

MAKING THE AUTHENTIC OVERMAN POSSIBLE
IN RELATION IN FREEDOM, POLITICS, AND ETHICS

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Goals, ideas, ambition, and what we have all grown to know as the classic “American Dream” that includes rising to the top to achieve one’s dream home and life, this dream has been dead for quite some time now and it is not at fault to those who would wish to achieve it. Largely, it is quite the opposite, and what is unfortunate about this is that those who would wish to change this fact are also the people who are the ones unable to. Taking inspiration from the German philosophers Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) and Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), French philosopher Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986), as well as thoughts from other great thinkers throughout time, the goal of this paper is to show that there *is* a possible route to fulfilling life by exploring freedom and authentic choices through art, in addition, the variances of this possibility that concern political and ethical norms.

[This paper was written with great admiration and appreciation for Simone de Beauvoir and her 1947 work *The Ethics of Ambiguity*. Under section three, the second chapter of which, I found her “Freedom and Liberation” (pp. 84-102). Finding and reading this chapter was as if I had found the very work I set out to write, the very ideas I set out to devote my philosophical life to in her 18 pages. In respect to de Beauvoir’s and my own thoughts being all too parallel, she will be helping me make sense of the ideas that I previously only incorporated Heidegger and Nietzsche into.]

Defining Terms

Freedom as an issue.

For as long as human history can tell, there has always been a constant struggle between those who take charge as leaders and those who are put into place to follow. Freedom is “something one has or does *not* have, something one *wants*, something one *conquers*,” as Nietzsche simplifies in his *Twilight of Idols* (TI, p. 543). Whether this is natural to humans or not

is also an argument that has been made a thousand times over, and from either side. With respect to humanity's constant worry for their being, as suggested in existentialism, their life's purpose, and their eventual death, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and de Beauvoir directed much of their lives to finding the answer: satisfying the feeling of freedom is truly what fills the empty hole that lives within the human condition (as known as the existential void). There are a great deal of thinkers, namely the three mentioned above, who have all come to the same conclusion on how to satisfy freedom and this is substantially to create from one's own being.

Nietzsche unified this philosophy into his overman, his "ideal man", as the name of the being who is able to move beyond societal ideals: quite literally he is over-man. The aim of Nietzsche's overman is moving beyond false values that make humans immortal (namely, the Christian Heaven or Plato's True World), and affirms that humans are finite creatures that should act as such. The life affirmation found in Nietzsche's work is parallel to that within Buddhism: Life affirmation seeks to relieve the suffering one feels from the human condition (including desires, regrets, dread, and other things that cause suffering). Once we let go of the chaos out of our control, we suffer less. For Nietzsche, once we realize what exactly is in our control, we suffer less; by this, he means the man-made values that society lives by. The overman is able to see past and understand these things, and with this he is able to find his own values from his own being and to transform himself into something more perfect and true to his being. Within his TI and his *Genealogy of Morals* (GM), Nietzsche paints suffering as a step towards transformation as overcoming this makes us stronger: "What does not destroy me, makes me stronger" (TI, p. 467); "Such a man simply shakes off with one shrug much vermin that would have buried deep in others" and is then able to appreciate his own suffering (GM, p. 452). Affirming that life is suffering, that there are qualities of life that are both natural and man-made, is what makes Nietzsche's overman able to transform himself beyond society and more perfect to his true being, and this, to Nietzsche is freedom within a person's being.

In concreting Nietzsche's overman, he writes that "in art man enjoys himself as perfection" (TI, p. 519) – that "art is the great stimulus of life" (TI, p. 529) as it helps us understand our suffering through modes beyond simple words. Art is a tangible form of this relief from suffering and life affirmation, as Nietzsche proposes, to project this transformation

through art one can find satisfaction in their transformation. And this satisfaction brings meaning to the overman's life, his purpose, to his existence, as a countermovement toward a meaningless existence. Within the philosophy of existentialism, thinkers throughout time have noted that the human condition is rotten with existential wonder (Who am I? Why are we all here?). Moreover, the existential void attempts to fill itself with potential meaning to cure this wonder. To take away the religious answers given by society as Nietzsche does, he leaves a step between being one of "the herd" and his overman, and this is Nihilism. In Nihilism, we move beyond social values but are left with a feeling of utter meaninglessness. Nietzsche writes most about his overman in his book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (TSZ), where he declares that the "overman is the meaning of the earth" (TSZ, p. 125), through overcoming man-made values the overman is free to create his own meaning in life.

