*euroClass

Felix Ensslin

SHORT BIO PLEASE I

This is how an iMessage on my iPhone 6 reads. The message is currently still dated 'Gestern 13:45'. 'Yesterday...': an index of time opening a now while remaining relative to a day-before and thus a tomorrow. When does a day end, when does a new dawn rise? This question cannot easily be answered. Unless one ceases to hear it. Looking at a time piece will then furnish an answer. A time piece is a watch, a clock, particularly one that does not chime. On the other hand, hearing, I might answer the question thus: When midnight strikes.

Right now, I am writing. Whenever I do, time becomes something other, incommensurable with other times I also might participate in, e.g. times organized around the care of children, the duties of teaching, the payment of taxes. In fact, the sometimes excruciating difficulty of writing might be described as the difficulty of crossing an invisible line, a border, a threshold. Any threshold implies both, a leaving, an entering. Leaving the times that are other to writing, entering the time of writing. But who? Who leaves, who enters? Me, of course, who will have been the writer of whatever is written on the other side, on that other scene. Me? What sameness, what identity is preserved in this change of times, what displacement takes place in its process. How does entering such an Other time produce an Other place? Produce? Might it be better to use reveal? Open up? If writing is in fact excruciating, it might be due to this experience of a threshold. Crossing a threshold always implies the question, if whatever is doing the crossing will remain - will be - the same.

An excruciating experience. The English usage of the term dates to the Baroque, the time of the *Transzendenzverlust* (loss of transcendence), according to Walter Benjamin. It derives from the Latin past participle *excruciatus*, containing *cruciare*, to torture. The prefix ex- does not imply here 'remove, expel, relieve from', as it does, e.g. in the English verb *expatriate* or the German juridical use of the Latinate word *expatriieren*. While today's English usage, as e.g. in the abbreviation 'Expat', often carries a rather positive connotation, namely of a voluntary absence from home, e.g. when it is used to denote employees of a firm that come from other countries as the one in which the firm is located, the juridical usage stays closer to the word's etymological roots: to ban, to expel, to withdraw the status of citizenship. But both have

in common that the prefix ex- denotes continuity, permanence, duration. Excruciating: enduring torture, pain. 'Dass es so weiter geht ist die Katastrophe.' (Walter Benjamin)

Soon, whenever midnight will next strike in the time zone I am inhabiting, the time index on my iMessage from 'Gestern 13:45' will change register, being inscribed into a series of dates organized around a lunar calendar, the Gregorian calendar introduced by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582, the epoch of early Baroque, when 'excruciating' also entered the English language. Yet, that my time piece iPhone will show me a date in the Gregorian calendar is actually a kind of condescension on its part. In order to show me a familiar and recognizable register, with which to log my existence and the events in it, it will have invisibly performed a short algorithmic function. For the time my iPhone lives in lies behind a different threshold still. In order to give me an imaginary glimpse of a phenomenological, a subjective, time experience by showing 'Gestern' or to enter an event into the familiar registry of the Gregorian calendar, the iPhone computes these outputs from its own time reference.

That reference is The Epoche, as computer scientists, programmers and mathematicians like to call it. The epoch of UNIXTIME, originally introduced as the time reference of the UNIX basic operating system. The Epoch began on Thursday, January 1st 1970, 00:00 Universal Coordinated Time. It is an additive measurement of seconds. Thus 'Gestern 13:45' is in fact a sloppy round up or round down the algorithm performs for my imaginary pleasure. According to the time of The Epoch this seemingly precise moment contains in fact a duration lasting from 1473421470 to 1473421529. Incidentally: The first time piece capable of measuring seconds was built in 1585 by the Swiss scientist Jost Bürgi for the landgrave Wilhelm IV in Kassel, Germany.

Why would I be justified in writing of an 'imaginary pleasure?' Maybe if it turned out that my iPhone and I have both crossed the threshold of The Epoch. Only, it wants to help me sustain my blissful ignorance of that fact, sustaining an imaginary pleasure. Let me repeat the famous words of Walter Benjamin: 'Der Begriff des Fortschritts ist in der Idee der Katastrophe zu fundieren. Dass es "so weiter" geht, ist die Katastrophe. Sie ist nicht das jeweils Bevorstehende, sondern das jeweils gegebene.' Maybe writing is actually excruciating in a double sense: the continuing tormenting experience of the threshold. But also the potential to exit through this threshold that time and place of 'the given'; that time and place of which we often don't even seem to know much, even though we have been living in it since that fateful Thursday in 1970. (Fateful? Can this be more than an

ironic usage; can there be a fatum dated with UNIXTIME, lived within the purview of The Epoch?)

