they are" (16). Even to say "animals," as Berger does, is to invoke the index of our power over non-human animals; it is to separate Derrida from his cat and ignore the shame that travels and unravels between them, that dis-orients and re-orients them both. Berger suggests that the non-human animals of zoos have been "immunized to encounter," but perhaps we, too, have been immunized (28). Perhaps it is we who have renounced the bottomless and uncivilized eyes of the non-human; perhaps it is we who have tried to ignore the cat lurking in the shadows waiting to fix its gaze upon us. Perhaps it is we who have tried to extinguish this furtive yet constitutive exchange of looks between a man and his cat.

Shame, according to Sartre, "is not originally a phenomenon of reflection" (1992, 302). It is shame that "makes me live, not know the situation of being looked at" (350). Therefore when Derrida is ashamed of the fact that he has been discovered, naked, at the end of a gaze called "animal," it is because he is overcome not by the apprehension but by the prehension, the lived sensory experience, of his own object state. This irreducible other forces Derrida to live the situation of being looked at, and further, in so doing, aligns itself within the ontological neighborhood, within the very the community, of a human other, of an animal man. Sharon Sliwinski aptly prognosticates in reference to the theme of Derrida's text:

> …efforts to deconstruct the traditional determination of the human have exposed an anxious encounter with the gaze called animal. As the furious contestation over the definition of the human expand, and as the gap between this and other, nonhuman creatures continues to diminish, let us at least agree on one point: the centuries-old debate about what it means to be human necessarily begs the question of the animal (2010, 77).

The gaze called animal is caught up in the efforts to determine the expanse called humanity. Being exposed before this gaze, being shamed before this gaze called animal, is to open the question of what it means to be human, which is equally to open the

question of what it means to be otherwise. The shame Derrida feels in front of his cat, a primary shame for his objectification and ensuing subjectification before a cat, reveals the contours, the zones of inter-penetration and inter-animation, that do not just define self and other, but that stratify the very range of what it means to be human or otherwise. Shame, it would seem, in the particularity of its phenomenological signification, does not so much categorize the difference between "man" and "animal" as raise a connection and intersection, a fundamentally shared vulnerability, the very vulnerability of being-in-the-world, a vulnerability arranged by and between a man who is seen and the cat that sees him.

Derrida, in response to his primary experience of shame before his cat, is consumed by a second order shame, a reflective shame that protests his first experience of shame, that protests his being existentially divulged before a being that is not human. This second order experience of shame is a "covering up" before the other that reveals as much as it aims to hide. This is the enterprise of secondary shame, moderating the behavior, specifically the kinds of exposure that can take place within the societal realm, within the borders of one's socio-cultural environment. If primary shame is the feeling of an "original fall…into the world in the midst of things," and if "[we] need the mediation of the Other in order to be what [we are]," then the effect caused by secondary shame, especially before a cat, is the desire to hide both the nakedness of our existence and the truth of what we are (Sartre, 1992, 384). We are naked, that is, exposed and utterly seeable, so long as we *are-in-the-world-alongside-others*. A cat is as naked, ontologically, as a man or woman. But the societal implementation of shame, shame as a tool for the mitigation, standardization, and bio-political regulation of human citizens, shame as secondary shame, initiates, issues forth, a new reified and commodified "human," nakedness. According to the strictures of secondary shame, there is a nakedness that is uniquely "human." It is un-civilized, primal, beastly, it is a nakedness in addition to our primordial revelation before the other, a nakedness that is shameful precisely for its affinity with our "animal" origins, for its congruity, its harmony, with the state of "being-animal." This human nakedness and its corresponding shame are counter-acted by a proclivity for covering up, for clothing, for sartorial concealment, for the

cultural protection of fashion, for the costume and accompanying mask of the decent (and decently concealed) citizen.

The ability to be naked, that is, to feel one's "human" nakedness, is simultaneously the ability to feel secondary shame, to be ashamed not of being seen, but of *how* one is seen. As Derrida points out, "Because it is naked, without existing in nakedness, the animal neither feels nor sees itself naked. And therefore it isn't naked" (2008, 5). To feel one's nakedness, not the nakedness of being-in-the-world-before-others, but the particular nakedness of the exposure of certain areas of the body, is strictly a human feeling, a feeling incited and proliferated by the practices of secondary shame. Hegel forwards, "it is in the *human* feeling of shame that we are to seek the spiritual and moral origin of dress, compared with which, the merely physical need is a secondary matter" (1941, 46, emphasis added). The spiritual origin of dress, though for Hegel a primary matter, is for us part and parcel of the secondary phenomenology of shame. Max Scheler reverses Hegel's order arguing, "the most primitive form (merely physical) of clothing stems from shame, and the need to cover other parts of the body comes from a secondary adaptation of the organism to ramified influences resulting from covering shame" (1987, 11, parenthesis added). The primary shame of having a body that is seeable—what Scheler calls "body shame"—is shared by an indefinite number of human and non-human beings alike, but the secondary shame—adapted from the ramified influences of certain kinds of social gathering—is used to project and impose a fundamental and distinguishing aspect of an exclusively human being-in-the-world. It is here, at the point of transition between primary and secondary shame, that the tradition of philosophy—a tradition of thinking that includes much thinking about "animals"— erects one of its most reductive and ill-conceived pillars in the attempt to formalize the true nature of human being: the true and inalienable preeminence of human over non-human existence rests in the notably human aptitude for shame, the ability to see oneself seen. As Schneider presses, "a sensitivity to the sense of shame will result in a richer understanding of what it means to be fully human" (1977, ix).

Despite rightly suggesting that: "Traces of [body shame] can be found in higher animals," Scheler, too, never strays far from the conviction that the "feeling of shame belongs, as it were, to the clair-obscure of human nature," adding, "For man's unique

place within the structure of the world and its entities is between the divine and animality. It expresses itself nowhere both so clearly and so immediately as in the feeling of shame" (1987, 3). And in this manner the philosophical tradition extinguishes the gaze called animal, imagining only non-human animals that cannot return this look that classifies them, conceiving of only a certain kind of nakedness, and thinking this nakedness and the shame it procures as matters for only a certain kind of existence: the superior, semi-divine existence of the human being. Here we have the origin of a mode of thinking, a secondary thinking, the delegation of all non-human animals under a universal, generalizable, "animal" grouping, a thinking that is adamant that this universal group is unlike, indeed unaffiliated with and absolutely disconnected from any and all "human" groupings. As a result, both groups are fundamentally misconstrued. Primary shame cannot properly be investigated when, with secondary shame, we have concealed the gaze shining in the eyes of the non-human animal. Darwin sagely advises, "No doubt as long as man and all other animals are viewed as independent creations, an effectual stop is put to our natural desires to investigate as far as possible the causes of expression," and it is nothing if not shameful (although only in its secondary significance) that this advice is still pertinent today (2007, 19).

Secondary shame causes us to cover ourselves, to hide before the other, and, as Derrida furthers, a man "would be a man only to the extent that he was able to be naked, that is to say, to be ashamed, to know himself to be ashamed because he is no longer naked" (2008, 5). Before the other, and particularly before the non-human other, secondary shame is the experience of a nakedness that while being unique to the "fall" of human being-in-the-world, is a concomitant configuration of what would be the ontological and diacritical relationship between "humans" and "animals." Humans come to know that they are naked, that is, to feel the object-state not of the body as a whole, not of their embodiment before the other, before a cat even, but of only certain parts of the body, certain kinds of visibility, they feel the object-state of only the "private" aspects of their embodiment. Both in pride and modesty—each an attempt to remove oneself from view, the latter an effort to cover up or to hide, and the former an effort to become pure subject, to cause the other to hide and to reduce the other to the status of object—the human seeks to decry that any being who is unable to likewise cover itself, to clothe

itself, is also unable to be a subject, unable to see beyond its own object-state and therefore unable to stand before a human other and demand a response, demand to be answered for, to be granted station in the ontological neighborhood of animal men and women.

With this conjecture—the alleged absence of shame and nakedness in non-human animals—one might argue that Derrida's cat instead embodies another of Sartre's existential modalities: grace. For Sartre, "Facticity…is clothed and disguised by grace; the nudity of the flesh is wholly present, but it can not be seen" (1992, 520). The cat, equally naked before Derrida, even more wholly naked than Derrida and therefore never within the (secondarily) shameful state of nakedness, exists then, it would seem, within a state of grace. "Human" or secondary shame disguises "human" nakedness and occasions only rarified displays of grace. If a cat's existence is inherently without either shame or nakedness, the movement of its body would be—over and above the moderating customs of human etiquette—the boundless and splendid maneuverings of a subject whose body parts cannot be objectified by the gaze of the other, the candid and unabashed mobility of an absolute subject, a subject that while experiencing the relational and primary shame of its inter-subjectivity, is yet unmarred by the laws of the circus of human visibility. Therefore, if, as Sartre argues, "The most graceful body is the naked body whose acts enclose it with an invisible garment while entirely disrobing its flesh, while the flesh is totally present to the eyes of the spectators," then it is the body of a non-human animal, of our cat perhaps, that is, in fact, the most graceful of all bodies. Perhaps, too, this cat would be a pure subject, a subject that sees and is seen, but who is not seen according to the rules and regulations of the socio-cultural context in which it is seen, whose body parts cannot be condemned to the status of object-state like the timid and calculable flesh of a human body. Unlike Derrida then, his cat does not seek to cover itself for reasons so innocuous as the nakedness of its flesh, but in addition, and perhaps just like Derrida, the cat is still naked before the other, naked in its existence, naked as a being-before-others, as a being circulating helplessly, dispossessed within a field of others, as a being vulnerable to the experience of primary shame.

Sartre postulates: "To put on clothes is to hide one's object-state; it is to claim the right of seeing without being seen; that is, to be pure subject" (1992, 384). It is exactly in

this sense, with almost frantic recourse to secondary shame, that human beings, and more specifically, most philosophers, have claimed the right to see certain non-human animals, to distinguish them from the lofty heights of human (secondary) shame conferral, and to refuse them the capacity to see in return, to look back with a proportionately intractable, constitutive and objectifying gaze, a gaze in which is held the very secret of being—human or otherwise.

Given the grounds laid before us by Sartre's existential reconnaissance into the territory of shame conferral, and given the original form and content of one's being-for-others—the ontological shape of the neighborhood of self and other—these avenues and fields must be in some way populated by human and non-human animals alike. We are renderable and deliverable under the gaze of a cat, and what is more, the cat that renders us remains an inconceivable alterity in our perceptual field. This creature is responsible for the culmination of our being-in-the-world while remaining still ungraspable, remaining somewhere out beyond the reach of our perception, beyond the scope of our singular existence—just as any human other. As it is, the philosophical tradition has simply overlooked, or misapprehended, these non-human animals, and as Derrida reached for a towel to cover his naked body from the eyes of his cat, it is evident that a particular animal can indeed see us, it can address us in our nakedness; i.e. it can confer upon us the origins of our subjectivity and the ends of our being, it can confer upon us, and perhaps experience in turn, the distinctive hallmark of primary shame.

In primary shame we are still dominated and controlled, we are at odds with the factical limit of our freedom, a limit that traces the outline of the other. This relationship, a momentous and congenital event in the existential reckoning of all beings, hides within it, within a dialectical correspondence of freedom and captivity, of subjectivity and objectivity, the true nature of authentic being-with-and-for-others. There is no privileged shimmering in the human gaze that would illuminate otherness with an incandescence unapproachable by the non-human gaze. In the pre-reflective confrontation with the look of the other, a cat can hold the truth of the being of a human self in the enigmatic glimmer of its look. Sartre is clear: "The Other looks at me and as such he holds the secret of my being, he knows what I am" (1992, 473). With its look, the other takes authority over the borders of our being. The cat that looks upon Derrida wields this

control and possesses this portion of Derrida's being. Sartre continues: "I am possessed by the Other; the Other's look fashions my body in its nakedness, causes it to be born, sculptures it, produces it as it is, sees it as I shall never see it" (475). The other's power of acquisition and production, the other's power to both fix the origin and project the ends of the self, is not lost but becomes all the more intriguing when it is a cat that stands before us, when it is a cat that generates and claims the secret of what we are, of what human being is, and of what shame is.

But what of Derrida's animality? What role does the animal origin of a man play in this scene of shame conferral, especially shame before a cat? Seidler sharpens his focus on the shame subject, unveiling that in shame "intentionally, gesturally, and facially, a person attempts escape from a real instance of outward-relatedness and in so doing falls into self-relatedness" (2000, 23). Derrida glimpses the "ends of man," and surely there he catches the flickering image of his origins as well. To experience primary shame is to see these origins in the faces of others—both human and non-human others—and to feel the bared and vulnerable commonality of all being, the cardinal togetherness of being-in-the-world-alongside-others. Secondary shame deals with the severance of this commonality. As Gershen Kauffman indicates of shame in general, it "can even altogether sever one's essential human ties, that we might either feel barred from entry forever or forced to renounce the very striving to belong itself and resignedly accept an alienated existence" (1996, 33). Secondary shame is a mode of interpretation and concealment, of turning universal being-in-common into specified and regimented communities of likeness, of forcing innumerable non-human beings out of the neighborhood of human subjectivity, of human responsibility, and of human rights, and forcing them into the ambiguous ethos of the vulgar and abyssal realm of un-civilization.

Blaise Pascal, in *Human Happines,* declares, "Man's greatness comes from knowing that he is wretched" ([1966], 2008, 21). He argues that reason covers humanity with shame and that it is through this shame that human dignity is (in the end) endowed. For Pascal, it is the knowledge of what one is, knowledge of the correlation between what one *is* and *how* one is seen, the recognition of one's secondary shame, which is the defining and ascendant quality in human beings. Pascal adds, "what is nature in animals we call wretchedness in man," deducing, "there is no shame except in having none" (22,

78). The conferral and experience of shame is, again, developed at what would be the categorical limit between the "human" and the "animal." The determination of human greatness, as Pascal sees it, is intimately entangled within assumptions about the relationship between humanity and its own animality. What we can glean from across the infinite and desolate distance between humans and animals, from across the segregating abyss ordained by traditional philosophical discourse, is that it is with shame that philosophy has looked upon the animal as a theoretical subject. What is nature in animals must to some degree be nature too in the human animal. But to mark and conscript the greatness of "man" is to look upon this nature with an "evil eye," with the lens of secondary shame, of institutional surveillance, organization, and codification. A critical distance is set between what is natural and what is habitual in human beings. Humanity is aware of its wretchedness, and secondary shame—an act of violence against both the self and the other—exposes in human kind the desire to cover itself, a desire to hide from what it is, from the penetrating and debilitating gaze of others.

At the end of the gaze, at the abridging limit of the look returned, where constitutive aspects of being are announced, the experience of shame is the revelation of what one is. Primary and secondary shame are the intersecting avenues between the figuration of human being and the correlative configuration of the being called "animal." Following a heritage of miscalculation in regards to both non-human animals and the animality inherent in humanity, Pascal affirms that "The only good thing for men…is to be diverted from thinking of what they are" (2008, 32). And so, civilized men and women, and the philosophers some of them become, robe themselves, conceal their secondary nakedness with great effort and with rigorous contemplation, conceal themselves in secondary shame so as to be diverted from the secret truth of primary shame, that secret revelation of what they are, that secret commonality, that shared existence between Derrida and his cat.

