

## THE AWAKENING

Eliot studied economics and philosophy at ASU. He believed that his studies would provide a more powerful description of the world. Did reason provide the opportunity to account for what happened in the world? Would he surrender to the random elements in his environment?

Eliot believed that he could apply the notion of the syllogism to understanding cognition. He was working with a team trying to apply these ideas. Could the syllogism serve as the underlying structure of human thought? This simple idea could describe the basis for all human reasoning. How was it possible to generalize this idea. At what point, would it break down?

The world seemed to come together as a system. And this harmony could encompass complex social interactions. The syllogism could describe any kind of motivated experience. This could also serve the scientific observer. Science could describe necessary connections in the world. Eliot seemed to lead an intellectual enlightenment.

Eliot believed that this way of thinking could be generalized into an ethics. These ideas could be shared with others. There was almost a magical element to his use of the syllogism. This depended on his own perspective of the world. The broken could attain a sense of coherence. Eliot could offer people guidance in their lives. Everything seemed to proceed a shared understanding. Darkness moved towards light. This was the foundation of this enlightenment.

What could possibly go wrong?

The Contrarians did not go along with this outlook. They felt that life was based on uncertainty. It was important to embrace the chaos. Thus, Eliot found himself in conflict with his opponents. Luna had the opposite view of human experience. The desire to control others was the basis of the syllogistic outlook. It was important to speak out against this outlook.

Luna was authoritative. And she was able to break down Eliot's reasoning.

"These are only patterns. They have no connection with the real world."

How could Eliot explore the contingent in experience? He was convinced that he had found the purpose for human interaction. The world was speaking through this kind of thinking. Eliot realized that it would be difficult to reconcile these different ways of thinking. He even debated Luna, in the hope that he could convince others of his certainty.

"You are only protecting the privileges that you already enjoy."

"The spontaneous provides you with the means to avoid any kind of social responsibility."

These ideas played out a Reunion. Most people liked Luna's way of thinking. But it lacked direction, and it played into a hedonistic perspective. People could only make small changes to improve their situation. They spent most of their time in confusion. Their lives could be even more intense.

"Are you using our psychology against us?"

"You tell me."

"I want a cure."

"I have to work everyday."

Eliot felt that Reunion would be fertile ground for his way of thinking.

"Our lives transform over time."

“This understanding could develop with a greater understanding of the connectedness of experience.”

“Eliot, you only want what you already have.”

“There are the things that we know. And the things that we want to know. Then there is confusion. But we can work through that.”

“What about our families?”

“Where is this going?”

“What is attractive about your way of thinking?”

“You tell me.”

“What about death?”

“You die before you can arrive at a suitable understanding.”

“They are not looking for more.”

Theo said, “No one is going to take a chance unless he already knows what he is looking for.”

“What does that mean?”

“I work hard for my money.”

“Eliot, this is a good story, and you are ruining it.”

“What is going on here?”

“Fun.”

Was Eliot giving in to his more conservative inclinations?

“How can there be syllogisms? What do you start with? A desire to be right?”

“Perhaps, syllogisms tell us things in a specific situation. But they cannot explain how rain falls.”

“If the clouds get heavy, the rain comes down.”

Theo said, “You lack real spontaneity.”

“Where is this headed?”

“Who is running this show?”

“There is a lot of spectacle.”

“What good is that?”

“It reminds me of a movie that I saw.”

“Who is running faster?”

Eliot developed this idea that human consciousness could become more certain if it was nurtured in a rural environment.

“We need to get back to the land. This is the source of our nature.”

He was convinced that small farms would hold the key to social transformation.

Clara disagreed, “We cannot feed the world with your model.”

“The factory farms only contribute to malnutrition. They cannot supply enough food to all people”

“The model can be reformed.”

“We are talking about economies of scale. You do not want to intensify the level of labor to achieve a high enough yield.”

Even though Eliot argued for these small farms, he defended privilege in socio-economic interactions. He wanted greater reward for his efforts.

Clara was rooted in the materialistic history of labor. She observed how corporations favored profits over people.

“This is not going to change with your idea of small farms. You want the rewards of an advanced society. But you are not willing to favor more equitable forms of social interaction. The market controls the exploitation of labor. Workers’ rights and fair wages are surrendered for industrial power.”

“Are we really having this discussion?”

