

Discussion

Anahid Nersessian: OK, so I guess I can start with a response to that. So, just in case this wasn't clear, I'm not down with cognitive studies at all [group laughter]. I should just make that part clear, right? So, the limitation of what is called prototype theory is precisely that you can't generate combined concepts from it, so the classic example from Jerry Fodor and Ernest Lepore, who are philosophers of language and not cognitive scientists, is that you can think of a pet, right, and you can think of a fish, but you can't think of a pet fish, right, at least according to prototype theory, right, so the concepts don't combine. So, then the paper tries to think through what, you know, a Romanticist would call "The Imagination" (with a capital *I*) as a way of combining concepts—for example, of course, the mountain that's made of gold. So, yeah, I think that's totally right, I think that it's just a kind of renaming concepts there. So, to get at a partial response to your question about what new is gained from exemplarity, I think my best way is to say something about the project from which this paper is drawn. I just have to say thank you for your patience this is a really, really new project, and this is a fairly open salvo from it. But, the paper really is not just about what happens to people when they encounter an ecological disaster and they don't know it's meaning, although that's sort of the diegesis of the project.

The other part of the project is really about the way in which literary criticism uses certain kind of things as exemplary, right. So, you know, the paper begins by talking about climate change, for example, right, as a thing that has really captured the imagination of literary critics. Obviously it matters to other people, too, but people who work in the humanities have taken it as an exemplary object of something literary critics are qualified to talk about, right? It's a thing in the real world about which literary critics or humanists have knowledge because the argument against humanistic scholarship is it that it doesn't talk about anything real, it doesn't talk about things in the world.

So, one of the objectives of this project is to say it is fine to talk about things that don't exist in the world—I don't think that's a problem. And to open up a space for reclaiming things like imaginative enterprise or poetics or any of those things as having not necessarily what we would call reality, but some kind of utility that isn't, you know, a degraded version of utility, but that is useful and effective to think about. So, that's one way to kind of answer the question that was posed. But, the need to go to the meta-critical, which I think is always a little bit problematic, I don't want to say I consider this is only interesting insofar as it says something about us.

Jesse Molesworth: We all work in examples. You know, I think that's one of the strengths of this conference is that we're not simply having a subject-matter—but a methodological—discussion.

Nersessian: Yes.

Molesworth: Johannes, would you like to reply or would you like to reserve your questions.

Johannes Türk: I mean this doesn't come from a larger project [laughter], so it's not exactly representative of my work or of anything else. So, I think what my aim was in writing it was to make visible a story of the disappearance of exemplarity that happens much earlier in the eighteenth century than I think is usually assumed and which occurs in moral philosophy—in Hume,

it's fairly visible. And, I think, you know, it describes one of the major turning points, for me, in the relationship between ethics and exemplarity.

Now, this is not the only story. There's, as I indicate, another story that Michel's talk tomorrow will tell—a story in which exemplarity in the philosophy of the eighteenth century plays a very intricate role and becomes something like a very highly differentiated tool to think about the human mind and judgment. But, I think on the simple level of thinking ethics as something that has to do with the pedagogy of examples that comes to an end in Hume and, it seems to me, in an interesting and not widely recognized way.

And, I can try to make it more visible, actually, why I think that Hume, in a way, operates this disintegration of elements of ethical thinking and discourses of pedagogy in the discussion. And, then, you know, it seemed to me that Kleist, I mean, his [Hume's] metaphor is really one that's even used in titles of books about Kleist, but I think Hume's ethical thinking in particular this metaphorical relationship between wall and vault is entirely ignored as far as I know. Whereas the philosopher Kleist's often read through is Kant, which I think is a mistake partly because it was already discovered twenty years ago that he—in the famous letter that formulated the Kant crisis of Kleist—where he talks about how reading Kant's *First Critique* was for him the realization that if we actually had green lenses [instead of eyes] we would be unable to see them because they are built into our apparatus for perceiving the world, but that's actually a quote from a second-rate novel of the 1780s. So that—and there were additional attempts to turn, you know, his whole crisis in which he begins to doubt radically perception, emotion ...through, you know, a doctor's visit that is assumed—well, there are several trips where no one knows what Kleist actually did, so people began to assume he went to the doctor to be cured of, you know, onanism and other moral problems that he seems to have had and that were, I don't know....

So, but, actually I think that Hume is a more important thinker for him, and in particular his metaphors and I think they have enormous explanatory power. Because if you look at most of his texts then there is always, I mean, they are... I think they simplify somewhat also the meaning of Kleist. I think they are at their heart often about the disassociation between an individual experience and collective assumptions about morality, about history, and so on. So, I try to reintroduce a thematic reading through the, my reading of Hume into Kleist that, on the one hand, simplifies him and, on the other hand, opens him up to make him visible as an author that actually talks about problems.

And, I think, therefore, that there's a similar tendency in both of our papers to say...--to make moral philosophy, to make literature, actually, talk about thematic problems and then to regain an intricacy from there that's epistemological and ethical but that is not purely academic discourse. In other words, I do not try to just be smarter than someone else (which I could not do any way because I spent very little time in writing the paper).

Mary Favret: Otherwise you could've. [laughter].

Türk: So, I'm not sure if this makes sense, but I think I was also particularly interested in your paper in those moments where you talk about the relationship between exemplarity and figuration as something that is supplementary. And, in a certain way, the emphasis on figuration actually keeps the humanities (if I understood some parts of your paper correctly) from making claims about the world, right? And, I think, in a certain way, I agree with it.

And, I put a lot of trust in the history of ideas. In other words, it matters to me that an appendix in Hume's *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* something becomes thinkable that

someone later can refer to when he discovers that actually our moral universe is less coherent than we're used to, and that we, so to speak, read over complications and fissures in it because we have an established quality that guides our daily life as well as our discursive academic thinking. Yeah, so . . .

Nersessian: I actually have a question I wanted to ask you. Jesse already alluded to this in his comments: so an individual and a couple don't seem to me be the same thing. So, the idea that at the end of the story the rights of the individual are, in some sense, superseded or the claims of the individual are superseded by the claims, if you want to call them that, of the community, seems like it has to be complicated by a sense of what "coupledom" means in that story. So, it seems like an individual, OK, is one thing, right, but a couple is a form of a relation between two people that is then found to be in some way insufficient or undesirable, right, in the name of some other kind of relation to an innumerable group of people. I wonder if that seems to make sense or not, but it was something that I thought of.

