The issues of representation, ethics, and sources of order are of crucial importance in any dialogue between Eric Voegelin and Emmanuel Levinas, as I have sought to show in my own work on these two thinkers. It is especially important, however, to widen the dialogue to include other philosophers of note and I think that the current panel has done an exemplary job in contributing to that larger dialogue. Although I will comment on all the papers, I will reserve the main focus of my remarks for the papers of Professors Jardine and Simmons. Central to these remarks will be my own concern with the place and role of theories of consciousness in the work of the philosophers under consideration. My remarks are also intended to raise a few general questions that might pave the way for further discussion.

Professor Petrakis's paper on the role of phenomenology, representation, and symbols in the thought of Husserl, Voegelin, and Ricoeur reminds us of the centrality of theories of consciousness in the formulation of any political philosophy and ethics that would respond to the positivistic attack upon the integrity of subjective experience as an appropriate philosophical focus of inquiry. I appreciated the rigorous accuracy of his presentations of all three thinkers. Indeed, Voegelin's and Ricoeur's stress upon the primacy of symbolic representation evokes the need for the "more aesthetic approach to the science of politics" that Professor Petrakis's paper calls for. My question to him in this regard is whether he has of yet formulated any more specific guidelines for this aesthetic approach on the basis of his further reading of Voegelin and Ricoeur in particular, and whether he, or others, might suggest other potential dialogue partners in the establishment of such an approach. Despite his fine presentation, I remain somewhat unclear as to what such an aesthetic approach would specifically entail, in other words.

Professor Jardine's paper gives voice to a number of issues regarding the very fact of literacy, the role of literacy in the perception of either a natural order or the arbitrariness of humanly constituted conventions, and the ultimate consequences for philosophical, ethical, and political discourse, culminating in the moral crisis attendant upon the perceived death of nature. His analysis of the impact of the spoken word, and by extension that of narrativity in the constitution of a virtuous political order, reminded me of John Caputo's injunction, vis-a`-vis Levinas's philosophy, that sometimes it is enough to simply tell a good story, like that of Abraham and Isaac or that of Antigone, in order to effect the possibility of ethical change in the real time of history. I will argue later that Levinas's ethics is unable to address concrete ethical experience in real time, his analysis of the third party notwithstanding. I appreciated Professor Jardine's caveats that literacy is not the only source of the nature/convention dichotomy and that there is no simple chain of causation leading inevitably from literacy to this dichotomy -my remarks presuppose the correctness of these assertions.

It is not only the mere fact of literacy over sound that establishes the literate person's conception of reality as " a large but finite text" to which language must correspond, creating the "language realism" of which Professor Jardine writes, but father also, and more importantly, the way in which literacy mediates the immediate and personal connection to the life world through abstraction. If language becomes "spatialized" then the life world itself risks becoming subsumed under such "spatialization," creating a decontextualized climate in which reality must either "correspond" to an unchanging natural order whose topography we must discover or reality

becomes the product of human creativity where everything is, indeed, permitted because the very notion of moral constraint has died along with the natural order's demise. Such constraint requires "the ongoing story of living responsibly in a community of other people," to quote Professor Jardine's paper. (p. 10) We need radically contextualized, spoken stories to offset the pervasively visual orientation that literacy mandates- perhaps this is the "stick in the eye" that a colleague of mine at Duquesne often refers to. The Other arrives on the scene to narrate such stories which we hear and to which we are called to respond in the concrete context provided by the face-to-face encounter. I am, perhaps, misrepresenting Professor Jardine here: he writes that "we cannot hope to regain a sense of virtuous action that contributes to meaningful human communities without at least partially recapturing a sense of face-to-face oral/aural experience [emphasis mine]." (p. 11) My first question arises at this juncture: how do we literate humans do that? Is Professor Jardine's invocation of "the reconstruction of the fundamental metaphors that we use to comprehend our world" sufficient? (p. 18) And herein lies a theory of consciousness connection that I would like to at least mention, and that I think Professor Jardine's paper does not address.