To find our life's meaning and to end the dread of existentialism may result in, this is what Martin Heidegger set out to answer in his book *Being and Time* (BT), later to finish with his book *Nietzsche* (HN). In Heidegger's BT, he uses the term "Dasein" to denote the "entity which each of us is himself and which includes inquiring as one of the possibilities of its Being" (BT, p. 27). In addition, Heidegger adds that for Dasein, it holds its very "Being as an issue, [and] comports itself towards its Being as its ownmost possibility" (BT, p. 68). Heidegger also connects Dasein's "comporting" or behaviour as a relative choice: to be either authentic or inauthentic to one's being. Without intending to make any sort of ethical point to which is better, Heidegger does suggest that choosing an authentic route is how one would find their own being (purpose) and resolve this as an "issue" for their Dasein.

In BT, Heidegger coined the term "thrownness" to describe one's preordained features like time, culture, and everything we are born into. As "Dasein" can be translated to "being-there", Heidegger explains thrownness, "as Being-in-the-world, is its 'there'" (BT, p. 174). This idea has also been simplified by the band The Doors, in their 1971 song "Riders on the Storm": "Into this house we're born / Into this world we're thrown / Like a dog without a bone." Heidegger's thrownness sets the conditions of the natural world we have been born into (ie, the year or location; not precisely the man-made world). "Being-in-the-world—that basic state of Dasein by which every mode of its Being gets co-determined" (BT, p. 153), Heidegger

acknowledges the fact that our being creatures amongst many more, this determines our possibilities. To take hold of these possibilities authentically, Dasein must separate itself from social influence (the “Others” or the “they”) and here is where Heidegger further demonstrates Dasein’s “Being as an issue” where that which we have “anxiety about is our potentiality-for-Being-in-the-world” (BT, p. 235). Being-in-the-world admits social influence, and makes authenticity nearly impossible to define as well as to find for one’s self, with this grows anxiety to realize our life’s purpose. Additionally, the possibilities that live within our thrownness are not made obvious as Heidegger suggests these can sometimes fall into inauthenticity as authentic possibilities must be seen past the ones created by society. The difficulties here of defining and finding *is* Dasein’s “Being as an issue” and where every individual’s existential dread lies. Thus “Being-ahead-of-oneself” is conditional for Heidegger, “for the possibility of *Being-free* for authentic existentiell possibilities” (BT, p. 237). Meaning, seeing the transformable, into the future, is how we determine our possibilities and is a necessity of freedom for our being to be authentic in making decisions that affect our possibilities, which realistically are all decisions. And with this, our Being-in-the-world requires freedom within that world, to look beyond the given possibilities of our being to find the true choices that will relieve our anxiety and dread for our potentiality—our life’s purpose.

Towards the end of BT, Heidegger affirms that an authentic being’s truest possibility is death. Very similar to the modern phrase, “the only things certain in life are death and taxes,” of course without mentioning taxes, Heidegger affirms life as finite and death as a part of our thrownness. In HN, authenticity is developed more as Heidegger unfolds Nietzsche’s “Eternal Recurrence” – when you live a finite life a thousand times, a million, an infinite amount of times over, authentic choices towards possibilities are those that would never be regretted and will forever be welcome. Through a satisfaction visualization exercise, Heidegger’s authentic self is found to be “grounded” between our being and our being-in-the-world (HN, Vol. II, p. 24). What this means for Heidegger is that authentic choices are those that can be recognized past the society-made possibilities, while still understanding the potentialities society provides; and these decisions towards potentialities would be chosen an infinite times over quite happily.

In her book *The Ethics of Ambiguity* (EA), Simone de Beauvoir puts forward that existentialism does not conclude with Nihilism, on the contrary, it only ends as such “because one has begun by emptying the word freedom of its concrete meaning; [...] freedom realizes itself only by engaging itself in the world: to such an extent that man’s project toward freedom is embodied for him in definite acts of behavior” (EA, p. 84). This engagement with the world is with its future possibilities. This freedom follows the “forms” given to us from the world around us, our interaction with attempting to make the form better or to simply understand it is then the embodiment of this freedom, creating new forms that we call “art” (EA, p. 83). De Beauvoir believes that freedom can be seen in productive arts that are able to “constantly surpass” themselves toward the future: “Science, technics, art, and philosophy are indefinite conquests of existence over being” (EA, p. 84). When art is truly authentic, appreciates and affirms life, this can unveil one’s purpose and life’s open possibilities; what de Beauvoir points out is that art can be life-denying when the purpose of which is to save time for its consumer. However, life “exists only by being spent” (EA, p. 85). This time-saving mode of art breaks down the forms given to us rather than making something new and surpassed to be then understood by others. Together with Heidegger and Nietzsche, de Beauvoir paints what authentic-overman-art may be defined as, as it looks beyond the current state and surpasses/transforms this into the new possibilities of what society has provided, and by creating meaning for itself, this art also satisfies the feeling of freedom for the artist needed to resolve one’s purpose as being an issue.