Türk: Yes, it entirely makes sense. I mean, the reason why I included it is that what Hume calls—what he previously called "natural virtues," he no longer calls them by that name in the *Inquiry*—they, in a way, relate someone's ethical impulses and perception exclusively to one object (and that can be a person), and what he discovers is that that set of previously called "natural virtues" or virtues is an entirely different order, a different domain in our ethical being than, say, justice. So, Hume, by being an empiricist, he dissolves a lot of the hierarchies that are established which is a basic move and I think Deleuze is principally right by calling him a "transcendental empiricist." In other words, he says the universal actually is an empirical fact in man—it's a moral sense, but it's only one that is actually on the same level, that can compete, for example, to be the motivating actor in human action side by side with egotism and utility and a lot of other principles. So, this is a huge move of disintegration, and then Hume tries to establish, to bring those elements together again. He has elements of a history of morals where he seems to say "Look, these impulses like benevolence and pity, are actually some part of the origin of morals," but he never gives us the whole story (unlike Rousseau). And, so this makes these fissures never disappear, and I think in this appendix he comes, really, to the conclusion that, you know, these basic sentiments that are virtues *and* things like justice actually are entirely different things. So, *justice* emerges only in a system: it's based on utility or at least it has to do with it, it's established through convention, it has to do with the social. Whereas, these other, you know, ethical impulses and feelings—they are something entirely different, so that it's no longer possible to arrive at an image of the social and of the ethical universe in it by considering both as part of the same story and the same dimension. Which I find extremely fascinating.

And, I think to return to it, I mean, the social and actually the relationship between one and the other... [inaudible] are in a way the core lesson that I took from Hume. Not sure if that answers you, but it also let... I went back to some of the arguments in the case that you didn't have them all present.

Molesworth: I think we'll open it up to anyone who has questions. I have Frauke, I don't have anyone else.

Frauke Berndt: Is it okay that I have two questions? [laughter] One is for Johannes and one is for Anahid. I loved your paper very much, but still I have a little problem: it's like figuration happens when exemplarity fails.

Nersessian: Yes, that's your question?

Berndt: Yeah, so figuration happens when exemplarity fails. So, that means to me that you need to differentiate between example and figure, right? So, in order to do so, actually, I think you need an ontological background because, I mean, with the tradition of rhetoric you could not differentiate example and figure because example *is* a figure. It's one figure among others, and it's a figure and yet not a trope; so, whereas, a metaphor or a metonymy or whatever that is trope. So, when you say "example versus figure" I think you need an ontological background and, if so, then the antagonism doesn't make any sense and it must be "exemplarity versus fictionality" or something like that. So, that would be a theme or problem I just don't understand because I think you're switching levels in the argumentation, conceptual levels or something. So, I would be happy to understand that.

The other question is for Johannes. So, you say: because it's dealing with the relationship between the individual and the general, right, and, of course, in Kleist, to Kleist's credit, it fails. So, you say events can no longer become an example for anyone, which is obviously true, but by observing the whole setting of the novella why don't you just go a step further or a level higher in your observation and say, why then, the novella's exemplarity is that it is just exemplary for the group, right. So, and then you would rescue the whole exemplarity for the novella just on a higher level, right? But, then you could not say exemplarity in itself as a paradigm fails, well, that's what I'm asking myself.

Molesworth: Anahid, would you like to...?

Nersessian: Sure. So, I'm trying to find exactly where that is in the paper, but if I remember myself correctly I think that that statement is something that comes up in the reading of Wordsworth? And, this is something that I think is important for this project as a whole, and I probably should've said this earlier... I'm very reluctant to generalize across texts. I think I'm too much of a formalist to do that, right? So, in my sense, exemplarity or figuration happens when exemplarity fails *in* Wordsworth's poem "Nutting," right? but it may not always happen.

Michel Chaouli: It's actually much more interesting than what you're describing. [laughter].

Nersessian: Great! Thanks.

Chaouli: Because you say that *just before* you start with the Wordsworth, and you introduce it by writing, "Take, for example, Wordsworth's."

Nersessian: Oh, great. [laughter].

Chaouli: So, it's an example of?

Nersessian: Yeah, so that's totally tendentious, I mean, I'm being tendentious. I think what's going on there, right, is I'm trying to set up the reading of Wordsworth in that paragraph, right. So, I think that's totally true, although that leads us, sort of, leads me back to the formalist claim that the ideas you take away from a single poem are also the ideas that you go to that single poem bearing, right? And, I think that's totally what's going on here, so I think there is a kind of tautology at work, right, in between these two paragraphs, I think that's totally right. But, formalists are entitled to feel totally comfortable with tautology.

So, but to go back to your question, right? I mean, we were sort of talking about this yesterday and, you know, my claim that I think exemplarity, you know, has to be informative about something in the real world, whereas figuration doesn't. And so, in this poem, right, in "Nutting" (and I now realize that this is not clear in the paper), in "Nutting" (though this may be less interesting), right, there is an attempt to suggest that an experience is one of a set of like experiences, but that attempt then fails, right? And then, the poem tilts into kind of a pure figure at which point it becomes totally impossible to think that the phrase "one dear nook/unvisited" refers to anything in the real world, so that I think is at least what's going on in that paragraph or in that poem.

But I do think what you say about the ontological background, I feel wary about mainly because I'm wary about talking about things like ontology in the context of literature. Because I feel as though, speaking of things that have to be informative about real things in the world, ontological thought is really one of them. And I really want to carve out a space where there are different levels of thinking that can be theorized and literary thinking is simply on different levels, and so I think that for that reason the paper and the project and my thinking in general tend to get a little bit, start to look a little bit like a cardiograph or something, right, jumping up and down different levels, but that's deliberate.

Molesworth: Mary has a little one?

Favret: Well, I just want to say, I just want to ask: do you think of the example as a figure? I mean, or is it a special kind of figure unlike the other kind of figures that you've marshaled?

Nersessian: I think, again, I know this sounds like a cop-out answer—

Favret: Or even just in Wordsworth.

Nersessian: In Wordsworth, right. I don't think so, right? I mean, I think exemplarity in Wordsworth is a formal relationship between one thing and a set of things, and when that formal relationship does not exist or becomes impossible to apprehend (in "Nutting") then you have a moment of figuration. So, to me the difference between, say, parts and wholes and example is that an example is a kind of philosophical form. That's what's at stake in that moment in the quotation from Agamben's *The Coming Community*, right, "singular distinct objects *m*. . . and a whole [set] *M*." So, I think that's a narrow idea of example and one that I'm using to constrain the domain of figuration and separate it out from the domain of exemplarity. But, nonetheless that's what I would come down to if I had to.

Molesworth: Johannes, would you like to respond?