CAPTURE AND CONFINEMENT

"There are indeed many precautions to imprison a man in what he is, as if we live in perpetual fear that he might escape from it, that he might break away and suddenly elude his condition" (Sartre, 1992, 102). While primary shame on the one hand uncovers an essential vulnerability in the existential nature of being-for-others, divulging a bareness, a sensitivity, that marks, with ontological severity, a shared origin—or an original sharing—between human and non-human animals, secondary shame on the other hand is a precaution, a praxis for the imprisonment of a man (Derrida) in what he is (human). To feel ashamed, dispossessed, and pronounced by the gaze of a cat, to witness the ends of one's humanity in the eyes of a non-human other is to threaten escape, to threaten departure, to be on the verge of breaking away from the human condition. Derrida's secondary shame traps him, encloses him tightly within the confines of a distinctly human civility, and entraps his cat as well, although his cat is held within a much more ambiguous cell, with one-way glass, into which Derrida can freely glance, but out of which no returned gaze is ever transmitted. Secondary shame segregates, it distinguishes "human" society from the "natural" and "animal" worlds discoverable at its limits. Reason, language, laughter, all properties that extricate human being-in-the-world from the general singular being of the animal, are in a sense reducible to the capacity to see oneself seen, to apprehend one's object-state for the other, to be the subject of a signifier, to have the walls of one's corporeal imprisonment composed of two-way glass. If it is not because of an ontologically dividing exclusivity in the primary phenomenology of shame and nakedness that human being-in-the-world differs from that of non-human animals, but rather because of the socio-cultural mobilization of secondary shame and the emergence of a particularized nakedness experienced before a civilizing other, then Derrida's secondary shame before his cat is not, after all, specular, it reflects nothing of his cat, it is no more than a residual and commodified shame, the regulating social habit of a cultural regime interested in keeping the "animal" blinded by its confinement and relegated to the periphery of human articulations of inter-subjectivity and shared vulnerability. Furthermore, if secondary shame is followed through to its avowable limit, it reveals less about a true ontological distance between a man and his cat, and more about a theoretical tradition, a mode of thought, opened by the self who announces itself

as "man" and names the other "animal," which is to say, it says more about the kind of univocality that obtains ritually and institutionally between human and non-human beings within human society.

In *Phenomenology of Perception*, French phenomenologist, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, professes, "Saying that I have a body is thus a way of saying that I can be seen as an object and that I try to be seen as a subject, that another can be my master or slave, so that shame and shamelessness express the dialectic of the plurality of consciousness, and have a metaphysical significance" ([1945], 2007, 193). For Merleau-Ponty, then, shame is an original expression of the bodily display of inter-subjectivity. It is one side of a dialectic that accounts for being-alongside-others. To have a body is to be vulnerable, exposed, to primary shame. To have a body is not necessarily to be human, though, as Jean-Luc Nancy advances, the "ontology of being-with is an ontology of bodies, of every body, whether they be inanimate, animate, sentient, speaking, thinking, having weight, and so on," adding, "'body' really means what is outside, insofar as it is outside, next to, against, nearby, with a(n) (other) body, from body to body, in the dis-position" (2000, 84). To have a body that is sensitive to shame, is to have a body one is conscious of, a body that extends over against other bodies, a body that is outside but that distends outwardly only as an inextricable aspect of one's subjectivity. Embodiment is an ontological principle, the grounding of the "being-with," and it afflicts both the beings-with of humans and non-humans alike. Embodiment is a kind of imprisonment, as well, keeping one close to proximal others, and keeping one surveilled by those others. The visibility of the body confines the self. Primary shame reveals this confinement and connects us to nearby others, others who see us, others who when they are seen by us ask that we see them seeing in return.

Primary shame is concerned with the being visible of the body, with the fact that one's extension into space is seeable by others. Secondary shame is concerned with the particularity of the body's visibility, with localized displays of the body. For Metcalf: "The particularity of my body's visibility is crucial, for my subjection to powers outside me is always a subjection to concrete powers, whose regard of me has much to do with my body's particulars" (2000, 14). The shame that Metcalf here refers to would be shame in its secondary circulation, in a supplementary and narrow lens, shame in its most

conscripting. The body's particulars are crucial when the matter is of their regulation, but when we are speaking of ontology, of inter-subjectivity and of the primordial being-with of being-in-the-world, it is not the bodies particulars that are central, or decisive, it is the body's visibility as a whole—as a whole that is wholly vulnerable and inherently shared—that is paramount. Shame has first to do with the exposure of an embodied self before the body of another, secondly, it has to do with the kind of regard the other has for the particulars of the body it lays its gaze upon.

The metaphysical significance of the shame of embodiment, shame as a dialectical affect declared by the plurality of consciousnesses, for Merleau-Ponty, refers to the transcendence of a markedly "human" perception. Merleau-Ponty wants to maintain that non-human animals are not aware of the visibility of their bodies. They do not experience their bodies as subjects of a signifier. Shame, again, is meant to signal a moment in which human nakedness before the gaze of the other is a diagnostic for the distance between the subjectivity of human embodiment and the nascent subjectivity proposed by any other expression of body. What *is* metaphysical in its significance is secondary shame: spiritual precautions conjured up in order to preserve the incarceration of a "man" in what he is, keep him undisturbed, uninvaded by the "animal." What Merleau-Ponty ignores, however, is that in not only having a body of its own, but also in having an ontological and perceptual location from which it can see other bodies, other dis-positions, from which it can see others as objects, even human others, when a cat is seen and objectified, it too makes an attempt to return the gaze, it too tries to be a subject. A cat knows and returns the look that spots it. And moreover, it knows and returns the look that spots its body. As Nancy argues: "Not only does a body go from one 'self' to an 'other,' it is as itself from the very first; it goes from itself to itself…a body is the sharing of and the departure from self, the departure toward self, the nearby-to-self," (2000, 84). Derrida's cat, by the extension of its body, and by the sharing of its departure from self, experiences the shame of embodiment, the shame of sharing its body with an other, and what is more, its body is body enough to induce Derrida's departure from self to other and from self to nearby self. To call for metaphysical significance in the experience of shame is to call for confinement, for moral ideology, for ceremony and formality, it is to call out in fear of the otherness of the other, in fear of the cat that sees the "ends of man."

Merleau-Ponty refuses what Derrida perceptively endorses when he says of his cat, "it comes to me as this irreplaceable living being that one day enters my space, into this place where it can encounter me, see me, even see me naked," asserting that "what we have here is an existence that refuses to be conceptualized" (Derrida, 2008, 9). Not only can this particular cat enter the space of a human other and participate in the foundational scene of primary shame—playing the role of alien other and conferrer of objectivity and shame—but it can also do so from a dwelling that is irreplaceable and that refuses conceptualization. If it is saying too much to suggest that a particular cat aims, with its look, at being seen as a subject, perhaps it is saying too little to suggest, as George Bataille does, that "every animal is in the world like water in water" (2004, 34). Perhaps we must at least acknowledge that there is something in this look that is not altogether object, something that glistens with a discernible and challenging obligation, with the awareness of its body and the being-with of its embodiment. Perhaps we must at least acknowledge that there is an illumination in the gaze of this cat that surpasses the twinkling of the sun against the water, that the being-in-the-world of this cat is something much more than water in water.

Merleau-Ponty insists: "There is no doubt at all that we must recognize in modesty…a metaphysical significance, which means that [it is] incomprehensible if man is treated as a machine governed by natural laws, or even as a 'bundle of instincts" (2007, 193). The expression of modesty, that is, the expression of a "sense of shame," is meant to free the significance of human acts, or rather, conceal and protect this significance, from the natural laws that govern the instincts of non-human animals. Or more appropriately, a sense of secondary shame *is*, for Merleau-Ponty, the very freedom that executes a separation between human beings and their natural proclivities. It is that which imprisons and distances them from the neighborhood they share with many beings and many bodies. This separation simultaneously establishes an incommensurable abyss both between Derrida and the animal cat that he sees, and also between Derrida and the animal man that he i*s*, that is, that animal other from which he is descended. This separation is a constraint, and Merleau-Ponty casts an "evil eye" in the direction of the bundle of natural instincts from which human subjectivity itself manifests. There is a palpable tension in any philosophical discourse that strains and constrains in an attempt to do biological

justice to the evolutionary clambering of humanity from its animal origins. Hegel proclaims, "the sense of shame bears evidence to the separation of man from his natural and sensuous life. The Beasts never get so far as this separation, and they feel no shame" (1941, 46). Secondary shame is a lexical and semiotic domain used in philosophy to strike a distance between humanity and the animality lying in caged domestication and persistent disavowal within the very heart of all human being-in-the-world. In both cases, whether as the animal cat or the animal man, a conceptual abyss is introduced, gaping with mythological magnitude, that is endlessly reinforced in and through a philosophical discourse that only ever offers inchoate accounts of the phenomenological presence of non-human animals, a discourse that has described only non-human animals that are seen and none that see, and certainly none that shame.

The practices of precaution of these philosophical accounts employ the conceptual censures of secondary shame. Secondary shame isolates the human body, human embodiment, and disavows the felt objectification of all non-human embodiment, all non-human being-with-bodily-others. The regulatory devices of secondary shame inculcate an ideology of difference, a negative teleology of shame, a dictum of disavowal and homogeneity, in order to sanction the inalienable rights and dignity of one kind of existence over another. As David Clark admonishes: "Ideologies of difference are in the end, ideologies of 'homogeneity', strategies and discourses that suppress uncontainable and irreducible variation in the name of an impossibly pure distinction between same and other" (2004, 49). When Hegel refers to "beasts," does he include Derrida's cat? Is there no variation in the being of beasts? Does not Merleau-Ponty's emphasis on the metaphysical significance of modesty in human behavior seem an impossibly pure distinction between human and non-human beings, one that suppresses the uncontainable and irreducible singularity of Derrida's cat, that intends to "imprison man in what he is," to keep him from eluding his "condition"?

Merleau-Ponty is committed to certain precautions, stating: "If man is not to be embedded in the matrix of that syncretic setting in which animals lead their lives in a sort of ek-stasis…then between himself and what elicits his action a distance must be set" (2007, 100). Therefore in order to keep human kind from bursting forth into the "animal world" of natural laws and base needs, a distance is set, a secondary shame, a spectacle, a

parade of modesty and etiquette, a chasm is interpolated between human beings and the non-human beings that evoke and represent their origins. Secondary shame and its complicit sense of modesty are precautions keeping Derrida from feeling too comfortable in the company of his cat, closing off his line of escape, a line of flight that unites each moment of exposure with a moment where thinking, perhaps, begins.

We have not yet said enough explicitly about communication. The conferral of shame between a man and his cat may yet be deemed an insufficient phenomenological exchange, bereft of adequate reciprocity or suitable transmissions of freedoms, to suggest that the ever-dilating abyss between them has in some way or can in any way be crossed. The question may here be posed, even if a cat is appropriately seen seeing, does this qualify as a legitimate mode of communication? Is this a call or request that meaningfully passes from Derrida to his cat or vice versa? Can this kind of request echo across the physiological borders of dissimilar species? Can a human being authentically be called out of his or her being-for-itself and delivered over to a being-for-others by the assertive gaze of a cat? Or, is it rather the case that as soon as the other before whom we are ashamed is recognized as non-human, we correspondingly recognize a deficiency in our shame, some inauthentic and chimerical manifestation, one that we have mistaken for shame, an approximation without the true supplication and revelation, the true plurality and vulnerability, of shame before the human form?

According to Merleau-Pontian phenomenology, perception can at each instant be coordinated or synchronized with the instant that preceded it or that proceeds from it. A perspective can, also, be harmonized with that of another consciousness. And in the last analysis, "all contradictions can be removed…monadic and intersubjective experience is one unbroken text" (2007, 62). The perceptual individualism and idiosyncrasy of each subject is bridged by the sensory plenitude that is perception. The world is always with us, and as such it is from within a habitation in objects and subjects-as-objects that the world of perception is shared and communicated, is received and translated, hosted and re-cycled. If, as Merleau-Ponty asserts, "every object is the mirror of all others," then our being-for-others is a tacit correspondence with the being of others, and the text of perception remains unbroken between consciousnesses (79). In the conferral of shame, our transmogrification, our becoming-object and our ensuing subjectification before the

other, in its perceptual abundance and through a consolidating accessibility, we find the radical and primordial sharing of being-in-the-world; it is at once both a proclamation and inhabitation in the world of perception. Perception is a system, an inter-sensory plenum, and it is necessarily comprised of the perceptual aptitude of both self and other, of both the self and a plurality of others, a plurality of othernesses.

Why should we suppose that this perceptual text is broken when one of the perceivers is a non-human animal? Do aspects of the world—a world that is always with us—fall away when our experience of shame is conferred by a cat? And does it thus become impossible to communicate at all from opposite sides of this imposed fissure between "humans" and "animals"? As Merleau-Ponty frames it, the body of the self and that of the other are "two sides of one and the same phenomenon," asserting, "the anonymous existence of which my body is the ever-renewed trace henceforth inhabits both bodies simultaneously" (2007, 412). Significantly, Merleau-Ponty concludes that this exchange, or rather this sharing, is manifest in the presence of "another living being, but not yet another man" (412). Therefore, to be two sides of one and the same phenomenon is, for Merleau-Ponty, not yet to be two human beings. A cat can inhabit our phenomenal body. A cat can communicate the object-state of a man, and it can be responsible for the allotment of his primary shame, all of which it accomplishes from the trace of its anonymous existence, from the uncontainable absence that is its perceptual capacity and with the ever-renewing resources of the place of its irreducible being. Perhaps, then, the text of perception is not broken when it is animated by a man and his cat. Indeed, Derrida's primary shame is precisely an indication that a message has been transmitted between he and his cat, that the very saying of being-with has been said in the presencing of this cat who has been seen seeing. The philosopher and his cat share an existential upsurge, they comprise a biunivocal phenomenological system, they together attest to the plenitude of the world of perception. Derrida's experience of primary shame before his cat is an experience of an apparent communication, and we would be remiss not to profess that this cat authentically and inextricably inhabits one side of a constitutive phenomenon of exposure, of a human's exposure before a non-human other.

In a final appeal to Merleau-Ponty's rich and instructive *Phenomenology*, we will pursue the notion that what is really in question here is not yet the veritable ontological

habitation of non-human animals and their adapted and befitting place within phenomenological discourse—although that is the eventual and inevitable aim—but rather, and more pressingly, that perhaps it is the relationship such a discourse exemplifies between human and nonhuman figurations, and the role played by shame in the articulation of these figures that is most expressly relevant to our present inquiry. For the moment we will leave aside our cat and consider, briefly, a canine counter-part. This is in no way to suggest that a dog and a cat are ontologically or phenomenologically analogous. It is only, again briefly, to broaden the variety of our exemplars while responding appropriately to a specific remark by Merleau-Ponty concerning a specific non-human animal. If anything, our shift from Derrida's cat to Merleau-Ponty's dog is resolutely consistent with our claim that one cannot simply abbreviate or conflate the irreducible differences between the vast multitudes of non-human animal species.

Merleau-Ponty concludes that: "the objectification of each by the other's gaze is felt as unbearable only because it takes place of a possible communication." He adds: "A dog's gaze directed towards me causes me no embarrassment" (1992, 420). It seems, intuitively, quite shocking and objectionable to suggest that a dog's gaze can never take place of a possible communication, especially given the long history of companionship that has endured for centuries between human beings and dogs. Additionally, though not so obviously, it is rather unclear why a dog's gaze directed towards us would cause us no embarrassment. Is it the case that Merleau-Ponty believes no communication is possible between a dog and a man or woman in the first place, and therefore that a dog's gaze will never take the place of a possible communication? If any embarrassment should arise here, it should certainly arise on behalf of Merleau-Ponty, and it should definitively arise in reaction to this dog's gaze that he so eagerly seeks to extinguish. While admitting that a dog has a gaze, that a dog can return the look that spots it, Merleau-Ponty wants yet to maintain that it is an empty gaze, incapable not only of interrupting possible communications, but also of communicating at all in the first place. He has acquiesced to the gaze of the dog, granting this non-human animal the tools to see, but has insisted that the distance across which this dog is looking, when it looks back at him, is too great for anything to be gleaned, let alone communicated or conferred.

Darwin is not so conventional in his depiction of the possible expressions of a dog. He asserts: "But man himself cannot express love and humility by external signs, so plainly as does a dog, when with drooping ears, hanging lips, flexuous body, and wagging tail, he meets his beloved master…Nor can these movement in the dogs be explained by acts of volition or necessary instincts, any more than the beaming eyes and smiling cheeks of a man when he meets an old friend" (2007, 6). The expressions of a dog, not unlike those of a man, are dynamic and continuous, constantly being divulged, transmitted, and communicated. A dog's gaze, one should expect—especially when taking the place of other external signs such as drooping ears, hanging lips, flexuous body, or wagging tail—can cause much embarrassment depending on the sort of behavior it interrupts. Certainly, a dog's gaze can objectify, can actualize the exposure of primary shame, all we have to do is accept what is true: that the dog you see may have seen you too.

