What Precedes Execution: Direction, Not Figure

Arnaud Quercy

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Ideamorphic Studies — disputatio

Fourth note in Series N, devoted to the first proposition of ideamorphism: every creation begins with an idea, every idea has form before it has material, the form precedes the making. The audit establishes first that the central term had never been made explicit: form is said in the exemplary sense, as a principle of order, and in the figurative sense, as an image. Under the second reading the proposition is false; under the first it is true and entirely anticipated by Thomas Aquinas's question De ideis. The verdict is therefore Anticipated, the statement retained and completed by a usage clause that governs the whole founding corpus. The disputatio sets an exemplarist tradition — Aquinas, Coomaraswamy, Maritain — against a pragmatist and analytic bench — Collingwood, Wollheim, Dewey, Gombrich, Mead, Winfield — and brings out three elements present neither in the statement nor in the literature consulted: a three-stratum architecture distinguishing acquired technique, stipulated codex and enacted idea; the proposition that chance is never in the rule but always in what the rule touches, attested across five devices with heterogeneous criteria of success; and a double regime, according to whether the executant's perceptual loop is available or cut. Leibniz's dilemma on the sovereignty of the will, Mead's objection on retrospective reconstruction, and the case of John Cage remain open.

A proposition on the anteriority of form, audited to its end: it survives, but its core belongs to Thomas Aquinas, and what remains its own lies elsewhere than in the statement.

Arnaud Quercy — Ideamorphic Studies

Limitations Declared at the Outset

Empirical register. I found nothing on phonetic symbolism or on experimentally attested motivated cross-modal pairings. The underlying question — is there such a thing as motivated, as opposed to stipulated, relation? — is therefore instructed in the philosophical register and not in the empirical one. This absence deprives the thesis and not the antithesis: no adverse verdict rests upon it.

Simondon partial. The principal adversary named at the outset is present only through the course on imagination and the technical writings. The volume in which he argues that form is not imposed upon a passive matter, but that the two are constituted together in the operation, was not consulted. No verdict favourable to the antithesis rests upon that gap either.

I. Quaestio

Is what precedes execution an already determinate principle of order, which execution realizes — or does the order constitute itself only in execution, which fixes it as much as it carries it out?

II. Statement

Proposition 1 — Primordial Idea. Every creation begins with an idea. Every idea has form before it has material. The form precedes the making.

Form is understood here as a principle of order — the relation between the parts and to the whole — and not as figure, outline or image.

Three assertions, two of them carrying universal quantifiers. It is the second that is instructed here; the first is near-analytic, the third its corollary.

III. What the Practice Says

What I have before beginning is not an image. It is an intention of a relation. Its shaping is directional: what stays constant from one end of the work to the other is the direction I take within the relation, not a figure I would have seen in advance and would then set about reproducing.

This intention comes in two regimes. Sometimes it is simple, and it rests on training and memory — years of practice tell me what a chord carries. Sometimes it is harder to make out, because it carries within itself a number of unknowns. In both cases it is the starting point.

If I decide to work on an augmented chord, the idea is known and so is its harmonic impact: I know the relation between the notes, I know its potential. What remains open is not the idea, it is its execution. How am I going to press the keys — fortissimo, pianissimo. That is interpretation, and even when stipulated, the gesture brings its own share of unknowns. I distinguish the idea from the gesture, but I cannot dissociate my knowledge of the gesture from the formulation of the idea.

In painting, the loop is cut. I know the direction, I execute it as faithfully as I can with my eyes and with the names of the colours on the tubes, and I cannot correct myself. I know this is my impairment, so I build it into the idea of the painting from the start, through the codex. Even so I cannot be sure of the result, because my eyes do not see it as the norm does. I therefore live in the idea and in the gesture at once, with my uncertainties.

Correcting the gesture to bring it into conformity with the intention — that I do not dispute: it is the art of the gesture. It is not the art of the idea and of its form. There is no action-reaction that comes to contest the idea. The wrong note may occasion a displacement, and so may the sand. The artist is not bound to the original idea and may decide to displace it, but that choice is sovereign to him.