Freedom as a possibility.

Within contemporary society, humans are not as free as they may think they are and for the commonperson, acts of true freedom are often either impossible or seen as impossible. There is a pessimistic view on art and creation: that everything has been done already; that there are no original ideas even conceivably possible in the 21st century. In considering Nietzsche’s transformation and de Beauvoir’s surpassing, this view could become the ultimate distraction to humanity’s freedom – an “it is as it is” sort of cynicism that can potentially lead to societal compliance with said feeling and eventual skepticism toward the possibility of the “American Dream” perpetuates the sort of system that we live in today. The “American Dream” itself is (or,

was originally) to surpass the given and to create a change that would follow with more freedom. Today, this can be put simply as the entrepreneur, who creates a product and a company to then become his own boss. Realistically entailing the goal of more freedom than a dead-end job, Americans were pushed to achieve something very similarly to Nietzsche's overman, except for how defined the route and goal are: to build a consumeristic product to achieve financial stability. And this, using Heidegger's terms, would be an inauthentic strategy and goal to Nietzsche as they do not transform toward something more perfect for one's self past the seemingly concrete walls of this dream. Creating and surpassing the given is, however, a pursuit of freedom in either case, but to do so authentically would be to not follow explicitly in the steps of other people and to find "Alexandra's Dream", "Andrew's Dream", as so on, to find the possibilities of achieving freedom for each and every being's being.

In art, where we are able to realize our freedom as an individual, creating meaning and values where there was either none before or others before, this is where future possibilities lie for our being to express itself freely and find its place and purpose in the world. This potentiality of the self is what aids in relieving the worries brought on by existentialism: what is my purpose in life? To be free; to freely examine the world of its possibilities. De Beauvoir sets out that "for man it is a matter of pursuing the expansion of his existence and of retrieving this very effort as an absolute" (EA, p. 85). When thinking back to Nietzsche's overman, suffering ought not to be without a reason as it is intended to strengthen our ability to overcome life. And so, if the common person attempts to find their freedom in the ways we have stated here, through acts in art that bring new forms, it would be necessary to make the future more optimistic to creative possibilities.

Art as positive action.

Within the philosophy of art, as well as in Confucianism, art is what makes one truly immortal. This can be seen in ways of art that have lasted for centuries: thoughts from Plato, plays from Shakespeare, pieces from Beethoven, paintings from Van Gogh. We know these men today by the works of their being throughout time, even as their bodies may be long from

skeletons, their minds are alive in their art. The reason for creative pessimism is because the world is a culmination of works spread across *all time*. Some thoughts may seem original but someone centuries before may have written down the same ideas, and thus proves the (seeming) impossibility of originality. But to transform and surpass these ideas is what would be original, authentic, and freeing.

When Heidegger went back to his question of “Being as an issue” in his work *Nietzsche* (HN), the first volume out of four is entirely devoted to art as being the resolution to existential dread. Expanding on Nietzsche’s views on Christianity and the Platonic “True World” as being life-denying, Heidegger writes that “the sensuous, the sense-semblant, is the very element of art. So it is that art affirms what the supposition of the ostensibly true world denies,” then quoting Nietzsche himself, from his collected notebooks: “Art as the single superior counterforce against all will to negation of life, art as [...] the anti-Nihilism *par excellence*” (HN, Vol. I, p. 73). The world that Christianity bestows upon its followers is that of a temporary body to eventually transfer into a higher being in Heaven; and the life one lives is that of a show for God to judge as either “good” or “bad” – to be a good Christian, then, is to want a life in God’s Heaven. For Nietzsche, and as Heidegger agrees, this is a denial of the life we are to lead in *this* world. The duality of human nature described above, the body and the mind, is this-worldly and affirms life. The transformation of the Christian, on the other hand, denies-life as finite as it creates a world for the spirit to look forward to beyond the one we know to be true. Without using as much religious explanation, Heidegger writes that “the artistic creates and gives form” past the forms already determined by other people, using the senses given to him to better understand the world directly around him as he experiences it (HN, p. 73). With this one may wonder about paintings of the Christian Heaven and the authenticity-inauthenticity of this artwork. To this, our triumvirate of thinkers would answer: does it transform, surpass, made-ideas to better appreciate, perfect, and spend time on this earth? A sort of balance between personal authentic-overmanhood with the provisions of society that will aid in uncovering more of one’s being? Then, potentially, definitely.