Kafka, too, in "Investigations of a Dog" sees something more, something Merleau-Ponty refuses, in the gaze of a dog. Kafka's canine narrator reflects on his neighbor, the other with whom he shares an ontological neighborhood, with whom he shares a being-with:

> "Are you after all my colleague in your own fashion? And ashamed because everything has miscarried with you? Look, the same fate has been mine. When I am alone I weep over it; come, it is sweeter to weep in company." I often have such thoughts as these and then I give him a prolonged look. He does not lower his glance, but neither can one read anything from it; he gazes at me dully, *wondering why I am silent and why I have broken off the conversation. But perhaps that very glance is his way of questioning me* (1995, 301, emphasis added).

The silent gaze of a dog breaks off conversation, and perhaps this very gaze is a way of questioning. Perhaps it is a way of opening a self to its object state, to its constitutive and shared vulnerability to the situation of being-looked at, of being the subject of a signifier. For Schneider: "Shame is intimately tied to the central *human* dramas of covering and uncovering, *speech and silence, the literal and the inexpressible,* concealment and disclosure, community and alienation," but perhaps these dramas aren't exclusively human dramas, perhaps there are extinguished non-human gazes at every corner waiting

to partake in the (primary) community of (primary) shame, gazes it would only take a sincere regard to relight and revitalized, gazes anxious to escape their shadowy confinement (1977, ix, emphasis added).

Objectification by the gaze of the other is a point of access into the nature of being. Primary shame is a primordial affect, the first departure of the self towards otherness, the keystone of being-with. To be seen, to be discoverable at the end of a look, is to become what one *is*. It is at this moment of openness and disclosure, of shame and embodiment, that the notional limit between "human" and "animal" being is inessential and incoherent. Merleau-Ponty pronounces such a limit, but with credence given only to secondary shame, only to the somewhat circuitous avowal of the perceptual distance and discontinuity between "human" being-in-the-world and the text of "human" perception. We are left feeling, perhaps, as if Merleau-Ponty is simply describing his own relationship to a non-human animal, a personal dismissal of the severity of a dog's gaze, rather than expounding any kind of scrupulous truths about the existential status of non-human beings in general.

Let us conclude this section by keeping with the notion of the personal relationship and returning again to Derrida's cat. In an essay entitled "Thinking with Cats" in which David Wood examines Derrida's *The Animal That Therefore I Am,* he suggests that "the question of the abyss is inseparable from the question of the kind of relationship that obtains between a man and an animal" (2004, 137). In this case, even as Derrida benevolently empowers the gaze of his cat with "a bottomlessness, at the same time innocent and cruel perhaps, perhaps sensitive and impassive, good and bad, uninterpretable, unreadable, undecidable, abyssal and secret," for Wood, the abyssal and secret gaze that Derrida here evokes is inseparable from the relationship that obtains between he and his particular cat (Derrida, 2008, 11-12). Wood is not suggesting that Derrida's account is thus void of impartial insight, or that it cannot be considered an opportune and suitable delineation of a non-human gaze. Indeed Derrida undoubtedly raises undeniable perforations in the traditional diagnosis of the being-in-the-world called "animal" and provides a binding and compelling positioning of human and non-human relations in philosophy. What Wood is suggesting is that as with any transmission of messages between two human beings, and as with any gaze directed from a human self to

a human other, the abyss that emerges has much to do with the social, cultural and political postures of each. For instance, it is difficult to disassociate the contextual affiliation between a human and non-human animal given the near universal practices of domestication and mass consumption that take place unilaterally between them, a systematic violence that has been exacted from one side of the phenomenal field for centuries on end. But while we agree with the explicit gravity of such considerations, this is already to have passed over the most influential and delicate point: the particular relationship that obtains between Derrida and his cat is secondary to the foundational ontological sharing they experience on either end of the phenomenon of primary shame. It is of utmost import that we recognize the unconditional, unadulterated, and instrumental gaze of Derrida's cat, before its insistence is relegated to the vagarious planes of societal value and "human" emotion.

Wood continues, "if the cat that looks at me is a hungry mountain lion sitting in a tree on the side of a narrow trail, I do not know quite where the abyss is to be found" (2004, 137). While perception is, here, unmistakably an unbroken text between two beings, and while the many possible communications that could take place between mountain lion and man are assuredly interrupted by this single gaze that, though inseparable from the situation in which it flagrantly infiltrates, still marks one side of a shared phenomenal experience between a human self and a non-human other, to require that the situation in which one is glimpsed by a non-human other alter the abyssal nature of that gaze is to stray into the domain of secondary shame, it is to contend that *how* one is seen is more essential or more consequential than the fact *that* one is seen, or seeable, in the first place. Derrida's cat sees him, and before he reproaches himself for his shame before its gaze, this cat is abyssal and secretive, it is insistent and intrusive, precisely because it is unconceptualized and unconceptualizable, precisely because it is irreducible to the human relationship that names and confines it.

"The other's negative perceptual constitution is one side of a double perceptual experience," say Gunnar Karlsson and Lennart Sjoberg. "The other side is one's own perception of the other, including the factual or imaginative negative appearance of the other one" (2009, 347). The abyss, then, that secures Derrida on one side and his cat on the other, an abyss straddled not just by a single, but by a double perceptual conferral of

shame, is not representative of a personal sensitivity between Derrida and his cat, it is a symptom of a profound inter-subjective vulnerability that obtains between an indefinite number of beings. The gaze of the cat is not an "animal" gaze equal to and indistinct from all other non-human gazes, it is a gaze that precisely in its irreducible singularity, precisely in its secretive ungraspability, is a nexus for the economy of primary shame, the original economy of being-in-the-world-alongside-others.

Primary shame is an abyss that reveals the secret of what one is for the other, or more specifically, it reveals the delicate secret *that one is for the other, that one is as the other sees*. When the gaze of a cat confers shame with a reductive and objectifying focus, it succeeds in addressing and communicating with the other. The cat that returns Derrida's look, that sees through the walls of its confinement and sees though its general singular figuration as "animal," summons the philosopher to the precipice of his humanity. The projection of modesty and secondary shame as the spiritual and axiomatic epiphanies for the particularized nakedness to which only "human" being is granted passage is the projection of an allegorical difference that, in effect, betrays more about the unease of an animal man with his own animality than it does about the reducibility, containability, or the phenomenological deficiencies of certain non-human animals in general.

A cat, it seems, can address us, then, from the ontological distance across which its gaze extends, but can more be made—especially in the terms and scenery of primary shame—about the ability of this cat to respond? Perhaps we can further complicate the localized shame that is exchanged between Derrida and his cat. Perhaps the cat's experience of *itself* as seen causes in *it* a shameful response *of its own*. Does Derrida's cat *respond*, and in its own way, to the objectifying gaze of the other? As Derrida remarks, "even those who, from Descartes to Lacan, have conceded to the animal some aptitude for signs and for communication have always denied it the power to *respond*—to pretend, to lie, to cover its tracks or erase its own tracks" (Derrida, 2008, 33, emphasis added). Let us continue, then, to follow the tracks of Derrida's cat, but let us be wary if we stumble upon any tracks that are covered, for as we have hitherto discovered, we would be wise not to underestimate the capacities of this cat.

RESPONSE-ABILITY AND THE FACE

Emmanuel Levinas' phenomenological humanism hinges upon the emanation of an infinite responsibility in *the face* of the other. For Levinas, a *human* self sacrifices his or her freedoms on the altar of the denuded and expressive morphology of the *human* face of the other. The non-human face, on the other hand, gains exigency through transference, through the conversion of the irrepressibility of the human face into a non-human form. It is through a secondary transposition of the imploration of the human face—the placing of a human mask upon an animal face—that a non-human animal can acquire the dignity and rights inalienable in human subjects and can enter the economy of answerability of the human community, joining the ranks of the responsible and ethical, and becoming again a recognizable being-in-the-world, becoming once again received into the world—an ontological atavism in the fray. For Levinas, the other's face is the realization of a freedom that is not one's own, that is prior to one's own freedom, a freedom introduced out of a horizon of alterity at the limit between self and other, a freedom that is wholly other, that is vulnerable, vulnerable to suffering, and therefore a freedom that requires, or rather, activates, the responsibility of the self. Recognition, then, of the other's face—a freedom and an entreaty—is the recognition of a vulnerability, but a vulnerability that opens the self, one that hollows and objectifies the self. The vulnerability of the other is the simultaneous immolation of the subjectivity of the self; it is an objectifying request, the plea and incantation of the infinite responsibility of one defenseless being for another.

The face of the other is both a pledge of allegiance and a call to arms, it commands, but with an irreparable fragility; the face commands by begging. We contract our infinite responsibility in the face of the other, our being-with-others surrenders to the obligation of our being-for-others. The face, the seat of the gaze, enlivens the deliverance of the self over to primary shame, animating the very situation of being seen, of being determined by the servicing look of the other. "The very notion of 'face'," says Schneider, "suggests the degree to which the self is literally identified with the face, which in turn symbolizes the integrity of the individual," adding, "we refer to one form of profanation of an individual as 'defacement'," and finally estimating that "A 'faceless;

society seems a violation of what is human" (1977, 48). The non-human face is not so convincing as that of the human for Levinas. As David Clark observes, "the animal face is always compromised by competing phenomena, all of them unnamed except for the most pressing…namely, the 'pure utility' of the 'force of nature'" (2004, 57). The face of Derrida's cat, the face that seats its gaze and further singularizes its embodiment, is compromised, evidently, by the "force of nature" that expresses itself thereupon. This cat's face is in the world like water in water, a "pure utility" for the "force of nature."

But how does the cat's face express such a signification? The arrival or manifestation of the face is a phenomenological conversion, freedom for responsibility, the supplanting of our alongside-otherness for the ineluctable commitment of our for-otherness, but this manifestation is contingent, dependent upon the purity of the "human" face, upon the recognizability of the "human" neighbor, upon a seemingly secondary reflective gesture that would distinguish the otherness of a human face from the otherness of a non-human face. Levinas will say, it is before the nakedness of the face of the other, a nakedness that with its gaze reveals our own nakedness, that exposes us to our vulnerability before the other, and exposes the other's vulnerability to us, disclosing the other's delicate humanity, and perhaps also the other's primary shame, it is before this nakedness, Levinas will say, that we are made responsible, that is to say, moral, and therefore also human. But what of this tiny face that emerges from behind the gaze that so profoundly shames Derrida? What of the face of a cat that is even more wholly vulnerable, even more wholly in need of our ability to respond, of our responsibility, than the human face against which it is measured? Is it not the case that Derrida and his cat summon *each other* into responsibility? *Each other* into the ontology of the "being-with"?

In his introduction to Levinas' *Humanism of the Other*, Richard A. Cohen declares, "Responsibilities are infinite, even if humans are insufficient for them. Rather guilt than guile, rather responsibility than risibility" (2006, xxxvii). According to Cohen, for Levinas, in a discourse concerning the authority and distinction of humanity, what matters most is not the declaration of this rational capacity or that propensity for language; it is rather an aptitude for responsibility, an awareness and cognizance of the vulnerability of the other's face, of how one is seen by the other, or more fundamentally,

that one is seeable by the other—and therefore *that* one is responsible for the one who sees and who funds one's subjectification—that marks the true dignity of human being-in-the-world. But perhaps if we take a closer look at Levinas' illumination of the face, his humanism, and his typification of responsibility—responsibility literally as the *human* ability to respond—we may, with the help of Derrida and his cat, complicate this notion of response, perhaps we can give consideration to the way in which a cat may have the ability to respond, to the way in which a cat may choose responsibility over risibility.

First, we will inspect whether a cat has face enough to evoke a response in Levinas, and secondly, we will examine why it is that Levinas, echoing the views of a larger tradition of thought, maintains that no non-human animal has yet answered for itself, has yet responded in any way to the situation in which it is seen.

Levinas attests: "Between the one that I am and the other for whom I answer gapes a bottomless difference, which is also the non-indifference of responsibility, significance of signification, irreducible to any system whatsoever" (2006, 6). Standing before the other, irrecoverably fixed under its gaze, we are standing before an abyss at which meaning itself is cultivated. Here again, as we have seen in Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, the significance of what we are, the modality of our very being-in-the-world, lingers at the vanishing point between two gazes. Although, it seems worth noting, the extent or degree to which this other is other than the self is not yet clear, which is to say, we cannot yet grasp how distantly other this other is allowed to be in order to merit or provoke a response in the self. For Levinas, it does not seem to matter whether we stand before a brother, neighbor, or anonymous human subject so long as it is indeed a human being, so long as we stand before a human face and therefore before the naked destitution, the flagrant plea and dispossession evinced by that face. Derrida asks, however, "If I am responsible for the other, isn't the animal more other still, more radically other…than the other whom I recognize as my brother, than the other in whom I identify my fellow or my neighbour?"(2008, 107). The duty we owe the other, if it comes before any system of signification whatsoever, as Levinas contends, must surely involve even more radical consideration and a more consuming obligation when the other who comes to us does so from an origin more exceptionally other than our own, if, for example, the other is a cat.

For Levinas, again as Clark detects, "The problem lies not with the human, who cannot or will not see this face, but decisively with the animal, whose face lacks the 'purest form' that we are presumed to see with absolute clarity when the visage is human" (Clark, 2004, 55). The face of Derrida's cat appears in and through a physiognomic transference, a translation of the "purest form" so as to fit the bare and expressionless visage of a cat. Levinas admits, however, "One cannot entirely refuse the face of the animal," adding, "Yet the priority here is not found in the animal, but in the human face" (2004, 48). One cannot entirely refuse the face of a cat, especially a cat before whom we are shamed, a cat who gazes upon us, and confers our shame, a cat whose face—a vulnerability veiled by the subjectivity of the gaze—actuates our responsibility for its otherness. Clark asks: "What is it about the animal face that lingers once the human had finished with its refusals remains quite unclear since it is difficult to conceive of an absolute demand and responsibility…that is also somehow partial" (55). The non-human other in Levinas' discourse never quite succeeds in triggering this conferral; a cat does not manage to address or respond to or with a face. The nakedness of the face is a nakedness much akin to the "human" nakedness of secondary shame. Indeed, as Schneider insists, a "sense of shame functions to preserve one's face," (1977, 48). But the nakedness of the face is another nakedness refused the non-human animal. Evidence of human kind's superlative existential status and ontological station again appears to rest in an ability to participate in a state of nakedness. Whether through a "sense of shame," the secondary shame of having body parts that are "private," or through the denuded invocation of having a face that is redeemably human and therefore preservable in and through a "sense of shame," to be naked before the other, or naked as the other, is an inaccessible modality for a cat. But is it not out of responsibility that Derrida's cat turns away from his (Derrida's) nakedness to take its leave? Perhaps this cat responds precisely to Derrida's exposure and primary shame with a face that is sensitive and responsive to his body, to the co-extension of both their bodies, and therefore with a face that is responsible and deserving of reciprocated recognition? Indeed, as Clark challenges: "Are we not responsible for those non-human others as they sometimes appear to be for us?" (44).

At what point, as the self is drawn out of its anonymous existence by a primary shame before the interminable alterity of the other, does it become clear that the other before whom the self answers and is responsible is human? This identification seems to secure the legitimacy of our response and by extension also the dignity of our responsibility, but when would this identification take place? If the bottomless difference that commissions the accountability of the self for the other manifests between a man and a cat, can we be sure that the entrapment, indeed the enchantment even, of this originary responsibility has not been cast between them? Have they instead really only encountered an unfounded vision, a risible simulacrum of authentic responsibility? Are we really so unable to respond, to account for our primary shame in the face of a cat, are we really so unable to attend to the obligations that are due this non-human animal?

