



This is a repository copy of *Love among the ruins: on the possibility of dialectical activity in Paris, Texas*.

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:
<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/178449/>

Version: Published Version

Article:

Bennett, C. orcid.org/0000-0001-8084-1210 (2022) *Love among the ruins: on the possibility of dialectical activity in Paris, Texas*. *Angelaki*, 27 (5). pp. 132-147. ISSN 0969-725X

<https://doi.org/10.1080/0969725X.2022.2110400>

Reuse

This article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs (CC BY-NC-ND) licence. This licence only allows you to download this work and share it with others as long as you credit the authors, but you can't change the article in any way or use it commercially. More information and the full terms of the licence here: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/>

Takedown

If you consider content in White Rose Research Online to be in breach of UK law, please notify us by emailing eprints@whiterose.ac.uk including the URL of the record and the reason for the withdrawal request.



eprints@whiterose.ac.uk
<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/>



Angelaki

Journal of the Theoretical Humanities

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cang20>

Love Among the Ruins

on the possibility of dialectical activity in paris, texas

Christopher Bennett

To cite this article: Christopher Bennett (2022) Love Among the Ruins, Angelaki, 27:5, 132-147, DOI: [10.1080/0969725X.2022.2110400](https://doi.org/10.1080/0969725X.2022.2110400)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0969725X.2022.2110400>



© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 20 Sep 2022.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Rocaille by Mohamed Berkane.

I
Two things in the world are worthy of awe or reverence, Kant tells us: the starry heavens above, and the moral law within.¹ *Paris, Texas* opens, with its stunning aerial shots of rocky desert, by presenting us with what is awe-inspiring in nature.² But it quickly snatches this vision away to take us instead to a confusing landscape of airports, flyovers, advertising billboards, plastic chairs and processed food, peopled by apparently slightly two-dimensional characters who are – initially at least – hard to like or understand. It does so, I will argue, in order to pose the question of whether humanity can still inspire our respect and reverence today, in the midst of the technological consumer society epitomized by the United States.

My interpretation of the film's response to this question is shaped, less by Kant, and more by the Hegelian approach that focuses on the

christopher bennett

LOVE AMONG THE RUINS

*on the possibility of
dialectical activity in paris,
texas*

dialectical movement of thought and action. I will be particularly interested in the recent development of this approach in Talbot Brewer's account of "dialectical activity," an account that is also influenced by the ideas of Alasdair MacIntyre.³ I will argue that the film returns a positive though equivocal answer to this question of the reverence-worthiness of humanity by pointing to the reverence-worthiness of our capacity for dialectical activity. Central to the film's illustration of this point is the flawed, single-minded, enigmatic and half-broken character of Travis. Travis's developing quest to

ISSN 0969-725X print/ISSN 1469-2899 online/22/050132-16 © 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/0969725X.2022.2110400>

make sense of his situation and live up to its demands – to make sense of the love that he finds (and in the end accepts) in himself, to be true to his love and to those he loves – are shown to be truly worthy. The film shows, indeed, that the respect- or reverence-inspiring nature of this love lies partly – though not only – in the rather Kantian feature that being true to it requires Travis to follow its demands even to the detriment of all his inclinations.

The MacIntyrean approach also chimes with what I take to be the film's pessimism about our social situation and its place for individuals like Travis. A further Hegelian preoccupation, shared by MacIntyre, is the capacity of human beings to be "at home" in the world (or "with oneself in another" [*Beisichselbstsein in einem anderen*], which is Hegel's basic understanding of freedom).⁴ This problem takes various forms in Hegel, but of interest here is particularly the issue of being at home in one's social world, and in particular in our highly individualistic, capitalistic modern bourgeois society. Travis cannot be said to find his place in the modern social world; he cuts an awkward figure that better-adapted souls such as his brother Walt find hard to engage with or figure out. Walt has adapted well to this social world, but at the price of becoming a conformist whose firmest motivations stem from a sense of rectitude. Travis is an original but, the film suggests, at a high cost to himself and the things he cares about. We might worry that the best that can be said for the society depicted in *Paris, Texas* is that it has produced a character like Travis, and that it does, in the end, leave him alone to carry out the project that he wants to as best he can. However, I will suggest that the film does have a more hopeful message; and that the distinctive, wiry soundtrack from Ry Cooder embodies a kind of resilience, vulnerability and authenticity that mirrors that achieved by Travis. Nevertheless, it is telling that the music is on solo guitar, the notes unsupported by background instrumentation. It is still possible to be human, the film tells us, and modern societies still produce people who strive for genuine goals (and achieve them); but the film

bennett

seems to be dubious as to whether it is possible both to be human and to be at home in the world.⁵

2

Paris, Texas is directed by German film-maker Wim Wenders, from a script co-authored by Wenders and American playwright Sam Shepard, and adapted by L.M. Kit Carson. It is the last in a series of films Wenders made in (and about) the United States before returning to Europe and European settings with *Wings of Desire*. Wenders's films are known for their striking visual imagery, but also – at this stage in his career – for their self-conscious engagement with "big" philosophical themes, and in particular themes that are familiar from the German philosophical tradition. For instance, *Wings of Desire* engages with the question of the value of embodiment posed to an "angel" whose job it is to record for eternity everything that is "spiritual" (*geistig*) in human behaviour.

Paris, Texas opens with the figure of a gaunt man in a randomly assembled version of modern dress (jeans, trainers, blazer and red baseball cap) walking out of the desert. It is not clear why he has been there, or how long. He arrives at some kind of settlement, and, after hungrily attempting to eat some ice, promptly collapses. When he wakes, he is with a doctor, an expatriate and heavily accented German, who asks him if he knows what side of the border he is on. Some identification has been found on the walker. We learn that he is called Travis, and it seems that he has been missing a long time. The doctor has tracked down his brother, Walt, who works for an agency that makes and erects advertising billboards. Walt lives in Los Angeles, where he and his French wife Anne have been looking after Hunter, the son Travis and his ex-partner Jane abandoned a number of years previously when their relationship broke down – apparently dramatically, though we don't know many details. Walt comes to collect Travis, but Travis is gone, off walking again. Although Travis is

love among the ruins

initially reluctant to stop walking, Walt does in the end succeed in bringing him back to his house in Los Angeles, on a hill overlooking a plain dominated by the airport and a mass of roads and flyovers. It is clear that Travis (and Jane) suffered some kind of collective breakdown that led to their leaving their child. Without it becoming entirely clear what caused this, we see Travis gradually recover and readapt to some measure of human relationships, including reconnecting with Hunter.