With this in mind, the 2001 Dreamworks Animation movie “Shrek” turning into a musical is still technically original. If the writer of the 2013 “Shrek the Musical” would choose

to do this an infinite times over, this would be also authentic to their being and might explain the world's fascination with the musical. The originality of the core idea then does not matter. Movies like "Shrek" are a complete re-telling of the Brothers Grimm stories from the 1700s; and so while parodies and musicals are not new, it is also likely that the Brothers Grimm took from ancient fables, making them just as "unoriginal" (which makes the musical a new-new-new form of something potentially as old as time). Consequently, centuries of immortal originality live on in new creative artworks – and this is not pessimistic. If it was, Disney would have given up long ago. Simone de Beauvoir suggests the contrary as well: it is appreciating the past and "it is an appeal toward the future which sometimes can save [the past] only by destroying it" (p. 102). By fixing, transforming, surpassing, de Beauvoir writes that art is a positive action that satisfies the human condition by viewing life as fluid and changeable, and points to the freedoms beyond the current setting. To create an original story within a universe that has been painted for centuries is still authentic-overman-art as we can only rely on others to realize our dreams. As Heidegger brings forth, we are a Being-in-the-world. And parallel to this is de Beauvoir: "In order for the artist to have a world to express he must first be situated in this world" (EA, pp. 83-84). Creative pessimism is a mere distraction from the positive action de Beauvoir highlights, the past is changeable, and the future is open.

Oppression as unnatural.

Nietzsche declares that the "overman is the meaning of the earth" (TSZ, p. 125). Using Heidegger's terminology, the overman's authentic choices set his morality as it is. In de Beauvoir's *Ethics of Ambiguity*, the title itself puts forth that moral norms are set by whoever defines the words for them, while largely acts and experiences are open to any interpretation. In the *Second Treatise of Government* (ST) by the English philosopher John Locke (1632-1704), Locke uses Natural Law to show that inequality and oppression over people is not natural to humanity's pre-societal state:

"[The] state all men are naturally in, and that is, a state of perfect freedom to order their actions and dispose of their possessions and persons, as they think fit, within the bounds

of the law of nature; without asking leave, or depending upon the will of any other man. A state also of equality, wherein all the power and jurisdiction is recipro-cal, no one having more than another” as we have all been born equally human, we “should also be equal one amongst another without subordination or subjection” (Locke, 1689/2003, ST, p. 101).

Locke explains Natural Law as being the more original state, the more primordial state, of people as being completely equal amongst one another. That our thrownness originally did not include oppression, and that it ought not to now. Nietzsche’s quote, “overman is the meaning of the earth” might then suggest that the authentic overman would follow the Natural Law laid out here, which also includes the principle that is commonly known as the “Golden Rule” – Treat others as you would want to be treated; do not harm others as you would not want to be harmed.

De Beauvoir adds temporal barriers to this list of what oppressors may be enacting that breaks the Natural Law – that if one has a (future) goal cut off from them, then this form of oppression that is unnatural as man cannot place barriers on others without oppressing them. Natural obstacles to life, for de Beauvoir, would be when nature itself creates them, such as with natural disasters that lead to the need of changing one’s goal. The reason for this is that total equality in attaining one’s goals and possibilities would stop someone from stepping on others in order to attain their success. Do not form barriers where you would not form any. In turn, de Beauvoir writes that wanting freedom for one’s self would include the want of everyone else’s freedom, as this equality in freedom would require the same for all. All of which revolve around Locke’s description of the Natural Law and its reciprocity. To use Heidegger’s thrownness, we are not born naturally into a world where others have control over our being, but truly, we are born free into a chaotic world. Oppression would be the “Others” in the world that cause our inauthenticity, or at least restrain the possibility of an authentic choice. And consequently, we are thrown into a world where other people have created a system that unbalances this equality and then calls this system good. This sort of oppression is invisible to the commonperson as the ladder to rise in this system seems to be there (the “American Dream”), or it can be seen plainly within creative pessimism as an agreement to be a consumer of entertainment.