Levinas proposes, in *The Humanism*, "the other man commands by his face, which is not confined in the form of its appearance; naked, stripped of its form, denuded of its very presence, which would mask it like its own portrait" (2006, 7). But how, then, can we be sure that this face that hollows and fixes us is that of another *man*? Stripped of its form, appearance, and of its very presence, so as not to mask the true imperative of its being, this face may plausibly be deemed that of another being, it may also undeniably be called the face of a being in possession of an infiltrating and entreating gaze, but surely, it may not yet be called the face of another man? Elsewhere, in *Time and the Other*, Levinas argues, "If the relationship with the other involves more than relationships with mystery, it is because one has accosted the other in everyday life where the solitude and fundamental alterity of the other are already *veiled by decency*" (2001, 82, emphasis added). Freed of the veil of decency, of modesty, of secondary shame, the relationship with the other is one of mystery, it is one of primary objectification and subjectification, of exposure by and responsibility for the otherness of the other, regardless of the degree to which this other is recognizable. Levinas contends, "If one could possess, grasp, and know the other, it would not be other" (2001, 90). For a face to project its humanity, must it not carry the weight or significance of a form, or of an appearance or at least of a presence? Must a face not be possessed, grasped, and known in order to be recognized as human? Levinas strips the face of these features so as to set the stage for an ethos with exigence prior to cultural signification—a cardinal point in Levinas' project. The face

must, for Levinas, be ethical prior to the arrival of the secondary enunciations of shame, in the interest of an ethics that is not bound by the familiarity of particular filial or social relations and therefore to any kind of relativism. Levinas establishes a system, therefore, in which the other before whom we answer is notably anonymous, anonymous in its being, in its being-seen-in-the-world-alongside-anonymous-others. These "onto-theological distinctions," as Clark refers to them, questions like "Who is my neighbor? To whom (or what) are obligations owed? With whom (or what) do I dwell," are "protoethical openings for thought," but they are openings that must necessarily follow an original and fundamental circulation of beings-alongside-other beings, of beings who are ashamed, who are vulnerable, exposed, and responsible to each other simply by being proximal and visible. The recognition of a shared history or genealogy would compromise the primacy of the responsibility of the self for the other, subjecting it to the erratic winds of cultural signification and the uneven grounds of aesthetic interpretation. Derrida's cat comes to him as an anonymous and intractable existence, and he is made ashamed and responsible for this existence prior to his recognition of its biological or socio-cultural status. The relationship with the other is a mystery conferred by its face. Responsibility is originally raised by the face that holds the gaze that shames the self. A cat is a mystery, and with the face behind its gaze it calls for response, it summons Derrida into an ethico-ontology of mutual responsibility.

Consequently, the face is without form and materializes before the self within a pre-reflective confrontation with alterity, an abyss of immeasurable distance. The face that addresses Levinas, that summons him into responsibility, may be more wholly other than he at first suspected. If the face of a cat, not confined by the form of its appearance, denuded of its presence, enters our perceptual field, leans over against our being-with-others, and confers upon us our object-state and the infinite request of our being-for-others—the constitutive shame of a look that fixes us as its object—and announces this inconceivable pleading for recognition, then surely this cat has acceptably fulfilled the role of other, acceptably responded to the presence of another being, responded to the situation in which it is seen seeing. Derrida's humanity and his ability to respond to the vulnerability he shares with his cat are announced, or better, commanded, by the look and accompanying face of his cat.

Existence is naked, and this nakedness is the revelation of the "being-with" of a self and other. Levinas notes, "despite the nudity of existence, one must as far as possible be decently clothed" (2001, 60). This is the dynamic of primary and secondary shame. Primary shame arouses responsibility, it incorporates the perspective of the other, the other who is not yet a man, who is naked, but not yet naked in its "human" affectation, in relation to its body parts, who is not yet veiled by decency, clothed in modesty and secondary shame, the other who merits the auspices of primordial "being-with" regardless of how it is possessed, grasped, or known by the self with whom it shares its space.

Perhaps we can now accept that a cat can call us out of our anonymous existence with its look, that a cat can fill-in an aspect of the phenomenology of our being-in-the-world. A cat can take up the integral antithetical position in the dialectic of perception that obtains between it and a human self, it can cause a human self to respond to the presencing of its face, to the transmogrification of subjectivity and objectivity, the co-determination and co-extension of self and other. A cat can be an ungraspable absence looking back at us from the end of our circumspective gaze. But is this enough to claim that a cat has a sense of its own object-state? When a cat is aware of itself as seen, is it aware, as well, that the other who sees it, sees it objectively? Sees its body as an object?

Levinas argues that responsibility before the other, the obligation of the face, is a compulsion that waits for a return, but that does so in the anxiety of a possible no return, exerting a "patience requiring immortality" (2006, 7). He contends that this patience requires "immortality despite the certainty that all men are mortal," that it is a "[d]emand that would already lie in my privileged relation to myself, which excludes me from any genre, showing that humanity is not a genre like animality" (7). A human self, then, is conscious of its death, conscious of the unquenchable call of its mortality, conscious of the fact that when it is seen by the other, it is offered a glimpse, too, of the "ends of man." To be human before the other, for Levinas, is to know the possibility of the impossibility of being and yet still to feel, in light of this possibility, the impossibility of cancelling one's responsibility for the other. The "human" debt is an "imprescriptible duty surpassing the forces of being" (7). The abeyance of our need for a response, an explicit acknowledgment of our unconditional limit, our mortality, our final objectification, the

realization that "there is something more important than [our] life, and that is the life of the other," is a human affectation for Levinas, a mode of being that surpasses the being of non-human animals (50). For a being such as a cat, Levinas contends, existence "is a struggle for life," in which "the aim of being is being itself," an aim that underwent notable ethical changes "with the appearance of the human" (50). To wait for a return in the face of a possible no return is to detach from the automation of one's involvement with the perceptual world, to be discontinuous with one's struggle for life, disengaged by the sheer weight of one's responsibility for the other. Levinas is, in effect, claiming that between a human being and her own mortality, a distance must be set, and straddling this distance is the other. So whether or not a cat can call us out of our anonymous existence and summon us into responsibility, it cannot, it would seem, step outside its struggle for life, it cannot re-calibrate the aim of its being, and therefore cannot wait, with *human* patience, for a return in the face of a possible no return.

We have here a distance between being and being-with in which the being who is answerable answers as the subject of a signifier, as the possessor of a pre-reflective "I am" that extricates the human from an automatic immersion in her environment, allowing her space, room to wait, a waiting room beyond the confines of her being, allowing her to be more than water in water, to apprehend the "ends of woman" in the look that constitutes her primary shame. The "I am," allows a human being to position herself, her origins and her ends, at the end of the other's look, and therefore allows her not only to see that she is seen, but to see that she *is* as she is seen. In other words, to experience oneself as the subject of the signifier is to be able to experience a responsibility for the other that outlasts one's very own being. To affirm "I am" is concomitantly to express, "I am and the other is." To truly respond to the situation of being looked at, then, is to be able, and inherently willing, to answer for a debt that extends beyond the limits of one's existence. Derrida illuminates, "Consequently…the question of the response of the automaton, or of the animal as automatic responder and therefore without response (the 'without response' that defines the death of the face in Levinas…) is immediately preceded, in an apparently contingent manner, by a response to the subject of a cogito" (2008, 85-6). This is what Levinas means when he invokes the "demand that would already lie in my privileged relation to myself." To respond to the other who sees us and

constitutes our subjectivity and our primary shame, is to incur an infinite responsibility for this other, to reside in the space between oneself and what elicits one's actions, in the hypostasis, the waiting room, between being-with and being-for. It is in this space, for Levinas, that a human being experiences the situation of being looked at, of being objectified, and of being naked, and it is from this space that when a human sees a cat who sees him in return, he can yet deny that this cat has responded to the situation in which it is revealed, he can yet deny that this cat can respond in any way at all.

This "privileged relation to myself," a patience in the face of the infinite, seems another precaution keeping the human subject from eluding his or her condition. If the being of certain non-human animals is a struggle for life, then mustn't particular animals, such as cats, have a distinctive experience of their own mortality? Moreover, doesn't a cat's struggle for life also fundamentally necessitate a foremost experience of its own objectification in relation to the being of threatening others, others who by their very presence awaken the anxiety of waiting for a return in the face of a possible no return? A cat's circumspection, as it struggles for life, is it not a patience requiring immortality? Does it not require that a cat inspect the body of the other against the likelihood of its own survival? As a possibility of the impossibility of being? Doesn't Derrida's cat, with its gaze, its face, and its vulnerability participate in and respond most profoundly to the destitution of the "I am"? We are of the mind that, as Derrida notes, "animality and by extension the life of most animals is implicit in the utterable "I am" of the human" (2008, 96). To be without the necessary linguistic aptitude or the reflective capacity to conceive of or articulate the "I am" is not to be *without* this irrevocable "I am" and the ensuing dignity of being-alongside-others-in-the-world. The cat that sees us as objects has a world. This cat lives in its world and encounters us from an irreducible phenomenological station. The "I am" of the cat, then, is unavowable, unavowable and yet consistently disavowed. Levinas holds that "the uniqueness of the Ego is the fact that no one can answer in my stead," but is it not, rather, the uniqueness of being itself that is the fact that no one can answer in my stead? That a cat lacks what a man calls an Ego is not reason enough to suppose that this cat must then be answered for. Why should we assume that a cat cannot answer for itself, or respond with its being—and beyond the limits of its struggle for life—to the situation in which it is seen? Derrida cannot feasibly answer for

the cat that faces him from a distant and unrecognizable alterity, but he can respond to this cat, he can be responsible for this cat as it has been responsible for him, in its own way, from its own ontological station, from its unique circulation in the "being-with." The most basic expression of being, the sacred being-for-others of a being-alongside-others, the advancement, upsurge, and reckoning of a being with its environment, a being that is seeable and can see, a being that experiences primary shame, that configures the unique liability of the plurality of beings is not only expressed by the face of the human self, it is shared, it spreads, it is affected upon and a condition of the being of an undeterminable array of beings, beings including cats perhaps, including, surely, Derrida's cat.

CONCLUSION

Shall we say then, that a cat can effectively respond to the experience of being seen? Surely the unmitigated propulsion of its existence and the perceptual grip it exacts within its phenomenal field, the positioning of its body in a field of bodily others, the visibility of its being, and the circumspectivity of its shame conferring gaze count as a response. A cat is aware of the effect its presence produces on other human and non-human animals in its environment. Just like any animal man or woman, a cat is circumspect about its surroundings, a cat reacts to its seeing and its being seen, a cat responds carefully and accordingly to the status of its mortality, to the ends of it ability to respond, to the immortality it requires to stand before the other and await a response. As Nietzsche expounds, "one wishes to elude one's pursuers and be favored in the pursuit of one's prey. For this reason animals learn to master themselves and alter their form," and therefore perhaps if a cat "likewise assesses the effect it produces upon the perceptions of other animals and from this learns to look back upon itself, to take itself 'objectively,' it too has its degree of self-knowledge" (1997, 26).

The object-state of being-for-others, a consuming responsibility in the face of the other, conferred before the contravening gaze of a formless and subsisting anonymous existent, the primary shame of a body in visible co-extension with other bodies, is a constitutive posture in the being of not just human animals. To feel primary shame is to be grasped and delivered by the inter-subjective vulnerability of being-in-the-world, it is

to experience oneself as the prisoner of an inescapable look that begets and extracts the guardianship of the self, a reconciliatory acceptance of the negation of one's subjectivity in the beseeching eyes of the solicitous other. This fundamental experience of shame causes one to fanatically adjudicate one's relational stance. Being-with-others is always being-for-others, and elicits the acquiescence and sublimation of the "I am" to the "I am seen." Levinas professes:

> Man must be thought from self putting himself despite himself in the place of everyone, substituted for everyone because of his very non-interchangeability; man must be thought from the condition or incondition of hostage, hostage of all others who, precisely others, do not belong to the same genre as me, because I am responsible for them without reposing in their responsibility for me (2006, 68).

This is the condition of being-in-the-world as being-seen-in-the-world and inasmuch as a man or a woman must be thought from this condition, so too must Derrida's cat. Discourses concerning the perceptual dialectics between self and other are in the end discourses of primary shame that emerge from the primordial instance in which the self is seen by the other. If we examine—even captiously and sometimes with equivocal loyalties—the dynamic inter-subjective territory of primary shame, what we should expect to behold is not the closing off, the existential barricading, the painful, narrowing identification that alienates self from other, that distinguishes "man" from "animal," and differentiates heterogeneity from homogeneity, but rather, we should expect to behold the opening up, the broadcasting and the blurring of the private territoriality of the self, we should expect to observe the co-extension, co-determination, inter-mingling, and inter-animation that is the phenomenal reality of being-in-the-world. Primary shame is the sharing of being between self and other, it is the becoming other of the self and the becoming self of the other, the becoming multiplicity of each and every singular and irreducible being, and it is expressed authentically and with ardency between Derrida and his cat. Deleuze and Guattari have argued for the "existence of very special becomings-animal traversing human beings and sweeping them away, affecting the animal no less than the human," concluding, "One cannot draw a symbolic boundary between the human being and the animal. One can only compare powers of

deterritorrialization" (2012, 261, 338). Primary shame deterritorializes, it blurs symbolic boundaries between self and other. Derrida covers himself before his cat, but not before first becoming-cat, not before first feeling the objectification of a phenomenal world that is shared, before first feeling responsibility over risibility, feeling the weight of the returned gaze, feeling the unconceptualizable and unavowable presence of otherness, the uncontainable mystery of the other, feeling the naked vulnerability of existence, feeling all of this before his cat—affecting the cat no less than the man.

In the next chapter, we will broaden the phenomenological field of our investigation of shame, widening the scope of contradistinction between primary and secondary shame to include the notion of community. Applying shame in a communal setting will allow us to move beyond individuated articulations of shame experience and observe and interrogate primary and secondary shame in their socio-cultural enunciations, to see how they diverge and interact at the level of cultural identity and social practice.

Chapter 3

BEING (IN-COMMON) AS THE OTHER SEES US

It may be that the poet's congenital subject is precisely the community and other people.

Wallace Stevens

Many a one is able to obscure and abuse his own memory, in order at least to have vengeance on this sole party in the secret: shame is inventive.

Friedrich Nietzsche

INTRODUCTION

We have been aiming thus far, perhaps rather broadly, towards a conception of shame not as a negative or alienating affect but instead as a constitutive and inter-connective aspect of being-in-the-world, a primordial feature of the being-in-the-world-alongside-others of an indeterminate plurality of beings. Primary shame reveals to the self the contingency of being, that is, it reveals that selfhood is both an arrival out of otherness as well as a tending towards otherness, a conscription within a field of others, a conscription both vulnerable to and responsible for the other before whom the self is seen. Primary shame is the exhibition, the declaration, of the sharing of existence. We have argued that secondary shame reflects the articulation and mobilization of this primordial phenomenon within the obsidian pale of society. Furthermore, we have advanced that although the passing of judgment is predominantly considered an essential ingredient in the scenery of shame conferral, it is, rather, simply a cultural investment, supplementary in the experience of shame, intended for the mediation of citizens and

marks a point of conversion in shame from the experience of the exposure of the fact *that* one is seen, to the experience of the exposure of *how* one is seen, a transition enacted under the civilizing surveillance of an ascetic tradition making out of the gaze of the other an "evil eye" for the degradation and diminution of the self.

In the present chapter we will shift our discussion from the particularized feline gaze of Derrida's cat towards a wider field of shame conferral. Our interest in this chapter is the relationship between shame, both in its primary and secondary forms, and community. In a way, this represents a move from a classical phenomenological approach to one more socially oriented. We will argue that a sense of community, a sense of being-in-common, too, gains expression in and through primary and secondary constitutions, and moreover that these constitutions are correlative with the maneuverings of our experiences of shame, that the experience of primary or secondary community is intimately related to the wax and wane of primary and secondary shame, to both their departures and their convergences.

Community is integral to the figuration of identity. Community does not just connect us to proximal others, it connects us to ourselves. But what of proximity? Is community in essence nothing more than a feature of inter-personal spacing, the relational positioning of the self in a field of others? And what of recognition? Can we take part in a community without having our membership recognized publically? Can we construct communities in private? Jean-Luc Nancy holds, in *Being Singular Plural*, that "the 'intelligible reality' of the community can only be the reality *of being-in-common as such*" (2000, 55). So, what then *is* the reality of being-in-common as such?

This chapter seeks to understand what it is about being-in-the-world that makes being-in-common such a constitutive and consequential existential phenomenon. We will analyze how the boundaries of social and political identities—both singular and plural, private and communal—are configured in the context of civil society, or rather, at the very inauguration of the social scenery we call civil society, at the moment when individual freedom is relinquished in the interest of communal relationality. Following, again, Emmanuel Levinas, we will examine the role of proximity, contact, and exposure in determining the philosophical limits of the existential encounter between self and other. We will posit that in as much as responsibility *for* the other is foundational to the

veritable phenomenology of being-in-common, so too is the experience of exposure *before* the other, and therefore, so too is an experience of primary shame.