Türk: Yes. So, yeah, in a certain way...and as I said this is a very sketchy version of what I was thinking, but I try to relate different dimensions of exemplarity. So on the content level, I would say what I find interesting is that here we have a philosopher who talks about the disappearance of exemplarity in a concrete, thematic way. He talks about its disappearance in two different ways: for one, he says (and this I find really interesting and I found nothing written on it), that with the idea of natural virtue in the eighteenth century, something like exemplarity becomes irrelevant because I do actually act out of an instinct, out of a spontaneous pre-reflexive impulse or feeling in Rousseau, as in many writers, and that's one of the origins of plurality. In other words, I just help someone—I don't think about it, I spontaneously act. So, on the thematic level that's something I found interesting. On the other hand, I found very interesting how a different form of thematic exemplarity disappears which is that he says, you know, the justice system (that's why he uses the vault as an example, as an image for it) works irrespective of the individual case. He even says, in many cases the law works, is detrimental in individual cases not by being unjust (which is an old thing, like everyone talks about, you know, the law being human error, there are different ways to explain it, it can be unjust), but it says because it has no relation to the individual case. It doesn't depend on it. Other than the judgment itself, there's no relation between the two, and, in many cases, laws are detrimental. For example, a guy inherits money with which, whatever, he builds bombs, right? So Hume says there's actually no exemplarity in the relationship between the law and an individual case of this type, right, that the individual case would speak about or manifest the value of this particular legal rule. Of course, the judge applies it and that's a different form of exemplarity, but you know, if you think of it as a moral fact it disappears; that's what Hume says explicitly. So, that's thematic, and I find it again in Kleist and I think it explains, it has an enormous power of explaining a lot of Kleist texts, right, exactly this disappearance. So, that's thematic.

From that I try to revisit, of course, the genre of the novella that grows out of exemplary forms of literature in the medieval period, in Boccaccio, that has been shown in a very interesting way, that his thematic structuring, for example, still inherits those collections and, actually, the furor of collecting and ordering exemplary stories in, you know, the medieval period, especially, the late medieval period. So, the novella is, from the beginning, something, a genre that comes, you know, that speaks about a crisis of exemplarity, of the exemplarity of narration. So, then, I try to, in a way, thematically motivate this in Kleist in a different way than it's usually done. So, there are people that relate, for example, the novella to contemporary Romantic theories of the novella that speak of it as actually filling a problem that historiography has. For example, Schlegel says, look, historiography tells the big story, but those individual stories that actually cannot be integrated into the historic narration are actually what becomes the subject of the novella. And, so there *are* attempts to talk, you know, about the problems of exemplarity, and no longer being exemplary of the novel in these genre terms.

And, I try to re-motivate it through a thematic reading which emphasizes moral philosophy instead of epistemology because, in general, you know, Kleist is always read as the expression or the epitome of an epistemological crisis in literature, and I want to deliberately argue against it because that leads to readings that, in the end, are only allegorizing problematics of reading in general and I want to get out of that because of.... yeah. And so, in that way it's also a move to, back to a certain of historicity in a certain way that motivates the way I read it. So, what does that say? I mean, in the end, is it exemplary for a certain failure?

So, in the beginning I try to open up by Quintilian, which has many, many different functions. Because for one, I mean, the rhetoric tradition in school really survives in some parts of Europe

really till the 1920s. My grandfather went to school where he had rhetoric as a subject, right? So in general it's assumed it disappears with the... so I try to find to tap into this very technical tradition, pedagogy of teaching ethics of thinking about ethics that actually aligns, but, in a way, falls outside of the literary and philosophic discourse at the end of the eighteenth century.

And, there are three ways in which that's relevant. I mean, for one, you know, it's relevant because the example is one of the forms of the argument that comes with a lot of interesting implications, right, the authority, the example you use, the literary example, the derivative. Then, examples are important for teaching, both of, you know, style, of oratory skills, as well as learning an ethos for one's speech, and then the third dimension is a general theory of imitation emerges from it in rhetorical handbooks that, in a way, claims that the enterprise of rhetoric is to turn nature into culture or to supplement it or further it and that actually virtues depend on a certain way of ...on the example in order to learn them and practice them.

So, I think that these three dimensions... of course, one of them never disappears in that there is a certain exemplarity in texts at work. And, of course, on that level I would say yes, that Kleist is actually, in any story that even tries to be non-exemplary participates in the power of exemplarity because the reader actually wants to read it as an instance of either a set of other examples (like Kleist's novellas, like the Romantic literature we want to place Kleist under) or of a general rule (which are two very different operations). And, on that level I would say I don't really show and I don't really go as far as to say that it's not exemplary, but I read it as exemplary for certain thematic problems that determine literary form. Is that—?

Susan Staves: Yes, a quick intervention in support of your general discussion of Hume as a dis-integrator and your (to me) interesting remark about Hume's position that law has no, law might not have a necessary relation to an individual case. I think you could press that even further with relation to Hume by arguing Hume sometimes, especially when he's writing on political subjects, sees law as (law in the large sense) as having no necessary relation even to a particular legal rule or legal doctrine. And, impressment is an example of that. Because Hume briefly discusses impressment as an oddity because, while he's not against it politically, he acknowledges that it is unjust to the persons impressed and notes that it is odd that we nevertheless have it and apparently need it.

Türk: Yeah, right. Yeah, I couldn't agree more. I think that's also very interesting. I think in a way there's two tendencies in Hume, and I think, you know, the conventionalism of his thinking of justice, about justice and the law, actually would have to lead him to a certain relativism. And, on the other hand, he comes, for example, in his writings on the judgment of the beautiful and the, you know, in the aesthetic texts, he says that we necessarily cannot fully appreciate Homer and some of the ancient Greek texts because they so obviously contradict our moral sense.

So, you know, even though, I mean, I think the dominant, if one understands him in a coherent way, one would have to say convention plays such a large role, and, in a certain way, this in-born moral sense—you know, inborn, I'm not sure—but the moral sense that he, in a way, thinks all humans have, is a very open one. So it's, you know, and, he acknowledges the relativism, that it's possible to have entirely different moral rules, and what he does as the first one is he says they have nothing to do with right or wrong. Like a value judgment or an aesthetic judgment, of course, they are not right or wrong, and it's not possible to even think about them in that dimension. Yeah, and on the other hand, there are these moments that seem to contradict, but I think a coherent reading of Hume would have to come to a conclusion on that.

Molesworth: Simon is next on my list.

Simon Stern: I pass.

Hall Bjørnstad: So thanks for two very inspiring papers to think with, so I will to try to think along and push it a step further. To me, exemplarity is attractive also because it escapes ... it escapes me; it's unruly. So, I will push you on some of the more sweeping claims. So, this brings me back to the point Frauke brought up, in a very broad sense, that figuration happens when exemplarity fails, and it seems to me if you consider exemplarity as a figure which links back to reality that maybe you can do something different with your wider project? So that's the challenge.

And then, Johannes, you, I think, at least when you make your major distinctions, you put exemplarity on the side of rationality. So, you say they are separate because what precedes reflection escapes exemplarity, but if you take the third element of what you said exemplarity is the construction of the pre-rational. So, if it is through exemplarity that the constructed ends up seeming natural, then, ... in a way this is sort of a rephrasing of what Frauke said, so then the dichotomy and rupture changes, too. So, I don't have answers, but it's just a way of pushing you.