In Nietzsche's book GM, he writes on the master and slave morality (words purposefully not used in this paper due to their connotation); in this, Nietzsche created his slave *ressentiment*: “a man of *ressentiment*—and here precisely is his deed, his creation: he has conceived ‘the evil enemy,’ ‘*the evil one*’—and indeed as the fundamental concept from which he then derives, as an afterimage and counterinstance, a ‘good one’—himself” (GM, p. 452). Nietzsche’s master and slave moralities are interdependent on one another as each of them find their own “good” as they relate it to the other. The “creation” from the slave morality, in this instance, is then not one of authenticity, as the created morals are entirely associated with the social influence of one’s socio-economic position. Perceiving suffering as an natural part of life one has to overcome, while still staying under the power of oppression, would be to perceive the oppression of man as natural and not something to be ultimately overcome. The overman’s creation of morality, and his transformation, is one not *entirely* that of being a result of oppression. *Ressentiment*, to Nietzsche, carries over the blame of one’s social position onto the oppressors, the masters, “the evil enemy,” rather than onto one’s self, and places “goodness” where there ought to be loathing. It is good that we are not oppressing others and are able to find satisfaction within our place, and we would choose this over being masters! No. Nietzsche writes that this source of satisfaction (life-fulfillment and -affirmation) is a false sense of volunteerism and boils itself down to a version of acceptance to the given state. To call one’s self better than their oppressors does not deny the satisfaction the masters achieve as they too consider themselves to be better. Largely, Nietzsche writes oppression as to be a producer of false values from both the slaves and the masters.

The entrepreneur, in this case, the individual seeking out their “American Dream” may fall in line with *ressentiment* as they are looking to attain the social position of the master. It is important to note authenticity here as Nietzsche’s overman is able to transcend the interdependence of the slave and master relationship; but Heidegger does realize that we are beings-in-the-world and must accept partial social influence over our selves. Attaining freedom to create surpassing arts, in today’s society, demands acceptance of being-in-the-world amongst other people. What Heidegger suggests is a demand of “empathy” and a realization that an “Other” are not “Thing” in order to understand that they are a being with their own goals/issues in possibilities, to create mutually benefitting relationships may be the only way to attain one’s

own (BT, p. 162). Without this sense of empathy, Heidegger finds the “inconsiderate”, who takes advantage of “Others” and turns them into “Numbers” as a one-sided relationship of benefits – “When Dasein is absorbed in the world of its concern [...] it is not itself” (BT, pg. 163). Looking back to Locke’s Natural Law, is inauthenticity what is unnatural? Is the interdependence of the master-slave dynamic forming inauthenticity on both sides? Mutually benefiting relationships with the world and people around us, a balance with wanting to fulfill our own goals in potentiality with a want for others to be just as satisfied, this would be authentic as Heidegger points out how the contrary would be inauthentic. Our entrepreneur then would make use of his surroundings to fulfill his dream without taking advantage of others, without putting his goals in front of others in a way that could be deemed as an inconsiderate barrier to another person’s goals. And to be “absorbed” within our world would be to not see the surpassable given and transformable world as a potentiality for goals and dreams; this absorption would be to only see the possibilities laid out for one’s being by society. For instance, the way in which the job-world runs: one must be the best to reach the top, the top being the given goal. To surpass this is not to be at the top of the top, but truly it is to transform the goal entirely from what is given to what could be.

Compliance to a system, to de Beauvoir, would be as tyrannical as enacting oppression because compliance generally involves participating in the system itself. If one is absorbed within their world, complying to the modes of goal-blocking for others, then this is a perpetuation of the barrier itself. If one is unable to rise in their job, and is accountable for the same in others, and then if they exhaust their ability to form barriers beneath them as retribution for their job, they become a tyrant and perpetuator of the system. This attitude can be seen too in those who fall into the pessimistic view of creativity, as a form of compliance: those who are artists and creators are already set out into the world, my effort would be better spent as a consumer. De Beauvoir writes oppression as that which makes people Things rather than Others in the very way Heidegger addresses it as Numbers, and compliance to this not only places one’s self as inferior but also takes away from the very individual itself, each and every being’s important and issue with their own possibilities. If potentialities are set, if my possibility is that of a consumer, then I am but a number and statistic for the art to find its meaning in. This must be rejected as it is the voice of camouflaged oppression from the world of conservative

entertainment, consumerism, the government, as they attempt (and succeed) to conserve their power over the commonpeople as they strive to make that number meaningful for everyone. Accepting a system as it is is compliance, and thus rejection of this system is the only way to not be a participant in its oppressive state.