Despite his gradual recovery, however, Travis remains an enigmatic figure, and it seems that Hunter, after initial wariness, is the only one who really “gets” him or forms a connection with him. This is apt, perhaps, because Travis comes across as having a kind of childlike simplicity to him. He is strikingly uninterested in normal adult things, but seems to take a fascination in staring through binoculars at the aeroplanes arriving and leaving, and expertly polishing all of the shoes in the house. Indeed, Hunter quite often seems the most adult and rounded character in the film.

In the end, however, Anne – who has shown some signs of being drawn to Travis, or maybe threatened by him⁶ – also has a moment of genuine intimacy with him. This is when she tells him about what happened when Jane left Hunter with them, and how she stayed in touch with Jane for a while, but now she only receives money from her every month, mailed from a certain bank in Austin. With this news, Travis devises a plan to go and find Jane; when Hunter is given the chance to come along – a plan discussed underneath a towering highway interchange – he enthusiastically accepts, and they both abscond from Walt and Anne’s hospitality on a road trip.

In Austin they wait for Jane at the bank (a drive-through, automated affair) on the relevant day, and eventually Hunter recognizes his mother in a red car. They follow the car to what turns out to be a kind of brothel. Jane is working the one-way-mirrored booths downstairs, where each is set up as a creepy, bleak,

supposedly sexy scenario: café; kitchen; pool-side. In these booths, the customer (we only see men) can talk anonymously to the woman inside by means of a telephone.

Travis does indeed talk with Jane, without revealing who he is. After a short while, however, with the shock of seeing Jane working in such a place, and having launched into an interrogation that verges on the aggressive, it becomes too much for him, and he leaves. He takes Hunter, who has been waiting outside, to a bar where Travis drinks himself into a stupor. He eventually falls asleep laid back on a couch, having opened up to Hunter about his own father and mother. The next morning, they go back to Austin, where they book into a hotel. There Travis records a farewell message to Hunter, before leaving and returning to the brothel. He again goes to a booth and asks to see Jane; this time, with his back turned to her, he opens up, telling her their story, and bringing her to understand that it is him, Travis, that she is talking to, that he has Hunter with him and that he is giving her the chance to reconnect with Hunter. Despite talking through a telephone, and a one-way mirror, and despite the roundabout manner in which he tells their story, Travis goes straight to the heart of the matter, breaching Jane’s defences, and the pair reveal their feelings for each other. Each seems to know that this is their only chance to talk. Having reconnected with Jane, and telling her about the hotel where Hunter is, Travis does not join them. He watches from a neighbouring car park as Jane finds Hunter in the hotel, and, as the reunited mother and child move from wariness to intimacy, he drives away.

3

Paris, Texas is a love story. But as the title implies, it is not a straightforward love story. It is Paris, yes – but relocated to Texas. And Paris, Texas ... well, the implication is that, whatever it is, it ain’t Paris, France.

While the film is clearly striking, it might initially be viewed as prizing style over

substance. Although it won the Palme D'Or at Cannes, it has divided critics and viewers. In a recent retrospective on Harry Dean Stanton in the *New Yorker*, Richard Brody characterized the film as:

a series of reprocessed moods and tones in which [Wenders] filters his mythologized America back onto American characters and places, resulting in a cinematic echo chamber that also echoes Hollywood's clichéd sentimentality and offers no contrasting practical complexity [...] Wenders's images – which, at their best, fuse analysis and observation, detail and abstraction – are merely graphically pure, moodily signifying their own downbeat authenticity in their romanticized alienation. Wenders doesn't see the landscape or the towns; he sees his repertory of myths and applies them to his settings like decals. The resulting images are often eye-catching, but they disgorge their purpose in a glance and leave little to the imagination; they offer the dream of deep mystery without being in themselves mysterious.⁷

Brody picks up on a common reaction to the film. Anecdotally, what many people seem to remember about the film, if they haven't seen it for a while, are the opening shots of the desert mountains and maybe Harry Dean Stanton's gaunt lost look as he drops his water bottle; and then, almost at the end of the film, our first sight of Nastassja Kinski with her blonde hair and backless pink top, and the denouement in the one-way-mirrored booth with its merging of the faces of Jane and Travis in intimate conversation. It might be seen as a film organized around these strikingly constructed visuals, but where nothing quite so memorable or successful happens for long stretches in the middle; and where these images mask a lack of characterization and, perhaps even more damningly, a lack of engagement with a satisfying overall theme. As Vincent Canby put it in an early review, the film “has the manner of something to which too many people have made contributions” and that it “seems to be a movie that's been worried to death.”⁸ It might also be seen as

a film in which the dialogue can be stilted and artificial and in which, at least until the end – and perhaps with the exception of Hunter – the main characters are stiff, superficial, cartoonish and hard to empathize with, either to like or dislike.

By contrast, I argue that – as we might expect from Wenders at this stage in his career – the film is an attempt to address an important philosophical theme, and that it does engage coherently with it. The features identified by these critics are not flaws in the film, but rather an essential element of its approach to that theme. At one level, *Paris, Texas* looks like a film that sets out to entertain; but in fact, it has a rather high-minded purpose that puts the entertainment value of the film in question. While not quite a *Verfremdungseffekt*, there *is* something alienating about the long middle of the film sandwiched between the unforgettable images at the start and end.⁹ A reading of the film that didn't take this alienation of the viewer into account would be missing something important. Yet as I say, this is not a failure of the film to accomplish its aims. It is internally necessary to those aims.