Shame, in both primary and secondary affectations, as we have seen, can generate some of the most intense and resolute experiences of boundary drawing. Gershen Kaufman argues: "No other affect is more central to identity formation. Our sense of self, both particular and universal, is deeply embedded in our struggles with the alienating affect. Answers to the questions, 'Who am I?' and 'Where do I belong?" are forged in the crucible of shame" (1996, 16). But shame can also initiate some of the most purposeful and compelling experiences of boundary blurring, as when we come to realize that an aspect our being is not only glimpsed by the revealing gaze of the other, but is constituted by that very gaze. Primary shame is the apprehension of our objectification in the eyes of the other, our existential sharing with the other, and it is, as we will argue, the keystone of being-in-common *as such*.

The key factor, then, concerning the role of shame in the construction of community is the *way in which* it is conferred between individuals or groups, that is, whether it is understood and deployed predominantly as primary or secondary shame. A significant question for such a determination, and one that underlies the conceptual thrust of our entire thesis, is whether shame is being treated and experienced as an affect that brings people together or one that forces people apart. Heather Love has remarked, "While the capacity of shame to isolate is well documented, its ability to bring together shamed individuals into meaningful communities is more tenuous" (2009, 15). We hope to show that community is not actualized solely in and through expressions of autonomy and affirmations of self, such as pride, but that any and all constructions of community involve, indeed are founded upon, a certain experience of exposure, vulnerability, and of primary shame. Therefore, we will profess that meaningful communities gathered-in around experiences of shame are, indeed, something we can (and should!) speak about. We will advance that the reality of being-in-common as such is equal to the reality of being *seen*-in-common as such. In other words, *that* we are seen and *that* we see others and ourselves as partaking in communal experiences comprises the intelligible reality of being-in-common as such. On one hand, then, our exposure to others, our see-ability before others, typifies the very commonality of any being-in-common as such, and is the

rudimentary existential pronunciation of what we will call primary community. On the other hand, the *ways* in which we are seen by others, the regulation of our sameness and our otherness in relation to a particular cultural field of others, the ways in which we are organized around the play and practice of secondary shame, typify the commonality of a particularized kind of being, a being-in-common as similar or dissimilar cultural identities, a commonality we will call secondary community.

Finally, we will consider, in the context of our current techno/cyber-centric age, whether the manner by which we are seen being-in-common today is undergoing drastic and formative changes. We will ask if mechanical reproducibility, photographic accessibility, and the overall dilation of the sensorium by technological, mechanical, and prosthetic means is having a detrimental impact on the inter-personal bonds that make up communal inter-activity, on our ability to access primary community or for that matter to even experience primary shame. We will present two somewhat opposed arguments, one positing the more common and unfavorable connotations surrounding the influence and instrumentality of technicity, and the other introducing the less defended and more congenital and naturalistic interpretation of technicity, keeping with its most basic and even natural phenomenological implications. We will, with due optimism, favor this second argument by suggesting that rather than weakening the bonds between communal actors and weakening the role of shame in their experience of otherness, the current age of technological instrumentality, in which an involution, or blurring, of distances and boundaries has effected new modes and degrees of proximity, offers us opportunities to innervate new kinds of communal bonds, new kinds of face-to-face interactions, new points of access into primary community, and new ways in which we can stand, exposed, before the other, new ways in which we can be seen being-in-common as such. We will argue that the re-animation of what it means to be seen being-in-common brings about a concomitant re-animation of what it means to feel responsible, to feel answerable for one's revelation before others in common, to, at bottom, re-invigorate what it means to experience primary shame—that most inventive, intimate and communal affect.

EXPOSING THE PROCLIVITY FOR COMMUNITY or RAISING THE BORDERS BETWEEN SELF AND OTHER

At what point do we contract the bonds of community? Is there an ontological ground upon which we are ineluctably given over to others by virtue of our being-in-the-world? And would such a deterritorialization (and ensuing re-territorialization) of the self be characterized by any kind of experience of primary shame? For Levinas the self responds to the other "before any understanding, for a debt contracted before any freedom and before any consciousness and any present" (1998, 12). In this way, consciousness of self and the consciousness of the freedom of the self manifest as a response to the supplicating presence of a primordial alterity, an originary other. Levinas asserts, "Here the identity of the subject comes from the impossibility of escaping responsibility, from the taking charge of the other" (14). We are indebted to the other, then, prior to our apprehension of ourselves, or rather, the subject arrives at self-knowledge, at selfhood and self-consciousness, as the hostage of the other, as a self in destitution. Modes of being a self are, as Judith Butler argues, "Modes of being dispossessed, ways of being by virtue of another"(2004, 19). In other words, we are bonded to others, to the very essence of otherness, in the original moment of consciousness. So is *this* the origin of community? Or does community designate an inter-connectivity beyond this foundational reckoning of self with other? Is community something more still? Perhaps, as a point of departure, all we need to ground here is that our relation to the other, to otherness and therefore also to a possible plurality of others, is a constitutive aspect of our relation to ourselves. It is in answering for the presence of the other that the boundaries figuring our understanding of self, of identity, and of communal identity, are drawn. Indeed, perhaps it is enough to begin with the assertion that the other is precisely the congenital subject of the self.

Levinas advances that this relation, this equi-primordiality, between self and other must be conceived "in terms of proximity qua saying, contact, sincerity of exposure, a saying prior to language, but without which no language, as a transmission of messages, would be possible" (1998, 16). Proximity is a saying. It is where the self is opened to the possibility of saying anything at all. Being-in-common must always begin with a saying, whether as language or as some other transmission of messages, and therefore

community must always begin with proximity. For Levinas, not only must proximity be "conceived as a responsibility for the other," but "it might [also] be called humanity, or subjectivity, or self" (48). Proximity to the other is exposure before otherness. This exposure speaks. It is a saying. The exposure of the relational self says "being-with," says its being-in-common-alongside-others; it is in the abandonment of shelter, or rather in an original absence of shelter, the stepping into the sonorous mists of alterity, that the contours of subjectivity are first pronounced.

To call oneself human, to speak or to call out in the name or the presence of one's subjectivity, is to call *oneself* humanity, it is to call *oneself* member of the community called humanity, a community saying humanity, and it is to *be*-in-common with others, to be given over, exposed, to the commonality of an eternal sacrifice before the other, a shared debt and obligation to the other, to any other, a debt that ordains, that inaugurates, that sets in motion one's very subjectivity. Levinas professes, "Subjectivity is vulnerability, is sensibility" (1998, 54). Being, therefore, is contact with others. Or more precisely, being is an issue, it is *the issue*, the first and last analysis, only as a contact with otherness. In this vein, for Butler, it is embodiment that conscripts the self to the rule of the other. She asserts, "Prior to individuation, we are given over to another by virtue of our embodiment," adding that the body is the site "where doing and being done to become equivocal" (2004, 22, 21). We tend towards others in response to their leaning over against us, in response to the saying of their otherness. Contact with the other is the debut of the self, and this contact "always bring[s] us back to the very heart of the matter, to an alterity or alteration where the 'self' is at stake. The other is thinkable, and must be thought, beginning from the moment when the self appears and appears to itself as a 'self'" (Nancy, 2000, 77). Answerability, that is, commensurability and reciprocity, are the first fluctuations of being-in-the-world. In proximity and in contact with others the self calls out for the first time, answering for an accusation made before any understanding, finding vindication in the other, responding for the first time as a self, a self that is a self-with-other, a self-with-others, a being in common, a being who *is* communally.

Let us consider more closely this agitation whereby the exposure of being, the becoming-self-before-other, is synchronized with or assumes the form of being-in-

common. For Zygmunt Bauman, community rests on an understanding that "precedes all agreements and disagreements," and "is a 'reciprocal, binding sentiment'—the proper and real will of those bound together" (2001, 10). Community is a binding without need of re-enforcement, without need of assimilating gestures, without need of the consolation of agreement and likeness. Community is a commonality that precedes all these considerations. Nancy declares, "Being cannot *be* anything but being-with-one-another, circulation in the *with* and as the *with* of this singularly plural coexistence," adding that "there is no other meaning than the meaning of circulation" (2000, 3). Circulation, being-in-circulation-with-others, then, is a saying prior to any said, the saying of alterity, the voice of inter-subjectivity, the opening-up of the very possibility for meaning, and the opening-up of the very possibility for community. This is the essence of being singular plural, it is, for Nancy, the essence of being as co-essence. Each singular and irreducible being appears as a co-appearance, not just self before other as Levinas expounds, but as self in circulation among a plurality of others, among a commonality of others. Being-*with*-others is the ontological footing into which being-*for*-others of any sort is first positioned. Being-with-others, in proximity, responsibility and exposure, is the ethico-poetical articulation of alterity. Being-*with*-others is where being is pronounced before any one pronunciation, before any one act of being-*for*-others—which is where thinking begins, where self-consciousness is initiated, where commonality will eventually attempt to speak itself. Community mantles the threshold between these two, between the "being-with" and the "being-for" of the self. Community is both a point of arrival and a point of departure, and as we will see, it has both a primary and a secondary nature.

The singular togetherness of this moment in circulation, this instance of co-essence, is not, however, according to Nancy, "the sum, nor the incorporation, nor the 'society,' nor the 'community' (where these words only give rise to problems)," rather, "The togetherness of singulars is singularity 'itself.' It 'assembles' them insofar as it spaces them; they are 'linked' insofar as they are not unified"(2000, 33). Being-with-others, the co-saying of existence, is not therefore reducible to any one community co-said, it is not identical to the gathering-in, the profuse aggregation that is appropriate to community in its quotidian proliferation, community as some one thing said of cultural identities, as a togetherness in sum. We must distinguish, then, between "community" as

inter-subjective ontology, as being-in-common in singular plurality, and "community" as cultural artifact, as being-in-common in subscription, in generalized collusion. We must distinguish between a primary and a secondary experience of community.

"What is proper to community," Nancy argues, "is neither a creativity nor a rationality," instead, what is proper to community is that "it has no other resource to appropriate except the 'with' that constitutes it, the *cum* of 'community,' its interiority without an interior" (62-3). For Bauman, "'community' means shared understanding of the 'natural' and 'tacit' kind," and therefore it is a notion that cannot "survive the moment in which understanding turns self-conscious" (2001, 11). The community that speaks itself, conscious, prehensive of its *sensus communus,* ceases therefore to be community as such, to be community as relational ontology, and instead becomes community as thing, as summation, as possession, community as a site for the erection of boundaries and for the meticulous definition and re-definition of the spaces between those boundaries. Community as a social and cultural construction is, for Nancy, a figural limit, an essentialized and essentializing metonymy for the intelligible commodification of being-in-common. We are ineluctably "linked" to others by virtue of the phenomenological grounds upon which our singularity and subjectivity are made manifest, but while this may be fertile ground for the springing forth of unified and incorporated collectivities, the vociferous boundary drawing that these practices entail restricts the true relationality of the fundamental sharing of existence. The nature of community is not singular, it is dual. At Once, community is of a matter most basic, most formative, most important, and most primary, but it is also of a matter most enthusiastic, most dividing, most pernicious, and most secondary.

From here on, community as a social practice, as the naming of commonality, the speaking and possessing of similarities and agreements, of qualities in common, will be referred to as secondary community. Secondary community is a mode of inter-personal orientation. It is a communicative posture for the conveyance of standardized identities. Its mediation of the self can intuitively be compared to that of secondary shame. This level of community, a mechanism that facilitates the merging and therefore also the management of individuals, is the level of experience at which secondary shame is most active. Secondary community cannot see the individual, it masks the individual (part of

this masking is accomplished in and through the mobilization of shame). Singularity is lost, secondary community cannot measure the circulation of individuals, instead it calibrates and equilibrates, it shuffles individuals together, organizing like-among-like, conflating the particular for the universal, associating the mask with the face underneath.

Primary community, on the other hand, is a togetherness of individuals who are irreducible and irreplaceable, who are radically other to one another, and who are linked together by virtue of their otherness, by virtue of a shared proximity and vulnerability—and as we will argue below, also by virtue of a shared experience of primary shame. Primary community is replaced by secondary community in the execution of everyday life. Primary community becomes community as a togetherness that re-defines and re-inscribes the individual indistinguishably within a cultural collective, smoothing the idiosyncratic surfaces of its members with the help of secondary manipulations of shame so as to regulate difference and control the very ways in which we can be responsible to and for one another. Secondary community is a tendency and a mechanism that arises out of the insecurity of the exposed self before the unyielding other, and it is wielded in the interest of the quantification, regimentation and administration of citizens. Secondary community is the arena of secondary shame, a parade of moralization and regulation. It is a repudiation of otherness.

To construct secondary communities is to respond to the commanding proximity of the other by fleeing in the face of its otherness, by fleeing the face of otherness that is one's own face, fleeing the other through whom one becomes self and with whom one shares a mutual vulnerability, with whom one shares existence. To construct community in this way is to control one's exposure before the other by means of cultural codes, of rules and regulations, of secondary shame, the associative habits of accepted behaviors and accepted appearances. It is in this secondary figure of community that the "simplest solidarities, the most elementary proximities seem to be dislocated" (2000, 63).

The exposure and displacement of our primordial contact with the other, the nudity of our first act on the stage of our being-in-common, our being-in-common-as-origin, we will refer to as primary community. Primary community not only conditions our being-in-common as such but also incites a concomitant desire for escape, an inclination to cover ourselves from view, to conceal ourselves from our primary exposure

before a primordial other. Primary community inclines the self towards concealment, it reveals the devotion and contingency of the self, actuating a propensity to seek the firmer and more secure ground of secondary community—firmer, of course, because it is not sedimented by difference. The togetherness of singulars in primary community, face-to-face in the opening-up of their subjectivity, face-to-face *as* the very opening-up of subjectivity, is marked by an experience of primary shame. "Exposure," says Carl Schneider, "is a relational metaphor," and further, "Shame as exposure, then, is relational, arising from a felt disproportion or disharmony in which someone has exceeded his or her proper place and is dislocated, displaced" (1977, 35). To feel that one has exceeded one's "proper place" can be simply to realize that one's place-in-the-world, one's being, is conditioned by the invading presence, and dismantling gaze of the other. The self is a trespasser upon the grounds of its own being-in-the-world. One only becomes self insofar as one is grounded by the other, that is, insofar as one stands upon the very grounds of the being of the other. We retreat from our full disclosure before the other, our primary shame, from our dissemination in primary communality, we retreat towards a being-in-common as consolidation, towards community as a unifying border, towards secondary community, community as a collective identity for the masking of our desolate and desolating togetherness, hiding from the infinite responsibility of singular sharing. Community becomes "nothing more than the generalized impropriety of banality, of anonymity, of the lonely crowd and gregarious isolation" (Nancy, 2000, 63).

Secondary community is an escape from the primary community of shared vulnerability and primary shame. The phenomenological condition for any experience of community then, however, is this unveiling destitution, this exposure to and for the other, this oblation of freedom in the name of responsibility, in the name of responsibility for the other, the other that is-in-common insofar as it *is* at all, vulnerable-in-common, proximal-in-common. We find our way into communities of generalized identity so as to hide from our naked singularity, a nakedness we share with others by virtue of the manifestation of our subjectivity.

The encumbrance of the other, this albatross bestowed before any freedom, is only relinquished in the name of the freedom it precludes. The poverty of the self before the other is at once both a denuding imposition and also a most secure reciprocity. The

self is shelterless before the other, but the other becomes its shelter. Responsibility for the other, for the other who exposes every inch of our vulnerability, is a sheltered and sheltering imposition, and it is necessarily a shelter that is shared. It is the absolute sharing of both freedom and security that impels the self towards the dividing lines of secondary community, of collective cultural identities. In *Community: Seeking Security in an Insecure World*, Bauman diagnoses, "Promoting security always calls for the sacrifice of freedom, while freedom can only be expanded at the expense of security" (2001, 20). Freedom and security are the economy of secondary community. Primary community—being-in-common as such, being before the other who obtrudes against the self, begging for deliverance while conferring subjectivity—is the experience of freedom and security as one and the same event, as two sides of the same phenomenological coin. It is in the interest of a freedom and security that are not shared, that do not share phenomenological soil, in the interest of a vulnerability that is not so singularly irreducible, of a responsibility that is not so singular and unadulterated, that identity-building sign-posts are hammered into the social and cultural grounds between self and other. The desire to flee the nakedness of existence, the nakedness of primary shame, and to cover oneself in the garbs of secondary community, in the protective modesty of secondary shame, the desire for the feeling of fusion rather than of sharing, interposes a space between freedom and security and between the individual and the community, and also between appropriate and in-appropriate modes of appearance before others. Secondary community is the generalization and unification of distinct selves, it is not the sharing of being, but the blending of experience.