Nersessian: So, maybe it will help to get a little brass tacks about this for a second. So, if you say exemplarity is a figure, right, what kind of figure is it? So, if we say... my first instinct is to say, OK, probably it's a synecdoche of some kind, right. But then I think of the classic example of synecdoche, right, of parts for whole, and I think of what you tell undergraduates, right? So, saying a sail for a ship. But there's nothing exemplary about that; that's simply a part of an object that represents the whole object. So, if we're saying exemplarity is *not* a synecdoche or a metaphor or an apostrophe or anything that I would call figures within a literary context, do you think that to the list of synecdoche, metaphor, an apostrophe we should add exemplarity, right?

Then I have a problem because, to me, what a figure does, what any figure does is (I'm sure we can come up with many counter examples, but I'll say this anyway), what a figure does is propose a relationship that is in someway counterintuitive, not true, forced, imagined, any of those things. And so, I think as soon as example or exemplum becomes any of those things—forced, imaginative, counterintuitive, untrue—it fails as an example because it's no longer performative. So, that's why I make a distinction between those two things, because I think sometimes what we end up calling or what we seem to be calling exemplary ends up being something different. So, what you were just saying before about the exemplary reading for the exemplarity in Kleist within Romanticism or within the history of the novella, I think do you mean exemplary or do you mean evidentiary, right? Or do you mean synecdochal: we say "Kleist," but we mean the novella, right? I think those are two different things.

Bjørnstad: But, then you speak as if you already knew what "example" means in what you say.

Nersessian: Yeah, so I think that an example of something is a thing that is a part of a set of like things, and yet it somehow stands outside of them.

Bjørnstad: But, so are they a microcosmic in someway? What that entails and couldn't you say what?

Nersessian: Yeah, so but then I think that it's context specific. So, that's why I say, well I would pay attention to the specific text and the context of the thing. So, when Wordsworth says, you know, it was "one of those days which cannot die," there is such a thing as days that cannot die, right? And this is one of them. But then in my reading, when you push on that statement you realize that "days that cannot die" is a metaphor, right? So, the exemplarity of that statement or the would-be exemplarity of that statement is immediately undercut by the fact that the set itself is metaphorically constituted. Does that make sense?

Bjørnstad: It makes plenty of sense at one level, but then there's still... I still have a lingering question about what work exemplarity is doing.

Molesworth: Frauke has a tiny one, right?

Berndt: Yeah, a tiny one. My problem since yesterday, actually, is that we don't differentiate between example and exemplarity, and I think that these are two completely different things. Because exemplarity has the problem of framing and pragmatics and ethics and pedagogics and whatever, so it depends on certain contracts. There's a contract that you and me agree that the water thing is exemplary for God or so; whereas, an example is something different. So, we have, I think we have to search for a discipline to help us describe an example. So, I think that one is a more symbiotic problem, the other is a more hermeneutic problem or an institutional problem, or something like that, but it's definitely not the same and we are mixing it up always.

Nersessian: So, it seems to me, this is going to sound like, I mean, I don't mean to proliferate entities... I don't have a problem with exemplarity which seems to me purely to describe the quality of being an example. I think what you're describing seems to me like the kind of social or institutional forces pushing on a word is more of a problem when we talk about something "exemplary" because that has a clear ethical connotation to it. Exemplarity, not so much, I think that's sort of just a straightforward description of the quality of being an example, but I take your point, nonetheless.

Berndt: That's a good one, I mean, I would agree with that if you define "exemplarity" like that. But we're using it or it was being used always as being exemplary for something or to someone.

Nersessian: Yeah.

Jonathan Elmer: A short one, and I also wanted to ask Anahid to go back to her earlier comment in this context about the difference between trope and figure because I think we're also caught in the, there's a, sort of... the tradition of rhetoric with its grab-bag of figures versus a more modern, specifically literary-critical, usage of some of the same terms that don't necessarily line up, right? What you call a figure I don't think rhetoric would call a figure.

Nersessian: I think that's totally true because a trope literally means—and you're going to have to correct my Greek—a trope is literally a turn, a turning. So, to me trope and figure because they do the same work, right, can be classed among the same type of things. That's, you're right

that's some kind of a literary-critical kind of tradition rather than one that's from Classical rhetoric, I think that's right, and that's really helpful.

Molesworth: Johannes, do you have a reply or would you like to save it?

Türk: I'm not sure if I can get back to Hall, but I think it's neither trope nor a figure. I mean examples are a type of argument in rhetoric first and foremost, so it's neither-nor. So there's, that's why it, actually, is very fascinating to think about the relationship between the two that you open because if you think of climate change, you know, what happens there is that there are certain narratives, right—and I think arguments that are narrative is what actually a useful narrative is what the example is in rhetoric—and, I think what happens to climate change is, for example, that some narratives become metaphors. So, for example, if you read a book with an elaborate description of the spring and you go somewhere and actually the weather patterns are so chaotic that it's more and more difficult to recognize the weather patterns, to recognize what, say, a nineteenth-century realist novel describes as spring. Then you can see that actually many of the exemplary narratives that relate, actually, literary texts and ontological reality become figurative simply through a very basic, huge change. And so, the dimension of an anthropocenic, so the questions then that Nietzsche asks or which you kind of mention in passing in your essay about the anthropocentrism and the relationship between figure and perception and inhabiting the universe I think are extremely interesting to think about... through the question of figure and exemplarity because what is a... like, a novel starts with a beautiful summer August day in 1784, right, and you are somewhere and it's maybe forty-five degrees [Centigrade] and it's really not nice. [laughter]

So, it's an interesting experience. That's what your essay made me think about in terms of the question of figurality and exemplarity. The very basic parameters of experience and of language are at stake in the process of climate change.

Nersessian: So, when you first said that you thought that, OK, when examples are mobilized in rhetoric they're narratively mobilized... I think that seems really right, and that makes sense to me given what Jesse said about both of our papers being interested in counterexamples, right, or being counterexamples because it seems as though—and I think that's totally right, the your desire to, you know, bracket the epistemological reading of Kleist for a moral, philosophical problem. It seems that one of the things going on in those novellas is that they're also counter-narrative, at least in the normative sense of narrative, right, where it's very clear what has happened from point A to point B. There's a kind of explanation or discovery of the trick and anything, and you sort of don't get that, right? There's an oddness to the story. So, I think that seems right.

But, then I wonder because, for me, I would want to say that the example itself has nothing to do with narrative, right, it's a formal relation, but I think that it makes sense to say once the example is mobilized, right, or when something is picked up and described as an example, that's when a kind of narrative or story-telling about how that thing fits into other kinds of things comes into play, that seems right.

Molesworth: I have Richard for the next big one.

Richard Nash: I want to respond to Johannes's reference to climate change here, but it's probably not a question, probably not even a comment, probably just a long-winded, tentative hypothesis, and I'll project that the comment really goes to both papers and harks back to Ron's lecture yesterday. Because when I was reading these papers, admittedly hastily, one of the things that I saw hooking them together that interested me a good deal was to think about—less thinking about them as Romanticism (though that helps)—but thinking about how their papers struck me as being anti, about anti-ecological thinking, about modes of thinking that I think we could dump onto Romanticism and say prevent or at least delay for a long time thinking ecologically.