I argue that there are two main reasons for this alienation. (I discuss the first in this section and the second in the following one.) The first reason has to do with Travis himself, and the fact that the film is structured around a trajectory that sees him gradually move from a self-imposed retreat from the world brought on by rejecting his love for Jane and Hunter; to accepting that love; and then, having accepted it, to gradually working out and fulfilling what it requires of him in his particular situation. As he emerges from the solipsism of his time in the desert, Travis gradually gets “hooked” by a search to get his relationship with Jane and Hunter right. When we first see him, he is burnt, damaged, and he has turned away, as far as is possible for him, from a love that has caused him so much pain and caused him to give pain to those he most loves. He can barely speak; he can barely remember. By the time Walt recovers him and is trying to engage him in conversation, he can't remember his mother's maiden

love among the ruins

name. He seems to have gone into the desert to forget. However, from the perspective available to us by the time of the film's conclusion, we can see this search for solitude precisely as a reaction to his love that shows the depths of his commitment to that love. For him, it is all-consuming.

Connectedly, Travis has a kind of self-containedness, or self-possession, a kind of sense of knowing what is important to him and not having much time for what is not, that makes him independent and hard to grasp. As I explore below, he has a capacity for *absorption*. And this capacity is combined with a *fidelity* to his best understanding of what is important in his situation, and a commitment to doing justice to it. He doesn't, we sense, need the approval of others. What is important to him is his all-consuming relationship with Jane and Hunter, and his emerging desire to make sense of that relationship and to do what needs to be done for it.

At the outset of the film, these features combine to make Travis childlike and frustrating. He won't fly on the plane, so he and Walt have to drive to LA for days across the Mojave Desert. He won't go in a different hire car, so they have to persuade the woman at the car hire to allow them to look for the car they have just brought back. At Walt and Anne's house, he sings to himself, and smiles to himself, and interacts only politely and distantly with the people he is suddenly living next to. He tries to do things that will be helpful, but often – as with his shoe-polishing – in ways that perplex those they are meant to aid. However, as the film draws on, and Travis's own purpose becomes clearer to him, he starts to develop a kind of gravity, poise and maturity. The turning point seems to be Walt's showing of the Super8 film of the two couples playing around by the sea with Hunter as a young child¹⁰ – that and the humorous conversation with Walt and Anne's Hispanic housemaid, in which Travis asks what to wear, how to look like a father and how to have... dignity. From this point on, Travis seems to become possessed by a growing sense of determination, he moves from being

unsettled and vague to being inwardly certain about what he needs to do and possessed by a quiet single-minded determination. This is not to say that he has a clear plan. His aim is evolving and grasped by Travis only dimly. Initially he only knows that he must go to Austin. He is not portrayed as having any clear idea of what he will do if he meets Jane. At that point he only has the glimmer of hope that once there he will know what the next thing to do is. Once he is there, however, he does indeed grope his way towards a conclusion.

Hence the viewer's perspective on Travis's self-containedness alters as the film progresses. As we have said, he appears at the outset to be a blank, superficial, cartoonish, badly drawn character, at best childish, and we share the perplexity with which Walt and others view him. As the film draws on, however, it is Walt who is shown to be cartoonish, superficial and conformist, a mere rule-taker adapting to the social conditions in which he finds himself. By contrast, we come to see Travis's self-containedness as the source of his ability to deepen his understanding of his love, and to find a creative response to the complex situation it has dealt him. We come to see Walt's bafflement at Travis as a sign of his own limitations, his shallowness. In contrast to Walt, Travis is an original (his search for his own origins, shown in his buying the vacant lot in Paris, suggests that he is concerned with questions of who he is, what he stands for, what is important to him), and it is this ultimately that allows him to overcome his personal ruin and move to some kind of redemption.

Nevertheless, Travis is not portrayed as self-sufficient, as a classic American figure of rugged independence. Indeed, when at the start of the film he is entirely by himself he is portrayed as being without character – his character only gradually emerges and comes to be defined as he engages with others and comes to clarity about his terms of engagement with them. He is not cut off from the external world, but rather deeply depends for his happiness on the welfare of Jane and Hunter. Although he cannot live with them, he learns that what he most needs is that they should

flourish. Nevertheless, he does start in something more like a solipsistic state, a desert of the mind, and this is why it is necessary for the film to make difficult, confusing watching at the outset. We have to see Travis's bewilderment, participate in it, in order to see the significance of his emergence into clarity.

This trajectory, and the self-discovery it involves, is portrayed as the source of Travis's originality and dignity. But the film shows us this originality and dignity by making us intimate witnesses of the trajectory. This is why as viewers we must share Travis's bewilderment and disorientation before we can appreciate his gradual achievement of clarity and purpose. However, if the film connects to Kantian ideas of worth and dignity in humanity, it does not do so by finding our vocation, as Kant did, in obedience to the moral law. The source of dignity shown within the film is not unconnected to Kantian ideas of freedom, but it is rather in this evolving grasp of the demands of valuable human relationships, rather than the stern visage of law, that the film finds our claim to have ultimate worth. In what follows, I will connect this to Talbot Brewer's notion of "dialectical activity," activity motivated by the intimation of some good, the ultimate purpose of which only gradually and provisionally becomes clear to the agent engaged in the activity. The film, because it revolves around Travis so cleverly, shares this trajectory of moving from darkness and confusion towards clarity and resolution, but that means that it must start by plunging us into disorientation.

4

The second reason that the film can appear alienating and fragmented has to do with the backdrop against which Travis has to struggle to find and pursue this trajectory. If the film does show Travis as coming to clarity about his love, it also shows him having to do so in a cluttered and oppressive physical environment in which technological development – airports, flyovers, car parks – threaten to dwarf and crowd out the human activity they are meant to serve; and in a social environment in

which people adapt simple satisfactions in order to try to fit in with this brash technology; where human relationships are unambitious and conformist; and where people are largely happy to settle for a bare kind of rubbing along and fitting in. The film depicts Travis's identity and effort as under threat from the social conditions in which he finds himself. This environment is portrayed as inhospitable to human life in a different, but no less serious way, to the inhospitability of the desert.

The crowding-out of human effort and originality is depicted in the film by the metaphor of crowded, intrusive backgrounds in scenes in which vital, intimate conversations and events are played out. Key moments of the film take place against a background in which the satisfaction of psychologically simple forms of market-driven desires is pursued ruthlessly by big, gaudy technologies that take up a lot of space, physically and metaphorically. Often, what appears in the background in key scenes correlates in a cheap or debased way with what the main characters are discussing, and revealing of themselves, in the foreground. The backdrop thus appears to be presented as a kind of parody that mocks the kind of quest in which Travis is involved. Nevertheless, what is going on here is not postmodern irony. The heroic quest is undermined at the same time as it is presented, but this is not in order to mock Travis's seriousness. Travis is portrayed as strange, but the film is always on his side. Rather this effect points up the way in which Travis has to single-mindedly act *in spite of* what is going on around him, and how following his trajectory thus requires him to close off so much of his environment.