INSTITUTIONS MAKE ARTISTS

6th of June, 2015. It is afternoon and I am sitting in the Hospitalkirche in Stuttgart. It is hot and the buzz of an excited audience envelops the senses. The panel discussion I have been invited to participate in is one of a few hundred events, maybe even thousands, which together make up the 'Kirchentag', this biannual meeting of the German Protestants. Since the 80s it is organized mainly by laymen as a manifestation of the 'church from below', die 'Kirche von unten'. The gargantuan collection of events and options probably contributes to the buzz I am feeling all around me, driven by the energy and adrenaline particular to the sleep deprived intensity of summer festivals. The discussion is part of the 'Kulturkirche', a recent addition to 'Kirchentag' expressing the desire of a small group of culturally minded Protestants to 'engage in a dialogue' with the arts, literature and philosophy. Catholics, I was told, had never had a problematic relation with the visual arts. Yet, while Protestantism had always had an intimate relationship with music, both historically and today, it was felt to be necessary to open up Protestant sensibilities to the experience of contemporary art. Thus, the 'Kulturkirche' was created as a platform for this project, as well as serving as a small counter weight to the otherwise strong emphasis on social issues, so typical of post-WWII German Protestantism. On the panel I join some representative of the organizing group as well as Dr. Marion Ackermann, a well-known art historian and the artistic director of the Stiftung Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen.

   The Hospitalkirche is situated in the middle of Stuttgart. It belongs to the Hospitalhof, the only monastery in the city, originally built in the second half of the 15th century for reform-minded Dominican monks associated with the *via moderna*. Their occupancy was short lived, however, as already in 1536 the monastery was dissolved in the wake of the Reformation, and a hospital serving the good citizens of Stuttgart opened on its premises. In the late 19th century the city police took over the buildings. During the rule of the Nazis police and Gestapo used the buildings as a prison and torture center. Reduced mostly to rubble in the final years of the war, it was rebuilt and opened as an administrative and social center for the Protestant State Church. Starting in the late 70s the buildings were also the site of a peculiar attempt, driven mainly by the initiative of a particular pastor by the name of Helmut A. Müller, to bring Protestantism in contact with contemporary

art and artists, e.g. through exhibitions, talks, performances, etc. I had been invited to participate in a discussion on 'The Impossibility of Being Finite. On the Common Roots of Art, Philosophy and Religion.' The first part of the title was taken from a conference I had organized the days before, attempting to elucidate issues in philosophy and psychoanalysis which are best summed up with a quote from Alenka Zupančič: 'The problem is not that we are not infinite', she writes, referring to the loss of transcendence and the immortality of the soul in the course of the last 500 years. 'The problem is that we are not even finite'. This punch line refers to the problems opened by issues such as the 'death drive' in Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis, or the subject and its relationship to an 'idea', as it is thought by Alain Badiou, and other theoretical work critical of a half-baked vulgar (or, as Badiou calls it, 'democratic') materialism, of positivistic scientism, or of seemingly self-evident sociological paradigms like 'modernization' or 'secularization'. The second part of the title, however, was added on by the organizers of the 'Kulturkirche'. The addition signaled, what outcome of the discussion was desired. 'The common roots of art, philosophy, religion' affirms implicitly a kind of anthropological grounding of practices, which are then thought to hold open the door to a kind of immanent transcendence, namely precisely practices such as 'art, philosophy, religion'. Of course, such an implicit anthropological grounding – human beings as beings of lack, as *Mangelwesen*, in the famous term coined by the conservative philosophical anthropologist Arnulf Gehlen – paints a picture of human beings as forced in their finitude to open themselves up to the efficacy of practices, which operate in a liminal space opened up precisely by this very lack. These practices are thought of as engaging the border or the threshold to (impossible) infinity. Such implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) anthropological attitudes do understand this determination nevertheless as a historical argument, not as an essentialist claim, since they focus in their elaborations almost exclusively on the *locus* – the historical place and time – of such practices, namely that they have to be understood today in a historicizing fashion in the context of the age of modernity. The anthropological aspect is rather meant in a quasi-Kantian way as a transcendental critical marker, a warning sign to *Man*, to counter his technological and rationalist claims to dominion over the world and autonomy for his *Self*, with reflections on his own limitations, particularly regarding the scope of knowledge and the inaccessibility of truth. The thrust of this ideological temperament pushes 'art, philosophy, religion' into an orbit, from where they are supposed to signal warning signs to receptive mortals not to engage in tragic *hybris*, to

