IDENTITY AND SELF-RESPECT

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István Bujalos
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IDENTITY AND SELF-RESPECT

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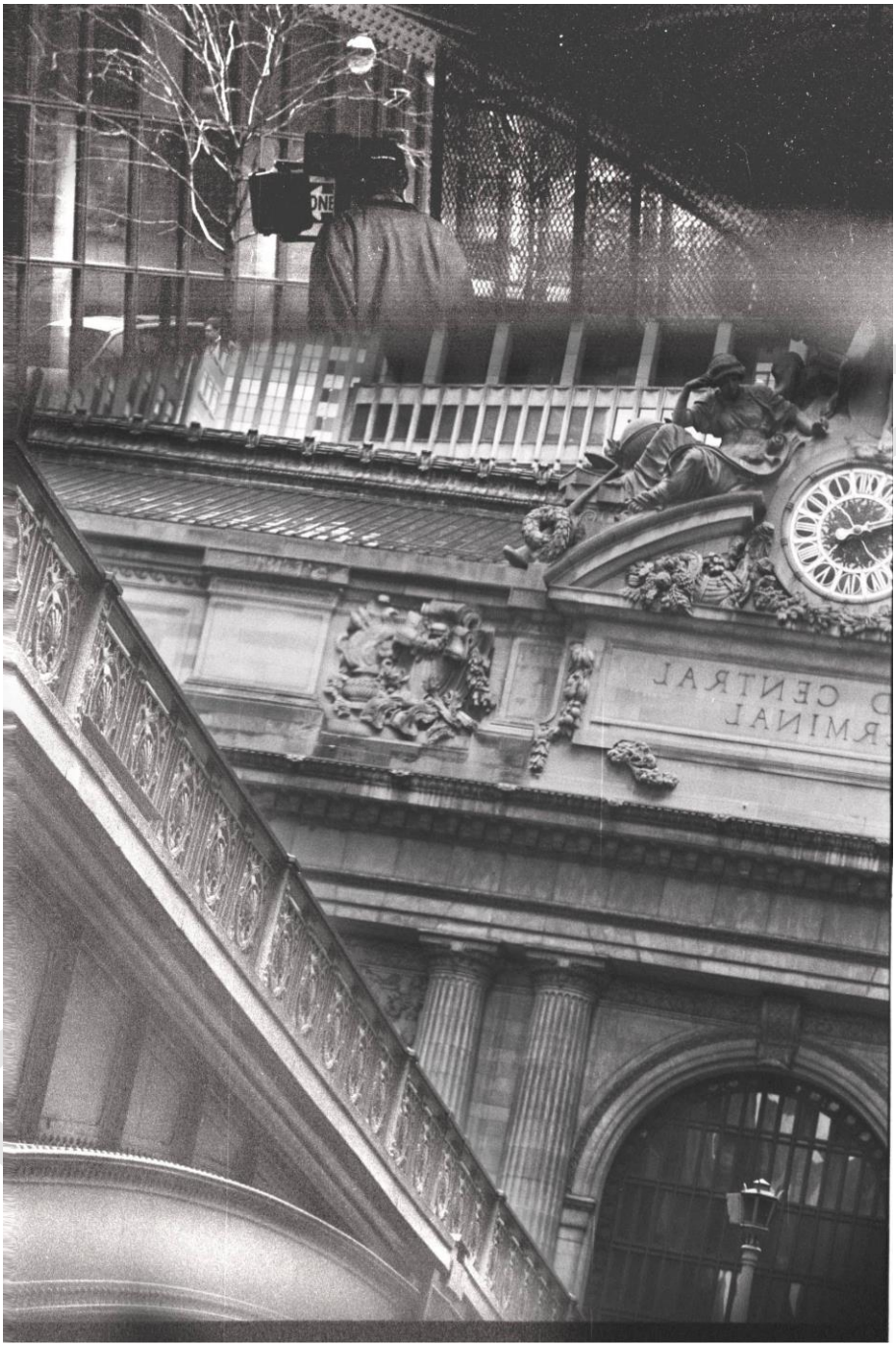


To the beloved memory of Walter Brand

Preface

The Institute of Philosophy and the PhD School of 'Modern Philosophy' at the University of Debrecen, Hungary organized an international conference entitled „*Identity and Self-respect*" in Debrecen at the beginning of June in 2013. The conference opened with the keynote lecture titled "*Reflections on the dynamics of personal identity"* delivered by Ágnes Heller (philosopher, Member of Hungarian Scientific Academy, Hannah Arendt professor of New School for Social Research, New York). More than twenty renowned scientists presented their papers during the three–day-conference.