The most eye-catching such example is no doubt the second conversation between Jane and Travis, in which they finally reach a kind of intimacy and mutual connection but do so against the background of a seedy sex booth set up for the playing out of a clichéd fantasy, and where the interlocutors are separated by a one-way mirror and must speak by telephone. Here the idea that the struggle for authentic contact takes place in a hostile environment comes across loud and clear. The characters

love among the ruins

are deadly serious, but their backdrop is parodic, and they must somehow blot it out in order to concentrate on what is vital to them. But there are instances of the same radical mismatch between the patient dignity of Travis's efforts and the environment in which he has to pursue them in key scenes throughout the film. For instance, the conversation between Anne and Travis, in which she first tells him that she knows where Jane is takes place on the hill overlooking the airport, where the noise of incoming and outgoing planes threatens to drown out their voices. This conversation is the harbinger of Travis's own journey, since it plants the seed of the idea of seeking Jane out in Travis's mind. But the airport backdrop with its almost overwhelming noise is presented as a brash, short-cut version of the psychological journey of self-transformation that Travis has to undertake. Travis eschews the short cut and takes his own way, but he has to do so against the background of the looming and intrusive ease and attraction of these powerful machines.

Similarly, when Travis tells Walt that he is leaving, he does so up on a gantry against the backdrop of a huge Evian advertisement featuring a woman in a swimsuit that Walt is in the process of installing. Travis has by this time settled on the idea of finding Jane, and it is the pursuit of this love that he has to try to explain to Walt. But this conversation is staged against the background of a massive depiction of what might be seen as an alternative, easier, less demanding kind of love. Again, the conversation between Hunter and Travis about whether Hunter will accompany his father to Austin takes place by the side of a very noisy multi-lane highway with a busy flyover looming overhead. The flyover intrudes so much that it appears like another character in the scene rather than a backdrop. And when Hunter phones Walt and Anne to tell them that he has left with Travis, he does so from a phone box next to a child-size plastic figure of a cowboy and a donkey. In this scene, the garish plastic, the size and prominence of the figures, and the echo of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza act as a parodic echo of the human seriousness of the drama being played out in front of them.

These pivotal moments in the lives of the protagonists are played out against backgrounds that contribute to something like the *Verfremdungseffekt* that I mentioned above. For the viewer, these backgrounds are distracting, making the screen busy and the main characters harder to focus on and take seriously. The main drama is always struggling to emerge and claim its rightful place against this background. These features threaten to undermine the seriousness of these scenes and make them harder to engage with emotionally. In this way, the film holds us at a distance. As viewers, we have to keep reminding ourselves of the human importance of what is going on, while elements in the film seem to be working to counteract our ability to experience it in this way. I suggest that this explains why some critics have found the film in some way cluttered and "worried to death." The point of this, I am arguing, is to bring the backdrop of modern life into view and show how hard it is for something like Travis's quest to take root and flourish.

So, what does the relocation from Paris, France to Paris, Texas involve? The relocation is not merely geographical, and for much of the film it feels more like a dislocation. It makes much of the film, after its awe-inspiring beginning, strangely uninviting. If the classic premise of the love story is to draw you in to the world of the characters and bring you to share their romance, *Paris, Texas* can, until its denouement, seem to be holding the viewer at arm's length. When intimacy does emerge, it is intense; but this happens only gradually, and only as we, like Hunter, are gradually brought in to Travis's world. *Paris, Texas* is a love story that intentionally makes itself difficult to engage with as a love story; it does so in order to show us the difficulty and the dignity of love, and the threat that modern social conditions pose to its possibility.

5

While academic commentators on *Paris, Texas* have noted that it has a developmental structure focused on the development of Travis's

character, they have often interpreted this trajectory in a psychoanalytic way.¹¹ In particular, psychoanalytic critics have focused on the Oedipal resonances of Travis's journey from childlike state to accepted fatherhood, and of his concern with Paris, Texas as the place of his mother's birth. While these readings are often insightful, the monopoly of psychoanalytic approaches seems a weakness in the critical response to the film. It is highly controversial whether psychoanalysis is the most productive way to understand the theme of identity, or the idea of human life as a quest or trajectory or narrative.¹² Psychoanalytic interpretations attempt to fit the film into a narrow set of schema such as the Oedipal or the abject. But it seems unlikely that all those viewers with whom the film resonates subscribe to these aspects of the psychoanalytic approach – if they are even aware of them. This suggests that, if we are concerned to articulate critically the reasons viewers have for valuing the film, it might be fruitful to look to a different theoretical perspective.

Furthermore, it is a failing in the psychoanalytic perspective that it cannot account for the idea that the film presents Travis as an *exemplar*. Travis is not simply an anti-hero: he is a character with whom viewers are asked to identify with and respect. His situation is a complex one, but in the end he does his best with it; and we are meant to value him for that. (Perhaps he is even presented, as I have suggested, as an emblem of what is valuable in humanity.) A psychoanalytic approach cannot give any straightforward account of the fact that viewers might not only see themselves in Travis's journey, but also approve of him for how he handles it. Psychoanalysis gives us an understanding of ourselves, our actions and our deepest purposes, that is not – and perhaps cannot be – transparent to us in our ordinary practical deliberations. The deepest purposes that it ascribes to us are often deeply troubling. It is hard to see why viewers who understand Travis as driven by the Oedipus Complex, or some variation thereof, would identify with him as an exemplar.