Community-driven agriculture could improve the situation of the farmers. But this was only one part of the overall economy. It was important to commit to sustainability. Nevertheless, these changes needed to be balanced with important economic changes in industrial production. Otherwise, the farm workers become a privileged group, who would only protect their achievements against the transformation of the whole society.

“Eliot, you are advancing an idealistic model of social change that only perpetuates the basic forms of exploitation. And you acting as if changes can be made locally without an overall systematic change. It will not last in a market economy.”

Even if community farms improved the lot of the workers, these gains were threatened by the overall development of the economic system. The markets could limit these developments and work to level these gains. Competition with larger factory farms could threaten these operations.

When workers were empowered, they could increase their productive capabilities. But there were challenges to these developments. The system did not want the empowerment of workers in any form.

Eliot acted as if the transformation of ideas could create lasting change. But the economy did not develop in this manner. People struggled in urban environments to get enough to eat and have adequate housing.

Walter claimed that these social contradictions could be resolved. It demanded a greater sensitivity to labor politics.

Clara disagreed, “Other forms of industrial production play a greater role in social interaction than agricultural development. Agriculture only plays such a preeminent role a developing economy. There are still extensive pockets of neglect.”

Walter countered, “There are numerous examples of the breakdown of distribution in so-called advanced societies. It is built into their narrow model of efficiency.”

“It is important to address that breakdown.”

Walter seemed to provide a further motivation for Eliot’s idealism. He could ignore the actual stress point of the economy. He could take examples of limited success and suggest that they could be generalized to the society as a whole.

Clara indicated, “This is not going to happen.”

Technologically-based solutions could drive Walter’s model.

“The short-term gains will be compromised when profits are not sustained at the same level. You don’t really believe that these farms can provide a sustained argument against the overall conditions of neglect.”

“What are you trying to tell me?”

What was Walter’s reasons for pushing this short-term solution?

“The farmers have their benefits from this new approach.”

“This is not simply a logical argument. You need to look at human motivation and labor history.”

The community could support responsible agricultural practices. But this depended on the availability of critical resources in the rest of the society. Nevertheless, economic changes could devastate these communities even as they attempted to create better conditions on the farms.

“It is important to understand what we can do. But we need a greater commitment to lasting changes throughout the community. Otherwise, these farms only create boutique goods for the few.”

This idealism could continue as a social movement. But it risked becoming further alienated from what was actually going on in the society.”

“Changes in community farms are worthwhile. But they should not have precedence over more universal changes in the rest of society.”

There were concerns that the advancements in agriculture could be exploited to consolidate power and resources, leaving the people vulnerable.

Marcus warned against blind faith in the benevolent promises of progress. Marcus believed that beneath the facade of innovation, there lurked a danger: a potential avenue for those in power to consolidate control and strip the community of its autonomy.

“We are leaving society open to further exploitation.”

Eliot did not want to give up on his idealistic pretensions. This seemed to assure his conscience.

“I am a philosopher of ethics.”

“Sure, you are.”

Eliot continued to believe that the rational distribution of resources could prevent exploitation. Technology only added to this dilemma.

Even though people could discuss the necessary changes in the society, these perspectives had little chance of influencing the community when developers held all the power. There were a lot of conversations about the transformation of society. But the power elites became more powerful. Innovation concentrated power in the hands of the technologists.

“Innovation tries to convert us with all the promises of equality. It only makes things worse. Those on the outside are condemned permanently.”

Eliot became a greater defender of the dominant culture. He felt that he was developing his training in philosophy. He learned how to compromise with those in power. But Eliot only moved closer to this way of thinking. He offered little in the way of social analysis.

“Society is not going to develop by thinking in this way. You are only going to sell more products. That does not improve education. It does not make the world a more equitable place.”

“You can’t be negative about everything.”

“You are dealing with a lot of aggression.”

“Where do you expect change to come from?”

Eliot felt that he was more tolerant of the ideas of others.

“That is why your syllogisms are so effective.”

Marcus realized that this was the furthest thing from the truth.

Chantal felt that change developed from a stronger understanding of culture.

“Our habits help to determine the world that we live in.”

“My life has developed in this place.”

Chantal was a visionary, who had new ideas about politics. Eliot considered her a rival. The syllogism of existence was based on community-driven agriculture and thoughtful governance. He was now tempted by Chantal’s vision. She represented this radical political perspective. She was the new beacon of hope.