And, it seems to me that there's a sense in which the function of what's the example here (in both cases) is focusing on an example of the one, exemplary case that then winds up privileged over systemic thinking. And so, the tentative comment/hypothesis for you, Anahid, is that I wish you would do more with the ecological moment that you bring up and that I don't see working out fully. But when I was going to reach back to Ron's paper... it's that what we didn't talk about at all—we had this wonderful conversation yesterday after your talk about the poets, about the state, about exemplarity—but Johannes' paper is also about exemplary punishment that gets interrupted by a higher level dispensation, right? andif you're thinking in terms of that marvelous phrase that you used, that you paid attention to, about the apparatus and thinking about how proliferated the notion of apparatus is when you think of it as including not just human actors, but also non-human actors. And, particularly in the case of Kleist, it seems to me you can mobilize a whole world as part an apparatus here, right? It seems to me that that way of thinking is precisely what moves us away from the way we're comfortable speaking about what is the example or the exemplary, right? We're comfortable thinking about that in terms of the context of the *polis* and the context of the state and of a single exemplary moment. But it seems to me that the whole notion of the apparatus is one that extends and proliferates agencies in ways that are much more closely aligned with ecological thinking than both of these works seem to be moving against. And so, I just, I'm wondering if what happens to exemplarity as we move into Romanticism is, in some ways, a move towards a kind of... a notion that resists ecological thinking, and then, that I would now say is high time to start undoing—just by way of closing my polemical thought.

Nersessian: I can give you the long-winded answer or the long-winded something because there won't be an answer. So, OK, so I'll tell you where the genesis of this project started. The genesis of the project really starts from an essay, which I'm sure many of you know by Eve Sedgwick: it's her "Paranoid Thinking" or "Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading" essay, and the essay begins by recording a conversation that Sedgwick has with Cindy Patton in which Sedgwick asks Patton what she thinks about all these conspiracy theories that are circulating about HIV/AIDS, right? And namely that the U.S. government has deliberately released the AIDS virus amongst communities of, you know, poor people and gay men, right, "people whose lives they hold cheap," right, that's the phrase, and all these other, you know, kind of conspiracy theories which clearly have an element of truth to them and certainly have a great deal of political efficacy (because conspiracy theories do). And, Patton says, in response, I'm not interested in things like that because even if we knew all those things, right, that the government doesn't care about certain types of people, that heads of state look pacifically on what that they know is, you know, coming, ecological crisis and all those things, even if we knew all that, what would we know now that we don't already know, right? And, it seems as though that the moment originally seems or initially seems quiescent. But, in fact, it's totally militant because what it means is you don't

need to know the full story to act ethically or politically, right. In fact, there may be something about *not knowing* the whole story that enables a true ethical action or a true political action.

So, that was the genesis of this project, and I'll say why, though I would want to note and I probably should've said this earlier that one of the things that this project is going to do is seesaw between the eighteenth-century and the early nineteenth-century and the 1980s. So, that's a specific—

Nash: So Rumsfeld is going to be a partner in this [laughter].

Nersessian: A dance partner, or on the seesaw. Oh, that's a horrifying image. [laughter].

Favret: It's a way of dancing. [laughter].

Nersessian: So, the project actually moves between a series of ecological—what we would now call a series of ecological disasters—between, say, 1750 and 1850 and the rise of the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s. And, I can say more about that, and I will do it now. So, what interests me is that there now seems to be a species of that kind of thinking that Patton says she has a hard time getting interested in or she finds ethically uninspiring very alive within the humanities, right. And, it means, and so the way I see it playing out is precisely to take this hypothesis, you know, scientific hypothesis about the anthropocene and say, “Now, starting from 1780 we have to start talking about everything that happens since 1780 as part of a narrative of ecological crisis” right, and that's where my resistance comes in. And, I would say, you know, the claim there is to sort of justify humanistic inquiry by relating its objects to real things that happen in the world, and I find that dangerous. Or I find it, you know, as Patton says, uninteresting in an ethical way. So, what I'm interested in is actually not climate change at all, what I'm interested in is—though I am interested, personally, just not on the page [laughter]—is looking at a series of disasters, like the Lisbon earthquake and like the, you know, Laki volcano explosion, none of which have anything to do with climate change, right? None of which have anything to do with human activity, the same goes for the year without a summer of 1816, right. Sometimes a volcano just explodes, right? Sometimes the earth shakes, those are things that happen, right? And, trying to use those moments and the lack of human meaning that they have, and the lack of historical or political meaning that they seem to have as an opening onto another way to thinking about ecology ...in a kind of counter-evidentiary way, right. So, that you don't *need* to know that it's forty-five degrees in August to be, you know, ecologically minded, right. If it were a pleasant, a balmy seventy-five you should still be ecologically minded, right? So, my interest in nescience or unknowing comes from this desire to look at that place where you don't know what's going to happen and develop an ethical attitude towards it or make an ethical decision in the absence of any knowledge of, you know, the meaning of an event or it's consequences. So, I think I would say I'm totally all for ecological thinking, I just would just like to present an alternative way of doing that doesn't involve seeking out examples of climate change in 1790. Okay, does that make sense?

Molesworth: Hall, your turn.

Bjørnstad: I guess I just wanted to comment about what Richard said about exemplarity as anti-ecological, I think that's very helpful and I will try to rephrase it as a way of integrating it in the

conversation. So, what I said yesterday after Ron's lecture about the state, exemplarity as a way of staging, exemplarity gives, constructs a stage, gives spotlight to history, and then of course, what is eclipsed is the systemic perspective—it's not in the spotlight. And, of course my paper tomorrow about royal exemplarity, the epitome of the non-ecological, because it's the extreme spotlight, so I think that's a very important observation.

Molesworth: We have half hour left, and I have Michel, Kate, Oz, and Julia. So, Michel.

Michel Chaouli: So, I guess this kind of fits: so, what I found very stimulating about our discussion since yesterday is that the notion of exemplarity connects on a very deep level to our own practice, to our own practice of reading, but also of teaching. So, we heard from pretty much everybody how exemplarity is a pedagogical method, and I don't think the humanities have been able to do without them or probably cannot do without them. So, I've been thinking a lot as people have been discussing objects of analysis, how it actually folds back into ways of thinking that I myself am engaged with.

So that was [why] I was particularly interested, Anahid, in a moment (and this relates to the ecological) in your paper where you speak about environmental conditions, and you say—and I'm just curious for you to say more, if you know more (you said this is the beginning, so you may not)—you said, “My own approach will be to treat those counter-affirmative things known as poems precisely as Sidney demands: as fabricated artifacts which neither determine the real nor disguise it, but instead actively explore the ground or, if you like, the environmental conditions from which knowledge does and does not emerge.”