To answer any potential critiques of Heidegger's thrownness in terms of Locke's Natural Law as being potentially too idealist: our Being-in-the-world does involve an acceptance of what our thrownness entails. However, in the case of authenticity, viewing our potentiality for our being only as suggested as society writes for us, would be to be absorbed within this state; and with this, also lies a sense of rejection to one's thrownness. Again from Heidegger's later work *Nietzsche*, authenticity finds itself with a strong foundation and is able to discern itself between the "I to 'We'" in its goals in its potentiality (HN, Vol. II, p. 24) On the other hand, Heidegger turns and immediately writes this: "In being a self, certain things are decided: the weight that things and human beings will have, the scale on which they will be weighed, and the one who will do the weighing" (HN, Vol. II, p. 25). This quote would suggest that the balance between acceptance and rejection has been skewed to potentially accept given values.

With this, it should be noted that the Heidegger's thrownness and Being-in-the-world strongly correlates to one's needed cooperation with achieving one's potential self. Locke's Natural Law with the usage of reciprocity and the Golden Rule connects further with Heidegger's necessity of empathy for mutually benefitting relationships in order to fulfill goals as Being-ahead-of-oneself. In Locke's ST, he writes that "the natural liberty of man is to be free from any superior power on earth, and not to be under the will or legislative authority of man, but to have only the law of nature for his rule" in the chapter "Of Slavery" (ST, p. 109). It can be admitted that this notion is practical towards the liberation of American slaves (not to be confused with Nietzsche concept of slave morality) and may be deemed as idealistic when considering society itself under the oppression of set-values, set-goals, and set-potentialities. Bearing this, the philosophies of Nietzsche and de Beauvoir provide both where Heidegger's thoughts came from as well as where they may point to. Largely, the balance and "grounding" that Heidegger finds authenticity placed can be swayed more toward rejection of one's given

thrownness, as de Beauvoir advances what ought to be accepted and rejected with her addition of barriers on our potentialities as being a substantial aspect of oppression.

Achieving Freedom

Routes to relieve.

To reject and revolutionize a system is to choose between one of two things: to either destroy or to change it. The most successful route to achieve freedom would then depend on who you ask: anarchists would vote destruction, Nietzsche and de Beauvoir would vote to transformation /surpassion, and then, of course, conservationists would want not vote one way or the other and would ask why we would do such a thing in the first place. The point to a revolution, for the purpose of this paper, would be to create equality opportunities for authentic choices in acts that embody freedom: to make the authentic overman possible.

To return to the question of whether oppression is natural or not, the Iron Law of Oligarchy would suggest that hierarchies are natural to the human condition. To this, German-Italian sociologist Robert Michels (1876-1936) wrote in his book *Political Parties* (PP), that the Iron Law of Oligarchy is “the theory that a directive social group is absolutely essential” and inevitable, creating upper and lower divisions of people where the upper division will mask their desires as benefits for the lower (PP, p. 225). Accepting that the struggle between people to be in power is natural, while oppression itself has been argued here to be unnatural, agrees with de Beauvoir’s acknowledgement: “that man must accept the tension of the struggle, that his liberation must actively seek to perpetuate itself” (EA, 103). In the Heideggerean view, Being-in-the-world with a sense of reciprocity for mutually benefitting relationships can only lead us to form societies. And so, to destroy a system of societal organization would eventually lead to having to create a new form of social structure, nevertheless the struggle of power will find itself again. Largely, anarchism points to destroying authority figures to achieve more personal freedom. But as it happens, the enlightenment period of philosophy (throughout 17th

and 18th century Europe) sought to attain a balance between governmental /religious authority and personal freedom (Kant, 1784). And the world in which we live in today is, to a great degree, a result of this philosophical age. To do away with authority entirely, as suggested in anarchism, could be seen as dangerous to the commonperson as one often relies on others to attain their goals and would need to trust that others would not want to cause harm to anyone else in order to achieve their own goals. Transforming what the system is today, and balancing out given barriers, is the only option in achieving freedom for everyone.