Chantal’s charisma attracted other to her way of thinking. Reunion, once a space for unity and collaboration, now witnessed heated debates and ideological clashes. The syllogism of existence was fragmented into different political perspectives. Could Chantal’s ideas be sustained in this environment? People liked the commitment to image. Would they really get into her radicalism? When she started to develop her ideas, she could draw an audience. This was often spectacle. People could be looking for entertainment.

There no longer seemed to be an occasion for reconciliation. Chantal could polarize people. Chantal wanted answers. Eliot was too prone to harmony for its own sake.

Chantal found a more able opponent in Newton. Newton offered his view of physical science to contrast with her speculative beliefs. Newton recognized the breakdown in philosophical thought. It lacked sufficient grounding in the physical world. People clung to their nostalgia. They would not pursue the actual source of their beliefs.

Chantal could play on these beliefs. But it became more complex than that. She confirmed this ideological perspective. People embellished this perspective. Newton was looking for a clearer balance.

Chantal had her own view of authenticity, which was grounded in her artistic awareness. Could this be anything more than a fad? The pursuit of pleasure only added to the confusion. It did not add layers to this awareness. Everything exploded in this magnificent moment, but it ended up being a total distraction.

Having explored the Marquis de Sade's writings on the philosophy of pleasure, Chantal found herself drawn to the stark contrasts and uncomfortable parallels between their perspectives. While her own vision had been rooted in a desire for societal change and inclusivity, Sade's philosophy of the bedroom leaned towards unrestrained hedonism and the pursuit of individual pleasure at any cost.

Chantal's contemplation led her to a deeper understanding of the divergence of paths. The Marquis de Sade's philosophy, characterized by the pursuit of extreme personal pleasure and the rejection of societal norms, stood in stark contrast to Chantal's commitment to a vision of collective well-being and transformation.

“If society is already in the position of flux, how can change contribute to any kind of societal transformation. Is it possible to influence the ongoing changes?”

Conversations at the bar degenerated into the intricacies of personal autonomy, the intersection of public and private lives, and the challenges of maintaining authenticity amid personal desires.

“Do you really think about this?”

“I do not think about it. This is how I am?”

“The body does not participate in any kind of actual revelation.”

“Have you given up on me?”

“I need my solitude.”

“Aren’t you afraid?”

“NO ONE CAN SAVE US.”

“The Marquis de Sade understood this all too well.”

“Don’t I have a purpose?”

“To save the whales.”

The bar, once a stage for intellectual discourse, became a forum for navigating the delicate balance between personal fulfillment and societal transformation. Chantal, having confronted the complexities of intimacy, discovered that the intersection of personal experience and philosophical ideals could be a rich terrain for growth and understanding.

“This is what I want this place to be. But it is nothing like this.”

“You can make it whatever you want it to be.”

“You seem like a real genius tonight.”

“I am getting ready for the math test.”

“Will you pass?”

“That is not going anywhere.”

Chantal started to explore new territory. This vision expanded the horizon of pleasure beyond the immediate pleasing. Hedonistic philosophy implied a greater devotion to the realm of the senses. This transformed pain into the extremes of pleasure. Such thinking made it more difficult to grasp trauma. As such, the political awareness became limited.

How did intimacy create new challenges for personal choices? Sade provided that entryway to a deeper form of personal exploration. It was an illusion to believe that hedonism would result in social development. The philosophy only increased levels of subjugation. But it had its short-term appeals. And it could enhance the appeals of the moment. This seemed enticing. Was Chantal losing her focus? She saw the image as the source of personal liberation. The individual was creating herself. But there were impediments to this understanding. The self exaggerated the importance of the moment.

For the time being, this radical hedonism added to the concerns of the individual. It made her feel that she was motivated by something more substantial. She could tolerate these negative experiences. She was embracing a higher ideal.

Chantal felt as if she was immersing herself in the world. But she seemed to be losing the collective vision. She was clinging to the more intense manifestations of individual awareness. These were further limitations of the pleasure principle.

This view contradicted the development of an actual philosophy. It was all about forgetting and commitment to the explosiveness of the moment.

Chantal had gone too far. As Chantal grappled with her own transformation into a hedonist, she sought insights from the community. Together, they navigated the complexities of aligning personal desires with the ideals that had initially fueled Reunion's collective vision.

Even in recognizing this collective, she was losing any connection to her authenticity. She wanted to give greater validity to her personal reflection. Did this have any roots in political awareness?