I don't think I completely understand, but “the environmental conditions”—maybe this is what you're asking about? I'm not sure—but that seems like a strange thing, to me, to say because it seems to me we're kind of disciplinarily always focused on the non-environment, which is to say on the system or on the thing that has an environment. And, we're not, we're not really equipped with thinking about whatever the environment of the thing is since we're so focused on... on the systematicity of the object of study whether it's a poem or something larger than a poem. Anyway, I was just curious about how one goes about thinking in a *humanistic* way about the environmental conditions of knowing or not knowing.

Nersessian: So, one of the things—I don't know if this is a site of confusion or what, but I should say it—one of the things that's going on there is that I am using, deliberately, obnoxiously using “environmental” in the way that, say, an analytic philosopher would use it, to mean “context” (as opposed to “ecosystem”) right? So, and the reason I did that, just stylistically, is to use a word that now tends to have a certain kind of moral, ethical purchase, and seems to refer to “the environment” embedded in “environmentalism” in a very different way. So, parenthetically, one of the things I'm really interested in is the terms that do and do not export and import easily between literary analysis and philosophy, right? You know, philosophers can use the phrase “just in case” to mean “only in the case that,” which I find really fascinating, and “environmental,” right, in philosophy or, at least, in analytic philosophy means contextual, right. So, what really straightforwardly what I mean there is that poems, at least this Wordsworth poem, thinks about the context in which, or describes the context in which, someone didn't know something. So, that context could be, at least in the case of the Wordsworth poem, something as, you know, as sort of banal and descriptive as “I remember now walking into this nook and it was like other nooks that I had visited, but I had never visited it before, but I loved it already as I had loved all those

other nooks.” There’s a kind of confusion that’s generated through that description of the nook, and through that confusion comes this moment, right, I then describe as figuration happening when exemplarity fails, right.

So, to answer the question about humanistic, about how do we think humanistically about that kind of environmental condition, now I would say that for me it really comes back to something like close reading. I was thinking this, too, when you were describing your, your move away from the epistemological reading of Kleist to the moral-philosophical reading of Kleist because, to me, it also seems to me like what some people are now calling surface reading or just like straight reading, right. What *happens* in that story is that these two people survive an earthquake, and then they are killed. That’s what happens in that story, right? And you don’t need to think deeply into it and uncover a kind of epistemological crisis; you can look on the surface and look at what’s described to find something that is, maybe, even more interesting than that, which is a moral problem about the relationship between couple and community or, you know, between rights of the individual, rights of the community.

So, I think, for me, the environmental condition or the contextual condition is an object I uncover through trying to read as much on the surface as possible. So in the case of this paper it would be things like attending to grammar and syntax in a really basic way. And, I think that is counter-systematic, right? Insofar as you are just looking at the way, the placement of a comma or the way that a line is enjambed and trying to extrapolate from that a context, or the world of the poem, but not the world at large.

Molesworth: Kate?

Katherine Blake: This question is for Anahid, and I just want to push a little on your reading of Wordsworth and “Nutting.” I want to put it (and I’m looking at page seven, in the middle of page seven when you sort of bring up memory, and you’re talking about how this poem engages with that), I think I want to put this in the context of maybe some other poems that Wordsworth wrote that talk about memory like, maybe, “Tintern Abbey.” And, sort of, think about... for Wordsworth, I think what’s important about memory is that he wants to recreate the experience of the *recollecting* subject, right, so not just organizing and classifying, you know, what is memory, what is a memory, but what does it mean to be someone who remembers? And, I think the subject of this particular poem is not so much the little boy, as it is the adult person who is, you know, remembering the little boy. And, I think that distinction is important in a culture that, you know, did then and still now often conflates materiality with memory and thinks that materiality is an extension of memory, right? [It’s important] to intervene in that way and to think about memory through the *experience* of remembering is, I think, sort of a way to counter that.

So, I would want to ask, what would you say to the claim that these moments where he says “one nook” or he talks about “perhaps,” right, and these moments of, sort of, nescience, right, where there’s sort of forgetting happening, but these are “just” (and “just” in like really big scare quotes, right) [laughter] are moments where he’s trying to reproduce or produce an experience of recollection, right? That these forgettings, these, sort of, gaps in the texts are productive of that experience rather than, say, or indicate maybe an actual lapse in memory, right, rather than, sort of, stepping around of the exemplary.

Nersessian: Yeah, I think that’s totally right. I think everything you’ve said is completely right, and, just to, this is just to footnote what you’ve just said, “dear” really does that work because it

is unclear, at least on that first reading, it's unclear whether it is the remembered childhood self that understood the nook to be dear or if it is the remembering *adult* who now feels that, right, that's totally correct, I think that's fantastic. So, I would simply say yes, absolutely.

So, I think that because, you know, a poem that describes an experience is always written after the fact, right, there's a kind of temporal confusion that's built in there, right, between remembering and the, sort of, the recollected past tense that is reanimated as though it is the present tense, but we *know* it's the past tense, right, if only because it's written down, right. So, I would simply say one of the things that interests me about nescience, right, and a nescient poetics is precisely that it assembles itself by toggling those registers of the remembered thing and the act of remembering in the present tense. So, yeah, I think, "yes" is my answer to your question. Wonderful.

Molesworth: Oz.

Oscar Kenshur: Actually, my gesture must not have been sufficiently clear because it was supposed to be an intervention about Hume and the moment has passed. So, I will... it's too late for that one.

Molesworth: Julia.

Julia Douthwaite: Just a kind of straightforward question on page two of your paper here. You say in the sentence, the paragraph that begins "As for 'this mess'," "What does it signify that the crisis in higher education is increasingly tied to and countered by an insistence, by academic non-scientists, on the realities of climate change?" So, I would like to know what you're talking about, really.

Nersessian: Which part?

Douthwaite: The whole sentence. I've never seen the crisis in higher education being tied to climate change.

Nersessian: So, if you read a lot of articles in *PMLA*, which I know not everyone does [laughter], in, say *PMLA* or *Critical Inquiry*—which are two journals that I think because they are trans-disciplinary, you know, I think tend to present themselves and I think really operate as organs of speech for a profession—you will see that a high percentage of those articles now tend to be about environmental issues, whether that means, you know, a move toward animal studies or any kind of post-humanistic discourse or writing about climate change or anything of that nature, right. And, one of the rhetorical moves, and I mean rhetorical in the traditional sense, right, one of the rhetorical moves that tends to be made in that kind of writing is the suggestion that, you know, "people" or *The New York Times* or whoever likes to say that the humanities don't have anything real to say about the world but, in fact, if we look at this poem from 1785 you will see William Cowper or whoever it may be, right, talking about environmental crises which we do know are very real things and very important things. So, it turns out that the humanities *do* have things to "uncover" about reality. So, that's a kind of anecdotal observation that is not backed up here by any statistics, but that's what I meant.