When goals (and the possibility of achieving them freely) are cut off from the commonpeople, their authentic means of transformation, art, and freedom have also become cut off. To revolutionize a system in which freedom exists fruitfully, de Beauvoir insists that this new system requires that freedom is equal for all. Parallel to the Golden Rule, de Beauvoir adds that to want one's own freedom is to want freedom for everyone. This unbalanced form of oppression is what needs to be alleviated for the commonperson to be as free as his wealthy counterpart. Religious systems often mirror these same principles, within both Christianity and Confucianism, everyone on earth belongs to the same family and all flow with the same chi. To ignore this Being-in-the-world fact and to step over others would then be to go against the Natural Law/Golden Rule, and potentially be oppressive if this blocks others from attaining their own goals.

Concerns in Politics

Social structure.

The socio-economic structure that we are thrown into can substantially determine one's ability to achieve freedom, one's ability to have authentic choices, and one's ability to project their transformation into art as an act of their freedom. The 2007 Disney Pixar movie "Ratatouille" follows the motto "anyone can cook", a phrase by the esteemed Chef Gusteau, throughout the journey of a young rat named Remy and his human counterpart Linguini. Remy's

dream is to become a chef, which is against the wishes of his family and human social norms, but with the help of Linguini's human appearance and his understanding of Remy's body language, Remy finds himself working in his role model Chef Gusteau's restaurant. Achieving this position was not easy as Linguini was the restaurant's garbage boy. It was not until Chef Colette highlighted the late Chef Gusteau's "anyone can cook" philosophy when the garbage boy (secretly a rat in disguise) was given his chance. Chef Colette later made obvious that she is the only female in the kitchen: "Why do you think that is? Because haute cuisine is an antiquated hierarchy built upon rules written by stupid, old men. Rules designed to make it impossible for women to enter this world, but still I'm here. How did this happen? [...] Because I am the toughest cook in this kitchen!" Chef Colette points to the set social structure that makes it difficult for new possibilities to be seen as possibilities, this is due to much of the world being already defined by others who are largely opposed to change.

The climax of the film is to impress the food critic Ego, who badly reviewed Gusteau's restaurant at the beginning of the movie, taking away one of its five stars (with Chef Gusteau's death traditionally taking another). After it comes out that Linguini's skill is largely that of a rat's, the climax builds to prove that even a rat "can cook". The resolution then fell to Ego, who said he finally understood Chef Gusteau's motto with this: "Not everyone can become a great artist, but a great artist can come from anywhere." What Remy wants to do with life is to be authentic to his dream, to be a chef, which is not normal in human society but then, as it turns out, is also not impossible either. While Chef Collete calls her being in the kitchen impossible, new possibilities realize themselves if one creates and proves them to be possible.

Taking one's thrownness too seriously can close off possibilities as this is to be looking too closely at the social structure of one's thrownness rather than the overarching facts of life such as where and when one is born. Falling into this mode too seriously is inauthentic to Heidegger because one will then determine their life by the rules of the society and culture as their determined thrownness. To not see the outside world of possibilities could be said to be unknowing compliance; in the case of knowing or not, this is accepting the position one may be in. For Chef Collete, this would be to never try to work in a haute cuisine (luxury) restaurant, taking the "impossible" as impossible, rather than a barrier to overcome. The phrase "glass

ceiling” in feminism speaks much to this effect: a ceiling is a barrier for going up in the world, but being made of glass one can still see their own possibilities. It should also be pointed out that glass is fragile, it shatters, making the phrase itself an encouragement to break down false barriers that are set by rules, by people in high places. To translate this to Remy would be difficult as actual rats are animals. But street rats and garbage boys alike are socially seen as much lower than chefs and food critics, they are seen as people who would never would in a luxurious restaurant. For Linguini to move up in the kitchen, Collete was forced to take accountability for his success because she stood up for him through Gusteau’s motto. What this means is that Linguini’s low social status was replaced with Collete’s, but if they fail then both of their values will fall to that of a garbage boy.

The freedom to move toward one’s authentic possibilities, in “Ratatouille”, depends on the assistance of other people and largely their social status (be it a human or a chef). In reality, this freedom also requires financial assistance. To be a chef today, which includes artistic expression in creation (which is not simply being a cook), there are a number of variables that one would need to comply with: a job interview requires nice clothes, culinary skills requires food and equipment, a résumé requires either schooling or previous experiences from another job, schooling requires higher education or high quality public education. If an individual cannot meet any of these requirements (or others not mentioned here), then a barrier exists between the individual and their authentic dream. What is unfortunate here is that it seems as if one’s ability to realize their freedom through are will always depend on the thrownness of that individual and if this does not include the financial assistance to gain access into society, as a Being-in-the-world to then seek out its goals and possibilities in artful expressive acts, then the potentiality of relieving the dread of existentialism falls significantly lower. And so it can be seen, for any goal, one ought to follow the Golden Rule and to assist others with their goals just as they would need assistance from others to attain their own goal. In the case of clothes for a job interview, governmental assistance becomes a kindness to lend a helping hand toward the dream of the individual's freedom.