not overstep with their desire and designs the limits placed on them by the limitations of their own epistemological and moral capacities. Of course, this temperament is the opposite of the questions raised by Zupančič, Badiou and others, with reference to psychoanalysis and philosophy: namely that human desire by its very nature transcends human limitations, that it is driven by a dimension that is not limited. These thinkers try to elucidate the possibility, that the very core of human subjectivity is, in a sense, in-human and that this inhuman core propels subjects beyond any ontic and empirical limitation. Thus, if here we find anthropological thought at all, it is an anthropological thought that destroys the very possibility of anthropology. The determination of the human is indetermination, not because of the limits of his capacities, but because desire occupies the place of a hole in the universe, a place in which the world is not fully defined, not fully rendered, as it were. As I am trying to advance these observations into the sweltering heat only partially alleviated by the thick walls of the church, by trying to describe how art can be thought of as a practice which does not function as solace to beings subjected by their mortality, but as an agent of infinity, forming desire into sensible fragments of another world and into the experience of dis-identification with the limits of the present world, Dr. Marion Ackermann grows more and more impatient. When I advance to proposition that an artist becomes an artist precisely by virtue of being an agent in the appearance of such fragments, she softly interrupts me: 'Institutions make an artist', she says, 'not this romantic notion of articulating something other, something new.'

MISSION
Ultimately the *foundationClass provides an opportunity for weißensee art academy to generate a new perception of itself as an educational arts institution.
(Excerpt from the mission statement of Weißensee Art Academy, Berlin)
   It refers to a project initiated by the artist Ulf Aminde and supported by the city state's governing body, the senate, with additional funds, originally earmarked to improve the quality of teaching in higher education. The class is a generator of perception. Or a transcendental condition for the possibility to generate perception, namely a novel perception. A transcen-dental condition, i.e. a condition of possibility, for a social sculpture, perhaps, to employ a concept articulated by Joseph Beuys. The sensible or material substratum which allows for this condition to appear is described in the following manner: 'The class is for refugees and asylum seekers who had

planned to start studying art or design in their home countries, already started such a degree program, or who plan to switch into such a degree program.'

COMPUTERS AND MOONLANDINGS
In the fall of 1972 Josef Beuys was fired by the Minister of Culture of the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia, Johannes Rau, from his positon as professor at the Düsseldorf Art Academy. Beuys had gathered the applicants for entry into the Düsseldorf Art Academy who had been denied - 125 of them - and occupied the rooms housing the administration of the academy. He announced that he would be willing to take all of them into his class for a period of at least one semester, since the decisions by his colleagues and the administration were not based on an artistic process. His colleagues had looked, of course, at the portfolios of the applicants while the administration was enforcing rules implemented by the state, ostensibly to safe-guard a proper student — faculty ratio, the availability of sufficient space, etc. There was also a *numerus clausus*, i.e. a minimum grade threshold regarding the applicants' high-school diploma or *Abitur*. This criterion was deemed necessary and legitimate by the state authorities, since the potential students applied to train as future art teachers in state-run schools, and also served as an instrument to keep the number of students in an officially desired range. While the year before the academy and the state funded a kind of compromise, by founding an external class in the city of Münster, (thus being able to safe face by claiming that the applicants had not really been admitted to the renowned Academy in Düsseldorf), in 1972 the conflict escalated and culminated in Beuys' contract being terminated. The ensuing legal battle lasted until 1980, when Beuys and the state reached a settlement allowing him to retain the title of Professor and to keep his studio in *Raum 3* of the academy, while his contract as a teacher was permanently terminated. On October 1st, 1980 Beuys opened the office of *The Free International University* in his academy room, an institution and art intervention, which was terminated upon his death.