When execution is not conformable, the idea has not been corrected: the artist chooses what follows, and what follows is a second idea, not the original. In the sand, nothing contests either: I can correct the form at will for as long as physics and time allow. What limits me is not the matter, it is the window.

But substitution is not erasure. The previous idea remains, and even if I wished to replace it, I do not really erase it. It has a lineage.

IV. Videtur quod — It Seems That Form Precedes the Making

The form of the art is in the artificer before the work. Thomas Aquinas defines the idea as the form which a thing imitates through the intention of an agent who predetermines an end for himself — *idea sit forma quam aliquid imitatur ex intentione agentis, qui praedeterminat sibi finem* [1]. We say of the form of the art in the artificer that it is the exemplar of the product of the art. This form does not merely accompany the making: it measures it, and the work is said to be true insofar as it attains the form conceived in the intellect of the one who makes.

The canonical example is not a painting but a house. Nothing there is copied: no external model exists of which the work would be the likeness. What pre-exists is an order, not an image — and that is what the proposition asserts.

Form and relation are not opposed. The immediate objection — is a form not already a setting-into-relation? — receives its answer within the tradition itself. Bonaventure distinguishes two senses of form, the perfection of a thing and the exemplary form, and notes that in both cases a relation is postulated: in the latter a relation to the matter informed, in the former a relation to what is exemplified [2]. The two differ not in their nature but in their term.

To grant that all form is relational therefore decides nothing. The question is not whether what lies upstream is a relation — it is — but whether that relation precedes execution or results from it.

The sense retained holds for all the arts. Carroll establishes that every statement about the form of a work is a statement about a relation between its parts, translatable as "x stands in such a relation to y": the sounds of a poem to one another, musical phrases broken up and redistributed, dramatic conflict, the equilibrium of volumes [3]. One definition, all domains.

And Dewey, who stands on the antithesis bench, confirms that the narrowing of form to figure is an idiom of the visual arts: it is especially in connection with pictures, he writes, that form is identified with the patterns defined by linear outlines — yet shape is only an element in aesthetic form, it does not constitute it [4].

The usage clause of section II therefore imports nothing foreign. It restores the sense the tradition employs without an adjective, and which modern usage has narrowed.

The gap in execution is provided for, and it does not touch the idea. The exemplarist tradition does not ignore that the work differs from its form. Coomaraswamy puts it thus: the actual form of the work is determined not only by the idea as formal cause, but also by the efficient and material causes, which introduce factors that are not essential to the idea nor inevitably annexed to it [2]. That form is called the accidental form.

What section III describes — the fortissimo or the pianissimo, the hand that succeeds or fails — finds here its doctrinal placement, on the side of the accident and not on the side of the idea.

The habitus: failure of execution is a defect of use, not of content. Maritain takes up the doctrine of art as *habitus*, a stable and deeply rooted disposition in the soul, and draws the exact consequence: the man who possesses the virtue of art is not infallible in his work, because often, while acting, he does not use his virtue; but the virtue of art, of itself, is never wrong [5].

Failure therefore does not impair what governs. It bears on the use one makes of it.

A limit to declare: the habitus is general — the disposition to make works — and does not cover the idea of this particular work. It accounts for the first regime described in section III, the one resting on training and memory; it does not account for the second.

Determinate without prefiguring. Deleuze separates two notions the discussion ordinarily conflates: determination and resemblance. The virtual, he writes, far from being undetermined, is completely determined; the reality of the virtual is structure. And yet actualization breaks with resemblance: actual terms never resemble the singularities they incarnate, so that actualization is a genuine creation. The virtual possesses the reality of a task to be performed or a problem to be solved: it is the problem which orientates, conditions and engenders solutions, but these do not resemble the conditions of the problem [6].

What the proposition needs to establish lies exactly there: what precedes can be entirely determinate without prefiguring the figure that will realize it.

A declared and partial borrowing. The structure is retained; the ontology that carries it is refused. The Deleuzian Idea is pre-individual, it is in no one's mind, and its actualization is no agent's doing. The thesis defended here holds on the contrary that what lies upstream belongs to whoever institutes it. Deleuze is therefore summoned for a distinction, not for a metaphysics, and the cut is declared rather than concealed.