Concerns in Ethics

Representation.

For those in power, they are the ones who determine what is good and what is bad, de Beauvoir suggests this but it is something Nietzsche too has made prominent. To pay your taxes, this is good and to not is bad. To go to school, this is good and to not is bad. With powerful influence, taxes and school are made mandatory for certain age ranges and to not follow this is made illegal. What can be said is that the anterior benefits of taxes and school are made for the benefit of the people and for the betterment of society – but where tax money goes and what is taught in public schools is also determined by those in power. De Beauvoir finds that oppressors “make themselves the curators of the given world; stressing the sacrifices that are necessarily involved in all change, they side with what has been over against what has not been yet” (EA, p. 98). In de Beauvoir’s view of oppression, language is what separates us from one another as one group can call something “good” and the other has relatively no backing to argue this as the “good” is defined and represented as such.

What we define as “democracy” and what democracy is in practice can often be two very separate images. To its greatest extent, democracy is a governmental system made by the people, for the people, that consists of representatives that are to enact laws agreed upon by the entire people. That is, by its truest definition. For Michels, in his Iron Law of Oligarchy, “the ruling minority [...] can never be truly representative of the majority” because societal benefits will always mask the benefits the ruling power would receive (PP, p. 233). And the commonpeople will be relatively none the wiser as the oppressors would tell them it is for the good of the people. This mode of government is also lined out in the philosophy of Utilitarianism, where values are good when they are for the benefit of the majority. But as de Beauvoir and Nietzsche have shown, this “good” is declared by the oppressing minority ruling class and the norms have been set by society.

Representations from oppressors, for de Beauvoir, is a conservation of the past that can lose exactly what it is supposed to represent. De Beauvoir points out that art, and especially in

historical monuments, is a representation of freedom tangified into something that can be admired and valued – and once a system places more importance over these pieces of art, both the system and the art has lost its meaning and projection of freedom. In Nietzsche’s thoughts on art, this is also a projection of the becoming beyond societal structure. And so while art is beautiful, the representation of which “must be grasped in terms of the artist” as Heidegger understands in his HN, “art is worth more than ‘the truth’” that is man-made in our world (HN, Vol. I, p. 75). And so while art is more valuable than words, de Beauvoir insists that society cannot place Thing over Man as it merely a form that can be surpassed again; and this act of embodied freedom will immediately lose its meaning if the meaning is misrepresented as a form that is to be idolized rather than surpassed.

Conclusion

Reject oppression.

Enacting freedom as an equal opportunity for anyone to project transformation and life-affirmation into art would necessitate a rejection of what the system currently stands for. This rejection, as stated above, is not anarchy, but would be to fix the misrepresentations that commonpeople unknowingly comply with.

“Oppression can in no way justify itself in the name of the content which it is defending and while it dishonestly sets up as an idol. Bound up with the subjectivity which established it, this content requires its own surpassing” (de Beauvoir, (1947/ 2018) EA, p. 102).

The “content” in which de Beauvoir is referring to is the pre-made world of our thrownness. And so, to transform and to surpass democracy as it stands would be to constantly do just that—to ensure that the government is working for the people and if the people are looking to transform themselves, then the government would (or should) change alongside its population. Rather than idolizing itself as being the power and authority over values and meaning within purposes, an

organized society with representation of all people would be as subject to change as individuals themselves do. Idolization itself is what creates the misrepresentation of the “good” values that are set before us today and means to comply with the given as it is. Perpetual rejection of oppression is only the antithesis of the Iron Law of Oligarchy, for de Beauvoir this is the only antithesis to the constant struggle between leaders and not-leaders: “his liberation must actively seek to perpetuate itself” and while being a follower may seem easier, “he must reject oppression at any cost” (EA, p. 103). This rejection is the means to see our potentialities beyond the given path of society. If a solution were to be presented today this would be that of a great unmasking of all barriers that form closed-off possibilities. The ability to produce authentic-overman-art as acts of freedom is merged with our ability to transform the suffering that lies in our existence. To oppress this ability is to push deeper the existential void of the individual and this must be rejected on a societal scale in order to see past our thrown given and to find what is authentic to our true selves.

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