I will argue that a more fruitful interpretation of the film is thus one that aligns with an understanding of ourselves and our action as broadly rational, and of the purposes that drive us as part of an effort of self-understanding and self-clarification that, at their best, form a trajectory that we can affirm and seek to emulate. In contrast to the psychoanalytic approach, Alasdair MacIntyre argues that the broadly rationalist Aristotelian tradition of ethics is still necessary to our self-understanding. This tradition, on MacIntyre's reading, is centred on a teleological conception of flourishing and fulfilment, articulated into a range of virtues, and centred on a quest to know our own Good and live up to its demands. Historical developments such as the rise of modern capitalism, the dominance of instrumental conceptions of rationality and, more generally, what MacIntyre calls the Enlightenment Project, have made the truth in Aristotelianism, and its practical relevance to our situation, hard to recover. These developments have also brought about social changes that threaten the social fabric that is necessary for the formation of virtues and the successful pursuit of a quest for the Good. Nevertheless, MacIntyre argues that there remain social practices that are organized around standards of excellence and through which an understanding of the Good can emerge and be pursued. These standards of excellence involve achievement relating to goods that are *internal* to the activity, and which thus require engaging in the activity for its own sake rather than for the sake of external rewards such as wealth or status. MacIntyre thus shows how society could be organized in such a way as to allow its members to flourish, while also showing how problematic forms of social organization (and ideology) can undermine the possibility of flourishing.

With this MacIntyrean background in place, we can now turn to Talbot Brewer's notion of "dialectical activity."¹³ Building on the Hegelian idea of dialectic as a progressive clarification and precisification of thought and action, dialectical activity, according to Brewer, is "an activity whose value cannot be grasped with perfect lucidity from the outset, but

love among the ruins

must be progressively clarified via engagement in the activity itself";¹⁴ and where "each successive engagement yields a further stretch of understanding of the goods internal to the activity, hence of what count as proper engagement in it."¹⁵ Like MacIntyre, Brewer is interested in activities to which the notion of excellence might apply, where this is understood as involving a pursuit of achievement that is not a matter of external reward but rather requires engagement in the activity for its own sake. Examples of such activity are having a conversation, mountain climbing, creating an artwork, being in love, doing philosophy.¹⁶ In each of these cases one might begin with a hunch, an intimation of value, that draws one in, makes one suspect that the activity might be going somewhere, though one cannot say much at this point about where it will be going or why it might be important. And as one does start to engage in the activity, and finds it has its own rewards, one strengthens one's grip on how to do the activity, and deepens one's understanding of what is valuable in it. Furthermore, this trajectory of engagement can take one to places that would have been impossible for one to predict, or aim at, from the outset. The idea, therefore, is of an activity with whose value one engages progressively more deeply through the reiterated process of assertion, challenge and reformulation characteristic of dialectic.

To get a better grip on this idea, let us consider two of the examples that Brewer provides. The first involves "a singer who is a masterful interpreter of blues songs and who is searching, just now, for the right phrasing and intonation for a key line in a blues number." The singer, Brewer suggests,

is sufficiently aware of what she would count as good to stretch her voice in its direction and to recognize it when she manages to sing it, yet her grasp is not sufficiently clear to permit her to produce it forthwith. She has no way of discerning what counts as the interpretation she wants except by trying to sharpen her grasp of this goodness she indistinctly perceives, and she may be unable to do this except by attempting to

approximate it in song [...] She might sing the line many times over before achieving the interpretation to which she is drawn. She would then have discovered, or uncovered, what was drawing her all along.¹⁷

The second example involves a conversation between a parent and a withdrawn, almost estranged teenage child, "who seems both pained by this detachment and stubbornly insistent on it."¹⁸ The parent aims at reconciliation, and may sense that, for that aim to be achieved, the conversation must go in such a way that it itself becomes *part* of the reconciliation. Furthermore, the parent may grasp that the conversation will therefore have to involve listening to the teenager and establishing common ground. But this schema doesn't yet tell the parent *how* to carry out the conversation, or *what* a successful such conversation will demand of them. It doesn't tell them how to be responsive to the fact that the interlocutor is a teenager; or how to avoid being either condescending or indifferent; or how to allow the right level of feeling to influence their words and tone, and which feelings. They can only start out and hope that, by attending carefully to the teenager's responses, and keeping the original glimmer of what they hoped to achieve in view, that "[a]s the conversation unfolds, it might become clearer what is called for."¹⁹

We can now draw out four general features of dialectical activity as Brewer understands it. Firstly, it is an activity the point of which initially appears indeterminate to the agent in fundamental respects: either in terms of the overall value of the activity or in terms of what valuable engagement in the activity consists in (or perhaps both). Secondly, however, the activity is grasped as, at least potentially, intrinsically valuable – the agent grasps an "intimation of the good." Thus, the blues singer wants to find, say, a phrase with a particular expressive power that she grasps obscurely; while the parent wants to find a form of responsiveness to the teenager that forms an appropriate form of care and respect in the context of their relationship, but again, is grasped only obscurely. Thirdly, through

participation in the activity, the nature of the end, and the requisite action, and their overall value can become more determinate and apparent. Fourthly, it is a part of the agent's responsiveness in engaging in the activity that their deepening understanding transforms their sense of what the activity involves or calls for.

As with Brewer's examples, we can see the activity of building and sustaining a relationship of love or friendship as a kind of dialectical activity. An agent involved in such a relationship can be aware in an inarticulate way, both of the value of the relationship and of what the relationship demands of them. But a precise practical understanding and specification of the value of the relationship and the nature of its demands will elude the agent until they engage in the exercise of the kind of ongoing responsiveness to their situation, and to the situation of the other person, that is involved in being a good friend. This is what is going on in Travis's situation. He starts in a place of confusion; gradually, however, he senses the value of his connection with Jane and Hunter, and he needs to translate that into a more concrete, determinate understanding of how he should now act. He needs to find a way to make determinate the demands of his relationship with Jane and Hunter, given the complicating factors such as his past history with Jane, Hunter's relationship with Anne and Walt, and the geographical distance between Los Angeles and Austin. He needs to go forward with careful attention, hoping that, as he does so, "it might become clearer what is called for." The film follows him in that journey from confusion, to glimpse, to increasing determinacy of purpose, and it is this that dictates its characteristic trajectory, as I have argued above.