Let me turn immediately to my second question, which is really a continuation of the first: what, if any, is the role of non-intentional consciousness in the reconstruction of such "fundamental metaphors?" I realize that I am asking a question that perhaps goes beyond the scope of his paper, but his evocation of "face to face oral/aural experience" raises it as a further evocation. Perhaps we literate humans need to be reminded that we are never only conceptually engaged with the life world, in other words, that such engagement is not confined to either literacy or speech. I think that Zygmunt Bauman's work on a postmodern ethics that seeks to take up the importance of non- intentional consciousness in relation to ethical action is, perhaps, an interesting point of dialogue for Professor Jardine's desire to liberate such "fundamental metaphors" from the eventual tyranny of a conceptualizing consciousness that takes language as such--I would suggest here language either as spoken or printed--as its sole point of departure. I understand, of course, that these "metaphors" are the product of conceptuality, and have no desire to challenge a certain centrality as to their importance. I wonder, however, about the overriding hegemony of their status.

The issue of non-intentional consciousness affords me an admittedly easy segue into my remarks vis-a`-vis Professor Simmons's paper. Wishing, perhaps, to play the devil's advocate, I will frame those remarks in a reading of Levinas that respects his claim that ethics is incommensurable to ontology, a claim that has come under fire from many sides, beginning with the Derrida of "Violence and Metaphysics," as Professor Simmons correctly notes. Specifically, I will argue that Levinas's ethical philosophy is radically impervious to the real time of history, despite his analysis of the "third party." Let me state unequivocally, however, that I think the kind of analysis that Professor Simmons presents is of crucial importance to the further development of Levinas's philosophy vis-a-vis concrete ethical experience, which I consider to be especially necessary if we are to "save" his ethics from the historical oblivion that his claim of its status as "otherwise than being" evokes for many of his commentators.

I was struck, recently, by one commentator's claim that Levinas's analysis of the "third party" is an *ad hoc* form of argumentation that functions as a kind of appendage to his overall project-and an awkward appendage at that. Should it perhaps be recognized that his philosophy has no direct

historical analogue? This is one reason why I think he and Voegelin are such good dialogue partners-Levinas needs Voegelin to help bring his thought into any possibility of historical relevance if we consider that Voegelin's analysis of the luminous symbol of "universal humanity," particularly as we find that in volume 4 of Order and History bears within it the impetus to ethically responsible action. Levinas himself has stated that he indeed does not take up a philosophy of history in his work, a comment made in response to the charge that his philosophy bears a "ghostly" character. Yet he also asserts that his ethics of responsibility is perhaps not incompatible with the concrete experience, in lived time, of what he calls a certain "utopia of conscience." The problem is that such concrete experience, mediated by the arrival of the "third party," ontologizes his philosophical project without creating a link between the intentional consciousness required to recognize the "third party' as such and the non-intentional consciousness that pervades Levinas's analyses of ethical subjectivity.

And Professor Simmons has not provided that link; he has passed too easily from an analysis of Levinas's ethical dyad to the arrival of the "third party" without indicating the radical shift in consciousness that is attendant thereupon. Indeed, I do not see how any such passage could occur without a detailed analysis of Levinas's theory of consciousness, which is an essential aspect of his "otherwise than being" claim. To those commentators who would claim that Levinas's putative "otherwise than being" is really a "being otherwise," Levinas would respond that such cannot be the case because the ethical subject's consciousness would then be subjected to an ontologizing conceptuality. Such is, of course, the case for the ethical subject given the arrival of the third party, but with that arrival the "otherwise than being" claim and with it, the incommensurability of ethics to ontology for Levinas, goes out the window. Indeed, Jeffrey Dudiak goes so far as to claim that "for Levinas ethics never &'precisely because its incommensurability to real time is incapable of "translation" into the conceptual categories that govern intentional consciousness. Dudiak and others who seek to defend the integrity of 1,evinas's "otherwise than being" claim, tend to characterize his ethics as a "diachronic transcendentalism" that articulates certain conditions under which ethical responsibility may be analyzed philosophically in a way that eschews the primacy of ontology. Let me close these remarks relative to Professor Simmons's paper with a short summarizing statement that I hope captures the gist of this particular way of reading "Levinas: A pure "otherwise than being" that escapes ontology altogether also remains untouched by-and unable to touch-history, a sad irony for an ethics of responsibility, yet an inevitable fate for a formalized ethics that calls itself transcendental. If the ethical relation remains outside of thermatization , as it most assuredly does for Levinas, the arrival of the third party does not succeed in historicizing Levinas's ethics adequately because the thematizing consciousness which is that of the third party cannot be guaranteed to thematize ethically. Here, in the real time of history, is where Voegelin's analysis of luminous consciousness and its generation of luminously differentiated symbols picks up where Levinas leaves off; Voegelin offers us a way of viewing consciousness in real time that can account for the kind of symbolization that enables ethical action.