Beuys had never been granted tenure. While his colleagues had supported his attempts to gain tenure in the past, many had turned on him over the course of the late 60s and early 70s, criticizing the 'sect-like atmosphere', the disruption of 'proper pedagogy', his supposedly self-centered (and self-serving) manipulation of young minds incapable of defending themselves, and a 'lack of form' in his messy artistic *Aktionen* and in his approach to

materials. In 1968 ten professors of the Academy had issued a manifesto against Beuys, particularly stressing that Beuys' actions and those of his students destroyed the conditions necessary for proper pedagogical processes in the art classes of the academy. These criticisms culminated in a polemic of Norbert Kricke, another colleague in Düsseldorf, published in the ZEIT on the 20th of December 1968. In it he scolded supporters of the embattled professor for not understanding the difference between a 'preacher' and a 'pedagogue', and criticized Beuys himself for engaging in enthusiasm and spiritual ecstasy, rather than in any 'free-spirited dialogue' which would really be able to help 'young artists to develop their personality.' He also accused him of being driven by fear, fear of progress, fear of technology, fear of change and being driven by a desire to return to the past. 'We fly, we have the car, machines have learned to compute, we have landed on the moon — is all of this to be considered nothing?'

FAKE FICTION, FICTION FAKE
On Friday, September 9th, 2016 Lionel Shriver opened this year's Brisbane Writers Festival with a keynote speech. About twenty minutes into the speech a woman stood up and left the auditorium.

The author of *We need to talk about Kevin*, a novel written in the voice of the mother of a teenage boy who commits a school massacre, included a polemic against claims about the limits and legitimacy of a writer's choices regarding subject matter and the voices she chooses to inhabit in writing. She defended the freedom of a writer as unlimited in this regard. Or, if there was such a limit, it would be constituted by a writer's ability to do justice to whatever experience she takes as her subject matter. Lionel Shriver granted this license to writers not in the name of some special access to the truth they might enjoy by virtue of being writers, since she also took as a certainty, that no-one can ever truly 'know someone else's experience'. Rather, the claims she made were based on another axiom or insight: 'Fiction, by its very nature, is fake.' Thus, she observed, not every writer who writes on crime is a criminal, not every writer who depicts sexual violence is a rapist himself.

The woman who walked out during the delivery of this speech is named Yassmin Abdel-Magied. Her short bio accompanying her *Guardian* op-ed piece, introduces her as a 'mechanical engineer, social advocate, writer and petrol head'. It lists an award for being the '2015 Queensland Young Australian of the Year' and describes her advocacy as aiming at 'the empowerment of youth, women and those from culturally and linguistically

diverse backgrounds'. And it lists her as founding the organization Youth Without Borders 'at age 16'. This introduction is followed by a link to her own website. Because of these – and many more – accomplishments, Yassmin Abdel-Magied is a well-known public figure, not only in Australia, but in much of the English speaking world and beyond. A TED Talk she gave in December 2014 titled 'What Does My Headscarf Mean to You?' has, for example, been viewed well over a million times. In it she urges the audience to overcome 'unconscious biases' and to become 'mentors' to someone 'different' than themselves. Now, being a guest at the Brisbane Writers Festival and listening to Shriver's keynote speech, she detected a bait and switch. It seemed to her obvious, that the reductive argument about the difference between fiction about crime and being a criminal, only served to set up an assault on current positions in the political struggles of identity politics:

'Shriver's real targets were cultural appropriation, identity politics and political correctness. It was a monologue about the right to exploit the stories of 'others', simply because it is useful for one's story.'

Yet, for her, this is an insufficiently self-aware attitude for a writer. In a radio interview given shortly after her article generated some heated debates online, she elaborated her position further, by insisting that she was not aiming at censoring writing by white writers about 'others' in any general and sweeping sense, but was demanding awareness of the fact, that 'fiction doesn't exist in a vacuum, it exists in a time and a place.'