Anteriority is granted by the principal adversary. Simondon, named at the outset as the probable replacement for the proposition, does not dispute that there is something upstream. He affirms it: at the beginning of life, the image is a sheaf of motor tendencies, a long-term anticipation of the experience of the object — behaviour that guides the living being in its milieu before any experience and before any recognition of an object. He calls it the *a priori* image, and speaks of action schemas existing in living beings as anticipations of possible behaviours [7].

What Simondon refuses is not anteriority but its finality: these primitive images, he says, have no content other than the movements themselves — an autokinetic, non-finalized image. The objection will be taken up in the *Sed contra*. It leaves standing what the *videtur quod* had to establish: something precedes, and that something is oriented.

What precedes can be held, or displaced, by the one who holds it. It remains to be seen what the artist can do with what he holds. The Aristotelian tradition, re-read by Boulnois, distinguishes two principles: the principle of agency — the agent acts through himself — and the principle of mastery — the agent is master of acting or of not acting. What is proper to acting is not to begin a series of events, which natural substances do as well; it is to be able to inhibit that causality. What an agent is master-principle of is precisely the action in what it has of the contingent [8].

The objection that follows at once — the accident decided, not the artist — is set aside at the source: responsibility requires only that the agent be the principle of the action; it does not forbid that he be moved by something else at the moment of setting the action off. Whatever the motive, the action remains imputable to the agent, since it is he who executes it [8].

Duns Scotus goes further by distinguishing two indeterminations: that of passive powers, which is a lack calling for a determination from elsewhere, and that of active power, which comes from the perfection of the act and grounds a self-determination. The will is not determined by anything else to will, and it has alternative possibilities in the present, for the same instant, and not merely successively [9].

Bratman, finally, supplies what the thesis needs against the adverse inference. To reconsider an intention, he shows, is to bracket it: during reconsideration, strictly speaking, one no longer has it; and if one recommits, there is a historical discontinuity — the intention is not the earlier one retained, it has the status of a new intention [10]. Which establishes exactly what section III asserts: when execution is not conformable, the idea is not corrected, a second is substituted for it. And which cuts the inverse inference: that an idea was displaced does not show that there was no idea.

A methodological reservation. The bridge between the philosophy of the will and the idea of the artist, I did not find in the literature. "Artistic freedom" there designates, almost always, freedom with respect to power, to the market or to censorship, not the freedom internal to the act of making. Souriau already observed, at the international congress of aesthetics of 1964, that the question had scarcely been treated from a strictly aesthetic point of view, and posed the alternative in which I find it still: on one side the exercise of what Fichte called an empty freedom, on the other submission to a strict fatalism [11]. The crossing performed here is therefore a construction, and it is declared as such. Gilson gives its closest antecedent without crossing it: the germ of every work of art is not a concept but an idea, and the artist's freedom has no other limits than those imposed on it by the conditions required for the work to be able to exist [12].

V. Sed contra — But It Seems That Execution Determines What It Executes

The impulse is not the form. Collingwood grants that there is something before the work, and refuses to call it form. Something was there, no doubt, before the poem came into being — a confused excitement in the poet's mind — but it was not the raw material of the poem; there was also the impulse to write, but that impulse was not the form of the unwritten poem [13].

His criterion is precision. The foreknowledge that defines craft, he says, is not vague but precise: a man who conceives his table as somewhere between two and three feet high is no craftsman. Hence his question, which is the hardest form of the objection: what were the measurements and specifications of the poem the poet planned to compose?

It is worth noting where this criterion comes from. Collingwood constructs it to describe craft, precisely in order to refuse it to art: the distinction between form and matter, he writes, belongs to the philosophy of craft and not to that of art. The objection is therefore real, but its standard is borrowed from what it opposes — which the *Respondeo* will have to reckon with rather than ignore.

Total preconception is impossible. Wollheim refuses it twice. No total preconception of the picture, independent of all engagement with the medium, is a serious possibility; and in no case is it reasonable to think that intention calls for a total preconception in the artist's head, a kind of inner image of an outer picture which does not as yet exist [14].