6

Developing MacIntyre's thought that certain virtues of character are required for successful engagement in valuable practices, we can highlight two that are particularly relevant to understanding Travis. The first is that dialectical activity has to involve a capacity for becoming

absorbed by what one is doing.²⁰ One aspect of this is that successful engagement in dialectical activities requires continuous responsiveness to the evolving demands of the activity, and thus involves monitoring one's engagement and the new avenues that one opens up for one to make the activity intrinsically valuable. Another aspect is that one must have an initial sensitivity in order to be "hooked" by a dialectical activity in the first place, and hence must be able to recognize that some activities *call for* absorption, and provide "intimations," if we can hear them aright, that it is worth finding out where they lead. It seems, then, that this capacity to become absorbed is a virtue necessary for proper engagement in dialectical activity. Travis shows such a capacity for absorption at numerous points during the film. At first, he is absorbed in his wanderings in the desert, where at this point his absorption is unfocused and indeterminate. At a later stage, he gets absorbed in eccentric but purposeful activities such as polishing shoes and boots. But these seem to be steps on the way to his becoming overwhelmingly absorbed in the project of meeting Jane and reuniting Jane and Hunter. It is Travis's capacity to recognize and respond to the intimation or glimpse of what he needs to do, his gradually clarifying those demands and making them into an evolving plan, and then his single-minded dedication to seeing that plan through that help to make up Travis's creativity and originality.

The second virtue is that of *fidelity*. To understand what this involves, we need to consider first of all that the agent fully engaged in dialectical activity is striving, not to express *themselves* or further their *own* ends, but rather to do justice to the demands of the situation as they are best capable of understanding it. One is not focused inward, on one's own self, but rather on the emerging objects of the activity and how to respond to them. Thus, the agent is attempting to attune themselves to a set of demands that is not clear at the outset, but a deepening understanding of which is possible; and is motivated, perhaps through repeated attempts, to find a form of

love among the ruins

activity that will finally be adequate to a proper understanding of those demands.²¹ This suggests that another overall virtue manifested by dialectical activities is *fidelity*, where this involves being true to the situation as one best understands it. Again, this chimes with an aspect of what makes Travis authentic. Although clearly driven and absorbed, he is a character almost entirely without fixation on self. It is not his concern to express himself, or to complete a project as a satisfaction for himself, that drives him, but rather the need to get clear on the demands of his situation and meet them as best as he now can. In particular, it is Travis's gradual attunement to what he takes to be the demands of his situation, and his ability not to be distracted by the pursuits motivating Walt, that mark him as an original.

If we consider the character of Walt, by contrast, we can say that one of the things that marks him out is a lack of these virtues, and a lack of susceptibility for dialectical activity. Walt is a conformist. He has become successful because he is prepared to do what is needed, even if this means devoting his life to advertising billboards. Walt has a sense of rectitude, but no imagination. He doesn't wonder about things, or ask himself difficult questions. Unlike Anne, he doesn't seem to be unsettled by the prospect of losing Hunter – he lets him go as he presumably took him in four years previously, out of a sense of familial rectitude. Walt has none of the moral imagination that would be necessary for dialectical activity, for finding one's own way through an issue that grips and consumes one.

7

We can also draw on MacIntyre's thought that the success of practices or dialectical activities depends on an enabling social environment to appreciate the way the film presents a critique of the culture of modernity, and the way that that impinges on Travis's project and hinders his ability to pursue it successfully. Travis pursues an authentic love; but, MacIntyre would suggest, love and friendship are social

activities as well as dialectical ones. They can only be successful if we can learn how to do them well, and if our social environment supports them. We are dependent creatures, and we need social support, not only in respect of our ability to pursue our projects, but also for our development of the forms of self-understanding and virtue necessary to distinguish genuine standards of excellence from goods of a lower order, and authentic demands and opportunities from mere distractions. Travis manages to develop such insight, the film suggests, but only at the cost of cutting himself off from most of what is going on in the society around him.

We have explored the way in which the film illustrates this theme by setting key scenes against backgrounds that crowd out and deflate the significance of what the main characters are talking about. One further way in which the film takes up this theme is its portrayal of the mediated character of human connection that Travis is in the end capable of reaching. In *Paris, Texas* there is, of course, no fairytale ending. Travis comes to realize that he cannot live with Jane and Hunter, even though their welfare is the thing he most needs. The solution he comes to is therefore painfully mediated: he brings Jane and Hunter together only to say goodbye to them both. Although this is not shown to be the fault of social conditions, it seems to be a symptom, and indeed a symbol of the film's message that the only way in which dialectical activity can go on is in a highly mediated form.

There are examples of this mediation throughout the film's depiction of Travis's dialectical search. As I mentioned earlier, the turning point in the film at which Travis seems to regain his sense of purpose is in watching the Super8 film. But this is mediation: Walt, Anne, Hunter and Travis are not themselves actually interacting in the joyful, spontaneous, human way they see on the screen; they are simply watching a depiction of themselves doing so. Nevertheless, this mediated depiction of love seems enough to stir something in Travis – and that seems to be an important message of the film in relation to the

question of whether films that entertain simply distract us from the loss of genuine human relations in our lives. Another example is Hunter and Travis's trip home from school, on which they are emotionally together but on opposite sides of the road; and their use of walkie-talkies on their journey down to Austin and in the car park of the bank. And then finally there is the multiply mediated final conversation between Travis and Jane: on a telephone; through a one-way mirror; Travis in darkness; the two taking turns to give a monologue rather than engaging in dialogue; each turning away from the other to speak. In some way the film represents this scene as the culminating achievement of Travis's efforts, and a hugely meaningful event in his life – a searing moment in which the two main protagonists finally come heart to heart. Authentic human relations are shown to be still possible, despite everything. And yet, the film seems to say, they can only come about in a highly mediated way – perhaps a meeting of hearts, but not of faces or bodies. The selves that relate to one another are partial and fragmented.

In the wings is Paris, France. The Old World. The title of the film conjures up this contrast and asks us to think about how this new America looks in relation to its namesake. Paris, France connotes an old world of romance, of course – that world that Walt and his French wife would love to go and see if only his work allowed him time. But it also means a world of established social relations (and hierarchies); a complex, sophisticated but legible and shared set of manners; of noblesse oblige; of settled communities; of tradition and history; of a sense of the good things in life; a dedication to ends beyond the imagination of a nation of shopkeepers; of higher and subtle pleasures. The title counterposes this Old World, “settled in its ways,” in Joni Mitchell's terms, to the brash and overwhelming means-end rationality that the film's version of America places at the service of a simpler set of needs.