The Bartender's Dilemma

Martin was caught by these philosophical arguments. How did these grand philosophical ideas relate to Martin's own life as a bartender, diligently saving money? What did these philosophical arguments have to do with the practicalities of working in a bar, where everyday concerns often took precedence over abstract philosophical thought. Would Martin be able to bridge this gap? The bar, a microcosm of the community, became a place where the abstract and the concrete converged.

As the discussions unfolded, Martin discovered that no one would attain the needed social consciousness. At best, philosophy was a cover for really engaging any realities. The alcohol seemed to make things worse. These debates had no foundation in anything real.

The billionaire class was only enriched by the societal turmoil. The participants experienced deprivation. But they were immune from achieving any awareness.

"How could the philosophical musings within the bar influence the broader issues of perpetual war and wealth concentration that extended far beyond the town's borders?"

The harsh reality made change difficult. It was better to anesthetize the self.

Chantal started to have more impact. Was it only about fashion and lifestyle? If these discussions failed to have any impact, would people become more disillusioned?

#### Cultivating Conscious Action

The commitment to social change would fade within the realities of everyday.

"You do not need to be so cynical."

"Could Reunion serve as the platform for social change? Changes in the microcosm could alter the larger system. Individual choices could be linked to actual political changes. People would no longer be acting from a script. They could influence real changes."

**"Chantal encouraged efforts to address issues of perpetual war and wealth concentration. The bar, once a stage for philosophical contemplation, transformed into a catalyst for collective action aimed at making a tangible impact on the world beyond Reunion."**

"Do you really think that Reunion will become that ideal?"

"We are never going to escape."

"That is not the aim."

These ideals could extend beyond the walls of Reunion. It could provide a model for the dismantling of wealth concentration.

"We can end spending on perpetual war."

"Where are my tax dollars going?"

Eliot was still trying to exercise his influence over the discourse. Individualism was becoming a betrayal from a social commitment.

"Everything that I am doing is being compromised by these social connections. Everyone knows just enough to try to trick me for the moment."

"What about your hedonism?"

"It is going to develop into a form of extreme individualism?"

"Why the art? Doesn't it lose its importance?"

Reunion made every effort to incorporate her thought into these shared beliefs. There needed to be so much more. There was no opportunity for original thought.

“Why should I worry?”

“Have I been compromised?”

“Enjoy the moment.”

“That is inviting a horrifying moment.”

“Has anyone told you that you are the devil?”

“Is that part of your philosophy?”

“I can talk a good show.”

“Keep talking.”

This was all that she could do in the moment. That made her philosophy seem more articulate. But it was only temporary. It offered no real transcendence. Sade seemed to destroy the philosophical project. That might seem to give it an appeal. What did this do for the social contract?

“Am I here to save the world?”

“Repeat the same thing again and again.”

A shared vision could create the beginning for a political transformation.

“Nothing is going to occur here.”

“I own this!”

“No one cares!”

“That does not work here.”

That meant that it gave validity to the philosophical project.

“I do not want to get into this.”

“Is there any way to see this but as radical individualism?”

“You tell me.”

“I will tell you.”

“I can get you to your destination.”

“What does any of that mean?”

Chantal was all about the presentation in the moment.

Rels wondered if personal satisfaction could coincide with some kind of collective awareness.

“I am immortal.”

“You are dying before me now.”

“That is the next room.”

“Are there other rooms?”

“There is the slaughterhouse.”

“What does that mean?”

“Compliment me.”

“Where does that come from?”

“I can hit all the high points.”

“You think this is funny. Wait until you get home: the world will take revenge on you.”

“I will live for the moment.”

“I am the moment.”

“There is not much time to do anything else.”

“Give me a breath of fresh air.”



“There is no freshness here.”

“I hurt more than you know.”

“Why do you hurt?”

“Do not speak.”

Chantal wanted to develop the collective vision, but she had become distracted by the worst examples of hedonism.

“Where does that go?”

“There is a level of self-hate.”

“Why do you see it that way?”

“I can control the moment.”

“Control it, lover.”

“Is it possible to bridge the gap between individual autonomy and collective responsibility?”

“That is a philosophical question.”

“This is a failed state.”

“Can there ever be a shared vision?”

The syllogism provided a method to understand how these complex ideas could provide a singular path to satisfaction. But there was a complexity to this exposition. The syllogism only offered a limited awareness. There were other ways to examine human reasoning.