The mechanism he opposes is perceptual. The painter places his body as he does because he paints with his eyes: it is not that he paints first and looks afterwards. His dependence on himself as spectator is what keeps the picture on track.

And he names the very regime section III describes. Art carried out under the aegis of an idealized figure becomes, he writes, an art of preconception, in which the work is thought of as already complete in the mind before paint is put to canvas; the term "work" then becomes a misnomer, since art is held to pre-exist the work and the contribution of the hand, the brush, the medium can be no more than an irrelevance. He ranks this view among the pathological attractions [14].

The end is an end-in-view, not an antecedent scheme. Dewey does not dispute that there is an aim; he disputes that it is fixed in advance and serves as a standard. A rigid predetermination of the end-product leads to a mechanical or academic product, of the order of a stencil — and he specifies, which closes the escape route: even though the copy from which the stencil is made exists in the mind and not as a physical thing. The artist, he adds, cares about the end-result as a completion of what goes before, and not because of its conformity or lack of conformity with a ready-made antecedent scheme [4].

One must measure where the blow lands. It does not target the existence of what lies upstream: it targets conformity as a criterion. And he adds what conformity loses: artists learn by their work, as they proceed, to see and feel what had not been part of their original plan and purpose.

Winfield carries the same attack further, and to the root. An idea not already wedded to a sensuous configuration, he writes, is not yet an artistic one; what makes artistic creativity worthy of the name is that the essence of the work is not given prior to its production but arises within its realization. He then enumerates the commitments taken on by anyone holding the opposite position: a form definable independently of the product, a material contributing nothing essential, a meaning reproducible in another embodiment, and a criticism consisting in evaluating how well the given form has been embodied in the given material. He enumerates them in order to conclude that they reduce art to craft [15].

This is the most exactly aimed objection on the bench: it targets the point where section III stands — an upstream that is relational and non-sensuous — and it targets the measuring instrument the practice employs.

The initial content is vague and becomes precise by being externalized. Carroll describes genesis as a refinement. The artist begins with an insistent but vague feeling, which she tries to bring into sharp relief; she does so partly by externalizing it, experimenting with different ways of expressing it, then standing back to ask whether it is right. The painting is under the guidance of the emotion, but as the picture acquires more detail and definition, so does the emotion [3].

The objection bears frontally against the case of the augmented chord: where section III holds that the idea is known and its harmonic impact with it, Carroll holds that it is not known and that it is determined in being executed.

The schema precedes, but it is made. Gombrich grants more than anyone and withdraws otherwise. He grants that a schema precedes, and that it is even indispensable: since a schema is necessary, he writes, even a wrong schema is a useful tool, for our perceptive apparatus only jumps into action when prodded in some such way. He cites the formula that sums up his position: perception may be regarded as primarily the modification of an anticipation [16].

But that schema is learned. The copyist proceeds by schema and correction: he chooses an inherited vocabulary of formulas, which he then adjusts to what he has before him. *Making comes before matching*. What precedes is therefore the sediment of an apprenticeship, and the anteriority is chronological without being first.

The objection touches section III on its own admission, since section III acknowledges that the first regime rests on training and memory. It also touches the *videtur quod*, since Maritain's habitus is by definition an acquired disposition.

The act is first, and the past is reconstructed from it. Mead denies that the object aimed at is determined before the act. The act is initiated by a distant stimulus and passes through a manipulatory phase in which the object receives its character: it is the hand that fashions the perceptual thing. And the past of the act, in his philosophy of the present, is continually reconstructed from the standpoint of the emergent event [17].

The objection targets neither anteriority nor sovereignty but invariance. It does not deny that one finds a constant direction on looking back; it denies that finding it establishes that one held it. It is, for that reason, immune to the testimony of the one who held it.

Yet what Mead grants must be noted. Mere readiness, he says, confers no permanence in an entirely habitual act; but where there are alternative responses, which keep attention centred on the stimulus by bringing out now one character and now another, permanence appears — and the content then lasts with a constant core over against changing phases [17]. He therefore grants a core; he holds it to be engendered by the plurality of possible executions, not antecedent to them.