But does it, really? Or does it *make* a time and place? Does it tempt us – seduce even – to imagine *time and place*, bedding us in imaginary soft covers, while all along, fiction remains aloof? Fiction is not 'fake' – it has very real effects. The flags of nations are fiction. So are the troubadour's songs for the Lady. The deep *senses* of identity are tied to fiction. We are willing to defend identity as real:

THE REAL IMAGINARY OF FICTION
'You want to look like Cindy Crawford? Hell, I don't even look like Cindy Crawford.'
(A – probably apocryphal – aphorism attributed to the supermodel Cindy Crawford)

'YOU WANT TO LIVE IN EUROPE?
HELL, WE DON'T EVEN LIVE IN EUROPE!'
Might this be the motto under which to achieve the mission of generating a new perspective of educational art institutions on themselves? A practical

maxim by which to open up the opportunity for a novel object to appear to perception or for an object to function as material for the appearance of a novel perception. What will be new, once the contingent opportunity – occasione – for the *foundationClass is grasped as an ignition for a generator. A machine producing energy. Which in turns powers novel perception. Is it possible to argue, that a condition for the possibility of the historical, therefore contingent, event of the flow of refugees across the Mediterranean is the signifier 'Europe'? Or, if the scope of this question dizzies, might this at least be the implicit motto of the mission Ulf Aminde and weißensee art academy embarked on with the *foundationClass? The necessity of disorientation – dis-identification - as a condition of any act is affirmed by the typeface. While the website of the art academy in Weißensee, Berlin, affirms the desired link to history by using minuscule, the corporate identity of the *foundationClass affects a dispersal of this claim to tradition. Minuscule typeface was a design statement by the original bauhaus introduced in 1925:

'wir schreiben alles klein, denn wir sparen damit zeit. außerdem: warum 2 alfabete, wenn eins dasselbe erreicht? warum großschreiben, wenn man nicht groß sprechen kann?'

Deciding to only use paper sizes corresponding to DIN (German Industrial Norms), the institute decided to also reduce its typographic arsenal in the attempt to achieve 'formally objective results'. Thus only minuscule were to be employed – why write in capital letters when no-one is able to speak in capital letters? This rhetorical question resonated, of course, on other semantic levels: why write with majuscule, if we don't have major thoughts? Why write in capital letters, if we are aiming at collective rationality, freed from the ambitions of grand designs? The Ulmer Hochschule für Gestaltung, which established itself as the paradigm for post-WWII design in Germany after its founding, picked up the elimination of capital letters. Engaged in the mission of re-educating older Germans, and, more importantly, of educating younger ones, in ways that made them less susceptible to fascist seductions and the lure of irrational aesthetic forms, the elimination of majuscule remained a part of the design paradigm at the heart of the tradition claiming the mantle of the bauhaus. weißensee art academy articulates through the index of the Kleinschreibung of its name, that it sees itself in some kind of continuation of this tradition even today. *foundationClass, on the other hand, both functions typographically as a deictic tool, a kind of pointer to this fact, while at the same time taking up a kind of ironic distance to it. '*...C', the asterix as well as the 'Binnen-C', the majuscule rising up in the middle of the compound word 'foundation class', itself a translation of the

'Grundklasse' (or grundKlasse?), the famous foundation year originally at the beginning of the Bauhaus curriculum. The capital C rises up from the foundation like a newly raised crescent, but also as a possible and slightly pedantic reminder of the *class* as a political category. Did I say pedantic? Maybe diffuse would be a better qualification. For here we encounter the very problem of identity politics in its contemporary context. After all, identity politics were a vigorous and potent form of criticism aimed at the old New Left and its reliance on an analysis of class struggle. Women, blacks, latinos, gays, lesbians, and, later up till today, people with hybrid cultural heritages, with a trans identity, or identifying as questioning, bisexual, raised their voices in order to no longer be reduced to a secondary position in relation to the politics of class. Of course, the *foundationClass was brought into being in the contingent circumstances produced by the inflow of hundreds of thousands of refugees and asylum seekers since September 2015. Without these circumstances it would, e.g., not have been likely that the senate of Berlin would fund such an enterprise with moneys earmarked for quality improvement in higher education. The corporate identity design of the logo for the foundation class has, of course, also this very purpose: to transmit integrally an identity, recognizable literally upon a first glance. Corporate identity brings to letters the certainty of identity normally associated with numbers or algebraic variables. It reduces - or elevates - the symbolic dimension of the compound noun *Grundklasse*, to the level of the real. A generic term open to interpretation and various instantiations becomes a *rigid designator*, as Saul Kripke called proper names, something which, according to the philosopher, 'designates the same in all possible worlds'. It is a reduction not unlike what UNIXTIME does with calendars still operating with signifying elements, such as the names of months or even simply relative terms, like 'yesterday' or 'tomorrow'. '*...C' in *foundationClass produce a recognition of the tradition from which the convention of writing the host institutions name in minuscule arises, but also in this very act of recognition, the potential for dis-identification. Any imaginary relation to that tradition is interrupted, the very possibility of continuity itself put in doubt. Beyond the neoliberal advantages associated with a successful corporate design (after all, a design concept originally defined within the context of the *Ulmer Hochschule für Gestaltung* as a pathway to demystify corporations), the *foundationClass can be read as a marker of more general dis-identification. Rather than choosing to open up the institution, e.g., by offering any and all refugees a place to organize