“Eliot’s view is simplistic. Some moments of the syllogism are critical for intellectual development. Others are circumstantial. The method hardly provides an understanding of these complex patterns.”

“How does necessity operate in these situations? There is a stronger input of the individual.”

“There is not one clear path from existence to systematic reasoning. There are other things in place.”

“Why do I care? How did I get here?”

“Syllogistic reasoning proceeds from concepts of metaphysics. This can govern questions of being, identity, and unity. Such questions are important in trying to develop a description of the world.”

“How important is human belief?”

“I cannot take this.”

“Do not try to twist my arm.”

Chantal continued to push the benefits of the fashion revolution. A fashion sense could be the symbolic manifestation of social change.

“This could supplement how I see myself. I am preoccupied with the actual terms of my existence.”

“What does it mean to be up on fashion?”

“You make decisions that enhance your image. You seem to be in control of the world, and this can motivate a more lasting personal and social transformation.”

“Chantal, this all seems trivial.”

“This is how I express my values. It is a way of thinking. You cannot dismiss it simply because you cannot appreciate.”

“Let me sleep on this.”

“I did the little things.”

Reunion seemed to be fertile ground for these influences. The patrons welcomed the messages of change.

“Social change is not just a fashion show.”

“Sometimes, your image gets ahead of you. You see how unstable it is, but you are afraid to admit that it is temporary. You find those people, who are willing to carry on the myth.”

“He will explain it all to you.”

“I do not want Eliot to explain anything to you.”

“I don’t care how you do this. Making clothes in a sustainable way is not going to change the fundamental social arrangements. These are cultural changes, not economic.”

Luna disagreed with Chantal. They were both devoted to finding the best presentation of the self. But the disagreed about method.

Fashion was not the basis for revolution, but people had their beliefs.

Did conscious fashion really offer any kind of liberation? Or did it only play into existing privilege?

“A designer outfit costs a lot of money.”

“But fashion can represent the front line of change. If people can change their environment, this can provide the means for greater changes..”

“Fashion can be an impediment to political awareness.”

“We cannot be complacent. We do what we can. This is the inspiration for so much more.”

Eliot questioned the ability of fashion to offer an alternative world view.

Isaac wondered, “Do we need to conform to the expectations of our parents?”

“Honey, I look good with what I have.”

“This is the second time that I have been distracted.”

“That is the purpose of fashion. That can change things.”

“Do I see what I think I see?”

“We come back to a the metaphysical question.”

“Then there is the scientific question: how can we generalize what we see.”

“We hope that we are so much more.”

“This is when it get really complex.”

As Eliot and Isaac explored the concept of conformity, they realized that resistance to societal expectations did not guarantee freedom from conformity. Even the act of resisting could, in itself, be a form of conformity—a rebellion guided by external pressures rather than authentic self-discovery.

“You cannot escape conformity if you are committed to going along with things.”

“What are you going along with?”

“I am giving my heart to this.”

“This is a kick.”

This became the basis for the development of authenticity. But authenticity could be a more committed ruse. The self saw what she wanted, and she enhanced that view.

Personal authenticity was never going to be a refuge. It was not about an attitude.

“People are getting money doing what you do for free.”  
 “What is that about?”  
 “I will take it for what it is.”  
 “What is the most embarrassing thing that you have ever done?”  
 “Would that be a threat to authenticity?”  
 “All we worry about is personal satisfaction and the desire for societal approval.”  
 “Do you love me?”  
 “You need to take a chance.”  
 “What would that involve?”  
 “Close your eyes, and accept what is happening to you.”  
 “That is terrible.”  
 “I was on the verge of a deep understanding.”  
 “That was a necessity.”  
 “THAT IS MY LOVE FOR THE NIGHT.”  
 “A lot of people think that the pleasure principle is the source of our authenticity.”  
 “How does that work?”  
 “You give in to what you want.”  
 “What does this have to do with me?”  
 “You have a body.”  
 “Good thing.”

This went from societal norms to norms of personal stimulation. This was a completely different way of thinking about society.

“This is becoming a temperance union.”  
 “What are you saying?”  
 “Fear gives into our worst desires.”  
 “Are you lying to yourself about something?”  
 “Pretty much everything.”  
 “I am looking you in the face.”  
 “Let me paint you.”  
 “How do we travel in the pleasure-pain matrix?”  
 “What is pain?”  
 “We should not accommodate human suffering.”