Completion is decided, not prescribed. Valalas holds that completion is relative. In the absence of a determinate external subject — the case of non-figurative works — the completion of a work appears to be the result of a personal decision of the artist, who deliberately or intuitively judges that he has finished; between a sketch and a finished work there is no qualitative difference but a difference of degree [11].

The objection bears against the idea that a condition of completion can be fixed upstream. It carries all the more force in that the practice in question is abstract, hence without a model against which a threshold could be measured.

Passeron, in the same volume, nevertheless describes a case that does not fall under it: among artists who faithfully execute a sketch settled beforehand — Vasarely speaks of blind execution — the completion of the work coincides with the end of that execution, and follows almost mechanically from an internal completion that preceded it and made it possible [11]. The antithesis therefore contains, in its own camp, the description of the regime section III claims.

Is sovereignty over displacement an instance, or a word? The *videtur quod* rested on the will what matter does not supply: the accident occasions, the artist disposes. Leibniz opposes to this construction a dilemma neither branch of which leaves it room.

Either the will gives itself its object without reason, by caprice — and the free act is then irrational, inexplicable, the result of chance. Or it determines itself according to pre-existing reasons — and then the distinction between the will and its motives becomes superfluous, since it is the reasons that do the work. Better, he concludes, to admit from the outset that the will is not distinct from the inclination itself [18].

He adds that indifference, far from grounding freedom, would make it impossible: we would not be free if nothing inclined the will and if everything were perfectly indifferent to it. And he defuses the inner testimony in advance — we believe our will indifferent because we are not always aware of the reasons that move us; the feeling of deciding is worth no more than that of a compass needle taking itself to turn freely to the north [18].

The objection does not bear on what precedes execution, but on what makes the artist hold here and yield there, at each iteration. In this it joins Mead's by another route: in Leibniz the feeling of deciding is produced by unnoticed reasons, in Mead by retroactive completion. Two mechanisms, one conclusion — sovereignty would be an effect and not a cause.

VI. Respondeo

The dispute was first about a word. Two senses of form circulate, and the proposition had not said which it employed. Coomaraswamy notes that scholastic philosophy, when no qualifying adjective is used, always says form in the exemplary sense — principle of order according to which the matter is disposed — whereas modern usage takes it more often as physical shape, to the point that it is often impossible to understand what contemporary aestheticians mean by the word [2]. Dewey, from the opposite side, confirms the diagnosis and names its origin: it is especially in connection with pictures that form is identified with outlines [4].

One must therefore settle the term before judging, and the verdict changes with the sense. Under the figurative reading the proposition is false: Collingwood, Wollheim and Carroll refute it, and section III does not support it either — what precedes is not an image. Under the exemplary reading it is true, and that is the reading it employs.

This ambiguity was not in the thought but in the text. The usage clause added to section II therefore corrects no hesitation: it blocks a misreading which the published statement left open.

What precedes is a direction, not a figure — and three independent traditions name it the same way. Simondon speaks of oriented motor tendencies, prior to all experience [7]. Mead, describing the same facts in an entirely different vocabulary, speaks of tendencies that show a certain direction, the active future directing the process [17]. Deleuze speaks of a problem that orientates without the solutions resembling it [6]. Three authors whom nothing brings together converge on the same word, and that word is not form in the sense of figure.

Section III says it in the terms of the practice: what stays constant from one end of the work to the other is the direction taken within the relation, not a figure seen in advance. What lies upstream exists, it is oriented, it does not prefigure.

Three strata, and each has its regime. The bulk of the objections comes from three distinct things having been treated as one.

Technique — laying a touch, holding a dynamic, playing a scale — is acquired. It is obtained through hours of mechanical training, and on this point Gombrich is right without reservation: what the hand knows how to do is inherited from an apprenticeship. It is also what Maritain's habitus describes, a stable and rooted disposition.

The codex is stipulated. It is neither true nor false, nor learned: it is laid down by decision, and nothing obliges C to be red.