encounters with artists, art-students, a place to tell their stories, etc. the project treats them as subjects subjected to the same conditions as any other student in Germany today. It prepares them to enter the competition for the limited number of admissions into art academies, by preparing them for the aptitude test and the presentation of a portfolio. On the surface, this is the very opposite move of the one Joseph Beuys performed in the early 70s.: 'Whoever wants to study art, should be able to study art', because it affirms implicitly, at least, the power of art academies to decide who has the chance to be an art student – and by extension – an artist, and who doesn't. Rather than using the presence of refugees who cannot immediately proof their legitimacy and aptitude for admission, because they know neither the conditions in which they will have to compete, nor, in many cases, the assumptions about art currently operative in the institutions of art education, nor do many of them have the documents necessary to proof such legitimacy or aptitude, because portfolios, art pieces, school documents, etc. might have been lost during the arduous fight, it offers them painstaking assistance. Rather than using them as a weapon in attacking existing standards, exclusionary mechanisms, institutional biases, market orientations etc. in art academies, the *foundationClass accepts the conditions set by these academies seemingly at face value. Beuys tried to unsettle existing institutions by separating the discourse of power and the state, and of professorial privilege, from a genuine art practice. In this way he was able to highlight the degree to which power and privilege in fact formed the basis of academy life. *foundationClass refuses to engage in the fantasy of the outsider, the refugee, the 'other' coming to rescue ossified institutions. By refusing the logic of the exception – we cannot demand the same standards, portfolios, etc. of them, because they are refugees and come from a different culture – it engages in a logic of over-identification – of course we accept the process of selection which is practiced in art-schools; no we won't make claim on any special status because of the difficulties associated with having to flee from one's home, etc.; Ironically, this very act might be the most unsettling of all possible acts in this regard. For this over-identification slowly performs the labor of dis-identification: The logic of the institution is not seen as insufficient only for the poor souls who are ill-equipped to meet its demands, but as being an instrument of power full stop embodying an offering of imaginary pleasure: 'You have been choosen!' In the end, exactly by orienting its work on the attempt to help students from refugee background navigate the 'normal'

application process, it allows for a political potential open to any and all, from inside or outside:

'You want to study in an art academy? Hell, we don't even study (or work) in an art academy!' Those do not exist. They can be entered only by exiting the idea of being able to enter them. Just as little as Europe exists as a place of equality, liberty and sisterhood and can be found only on the condition of ceasing to find it. What does exist is maybe *euroClass.

*EUROCLASS
Ultimately the *euroClass provides an opportunity for Europe to generate a new perception of itself as an instant of the political.

SHORT BIO PLEASE II
Felix Ensslin was born in 1967. *warum großschreiben, wenn man nicht groß sprechen kann?* since 2009 he holds the chair for art mediation and aesthetics at the state art academy in stuttgart. he has worked in politics, in the theatre, and as a curator. he answers to the fiction of being a father. he writes. occasionally. ulf aminde, late son of protestant refugees from the france of louis xiv, is his friend. aminde, almont eyed lover. his name generating novel perceptions through generations. like *huis huguetan*, the architectonic fiction of arrival, palace built for refugees. not to generate novel perception. but to write the novel of success and power.

IDENTITY IS THEFT
'As (…) made light of identity,
I had not choice but to walk out.'
The conjunction 'as' in contemporary English is used to denote a relation of simultaneity. Earlier usage implied more a relation of conditionality, even causality. Not having a choice, but one, implies that there were other possibilities, but they were registered in the mode of impossibility. If one had realized them, one would no longer be one's self. The scene organizes the rhetoric of conscience. Here I stand and can do no other. Conscience: The knowledge of the Other. What makes me be myself only on the condition of a specific act — no choice but — is the knowledge of an Other about my self. That Other is fiction.

West