"To share," affirms Kristeva, is "to take part in a distinctiveness beyond the separation imposed on us by our fates; to participate, without erasing the fact that each is 'apart'" (2010, 43). We flee our capture by the other in search of a security that does not have to be so unambiguously shared, for an existence that is not so unambiguously naked, for a security that does not invoke such an impending responsibility for the other. We cling to the security of our immersion in a sea of indistinguishable others who do not share our security—which would require distinctiveness beyond the separation imposed on us by our fates—and who are not "apart" in the sense that allows for sharing. We cling so as not to *share* our experience of security with others so much as *participating*

identically in it. Bauman remarks, "the vulnerability of individual identities and the precariousness of solitary identity-building prompt the identity-builders to seek pegs on which they can together hang their individually experienced fears and anxieties and…perform the exorcism rites in the company of other similarly afraid and anxious individuals" (2001, 16). Once the individual has renounced the other and mis-taken an essentially shared vulnerability for a solitary confinement, the instability of this new and solitary expression of being inspires a yearning for sameness, a desire for ardent communal identity-building that will help conceal the primordial and precarious revelation of the self before the other, that will place the self among compatible others, that will make the self like among its like, and that will make being-in-common a matter of social and cultural allegiance rather than of vulnerability and proximity, of unified rather than of shared existence.

Primary community positions the self rhizomatically before others who must be answered not answered *for*, who are knowable in and through their otherness, who while being wholly and pre-reflectively other are nonetheless insistent and compelling because of an irremediable vulnerability, a vulnerability that conditions the vulnerability of the self, a vulnerability that conditions all beings-with.

Primary community universalizes what Julia Kristeva refers to as her "ambition," and her "utopia," believing "that this vulnerability reflected in the disabled person (a vulnerability we are arguing is reflected at the limits and by the limitations of all beings)…forms us deeply…and as a result, it can be *shared*" (2010, 30, original emphasis, parenthesis added). The self is responsible for all others, for any other who can by the infinite and unaccountable insistence of its presence and its gaze ask to be answered, be responded to, be recognized as other and sheltered as such. Secondary community is a harbor for the refugees of alterity. The individual who has forsaken the beseeching other and its primary shame, who has withdrawn from the experience of being-in-common as such, from its primary community, turns towards a commonality in which identity is securely fastened, a community in which otherness is no longer proximal, in which the other stands instead beyond the borders of each given unified collective. To refuse the call of primary shame, exposure before one's primary community, is to seek a community of generalized and generalizable selves, a community

of like among like. Freedom *there* is no longer shared between self and other, no longer a feature of their being-for-one-another, but is exercised always one at the expense of the other, always one over against the other, and always from within the rigid confines—and with the help of the strictures of secondary shame—of unified selves.

In *Civilization and its Discontents*, Freud professes that "the first result of culture was that a larger number of human beings could then live together in common," and that "the incorporation of the individual as a member of a community, or his adaptation to it, seems like an almost unavoidable condition which has to be filled before he can attain [the] objective of happiness" (1930, 68, 134). While the first result of culture may well have been that a larger number of human beings could live together in common, the first result of society—a development we believe necessarily precedes the organization of culture—was that a fewer number of human beings could live together in common. The advent of society marks a constraint upon the universal togetherness of all human beings, the being-in-common as such of all proximal human individuals, and perhaps also of a more fundamental and primal togetherness between an even larger number of beings, both human and otherwise. The expansion of cultural togetherness from within the initial circumscription of societal togetherness demonstrates, so far as we understand it, the failure of community as artifact, of secondary community, to account properly for the irreversible and undeniable primacy of the other.

Freud speculates, "The desire for freedom that makes itself felt in a human community may be a revolt against some existing injustice and so may prove favourable to a further development of civilization and remain compatible with it" (60). The diffusion and proliferation of communities and communal living in our present age is a revolt. The intensification and elaboration of what it means to experience community, to experience both selfness and otherness communally is indeed a further development of civilization. The unfurling of community into its counter-public, transnational, or network-centric iterations is a revolt not just in the name of freedom, but in the name of the freedom of the other, the other before whom we are exposed prior to our affiliation in cultural collectives, prior to our desire for the transmission of only certain kinds of interpersonal communication, prior the moralization of only certain kinds of interpersonal exposure, the other who is a saying prior to any said, who commands by virtue of its

vulnerability, a shared vulnerability, the other who demands of us nothing more than a responsible self. Freud cites "the inadequacy of our methods of regulating human relations in… the community and the state," as one of the three sources of human sufferings (Freud, 60). Secondary community is, indeed, an inadequate method for the regulation of human relations for it is conceived in the disavowal of the other, perpetuated by the arbitrary stipulations of secondary shame, and crystallized in the renunciation of otherness, the otherness that is such a fundamental dimension of the self.

How then can human relations be adequately regulated? Or, perhaps regulation is not the appropriate term. How can we do justice to the other without undoing its otherness? How can we do justice to ourselves without undoing our own otherness? How can we live together in a community without necessarily precluding our freedom to pass between communities, that freedom once shared between self and other? Can we stand before the other, in absolute vulnerability, exposure, and primary shame and not turn away, and not turn away in our audacious search for the security of identity-building collectives, groups of unified and incorporated others, others who wear the same cultural masks as we do, others whose appearance is guided by their "sense of shame," their secondary shame? Before the other we are seen, calculated, rendered measurable, we are vulnerable to our own limitation and to that of the other, our being collides against its limitations, its mortality, and we are ashamed of being seen, of being seeable, ashamed of the nakedness of our existence. Primary community is the community of all those who are seeable, being-in-common as such is a function of this primordial visibility, this primordial responsibility. In secondary community we wear garments to hide ourselves from the other, we wear the masks of secondary shame to conceal the unassailable limitations of our being, we calculate the distances between ourselves and others so as not to have to measure the true intimacy of our co-existence, our co-essence and co-circulation.

Shame, though, even when conferred from within secondary community, even when conferred in accordance with the moral decorum of its secondary mobilizations, may yet offer the self a renewed sense of the contingency of its being-with, of its original sharing and original proximity, of the responsibility and vulnerability of primary shame. Schneider postulates, "Because our culture has tended to obscure the way in which our

communication is simultaneously a disclosing and a concealing, we are often unaware of the covering that accompanies our meeting, and frequently are conscious of it only insofar as we are uneasy when it is missing" (1977, 38-9). Secondary shame, conferred in secondary community, conferred in moments not simply of exposure, but of exposure and judgment, employed as a tool, employed to impel the self to maintain its cultural disguise, to maintain the heraldry and regulatory force of institutionalized collectivities and the civilized relations therein, may yet evoke a residual re-animation of primary shame, and therefore may yet re-connect the self with the experience of primary community. Perhaps there is something more to secondary shame, something discoverable only in its experience and not in its conferral or contextual reception. Perhaps the penetrating and judgmental gaze of the objectifying and civilizing other of the scene of shame conferral in secondary community still raises the question of otherness, of that otherness that is a saying prior to anything said, that is the saying of inter-subjectivity prior to any subjectivity said. Perhaps moments of secondary shame, in their phenomenological severity, may also be points of access to certain phenomenological features of primary shame, points of return, then too, to the experience of primary community. Perhaps the experience of secondary shame is precisely the revolt Freud described above, a revolt that may prove favourable to a further development of civilization while still remaining compatible with it.

BLURRING BOUNDARIES or GATHERING-IN MOMENTS

Our encounter with the other, and with otherness as a primary community, is disorienting. When we flee this disorientation, this primary shame, this exhibition of the horizons of our being, we are seeking orientation. The "sword brandishing" and "wolf crying," as Bauman puts it, of (secondary) community are practices in orientation. Identity in community, identity as community, is the orientation of a self that has been unfolded before the other, before the other through whom its subjectivity is achieved, through whom the self first speaks inter-subjectively. It is our phenomenological tending towards orientation that first prompts our flight from the delimiting, debilitating and foundational presence of the other.

In her book entitled *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*, Sara Ahmed considers different, or "deviant," kinds of phenomenological stances. Queer phenomenology is about staying with moments of disorientation so that we may "achieve a different orientation toward them; such moments may be the source of vitality as well as giddiness" (2006, 4). For Ahmed, echoing the Levinasian diachrony through which the self first emerges, the self is revealed in and through, or out of, a moment of disorientation, a call to responsibility that sounds in the absence of any orientational positioning. This disorientation, the experience of vulnerability and primary shame before the primordial other, incites a movement towards calibration, towards the grounding of experiences of selfhood found in the unification of "individuals," the gathering-in of like beings among like beings, the composition of secondary communities. Once we are given over or committed to these secondary communities, these collectivities of pacification, the moments of disorientation, of difference, inherent to the experience of primary community are fastidiously mitigated or regulated, set at a distance in the interest of the comfort and social productivity of the now normalized citizen groupings.

In secondary community disorientation is acutely influenced by the routines of secondary shame. Disorientation, either as a source of punishment imposed upon secondary communities from without (extracting the moral idea of "ought" out of the politico-economic idea of "owe") or as a source of alienation arising from within a given community, disrupting the inter-personal spacing of centralized and consolidated selves, i.e., by way of deviant trajectories of desires, or abnormal bodily dwellings, is thoroughly controlled by practices of secondary shame. In secondary community disorientation is commonly the affective after-birth of the judgment-passing conferral of secondary shame. Secondarily shamed and disoriented individuals are expressly relegated to the extremities of the community, to the fringes of otherness, conscripted to the rigorous societal processes of rehabilitation, re-modeling, re-orientation, and re-integration. Secondary community is an institution for minimizing disorientation, and therefore also for minimizing difference. With the help of the regulative force of secondary shame, secondary community can more effectively minimize the otherness of proximal others. And of course, if minimization fails, alienation and excommunication likely will not.

Ahmed professes, “We need to complicate the relation between the lines that divide space,” the very lines that divide and animate the phenomenology of communal living (2006, 13). She adds, “Following these lines is a form of commitment as well as a social investment” (17). Moments of disorientation that emerge within the spaces of secondary communities can trouble the lines that divide those spaces so long as we are willing to keep within these moments, to keep from tending towards orientation and calibration. To be seen by the other, to be glimpsed as that radical and utter contingency from whence the self originates, both objectified and subjectified in the gaze of the other, is to have one’s social mask lifted, it is to be seen as a being-in-common as such, it is to feel shame for the exposure of one’s existential limits, as well as to feel the universal togetherness and vulnerability of one’s shared being-in-the-world. To complicate the lines that divide space, to deterrotorialize the disciplinarity of secondary community, is to keep within moments of shame, moments of true exposure, moments that may have been initiated along the script of secondary shame, but that may nonetheless approximate the exposure of the sharing of existence of primary shame, and therefore, may nonetheless also approximate the disorientation, vulnerability and commonality of primary community.

“Shame,” recalls Schneider, “reminds us of the deep mutual involvement we have with one another” (1977, 138). Shame is felt always before the other, it is the revelation of the self before another, and as a reminder of the deep mutual involvement we have with one another shame can trouble our experience of the lines of social investment that divide inter-personal space, that allege the zones of cultural and individual belonging. Jane Geaney, depicts shame “in the context of contact and contagion among blurred boundaries” (2004, 113). To be without the robes of the communal self, the attire of a self in harmonized iteration with like others, robes that smooth the edges of the social body, is to challenge the very taking shape of secondary community, it is to interrupt the drawing of boundary lines between same and other. Ahmed argues, “inhabiting a body that is not extended by the skin of the social means the world acquires a new shape and makes new impressions” (2006, 20). The body exposed by secondary shame is such a body. Its shame is an opportunity for change. Geaney holds, “when shame is exemplified by blurred boundaries, the body seems to lack a core or firm delineation. Indeed, it seems

porous and open to contagion," and she concludes, "the metaphor implicit in boundary shame points to a self that is neither exclusively private nor firmly demarcated" (2004, 126). The secondary shame and disorientation of inhabiting an aberrant and creative body or lifestyle occasion the re-structuring not only of the structural or morphological boundaries of the self, but also of the very institutions and mechanisms that impose these boundaries in the first place: a deterritorialization and re-territorialization of the social skin of both individual and community. Ahmed continues, "If we think with and through orientation we might allow the moments of disorientation to gather" (2006, 20). She offers: "To live out a politics of disorientation might be to sustain wonder about the very forms of social gathering" (24).

The shamed body is not extended by the social skin of secondary community. Geaney's boundary shame is about contamination. A politics of disorientation, a politics of shame—one that accommodates its primary and secondary connotations—contaminates the well-trodden lines of strategically essentialized collective identities, and harkens back to the sonority of the singular plurality of being-in-the-world, glimpsing the stark sharing of dispossession that is being-alongside-others, and emboldens the naked circulation of beings-in-the-world, conveying the universal inter-personal responsibility of each self for each other. To gather-in moments of secondary shame within established secondary communities is to gather-in moments of singular and irreducible togetherness, moments in which each of us remains an inalienable singularity ineluctably proximal to the other and to an otherness that defines and enriches us.

Frantz Fanon offers an incisive characterization of the role of the other's gaze in the figuration of cultural identity in his book *Black Skin, White Masks*. For Fanon, the lived experience of a black man is a relational experience, he is always black in relation to a white man. To be recognized by the other, and accepted into the secondary community of the white colonials, the black self must be seen posing as a white man, masquerading, as it were, "in the white world," where "the man of color encounters difficulties elaborating his body schema" (1952, 90). The mask is necessary. Secondary community is founded upon images of likeness, images of bodies, and as Fanon exhorts: "The image of one's body is solely negating. It's an image in the third person" (90).

Fanon describes the struggle for recognition in "the white world":

> Locked in this suffocating reification, I appealed to the Other so that his liberating gaze, gliding over my body suddenly smoothed of rough edges, would give me back the lightness of being I thought I had lost, and taking me out of the world put me back in the world. But just as I get to the other slope I stumble, and the Other fixes me with his gaze, his gestures and attitude, the same way you fix a preparation with a dye. I lose my temper, demand an explanation…Nothing doing, I explode. Here are the fragments put together by another me (89).

Fanon appeals to the other for entry into the world, not the world common to all, but a contingent world, a generalized, secondary world, a white world, a world in which rough edges are smoothed and recognition depends not on the ontological fact that one is seeable, but rather on cultural facts about the way in which one is seen. Fanon stumbles in his quest for recognition and is shamed. He is fixed and objectified in his fall by an other concerned with the regulation of his body and his behavior. The conferral of secondary shame is meant to alienate him, make him wear the white mask, but he offers another response instead: "Since the Other was reluctant to recognize me, there was only one answer: to make myself known" (95). To make oneself known, especially by a secondary community, is to make oneself seen, it is to gather-in one's moments of exposure, of fixity and disorientation, to keep within one's shame, one's objectification in the eyes of others, and change the very shape of the social schema, to change the shape of that cultural integument under which one is meant to hide from view. To be known and seen, to be shamed by a secondary community, by a secondary shame, and to keep within one's disorientation rather than flee for sanctuary in orientation and concealment, is to de-stratify one's secondary communal environment and regain access to one's primary community, to one's co-essential circulation within the world alongside others. Fanon surmises, "Every act of an Antillean is dependent on 'the Other'—not because 'the Other' remains his final goal for the purpose of communing with him…but simply because it is 'the Other' who asserts him in his need to enhance his status" (187). The highest status one can achieve is acknowledgment within the primary community, recognition as a co-essence, as a vulnerability shared, as a responsibility shared, as a being in common. The other asserts the self not only in his need to enhance his status, but also in his very being-in-the-world.