The idea of this particular work is an act. It traces a curve across the parameters the codex fixes, and that curve is not deduced.

Once the three are separated, several objections cease to contradict one another. The proposition does not dispute the stratum of technique — it nowhere instructs it, which is a gap in the corpus and not a claim. And Maritain's habitus, which seemed to carry the adverse thesis within it since it is acquired, describes the first stratum without touching the other two.

What a codex is, and what it is not. A codex is an instituted rule, executed without exception, of which one observes what it produces. What varies from one to another is what the rule bears upon and where the unmastered enters. Chance is never in the rule; it is always in what the rule touches.

This formula settles the central difficulty, and it is worth showing what it rests on. The chromatic codex bears on a correspondence between pitches and colours, and the unmastered enters through perception, since the eye cannot verify what the hand has done. The Codex of the Feigned Tongue bears on a lexical constraint, and its criterion of success is not a measured gap but the audibility of a curve: a transmutation can satisfy every rule and fail. *Monadology* lays down a physical rule, releases it, and withdraws the author from the loop: chance

there is entirely produced by the rule as it runs. *Transcendental Aestheticism* alters a property of the real and executes it without remainder, the unmastered there being nil. *Solabi Vare* delivers the form to duration and to the hands of visitors.

Five devices, five different criteria of success, none reducible to a function. A function correctly applied cannot fail; a codex can, and the Feigned Tongue goes so far as to name that mode of failure — a flat curve, a homogeneous stratum without intention, is a fault that sanctions the violation of no rule. The codex constrains a production; it does not replace it.

Winfield: the engine is not the essence. The most exact objection on the bench holds that an idea not wedded to a sensuous configuration is not yet artistic, and that the essence of the work arises within its realization [15].

The first point is granted. An isolated correspondence — *C* is red — is not a work: it is a code. What the practice holds upstream is never a single piece of information but a relation among several, with silence, with the rule, and it is the projection of that relation which is defined.

The second does not follow. That the work does not exist without realization is true, and the practice asserts it just as firmly: without execution there is no work. But one cannot infer from this that before realization nothing is determinate. Execution is an engine of possibilities: it proposes variations, it is an agent in the realization, it is not the author of the idea. Now what produces does not sort. Sorting presupposes a criterion, and that criterion is not in what has been produced.

It is here that the codex formula cuts: chance is never in the rule, it is always in what the rule touches. Winfield describes the entry of the unmastered correctly, and wrongly attributes it to what lies upstream.

What his position lacks is a distinction the practice holds to be first: that of the emitter and the receiver. That the work does not exist until it is received says nothing about what the emitter held.

Gombrich: the material is inherited, the act is one's own. The objection turns on a slide. The schema is learned, therefore it is not one's own. The first term is granted entirely: the emitter is as human as the receiver and subject to the same conditions; his culture, his memory, his hand are formed by what he has received. The second does not follow.

Two reasons. The first is that Gombrich's mechanism runs on *matching*: the schema is corrected against a prototype. A codex has no prototype. It is not corrected, it is instituted, and the objection loses its engine there — it can still say where the material comes from, not what validates it.

The second is that schema and codex are not on the same floor. The schema belongs to the art of making; a codex does not say how to hold a dynamic or load a brush. The objection is just, and bears on the first stratum.

What belongs to the emitter is therefore not a content but an act: having instituted this rule rather than another, within an entirely inherited material, and having undertaken to emit. Boulnois gives the form of this answer: moved indirectly by something else, the agent executes directly, and the action remains imputable to him [8].

The price is to be declared. Nothing pre-stipulative then remains upstream. All the material comes from elsewhere; only the stipulation is one's own.

Mead: what emerges is a bundle, and a bundle does not sort. The objection presupposes an emergent event from which the past is reconstructed. That description is reductive. What emerges from an execution is not an event but a bundle: several things took place, several could have been retained, and what was retained was retained by a sorting. Now sorting presupposes a criterion which is not in the bundle — the same argument as in the preceding movement, applied to time rather than to matter.