Douthwaite: Because I would say that, after, you know, reading the newspapers and paying attention to media, that's not the point I get at all from the current attack on higher education and on the humanities. It has nothing to do with climate change. It has to do with teaching, it has to do with the price of an education for lower income students, it has to do with the lack of diversity, lots of things, but *not* climate change. We're not scientists, we're... you're an English professor.

Nersessian: I agree with you, I couldn't agree with you more.

Douthwaite: Well, and I'm just curious because you're at the university where Bruce Robbins is in your department, I think, and Bruce has written really interesting works about "The Scholar in Society" and kind of given a call to scholars to do more than typical... and so, I'm just kind of wondering since you're in that department and he's your senior colleague, how do you see your work fitting into this? [group laughter]

Nash: Not comfortably at the moment! [group laughter]

Douthwaite: Is this simply just a new way of talking about Romanticism or is this really something that is actually a different way of being in the academy? Which I would think is a great thing. I think that we should all think about different ways of being in the academy, but not just, you know, changing the terms that we use and then doing the same old thing that we always do.

Nersessian: So, I'm going to try and answer that question, but I think I'm having trouble tracking what sentiments are being ascribed to what agents. So—

Douthwaite: Well, this paper says on page fifty, for example, or page four of your essay: "This essay, meanwhile, is part of a larger project engaged in imagining how art and activism might experimentally be construed as" blah, blah, blah, blah, to, you know, "answers to the difficult case of world-historical disaster." So, this is taking kind of an activist attitude. I'm going to *do* something here, I'm going to show a new way of being a scholar, that's somehow better than what's been done.

Nersessian: Oh, gee, I don't think I'm better than anybody. But I will say, had I had more time... maybe I could have. [group laughter].

Simon Stern: That's the way you handle that one.

Nersessian: So, let me think. There are a lot of things to say there. I mean, I think behind ... one of the claims behind the attack on the humanities in higher education is, I believe, and this is I think is the most "substantive" attack (and I use that word in quotes) is that the humanities don't teach people anything about the real world; whether that means they don't prepare them with skills that are needed on a job market, or they are in some sense insular and hermetic and reproduce a kind of elitism where people only pay attention—you have a small intervention?—pay attention to a line break or something like that. I take it that that is the, at least the ideological construct of the attack on higher education, right.

Favret: No, you mean the humanities.

Nersessian: Excuse me, the humanities.

Rebecca Spang: The liberal arts.

Nersessian: The liberal arts, the humanities—

Staves: The humanities are not the liberal arts, they include the pure sciences.

Nersessian: OK, alright, so the move toward, say, STEM, the move toward a more scientifically grounded education, right, that focuses on things like technical ability or technical training, right, I think advances itself on the program that to do, to train students for anything other than the ability to hold down a job or get a job or anything like that is elitist.

Staves: Or make an innovation.

Nersessian: Right or to be an entrepreneurial innovator or anything like that. So, I think at the root of that, right, is a very, very strong separation between “the real world,” right, and whatever that’s not real: poetry, art, imagination, etc., right. I don’t agree with that, but I take that—

Favret: Philosophy.

Nersessian: Philosophy, right, and history, right, in way the history that is done, you know, on places, let’s say, like France instead of places like China which are becoming economic actors in a way that seems relevant and we should know what the history of China is, right. So, there’s an injunction to utility, there’s an injunction to knowing about “reality,” particularly economic reality (if there is such a thing, right, which I think is an open question). But anyway, so I don’t believe that, I am not pro the disintegration of higher education on the basis of the STEM model, right, but I take that that is the objection and the critique of, you know, what I do.

So, in the case of somebody like Bruce. Bruce is always interested in economic difference, right, much more so than he’s interested in environmental crisis. Now, I think that’s very important because it seems to me that one of the things that is quite problematically obscured by a lot of ecological criticism or eco-criticism within the humanities is economic difference and with economic difference things like racial disparity and equatorial disparity, right. So, speaking of my senior colleagues, we actually just hired a woman from the University of Michigan who works on postcolonialism and ecocriticism, which I think is a fantastic project, right? Because what she wants to bring to the postcolonial conversation is an ecological thinking and what she wants to bring to ecological thinking is an awareness of global economic inequity, right. So, I think that’s fantastic.

Now, as for activism... maybe this was not clear from the footnote, but activism and particularly AIDS activism in the 1980s is an *object* of this project’s analysis. Whether it’s a model for my own practice, I think, is an open question for me, and I’ve lately gotten into the habit of saying, you know, I don’t want to bring a gun to a knife fight, and I feel more and more disillusioned...

Nash: Better that than the other way around. [group laughter].

Nersessian: I know, right? I feel more and more wary of filtering or channeling any of my own activism into my work partly because I think that kind of mimetic relationship between one's own political activism and one's own work shores up an idea that there's such a thing as "reality" and "real work" and there's such a thing as, you know, B.S. or whatever. So, I kind of feel—

Staves: Mandarinism.

Nersessian: Mandarinism. So, I kind of feel as though there's something to be said for writing pages on an enjambed line, you know, in an academic book and spending pages on an enjambed line with your graduate students or your undergraduates and then, you know, doing whatever you choose to do in your political life. And, I don't think that that distinction needs to be mapped onto a public/private distinction, I think it just needs, again, to go back to the idea of splintering levels, creating different levels and different types of engagement, right, as a way of contesting this, sort of, the annexation of both public and private by an injunction to commit oneself to the real world. So, that was a kind of long-winded answer.

Douthwaite: I guess it's just not very clear in the essay, that's all.

Molesworth: I've got Connie, it's a small one.

Constance Furey: I was just thinking one thing you hadn't said when you were describing the kind of context for the way of mapping out the investment in climate change was very much.... Latour's way in exactly that essay you're citing identifying the, sort of, sense of crisis of "What have we wrought, what has critique wrought?" if everyone else uses it in order to challenge things like climate change, assertions about climate change.

Nersessian: Yeah.

Furey: And so, the, you know "Oh wait, we do recognize, those who have investments in critique, those in the humanities, we do recognize what reality is" and then the kind of turn to do things like make claims about, to invoke, climate change as a kind of central theme in a reaction to that. ...

Nersessian: Yeah.

Furey: crisis that he diagnosed and what you're doing is very much in conversation with that and you're trying to find an alternative response to Latour. So for the people who hadn't thought about that essay, I thought that might seem helpful?

Molesworth: Richard, you want to go?