But that is not the whole story. For the film is fascinated by Travis, and Travis is American

through and through. And what the film seems interested in is, not just the possibility that someone like Travis might yet be possible in America, but that someone like Travis might *only* be possible in America, and that this might, for all its difficulties, represent an important and exciting new human possibility. Thus, despite the criticism of America as an epitome of modernity that I have argued is key to understanding *Paris, Texas*, it would be wrong to emphasize that aspect without also seeing the film also as part of Wim Wenders's love affair with America: a kind of love of Americana, no doubt, but also a love of the possibilities for human development that, despite its challenges, America presents. Some evidence for this view, I think, is the way the distinctively American originality of Travis is mirrored in the distinctively American originality and beauty of Ry Cooder's soundtrack. Travis is unbending. He is driven by something. There is something in him that needs to be worked out, and he can't stop until he has worked it out, even though he doesn't know what it is or what it requires of him. He is prepared to go into the unknown in order to be true to the thing that is within him. He is capable of getting into real problems because of the thing he is driven by. Something of this sinewy roughness is shared by the beauty of the music. Yet Travis and the music are both products of the society that the film critiques. Here we have an artform that only America could have produced, presented with the greatest of respect, and given great prominence in the film. Indeed, it will often be the music, along with the opening shots of the film, and perhaps the closing conversation between Travis and Jane, that sticks in viewers' minds many years after they have seen the film and forgotten what else goes on in it.

Furthermore, of course, the production of such music is a dialectical activity in Brewer's sense: it is driven by an evolving original sense of some kind of adequacy to be grasped and transformed into actuality. I have pointed out that the film presents the seriousness of Travis's journey, but often at the same time undermines it through the depiction of

love among the ruins

backgrounds that parody what he is doing and threaten to undermine it. In this way the film can be seen as depicting two sides of modernity. However, if the film's answer to my opening question about the prospects for humanity teeters between pessimism and optimism, the character of the music seems to tip the balance decisively in favour of the latter. The music interacts with the action of the film in such a way that it is always on the side of the authentic and original Travis, and it never takes the character of parody. It is, furthermore, a highly prominent voice in the film, playing an important role in the overall sensory experience of viewers. Nevertheless, it seems significant that the score is for solo guitar, which rings out without any instrumental support. There is no coordinated interdependence of musical lines, but rather a wry, poignant, reflective voice going its own way.

If we were in the business, then, of drawing a general lesson from *Paris, Texas*, it should perhaps not be that the future is irredeemably bleak. Rather the film shows that the reverence-worthy in humanity is robust and able to take root in unpromising soil, producing authentic and original forms of dialectical activity despite formidable obstacles. But the film also directs our attention to the need to sustain and nurture the social and physical environment through which the reverence-worthiness in humanity can continue to emerge. A reading of the film that did not emphasize its social awareness as well as its fascination with the individual would be missing something important.

8

I have argued that we can illuminate *Paris, Texas* by bringing to bear the ideas of Brewer and MacIntyre. But do these ideas stand up to scrutiny? For instance, Brewer's notion of dialectical activity might be claimed to be over-intellectualizing. Against psychoanalytic approaches, I have argued that it is a strength of the MacIntyre/Brewer approach that it reveals conduct that might appear to be non-rational as in fact rational and oriented to

intelligible considerations relating to the Good. However, it might be claimed that this is in fact a rationalistic distortion of these activities. Although there is much to be said on this topic, my quick answer is that, while this criticism may be just when applied to Brewer's approach to certain activities, it does not undermine the interpretation of Travis through Brewer's lens. For instance, Christopher Cordner criticizes Brewer's view that we can see sexual activity as dialectical, on the basis that it betrays an over-intellectualized view of sexual relations. However, even if this criticism is justified in regard to sex, it should be recognized as a strength of Brewer's view that it shows how even apparently non-intellectual behaviour can in fact be seen as guided by an implicit rationale of which the agent may only have a dim partial grasp or intimation, but which rationale could in principle be explicitly articulated and assessed and connected with other evaluative principles and claims. It is this capacity to help us understand the nascent rationality in apparently aimless behaviour that makes Brewer's conception a useful tool to apply to the trajectory followed by Travis.

Brewer's view might also be criticized on the basis that there are some activities in which it is true that the value or point of the activity "cannot be grasped with perfect lucidity from the outset, but must be progressively clarified via engagement in the activity itself" but where it is not true that the clarification of the point of the activity involves a deeper understanding of goods internal to the activity.²² An example of this might be what in previous work I have called "expressive action" – actions such as finding an apt expression of grief or joy or gratitude, etc.²³ On the view I have developed, the point of expressive action is not to *express oneself* so much as it is to do justice to what is significant in one's situation by finding an action that reflects or embodies that significance. Here one may eschew ready-made social scripts and attempt to give an authentic expression of one's own emotional sense of the significance of the situation. In doing so, one may start with a dim intimation

of what such a successful expression might look like, and progressively work towards a better sense of how to do justice to the gravity of one's situation. Indeed, it might be possible to regard sexual activity as "expressive" in this sense. Yet it would not be appropriate to say that one was thereby engaging in some activity that is structured around certain goods, and where "each successive engagement yields a further stretch of understanding of the goods internal to the activity, hence of what count as proper engagement in it" (Brewer 37). Expressive action in this sense is not an activity that is structured around the pursuit of goods, so much as it is an attempt to reflect, acknowledge or do justice to what is significant in the situation facing the agent.

Despite these lines of potential criticism, the idea of dialectical activity, I have argued, is a crucial theoretical tool to bring to bear on the situation of Travis in *Paris, Texas* – and, by extension, many real-life situations of a similar structure. This is particularly so when we set the idea of dialectical activity in the context of MacIntyre's concerns about the possibility of pursuing the Good in modern society. We better understand Travis's originality and authenticity – in comparison to Walt, for instance – by seeing him as engaged in an authentic attempt to clarify the response that is demanded of him given his situation. Furthermore, it is in his fidelity and capacity for absorption in this task of doing justice to his love that the film portrays Travis as an example of the way in which humanity can be worthy of respect or reverence. But the film also illustrates the difficulties that modern society poses to anyone authentically absorbed in an attempt faithfully to do justice to the situation in which they find themselves.