Mead concedes as much himself. Permanence, he says, appears only where there are alternative responses, and he draws from it a constant core beneath changing phases [17]. The structure is therefore common: a plurality, and something constant across it. The disagreement now bears only on the order — for him the core is engendered by the plurality, here it precedes it and serves to sort.

What remains standing is not nothing. That the criterion operated does not establish that it was formulated beforehand. It establishes it only where it is recorded — and it is recorded wherever the codex is written before execution. The answer is therefore strong under a prescribed regime and weak elsewhere, without improvisation being for all that without criteria: it has them, they simply leave no trace of their own. The difference is not between criterion and absence of criterion, but between written and unwritten.

Dewey: to measure is not to judge, and the loop is not always available. The objection presupposes that conformity is offered as a criterion of value. It is not. The gap between what the rule prescribes and what the hand produces is not a verdict on the work: it is a magnitude observed, and information about what took place.

This answer does not hold everywhere, and must be restricted. It holds for the chromatic codex, where the perceptual loop is cut: a colour vision deficiency prevents self-correction, and the gap is then the only information available about what the hand has done. It does not hold for the other codices, whose criteria of success are otherwise and none of which measures a gap.

The antithesis itself supplies the reason for this restriction. Wollheim, whose entire apparatus rests on the painter as spectator of his own canvas, holds that thematization requires an eye capable of fine distinctions, and that if the demands exceed what the organs of the body can meet, even after arduous apprenticeship, it stops in its tracks [14]. The model he opposes therefore has an organic condition declared by its own author, and the practice in question falls outside it.

One thesis, two regimes. It remains to conclude with what the preceding movements have brought out three times. Where the perceptual loop functions — at the piano, in the sand — execution engenders derivatives which the artist adopts or discards, and what limits it is not the matter but the window of time. Where it is cut, an instituted rule takes the place of the organ.

This is not an accommodation introduced to save the proposition. It is the same structure encountered in Wollheim, who states the organic condition of his own model, and in Passeron, who describes under the name of blind execution the regime in which completion follows an antecedent internal completion [11].

VII. Verdict

Anticipated.

The proposition, read in the sense the usage clause fixes, is true: what precedes execution is an already determinate principle of order, and execution realizes it. It is also entirely anticipated. Thomas Aquinas states it in the question *De ideis* with an apparatus of distinctions the proposition does not have: the idea as a form imitated through the intention of an agent who predetermines an end for himself; the example of the house, where nothing is copied; and the accidental form, which lodges the gap in execution in advance without the idea being touched by it [1].

The verdict does not mean that the proposition is false, nor that it should be withdrawn. It means that its core already exists in the literature, and that what belongs to it lies elsewhere than in the statement — in what the disputatio had to construct in order to defend it, set out in section IX.

The statement stands. It receives a usage clause and not a rewriting: the proposition is the first of the set, and the term it employs governs those that follow. It could not be left indeterminate.

A consequence of scope. The definition laid down here extends to every occurrence of *form* in the founding corpus. No proposition has been re-read under it; each will have to be, in its turn, and none should be cited in support without the sense having been verified there. Proposition 6 — the gesture IS the idea — is the most exposed case: under the clause, it asserts that the gesture is a principle of order, which makes it either stronger or incoherent. The note does not settle it.

VIII. Debt

Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate* q. 3, for the core of the proposition. Bonaventure, via Coomaraswamy, for form as relation and for the distinction of the two senses. Coomaraswamy for the accidental form and for the diagnosis of the modern narrowing. Maritain, via Weitz, for art as habitus and for failure as a defect of use. Deleuze for

the separation of determination and resemblance, as a partial borrowing, the ontology refused and the cut declared. Simondon for the *a priori* image. Boulnois for the principle of mastery and for imputability despite the motive. Duns Scotus, via Pasnau and Van Dyke, for the two indeterminations and for synchronic freedom. Bratman for bracketing and for the three regimes of reconsideration. Gilson for the distinction between concept and idea in the germ of the work.

Instructed and set aside: Suárez's objective concept, which belongs to a doctrine of signification and not of production; and the Thomistic distinction of *id quo* and *id quod*, which the texts show to be both at once, and to be the term of the act rather than its antecedent principle [19].