Nash: Yeah, thank you, because this is a topic very near and dear to my heart. I don't want to tell Anahid what she meant when she wrote what she wrote, I want to tell everyone what I would've meant had I written what she wrote [group laughter]. And, that is, picking up on the point that

the liberal arts, in particular, are under attack, and I would say the liberal arts, generally, and the humanities, in particular, are under pressure from external forces that we feel intently at state universities...precisely because our function, our job is to educate workers, to train workers. It's a vocational role that we've been assigned and that we're not only derelict in that duty from the position of commerce, but that we are actually teaching things that in many ways are antithetical to what the emerging coalition of STEM technology and corporate interests want the university to become. And, that puts us in a particularly vulnerable position, and one where I think (and this may be a place where I do part company from Anahid) one where I think we've been far too complicit for far too long, in the sense that we continue to hold onto a notion of the humanities that remains fundamentally, as humanism must be, anthropocentric. And that we need to become much more articulate and much more engaged in reframing how the interests that have been valuable and worth pursuing for centuries, and that we are—very late in the game—pursuing, continue to be worth pursuing, but pursuing from a broader perspective, a more ecological perspective in which human agents are not the only determinative agents, but are participants in a much larger process. That's a reformulation of what the humanities, in particular, should be about and could be about and could have some position to speak back to those external forces that are telling us that we are basically irrelevant for training workers, which is what we're hearing all the time when we get our budgets cut. So, that's, that's what I would say, if I were—

Türk: Which is not true, by the way, right. [group laughter]. Very fundamentally not true because—

Nersessian: Who says it's not true?

Türk: According to most recent surveys of American employers, actually the most sought after quality for jobs is communicative and analytical skills, those are exclusively taught in the humanities—unlike in the 1950s, the sciences no longer teach analytical skills. So, in a certain way, you know, I think it is the opposite; I think in the modern economy, so-called humanistic qualities, things like linguistic, intellectual abilities are actually the core of the large part of possibilities for employment, of jobs.

Douthwaite: We all agree with you.

Türk: Well, at the same time, they are devalued systematically, right. So, in other words, like an undergraduate does a chemistry degree even if it's not very good and it's in some areas even recognized as a qualification for jobs, where it is actually not, and that's the work of ideology, right, because those employment opportunities where specific qualifications are required today are very limited in numbers. So, the best students who do a chemistry degree or biology degree get very good jobs, high paying. The rest, actually, occasionally for ideological reasons get alright jobs, and... you know, but there's a certain misrepresentation of the whole debate.

So, I would actually not totally agree with what you said because we are a service based economy in which actually a large part of the job qualifications are very unspecific and have to do with core things in the humanities while the humanities are kind of, you know, low paid and not respected as offering a key qualification.

But, I wanted to return actually to the question of exemplarity and action that you mentioned because what is interesting to me (and it actually relates back to Hall's question) is that in a cer-

tain way, the power of exemplarity does not depend on rationality in the same way that other things do. So, for a long time rhetorically it's a tradition of imitation that develops, and what is interesting to me and Hume, in a certain way, opens up in a very broad sense that field, is that modern sociology and the modern social sciences have abandoned the notion of imitation apart from Gabriel Tarde who is you know, sociology, if you think of it as a sociology that understands human society on the basis of imitation. So, I think in an interesting way there are elements of the history of exemplarity that say look it's actually not a logical relation. First, there are logical paradoxes inherent in it, that it's, for example, part of a group and yet at the same time stands for it, that it see reality as an aspect of it rather than the relationship to a general rule, which is only one aspect of exemplarity. So, that there are many possibilities to think of a, to think about exemplarity working not on the level of cognitive... saturated, in a cognitively saturated field according to a rational relationship to either a rule, a set, or a series. And, I think there it becomes very interesting to bring in rhetorical tradition into the question of action and categories such as ethos, which traditionally are learned, actually, in rhetoric through the example, that are taken over and.. do not require, you know, penetration of the environment by rational means or on the basis of knowledge.

So, it's very interesting, you know, how figures—and this happens in politics all the time—people like, you know, these big heroes of leftist politics, like Che Guevara, right, that are—and in a certain way they are capitalized on right now, right, the t-shirts sell—but it's actually the power of a specific, irrational exemplarity that makes them sell. So—

Nersessian: Yeah, no, I think that you got at that really nicely, and what you just said actually really helped expand this moment for me. I thought you got at that really nicely when you described the kind of affective instantaneity, right, of a certain kind of event, right. I thought that was really helpful in your paper and now I feel like I understand it even better than I did at the time. I mean, I think that affect is really important, and it, I think this gets us back to your [Ronald Schechter's] lecture yesterday. It also gets us back to the question of memory, right, which is a cognitive and an affective function, right? So I think that this is really helpful.

I think I am wary of the point at which affect tips into sentimentality, and I think that, again, what's going on in my paper is a general skepticism about the production of affect around, say, something like climate change in academic writing for the purposes of creating some sense the writing is valuable because it gives you the frisson of impending disaster, right. So, I'm wary of, say, looking at somebody at Wordsworth and saying as Carl Kroeber does or did, "here's a poem about the destruction of the environment," and actually having the bulk of your intellectual engagement with that poem be about your sense of the poem is like something *you* are now experiencing, right. To me, that is like the antithesis of ethical thinking, is that kind of transhistorical identification. I know that's not what everyone thinks is the antithesis of ethical thinking, but it is what I would think is the antithesis of ethical thinking.

So, this leads me back to what Richard was saying earlier, and I think also what you [Johannes Turk] were saying. It seems to me that, you know, we are maybe a service economy, right, but there are parts of the world that aren't. And so, when we talk about, you know, people getting good jobs because of their analytic reasoning skills, we're talking about people getting white-collar jobs, and I think that's a really important thing to keep in mind. That there are some jobs for which absolutely *no* analytical reasoning is required whatsoever, no college degree is required whatsoever, so I think it's important to keep in mind that this economy has two tiers and one may be larger than the other, but there nonetheless are two global economies, two tiered or,

you know, two tiered and then the one underground or whatever you want to call it. So, I think that's important to differentiate that idea and keep in mind that there are jobs that don't require any college degree and people do them. And, this in a way sort of wraps me back to this question about the—

Molesworth: Can you wrap it up?

Nersessian: I can. Just... that's it.

Molesworth: Well, I wanted to give Mary, Fritz, and Rebecca who had maybe tiny comments if you're really aching to say something.

Favret: I'm going to pass on my time.

Fritz Breithaupt: Sort of summed up in three sentences, in response to Johannes. Number one: I'm actually doubtful that the humanities at this point really teach communication skills, I like the talks of other people much more than the humanities. Second point, and this is a large question that will lead us through the next two panels, is really that if your point is right about Hume, that he moves us through instinctual behavior, then the question becomes how do we share that, if not via rationality, not via examples? How do we share instinctual habits? This is where the question of affect and empathy and so on kick in. I just wanted to throw out the question as the marker of the transition.

Spang: Very fast, picking up on what Fritz just said to Johannes: Rousseau says that human beings have only one instinct, the only *human* instinct is the instinct of imitation. So that might be the answer. And, then when Anahid said that the transhistorical, "Oh, look it's like... it's climate change in 1784" is the *opposite* of ethical thinking, I was thinking, but that claim about ethical thinking is for an ethics of sameness and obviously you're working towards an ethics of difference. And, when you're working toward an ethics of difference, what then is the status of the example?

Molesworth: Okay, if no one has any further comments we'll thank both speakers [applause].