9

In this paper, I have presented a new interpretation of the Wim Wenders film, *Paris, Texas*. I have defended the claim that the film can be seen as a coherent engagement with an important philosophical theme. It engages, I have claimed, with the question of what is inherently

valuable in humanity and whether that value persists in conditions of modernity. I have argued that the film's approach to these questions can be illuminated by bringing to bear Talbot Brewer's conception of "dialectical activity." The fact that the film shows us Travis's gradual attempt to clarify the demands of his relationship with Jane and Hunter explains why parts of the film appear disorienting and fragmented. Travis exhibits virtues of absorption and fidelity that, while essential to his task, make him hard to engage with, at least at the outset. I have also argued that the film depicts the social environment in which Travis must pursue this activity as in important ways inimical to his efforts. Drawing on Alasdair MacIntyre, I have suggested that success in dialectical activities depends on the presence of favourable social conditions, but I have claimed that the film shows Travis as having to act in spite of his surroundings rather than supported by them. The hostile social circumstances also contribute to the disorienting experience of watching the film. While Travis is in some ways successful in pursuing his connection with Jane and Hunter, the connection is depicted as highly mediated, and Travis is finally unable to enter into a direct relationship with the reunited mother and child. While the film's answer to the question of the possibility of dialectical activity is in some ways highly pessimistic, I also noted the balance provided, not just by the importance given to Travis's dialectical activity, but also to Ry Cooder's score. The music echoes Travis's character, and is, like him, an original and valuable product of modernity.²⁴



disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

notes

1 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. W. Pluhar (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2002) 203 (5: 161).

love among the ruins

2 *Paris, Texas* (Road Movies Filmproduktion and Argos Films, 1984), directed by Wim Wenders and written by L.M. Kit Carson and Sam Shepard.

3 Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (London: Duckworth, 1981); Talbot Brewer, *The Retrieval of Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009).

4 See, e.g., Michael Hardimon, *Hegel's Social Philosophy: The Project of Reconciliation* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994).

5 For discussion of an alternative perspective on the film's pessimism about American modernity, see Norman K. Denzin, "Paris, Texas and Baudrillard on America," *Theory, Culture & Society* 8 (1991): 121–33.

6 In an interview, Wenders has commented that for Anne, "Travis is an opponent from the beginning" that he is "endangering the little world she's built up around her." Katherine Diechmann, "Wim Wenders: An Interview," *Film Quarterly* 38 (1984–85): 2–7, at 4.

7 Richard Brody, "How 'Paris, Texas' Sold Harry Dean Stanton Short," *New Yorker* 28 Sept. 2017. <<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/richard-brody/how-paris-texas-sold-harry-dean-stanton-short>>.

8 Vincent Canby, "'Paris, Texas' from Wim Wenders," *New York Times* 14 Oct. 1984. <<https://www.nytimes.com/1984/10/14/movies/paris-texas-from-wim-wenders.html>>.

9 For the idea of *Verfremdungseffekt* (alienation effect), see Bertolt Brecht, "On Chinese Acting," trans. Eric Bentley, *The Tulane Drama Review* 6 (1961): 130–36. In the context of *Paris, Texas*, this can again be seen as picking up a Hegelian theme: that it is necessary that one's dialectical trajectory should move from a simple wholeness, through self-alienation in which that wholeness is lost, to return to wholeness in a higher or more determinate form.

10 Indeed, the character of Hunter seems partly a device the film uses to humanize Travis and help us to see things from his point of view – but also the source of a crucial relationship through which Travis manages to clarify his own project.

11 See, for instance, the Freudian, Lacanian and Kristevan approaches taken in Donald Carveth, "The Borderline Dilemma in 'Paris, Texas':

Psychoanalytic Approaches to Sam Shepard," *Mosaic* 25 (1992): 99–120; Mark Luprecht, "Freud at Paris, Texas: Penetrating the Oedipal Sub-Text," *Literature/Film Quarterly* 20 (1992): 115–20; Roger Bromley, "Traversing Identities: Home Movies and Road Movies in *Paris Texas*," *Angelaki* 2 (1997): 101–18.

12 As well as the work of MacIntyre and Brewer, discussed below, other examples might be Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1989); and Maria Schechtman, *Staying Alive: Personal Identity, Practical Concerns and the Unity of a Life* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2014).

13 For discussion of Brewer, see Tamar Schapiro's review of *The Retrieval of Ethics* in *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*; Elijah Milgram's discussion in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* entry on "Practical Reason and the Structure of Actions"; Christopher Corder, "Dialectical Activity, Ritual and Value," *Philosophical Investigations* 39 (2016): 178–91; Lorraine Besser-Jones, "Drawn to the Good? Brewer on Dialectical Activity," *Journal of Moral Philosophy* 8 (2011): 621–31.

14 Brewer, op. cit. 39.

15 Ibid. 37.

16 Ibid. 39.

17 Ibid. 47.

18 Ibid. 92.

19 Ibid. 93.

20 We might connect the notion of absorption in dialectical activity with Hubert Dreyfus's understanding of the role of absorbed perception and attention in skilled activity. See Hubert Dreyfus, *Skillful Coping: Essays on the Phenomenology of Everyday Perception and Action* (New York: Oxford UP, 2015).

21 For a good recent discussion of such attunement, see Peter Railton, "The Affective Dog and Its Rational Tale: Intuition and Attunement," *Ethics* 124 (2014): 813–59.

22 Brewer, op. cit. 39.

23 Christopher Bennett, "Expressive Actions," *The Expression of Emotion*, ed. Catherine Abell and Joel Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge UP,

bennett

2016) 73–94; “The Problem of Expressive Action,”
Philosophy 96 (2021): 277–300.

24 For comments and discussions on the topic of this paper, I would like to thank Josep Corbí, Joe Saunders and Bob Stern. I am also grateful for very helpful comments from two referees for this journal.

Christopher Bennett
Department of Philosophy
University of Sheffield
45 Victoria St.
Sheffield S3 7QB
UK
E-mail: c.bennett@sheffield.ac.uk