IX. What the Note Establishes as Its Own

Three things, which appear neither in the audited statement nor, so far as I know, in the literature.

The three strata. Acquired technique, stipulated codex, enacted idea of the work. Their conflation is what made Gombrich's objection undecidable; once separated, it is granted without carrying the rest away. The corpus nowhere instructs the first stratum — the art of making, training, the hand. That is a gap in the corpus, not in the research.

The site of the unmastered. A codex is an instituted rule, executed without exception, of which one observes what it produces; what varies from one to another is what the rule bears upon and where the unmastered enters. Chance is never in the rule; it is always in what the rule touches. Five devices attest it with five different criteria of success — perception, audible curve, released process, execution without remainder, duration — and none is reducible to a function, since a function correctly applied cannot fail.

The double regime. The proposition holds under a single statement and is realized under two regimes, according to whether the perceptual loop is available or cut. The distinction is not introduced to save it: it is met with in Wollheim, who declares the organic condition of his own model, and in Passeron, who describes the regime of blind execution.

X. Condition of Falsification

The note is falsified by a documented case in which what lay upstream was a figure — an image whose traces establish that it was held beforehand, with its specifications, and not a principle of order.

The double regime is falsified in both directions. By a case, under a prescribed regime, in which completion was decided during execution although the prescription was complete. Or by a case, outside a prescribed regime, in which the condition of completion could have been stated beforehand.

The constancy of direction is falsified by a non-attributable displacement: a case in which, on the traces — writings, sketches, successive takes, recorded rule — the direction changed without any decision being locatable other than by reconstruction after the fact. This is the most exposed clause, the one where Mead's objection remains entire, and no dated case has been produced either way at the time of closing the note.

XI. Remaining Objections

Leibniz. Sovereignty over the displacement of the idea is asserted in section III and defended in the *videtur quod*; Leibniz's dilemma targets it and receives no answer here. The objection does not bear on what precedes execution but on what makes the artist hold here and yield there, at each iteration. That is another register — the reason of the act, and by extension the reason for emitting — which the proposition does not instruct. It is named, unresolved, and deferred.

Mead. Reduced, not eliminated: sorting presupposes a criterion, but the written trace has not yet been shown to distinguish a criterion formulated beforehand from a criterion reconstructed. See the condition of falsification.

Gombrich. Granted on the first stratum. It leaves open that the codex is built with acquired material — without that permitting the inference that it is nothing but an acquisition, any more than learned permits the inference not one's own.

Institution as a process. The *72 Facets of Paris* pose a case the proposition does not provide for: the rule is not laid down there in a single act, it is built by a back-and-forth between a geography fixed in advance and the writing of the waltz. A principle of order can be built; the proposition is silent on how it is built.

Plato. *Republic* X holds that the criterion of correctness belongs to the user and not to the maker, and that the latter has only a right opinion received from him [20]. The topology is close to that of the corpus, and the consequence is the reverse: the emitter does not receive his rule from reception, having no mastery over it. The reason for this refusal — the work has no public criterion of use, unlike the flute — is laid down without being instructed.

Cage. He too institutes a rule before execution, and uses *form* in the sense of the morphology of the continuity, not of figure: the division retained here is verified in the most distant witness [21]. He does not suppress judgment, he displaces it — you have no control, he says, except in the way of designing the questions you ask, and what can be analysed or criticized in my work are the questions that I ask [22]. And he judges his own determinate score an object more inhuman than human, in which the sounds have come together to control a human being, the performer [21].

The case is not instructed further, and it is instructable. Daniel Charles sees in it a contestation of the primacy of the end, and holds Cage's late scores to be luxuriously superfluous in that they refute the tradition's tendency to raise to the absolute the *a priori* of the work, its essence codified in its graphism [11]. The objection targets what a rule written in advance claims to hold, and it awaits a note of its own.

The unconscious upstream. I found no constituted treatment of the hypothesis that would strike anteriority and sovereignty together: that what governs production escapes the consciousness of the one who produces. Collingwood names it and dismisses it in a paragraph [13]. It is the only gap in this note that tells against the antithesis.

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