There is a subaqueous intimacy, an unofficial sharing, actively at work within experiences of secondary shame, and this intimacy takes place underneath the formal articulation of the cultural identities of secondary community. "Like a stigma," asserts Eve Sedgwick, "shame is itself a form of communication" (2009, 36). There is a somewhat discrete communicative impetus to the mark of shame, a private source of assembly, a sympathy between deviants, what Michael Herzfeld places under the conceptual parameters of a "cultural intimacy." In his book, *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics in the Nation-State*, Herzfeld describes cultural intimacy as "the recognition of those aspects of a cultural identity that are considered a source of external embarrassment but that nevertheless provide insiders with their assurance of common sociality" (1999, 3). This common sociality gestures toward, recalls and revises, the unmediated commonality of primary community, that original sociality, approximated in these meta-stable moments of "shameful" intimacy.

Alphonso Lingis confirms, in *The Community of Those Who Have Nothing In Common*, "Before the rational community, there was the encounter with the other, the intruder. The encounter begins with the one who exposes himself to the demands and contestation of the other" (1994, 10). For us cultural intimacy refers to an atavism, a latent commemoration of the primordial encounter between self and other. What Lingis calls "rational community", we have been calling secondary community. Submerged beneath this "rational community" is an immemorial intimacy that pre-dates its construction and that expresses a being-in-common before any socialization, *a covert saying-together before any one togetherness said*. Lingis declares:

> Beneath the rational community, its common discourse of which each lucid mind is but the representative and its enterprises in which the efforts and passions of each are absorbed and depersonalized, is another community, the community that demands that one who has his own communal identity, who produces his own nature, exposes himself to the one with whom he has nothing in common, the stranger (10).

The experience of secondary shame within secondary community is the re-awakening of the answerability of the self before the denuding gaze of the other. In secondary shame, if we can wade through the dense and capricious fog of moral

judgment, we can reach a certain approximation of primary shame, we can become painfully aware that the other does more than simply "judge" us, but fixes us within its gaze and innervates our responsibility, our responsibility for this very other (and others) through whom our selfhood is granted in the first place. "The other community," remarks Lingis, referring to what we have been calling primary community, "forms when one recognizes, in the face of the other, an imperative" (10). Primary shame is this imperative in the face of the other. Primary shame is a sociality-in-common, always positioning the self in unabbreviated relation to others, always channeling inter/trans relationality, always situating inter/trans communal avidity. Primary shame is a phenomenological confluence for the primordial correspondence of self and other, and it is accessible in secondary communities, approachable even through secondary experiences of shame.

Sally Munt argues, "shame, working at different levels, performs culturally to mark out certain groups" (2008, 2). Secondary shame performs such a cultural demarcation, but if we are not too quick about converting our shame into pride, we may yet use its cultural prominence to access another of its working levels, its primary level. Primary shame is a relational aspect in all communal gathering. It is the unacknowledged stimulus and registrar for the constitution, development, and enrichment of the social self. Herzfeld contests that "if collective identity is expressed through mutual resemblance, its intimate secrets are a matter of relationships—relational aspects of communal identity that often also disrupt its smooth surface from within" (1999, 62). Furthermore, Munt presses, "Shame is a force that acts upon the self, constituting social subjects who are marked and shaped by its interpellating propensities of recognition, misrecognition and refusal of recognition" (203). The vagaries of social subjectivity are the private recreational nodes for the relational insurgencies of secondary shame, but primary shame's hidden inter-subjective connectivity, its capacity to assemble individuals even at the level of secondary community unearths an intimate and smooth communal space underneath in which primary community can be re-approached, re-activated in moments of meta-stability, moments of shared exposure and vulnerability.

Secondary shame misrepresents and misuses primary shame at the level of sociality and politicality, at the level of official cultural identity. Shame is deployed, disposed, in secondary community as a social tool for the moral regulation of citizens,

and is ignored as the fundamental locus, the proto-locality, for the originary propinquity between self and other. But even secondary shame incites this propinquity, this original proximity, and therefore, secondary shame is perhaps an ideal affect for clandestine social gathering, for the establishment of new and deviant phenomenological stances. Herzfeld remarks, "The apparent overdetermination of official moralism, however, may in practice offer an enormous range of play to individual social actors," indicating as well, "the intimacy [that this overdetermination] masks is the subject of a deep sense of cultural and political vulnerability" (1999, 9). Secondarily shamed and disoriented social actors, though subject to the vigorous and over-determined societal tactics of unification and generalization, dwell together, uniquely, in autonomous, proximal, and dis-integrated communality, a communality that while upholding certain official relations to exterior regulating forces, unsettles this very relationality from below. The sub-surface vulnerability shared by the shamed, an unseen saying before any said, the counter-current of exchange between those whose cultural masks have been removed, displaced, by the gaze of the other, is a linking together of proximal others, of others whose otherness is re-intensified by the profound existential unveiling of being-in-the-world as being-with-others-in-the-world. The shamed are a network, a plurality of singulars, communicating across the fine lines of cultural identity, across the careful and precarious boundaries of the generic secondary communities of the like among like.

The positions we fill in our secondary communities, and the spaces they divide, are sometimes codes; they are sometimes the masks of a universal intimacy that lurks beneath and beyond the pronunciation of their artifactual borders. Herzfeld rightly declares, "what matters socially is how these codes are actually used" (1999, 19). What matters socially is how these codes are seen to be used, that is, how these codes are conferred between and before self and other. Dan Zahavi asks, "Is there an interpersonal drive inherent to shame? A need to engage another with one's shame, to make our shame social and public?" (2010). All shame is social. All secondary shame is public. Primary shame, on the other hand, simply connects us to others, it is an inter-personal affect, it reveals just how fundamental our connection to others is, and it discloses just how formative our visibility before others is. Insofar as secondary shame can remind the self of a primary shame that is its precedent, that is more constitutive in its inter-personal

resonances, shame will always, even in its secondary expression, evoke a need to engage others, to share the intensity of one's shame.

Evoking Butler's claims about embodiment, Herzfeld proposes, "The human body may endure the greatest disemic (the formal or coded tension between official self-presentation and private introspection) tensions" (1999, 21, parenthesis added). The body is the ontological seat upon which the socio-cultural dynamics of visibility affect their most rabid advances. The secondarily shamed are meant to hide their shame, to exchange moments of exposure for moments of enclosure, moments of concealment, trading vulnerability for security at the entrance-way back into the closed quarters of secondary community, to offer up their co-essence, their primarily shameful revelation before the other in exchange for essentialized cultural identities, for prideful self-protection. Herzfeld forwards, "the state brutality leaves few private spaces uninvaded and so makes the self the only available refuge for any sense of intimacy. The body is exposed to such extremes because it is the primary site of both privacy and display. Sometimes, too, shame can also be fought back through the ambiguities of embodiment" (1999, 21). The stultification of the self in secondary shame is an interference that opens points of primary liaison, avenues of existential commerce, not just between the self and the state, or the self and some authoritative institution, but between the self and the primordial other, the intruder. The primary shame achievable in moments of secondary shame strips the self, divests her of her cultural identity and stations her firmly within her irreducible and co-determined singularity, within her primary community, disclosing the intelligible reality of her being-in-common as such.

The aim, then, is to turn these moments of disorientation arising in secondary community, moments of return to the primary community of vulnerability and proximity, moments of singular togetherness in shame, of community for all, into lasting cultural postures, conditions whereby we can remember and re-ignite our primordial responsibility for the other, for the unadulterated otherness of the other, and for the irremediable mortality that we share with this other. "To collectively individuate," argues Erin Manning, "is to acknowledge the meta-stability of all machines as assemblages, to acknowledge that all communities are made up of more (kinds of) bodies than we can count" (2007, xx). There is community in even in secondary shame, every experience of

shame is an experience of community, but an experience of a community with more kinds of bodies than we can count, a community as the condition for our very being-in-the-world. Primary shame is the affective manifestation of the collective individuation of our rhizomatic singular plurality, our being-in-circulation-with-others, others who see us, and who fix us in their gaze, others who by fixing us in their gaze open us to the irreplaceability of the self, the self who is infinitely responsible for the irreducible other, and for the mortality that delimits all others. To gather in moments of secondary shame is precisely to perform what Herzfeld calls "social poetics," it is "the play by which people try to turn transient advantage into a permanent condition in [a] socially comprehensive sense" (Herzfeld, 1999, 26). It is in the interest of this condition of permanence, in the interest of achieving a socially comprehensive appreciation of our universal vulnerability, that shame, primary and secondary, should, without exception, be understood.

DISSOLVING BONDS or SHAME AND COMMUNITY AT THE LIMITS OF PROXIMITY

We want to speak now of technology, of how technology changes our experience of the world, and of how it changes our being-in-the-world, to wonder about technology's effect on how we are in common, on the ways we come together and form communities, on the ways we are seen seeing, and the very ways we feel and confer shame. As we mentioned at the start of this chapter, we will offer two somewhat antinomic perspectives. We offer them as a kind of practice in heuristics, to show that the first perspective, although intuitive, more commonly defended, and still valuable, is yet unsatisfactory, incomplete, and perhaps too concerned with the ontic rather than the ontological nature of technology—with consequences rather than causes. We offer both perspectives in the hope that we may glean certain independent truths or contiguities in connection to our thesis from each of them.

We suggested above in the previous section that even within the regimented groupings of secondary communities—the merging together of individuals into generalized collectives—the conferral of shame, even secondary shame, can re-position the self within the primary community where proximity, vulnerability and responsibility are all matters of a shared existence. The gripping and dispossessing affluence of the

perforating gaze of the other and the enduring porosity of self are perpetual points of contact with otherness—with the otherness of the self, and the selfness of the other—that cannot be absolutely eschewed. Our elementary singular plurality is re-articulated, re-assembled, and re-approached when we gather-in moments of disorientation and secondary shame. Our primordial circulation in the world, our being-in-a-field-of-others—sharing as vulnerability and vulnerability as meaning—can be achieved, again, after the provisional disavowal of the other in the organization of secondary communities in and through the scenes of conferral of secondary shame, from within—and underneath—the standardized and regulating fortifications of these unified and calculable secondary communities. But what is to become of this enduring contact when it is not only the otherness of the other that is distorted but also its gaze, also its ability to reveal the self, to confer the constitutive and relational shame of co-existence? What can be said of a primary community in which the very inter-personal distances, the inter-experiential proximities, between selves and others are rendered inconsequential? What if the confer-ability of the other who is seen seeing, who constitutes the see-ability of the self, and thereby configures the intelligible reality of the self as a being-in-common as such, is leveled off? What if technological instrumentality is interrupting and impeding the shared vulnerability of the gaze, of the revelation of self as a co-essence? What if it is no longer before the other that we are seen and exposed, but rather before the technological instrument wielded by and in place of the other? What if the other today is an anamorphosis, a distorted image that can only be viewed properly with the help of a special instrument, what if the other can only be seen or revealed, can only truly be exposed, from one end of the specialized lens of a technological instrument? What then can be said of primary community? What of shame?

Bauman believes that "'community' stands for the kind of world which is not, regrettably, available to us—but which we would dearly wish to inhabit and which we hope to repossess" (2001, 3). Community is no longer in our possession or in our reach. An involution has taken place between the self and the other, an involution that has made it more difficult to make contact, to connect. Our ability to see others and be seen by others has undergone a meaningful and extensive modification and the role of community within our vision of ourselves has proportionately been remodeled. Through the

mediation of satellite surveillance and the inter-connectivity of computer networks, we can now encounter the gaze of distant and otherwise extraneous others, or, rather, not the gaze itself of these others, but the look of their gaze, more specifically, we can encounter what the gaze of distant others "looks like." Can tele-communication transmit the burden, the imploring weight or proximity of the other's gaze? The incumbency or exigency of the proximal other? The nearness of the neighbour? Can we be sure that the tele-communicative gaze still approximates the constitutive and communal entreatment of being-in-common as such? Can it do so with the ardent involvement of the shame-conferring gaze of the proximal other? Can the image, the pixilated simulacrum of the gaze, command with the imposition of the gaze itself, of the gaze that is reachable, touchable, and proximal, of the gaze that is truly exposing and truly shaming? And if so, what kind of community is this?

Bauman mourns the dissolution of the other, "gone are most of the steady and solidly dug-in orientation points which suggested a social setting that was more durable, more secure and more reliable than the timespan of an individual life" (2001, 47). Will the mortality that glistens in the eyes of the other, that mortality against which we lean in our becoming-self, in the exposure of self, in our becoming (infinitely) responsible, will it fade in the face of the other comprised, re-arranged, projected, from the seat and across the surface of a technological instrument? "Proximity," says Bauman, "no longer guarantees intensity of interaction; most crucially, whatever interaction may emerge on the basis of proximity cannot be trusted to last long" (85-6). We no longer need to meet face-to-face in order to communicate, in order to transmit messages. We no longer seem to trust our memory to securely register the transitory exchange, the precarious temporality and communicability of the face-to-face, of the saying prior to the said. Or perhaps it is this temporality that we fear. Perhaps we are haunted by the other when she must be remembered, when she must live in our memories rather than in our technologies? We need only turn on a screen, and there we can correspond, there we can be close, there we can evade the saying prior to the said, that saying that so firmly conscripts us to the other, there we can see the other and yet remain calmly unexposed in return.

When the other who sees us is encountered on the screen or captured in the lens, when the other whose seeing is therefore confined to the perspective of the instrument, to the directionality of the instrumental, then our responsibility for this other—vulnerable and mortal—for the gaze of this other—objectifying and subjectifying—is adjusted, reduced, and leveled off. Gone, for Bauman, is the certainty "that what we do to each other has more than episodic significance" (Bauman, 48). The other has become an episode, a tele-transaction, a vignette, the image we can encounter but cannot reach. The commanding proximity of the other has faded, and with it goes our shame, our access to primary community, to being-in-common as such.

In *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,* Walter Benjamin notes, "Within major historical periods, along with changes in the overall mode of being of the human collective, there are also changes in the manner of its sense perception. The manner in which sense perception is organized, the medium in which it occurs, is dictated not only naturally but also historically" (1936, 8). Changes in the manner and medium by which we encounter each other will not only alter the messages we send, but will modify the very ways in which we perceive and organize ourselves around those messages. It will change the way we perceive ourselves as beings in common. Our irreducible togetherness, the communality of the singular plural, is corrupted if we are no longer required to stand before the other, no longer obliged to embody our existential revelation before the other, if we can simply and continually keep the other at a distance, even while bringing him in close, if we see him without reaching him, calculate him without being calculated in return. What vulnerability is shared if when we see the other we no longer see her seeing, no longer see ourselves at the end of her look, no longer see her as founding an aspect of our being-in-the-world? The other has become a surface for the self. "We tend to become surfaces to each other," says Bauman (2001, 147). The other as a surface is the other that in facing the self no longer orders him, no longer exposes or compels him; the other as a surface is the other that while being close, is no longer proximal. "'Getting closer to things,'" Benjamin claims, "in both spatial and human terms is every bit as passionate a concern of today's masses as their tendency to surmount the uniqueness of each circumstance by seeing it in reproduction"(9). To be an absolute subject, to see and remain unseen, to see the other multiple times at multiple distances

even without his permission, and without his acknowledgment, is to surmount the destitution of one's co-essence, it is to stand against the infiltration of the other and to dismiss the invitation to responsibility, it is to surmount the shame-conferring gaze of the other and break with one's universal circulation within primary community.

Mediated by the camera, by the screen, and by the insignificance of the new found technological "closeness," a newly revised proximity with the other, the self revealed before the camera lens can sense, in unison with Pirandello's lament about the screen actor, as quoted by Benjamin, "the inexplicable emptiness that results from his body becoming a withdrawal symptom, from its dissipating and being robbed of its reality, its life, its voice, and the sounds it makes by moving around" (1936, 19). How can we be responsible for the other, for her mortality, for the infinite request she makes of us by standing naked before us, and by denuding us with her gaze, by constituting our subjectivity in the realm of the one-for-the-other of being-in-common as such, if her reality is muted by the cold materiality of the technical object? How do we see ourselves as members of a community—primary or secondary—when we no longer see ourselves as seen by others, but simply see ourselves as seeing others? Can we feel shame in this way? Even secondary shame? Can we feel relational? Benjamin holds, "this is a different nature that addresses the camera than the one that speaks to the eye. Different above all in that the space permeated by human consciousness is replaced by one that is unconsciously permeated" (30). We address the camera and the screen in a different manner to the way in which we address the pure and unalloyed gaze. We respond to the camera differently to the way in which we respond to the gaze. We *are,* that is, we are-in-common, differently before the camera than before the gaze.

Shame, according to Thomas Keenan, "signifies involvement in a social network, exposure to others and susceptibility to their gaze" (2004, 436). Our susceptibility to the gaze of others, our sensitivity to exposure before others, is blunted by the technologies of exposure, the camera lens, and the computer screen. We see too much of the other, and we see him too often, to be unnerved by his gaze, or rather, by the look of his gaze, his gaze itself only a surface upon which we access his official, social and cultural identity, his secondary commonality, while keeping his presence and his imploring vulnerability, his primary commonality, at a distance, avoiding contact with his proximity, with his

nearness. "The dark side of revelation," continues Keenan, "is overexposure…If shame is about the revelation of what is or ought to be covered, then the absence or failure of shaming is not only traceable to the success of perpetrators at remaining clothed" (438). No matter how naked we may appear, behind the screen or lens we will always still be clothed, clothed by their instrumentality, clothed by their cold materiality. Primary shame is about the revelation of the self as co-appearance, as a self among others, a self in circulation, a self who is seen by others and who must *be* (responsible for) that very self who has been seen, seized and released, dissolved and distributed by the other's gaze. The reciprocity, the defenseless sharing of our being, is troubled when the constitutive gaze of otherness has been leveled off by a mediating technological surface. When we are no longer sensitive to the other's gaze, we will no longer experience primary shame, and secondary shame will itself become nothing more than the feeling of guilt.

Keenan asks: "So what difference does it make, for those of us who have to respond, when the technologies of exposure becomes opportunities for performance, exhibition, self-exposure? What becomes of shame?" (447). Exposure before the camera is not the revelation of our originary relational subjectivity, of our fundamentally communal being-in-the-world, it is not a proximal and vulnerable disclosure, it is the abatement, the curtailing of all exposure, the leveling off of the gaze, the reduction of our visibility before others to the level of culpability, of guilt. It no longer matters if we are seen, or who sees us, so long as our actions can be accounted for, estimated and registered by the camera lens. It is no longer substantial to face or be faced by the other, or to feel the shame of exposure, or to feel shame at all, so long as we can feel guilt, so long as the performance and accusation of guilty acts can be recorded. We are captured, not by vulnerability, not by the exposed mortality of the other's beseeching presence, but by a technical zone of only itinerant subjectivity, by the surveillance and, as Benjamin puts it, "continuous commentary" of the camera. We are responsible there, but not for the other, not for the being of the other, solely for the evidence of our position, for facts about ourselves, for the status of our cultural identity, for the individuality of our actions within civilized society, within only the shallowest depths of our experience of secondary communities. Can it be that the proliferation of technical devices for cybernetic

communication marks the disintegration of the shame conferring gaze? Of primary shame and primary community?

This, of course, is not the only thing that can be said on the matter. The notably negative view heretofore presented condemns technology for its impact on the communal bonds of the co-essential self. This perspective is a common theoretical interpretation, for instance, Jacques Lacan, among others, has already diagnosed the transformation of the other who sees into the other who accuses, signaling the perversion or disappearance all together of the shame-conferring gaze (Lacan, 2007). But is this an adequate portrait? Is this the necessary outcome of the relation between technicity and human being-in-the-world, that is, is this necessarily how technological being-in-common-in-the-world must always be enacted? We would like to forward an alternative view, one that characterizes technology not as an exterior force exercised outside and therefore lying over against being-in-the-world, but as an aptitude, a force or movement that is congenital with being, a natural proclivity that runs parallel to and that extends the reach of our primordial communality, of our primary community, a nature commensurable and contiguous with being-in-the-world. Moreover, we would like to suggest, following Derrida, that we may even "have to think shame and technicity together, as the same 'subject.'" (2008, 5).

Schneider believes, "Our age rejects shame because it rejects our bond with the Other. We believe in an isolated identity ('I am as the Other sees me') and deny our communal nature ('I am as the Other is'). The recovery of a proper sense of shame would go hand in hand with our acknowledgment of radical sociality" (1977, 136). As we have argued, however, to "be as the other is" is also, necessarily, to "be as the other sees me." To acknowledge the radical sociality of being-in-the-world is to understand that being-seen-in-common is the intelligible reality of being-in-common as such. To be, that is, to be such that one partakes in a primary community, is to be seen *in this way* by the gaze of the primordial other, it is to experience primary shame. Perhaps our age does not so much reject our bond with the other as it devises or reveals new ways of being as the other sees us, new ways of being as the other is. Perhaps primary community can actually be reached, re-assembled, and re-animated with the help of technologies of visibility and exposure, perhaps these technologies express precisely that movement—congenital and contiguous—by which we can regain access to primary community and primary shame.

Perhaps these new kinds of exposure do not so much reduce the avidity of the other's gaze, but intensify it, extend it, and provide new means of encountering otherness, new modes of experiencing the exhibition of the self, new avenues of exchange that not only facilitate the collision of self with other, but that better preserve the otherness of the other, that better articulate the proximity of the other, and that enrich our shared vulnerability with all others. These technologies may even more firmly and emphatically attest to the sheer and irreducible responsibility of the self for the other, for distant others who can be made proximal, others who can be seen seeing even through the camera lens, who can gain access to the being of the self, and whose technological circulation is one equally implicated in an originary community, a saying prior to any said, a community prior to any identity, a community for those who have nothing in common.

Nancy remarks that we regard "technological nature" as an autonomous instrument, that we do so "without ever asking ourselves if it might be 'our' comprehension of 'our-selves' that comes up with these techniques and invents itself in them, and without wondering if technology is in fact essentially in complete agreement with the 'with'" (2000, 70). The "with"—that relational currency that raises the very question of being-in-the-world, that reveals self before other, divulging self and other in interminable exchange, in inescapable inter-experience, and in ineradicable co-determinacy—is the ontological condition for all things technological, for all things with a technological nature. Technology does not add itself to our experience of each other, contributing an ulterior and alien impetus in addition to or in synthetic composition with our primary, natural, relational ontology. Technicity *is* a natural mode of being. The extension and elaboration of our contact with others, as well as the dilation and involution, the re-interpretation of our proximity to others by technological means is the amplification and reticulation of our experience of each other, of our experience of ourselves as a being alongside others. Primary community manifests on either end of the technological instrument. The camera lens can be both a point of departure and return, to and from our original upsurge in the community of those who co-appear, those who are in common so long as they *are* at all. Insofar as the technological apparatus captures and reveals being-in-the-world in its nakedness, it exposes being-in-common as such, it exposes human *being* as humanity, as the sharing of being, as the sharing of vulnerability,

as the conferral of primary shame, and as an infinite responsibility for the otherness of each other.

"Technology," says Heidegger, in his essay, "The Question Concerning Technology," "is a mode of revealing. Technology comes to presence in the realm where revealing and unconcealment take place, where aletheia, truth, happens" (1993, 319). One may indeed have to think technology and shame together as the same subject. For Heidegger technology is in each case an occasioning. He argues, "Occasioning has to do with the presencing of that which at any given time comes to appearance in bringing-forth. Bringing-forth brings out of concealment into unconcealment" (317). Primary shame as the revelation of the self, the discovering, or presencing, of the self at the end of the other's look, is the bringing-forth of the "with," the appearance, that is, co-appearance, of a singular plural existence, of a being-in-circulation-with-others. Technology is a mode by which being, non-human as well as human being, is exposed. Technicity and shame are two fundamental phenomenological conditions of being-in-the-world, and they are inextricably inter-animating. In primary shame we stand before the other, we reach out and are conscripted to an alterity out of which an aspect our being is constituted. In primary shame we are brought-forth, revealed in our radical sociality. The technological turn is equally a reaching out before and towards the other, it is equally the revelation of a radical and shared vulnerability, a vulnerability to the other, to her presence and her gaze, to a gaze extended across vast distances, across the world even, by the technological apparatus into which she fixes her stare.

Primary community is discoverable at the end of the shame-conferring gaze. Even in an experience of secondary shame, conferred in the realm of secondary community, provided we are diligent in our commitment to the disorientation of our exposure we can discover the transcendent relationality of primary community. If technicity is also a presencing, a bringing-into unconcealment of objects or subjects as objects, then it too is a mode for the discovery of primary community, it too is a disposition that can bring-forth, that can occasion the otherness of the other from within the socio-cultural veil of secondary community. Gathering-in moments of secondary shame so as to re-structure the very practices of social gathering may perhaps also mean gathering-in moments that are captured by the camera lens. The world, Nancy reminds us, "is not so much the world

of humanity as it is the world of the nonhuman to which humanity is exposed and which humanity, in turn, exposes" (2000, 18). We are exposed in our proximity and co-essence. It is exposure that conditions our being-in-common as such, and in turn—in the turn called technicity perhaps—we expose the world, to our proximity and co-essence.

Secondary community, the community of unified and regulated cultural identities, the community of like among like, and the community of those who have recanted the constitutive otherness of the other, can equally be aggravated by the technologies of exposure, it can be undermined, disinterred, by the moments of disorientation and of both primary and secondary shame that are made possible by a deviant and re-comprised technological proximity, the intricate and extensive unconcealment, the vulnerability that is born of a technological nature. "The essential unfolding of the essence of technology," argues Heidegger, "propriates in the granting that needs and uses man so that he may share in revealing" (1993, 338). Technology is a nexus across which extends the very relationality of being-in-the-world. We are exposed by the essential unfolding of the essence of technology, and it is with this essence that we in turn expose. Moments of disorientation and shame can be gathered in, fought back, through the technological dilation and revivification of proximity between self and other. Primary community is a radical sociality that passes freely and (both primarily and secondarily) shamefully through the camera lens.

CONCLUSION

In her book, *Human Rights in Camera*, Sharon Sliwinski argues that the broad circulation of technologically reproducible pictures "creates a virtual community between spectators…where the ideal of a shared humanity literally comes into view," adding, "the circulation of images help[s] produce a widely shared 'interior feeling'—or better, a complex constellation of feelings" (2011, 5, 9). The shared humanity that comes into view is a shared vulnerability, a shared "interior feeling" that is captured by the moment of the photograph. This moment is one of exposure. The photograph brings-forth self and other, it occasions the presencing of the gaze, and arrests, that is, conserves, the otherness of the other. The community here raised is inassimilable because of the nature of the exhibition that it engenders. The photograph brings the distant other out of concealment

and circulates her ungraspable being-in-the-world in a community that is not just virtual, but that is performed and exemplified actually, that is faced by others standing next to and before us, shared by distant proximals and proximal distants alike, a community that requires no commonality beyond the naked vulnerability of being-alongside-others, of being singular plural.

The sweeping range of the camera lens proffers a "special proximity," an opportunity to "bear witness to something which it is impossible to witness," an otherness that is inalienable, and a (primary and secondary) shame that is profoundly mobile (Sliwinski, 2011, 56, 97). The communicability of the photograph—unconcealing the being of distant others, exposing self and other across unintelligible distances, re-envisioning the seeable other who sees in return—re-articulates the parameters, re-composes the proximity, re-figures the vulnerability, of the togetherness of singulars, of the togetherness of all singulars—in common without commonality. The lens peers into that primary community that touches all of humanity and that perhaps even reaches much further than that, perhaps even beyond the limits of the human.

Hannah Arendt asserts, "One judges always as a member of a community, guided by one's community sense…But in the last analysis, one is a member of a world community by the sheer fact of being human" (Arendt, 1992, 75). One is a member of this "world community," this primary community, by the sheer fact of being human, but one sees oneself as a member of this community by the sheer fact of one's revelation before the other, one's exposure, proximity, and vulnerability before a plurality of others. Technologies of exposure are new ways by which we can see ourselves at the end of the other's look, see ourselves as members of a world community, see the other as essentially binding and essentially bound, as co-essential, and furthermore, see many others in many other modes of proximity, each requesting the singular and immeasurable responsibility of the self. Technologies of exposure occasion new ways of understanding that we are as the other is, and that we are as the other sees us, that we are in common with others, and that we are seeable as such. Technologies of exposure remind us that our visibility and the shame that it begets in us, in both its primary and secondary iterations, are part and parcel of our radical sociality. Technologies of exposure are technologies of shame, technologies of a shame that reveals the self, a shame that arises out of the mist of

alterity, a mist through which we glimpse the contingency of the self, the circulation of the self in a field of others, a shame that is as technological as it is natural (where this distinction only gives way to misconception) a shame that disorients and yet situates, that blurs the boundaries of the self and yet procures a certain form, a shame that is the foundation of communal togetherness, that is the relational dynamic that discloses being-in-the-world as being-seen-in-common.

AS WE SEE IT

As we see it, these are a few of the ways in which shame must be investigated. Shame does not characterize an abyss between a man and a cat, but is continuous between them, like a current between them, emanating from one to the other and back again. Primary shame demonstrates that the vulnerability of human-being-in-the-world is shared by the being of non-human others, that a man may be sensitive to the gaze of a cat, and that such a sensitivity is a call, a call awaiting response, a call that begs for response-ability, for an answer in the face of a possible no return, a patience requiring immortality, resting, delicately, over and against the very mortality of the other, and of all others. Additionally, shame is not absolutely alienating. It does not preclude the occasion, the possibility, for community, for communal experience. In fact, shame is a requisite ingredient in each and every expression, proclamation, and communication, each publication, manifestation and revelation of community. To be-in-common is to be-seen-in-common. The intelligible reality of community is precisely the being-seen-in-common as such of self and other, it is being as the other sees us, being singular plural, being technological, being ashamed, being vulnerable, being in circulation within a field of others, being ineluctably shared.

Primary shame signals the relationality of the self; it is a beacon, a lighthouse, for inter-subjectivity. In and through primary shame the self finds its way towards self-consciousness, and self-awareness, lead by the infiltrating gaze of the other, by the perforating borders of otherness. And yet there is still a secondary shame that moralizes and punishes, and therefore shame is still inhibiting, still debilitating, and still disorienting. Shame is still exercised by regulative regimes, still employed widely within society as a negative affect and as a tool. By directing our attention, our intentionality, and our understanding towards the opening up of shame discourse, towards a re-habilitation of this negative affect, and by including and emphasizing in our analysis discussions of positivity, of aggregation, of togetherness and sharing, we by no means wish to dismiss or treat as minor the negative impact shame still commands, acutely, against a diverse array of citizens, and even beyond the borders of citizenship against a vast range human and non-human animals. We have attempted to show that shame marks

the capacity of each to affect each, of each to be apportioned by each, that shame unites and makes responsible. But this sensitivity to shame is not to be taken lightly, and is not always a matter of enrichment or advancement of self. While we are interested in re-aligning the self with its shame, the being with its being-seen, we are not denying that certain experiences of shame, experiences of what we have called secondary shame, are invidious, harmful, and repressing. Indeed that they are secondary does not mean they are any less prevalent.

"Penalties," remarks Martha Nussbaum in her book entitled *Hiding From Humanity: Disgust, Shame, and the Law*, "involving public shaming of the offender, are becoming increasingly common as alternatives to fines and imprisonment"(2004, 1). The use of shame as punishment is exactly what this project works against. Our virulent distain for these practices typifies our insistence that secondary shame can be fought back, can be neutralized, inessentialized, with recourse to a notion of primary shame. Shame is rampant, and multifarious. Shamed subjects are themselves multitudinous and various. It is of utmost importance to see and understand that shame is primarily a moment of revelation, of upsurge, of coming into an existence that is shared, coming into a being that is being-alongside-others. It is pressing that shame be treated first and foremost as a moment of *shared* vulnerability, *shared* responsibility, a moment in which inter-subjectivity is born. Finally, it is crucial that we be able to translate and re-interpret the penology of shame, procuring from it an ontological severity, a constitutive intensity. It has been our aim to open shame to these considerations, to bare shame before the very nakedness of existence. It remains to be seen if these are transformations that can be enacted socially, culturally, or politically. It also remains to be seen if this transfiguration of shame can effect meaningful change in the way we understand community, or the way we treat non-human animals, or change our appreciation of our capacity to affect others and be affected by them in return. But perhaps this is in fact the most essential point of all: the yet-to-be of these changes is fundamentally a yet-to-be-*seen* and, indeed, it is the *seeing* that counts.

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