The aim of the conference was to explore and discuss the interdisciplinary problem of identity and self-respect and their social bases with the help of American, European, and Hungarian theorists.

Identity is an often used but rarely defined or specified concept yet it is the most commonly investigated area in most human disciplines including philosophy, psychology, sociology, and even of literature or cultural studies… etc. Identity and its different manifestations such as personal identity, group identity, collective identity or national identity, for instance, are often examined in the different disciplines in various historical, social or cultural contexts.

American philosopher, John Rawls, stated that self-respect is a primary social good so societies have to provide it for their citizens. This Rawlsian concept was criticized by communitarian philosophers (Michael Walzer, Michael Sandel). Self-respect is closely related to the recognition of others (Axel Honneth, Jürgen Habermas) and it proves that our well-being does not depend exclusively on material goods. Therefore this topic is relevant not only for the whole history of philosophy, but for psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, theorists of literature and film as well.

The conference was supported by the European Union and the University of Debrecen. It was organized within the framework of project TÁMOP – 4.2.2/b-10/1-2010-0024 (Title of the project: *Person, individual identity and social relations*)

This book is dedicated to Walter Brand who was a wonderful man and an excellent professor of philosophy at CUNY CityTech and died in 2015.

Editors

Ágnes Heller

REFLECTIONS ON THE DYNAMICS OF PERSONAL IDENTITY

This paper discusses identity formation and identity consciousness in the modern age. Certain aspects of personal identity are the same in pre-modern societies and the modern one, yet certain others undergo essential changes, especially those associated with recognition and respect. On traditional societies where the rank into which someone was born determines quasi naturally the function they are due to perform throughout their whole lives, respect was due to members of certain ranks and not due to members of other ranks. True, single members born in a low rank could achieve respect on the grounds of accomplishments, even without recognition, as slave teachers in ancient Rome. This was an exception from the rule. Is then self-respect dependent on the respect by others? Not necessarily, but conditionally. Self-respect namely presupposes the claim an individual or a group of individuals raise for respect by others. In the absence of such a claim one can speak of pride, yet not of self-respect. One can follow the transformation of identity formation also in Hegel's *Phenomenology of the Spirit*. Reciprocity of mutual recognition begins with asymmetric reciprocity, such as master/slave relation, finally − in modern times − transformed into relations of symmetric reciprocity. In a world characterized by symmetric reciprocity the natural rank of single persons does not determine the function they are supposed to perform and thus the place they are going to occupy in the social hierarchy, but the other way around. The function individuals perform will determine their places in the social hierarchy. The fundamental sentence of the new social arrangement sounds: every human is born free and equally endowed with reason and conscience and has equal right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, as the *Declaration of Independence* formulates. Independent of the circumstance whether those fundamental values are accepted or not, actualized or not, their very existence legitimate mutual recognition. It also allows, although does not legitimize, self-respect's claim not just for recognition but also for respect by others. I can justly claim respect for myself by others if I am also willing to respect the same in the other. The claim for mutual respect is founded on the value of freedom, it presupposes mutual recognition. Yet, mutual recognition and mutual

respect are still not identical. I recognize in others their rights to liberty, life and the pursuit of happiness. I recognize them as persons born with reason and conscience just like myself. However, I can only claim respect for myself on condition that I grant not just recognition for others, but also respect for their actions, deliberations and judgments. If a gangster, as usual, claims respect for himself by others, his claim is not to be honored, although he, too, has to be recognized as an equal human being.

It was under those briefly enumerated conditions that the dynamics of identity building underwent certain changes.

One might distinguish between two kinds of personal identities, better to say, by personal identities constructed from two perspectives: subjective or rather internal identity and objective or rather external identity. The distinction goes back to Locke and Leibniz respectively, but has been modified since several times. I present them with my own modifications.

Internal identity is constituted by personal autobiographical memory. Autobiographical memory on its part, is based on memory fragments, linked to one another by the individual into a narrative. Every autobiographical narrative is a fiction, and not just because the memory fragments are always interpreted by fitting them into the identity narrative. Autobiographical memory resembles in one aspect to dreams. Only the persons whose memory fragments they are, have access to them. They can talk about them, recite them to friends, just as in case of dreams, write them down, confess them to a priest or an analyst, recite them to a boss at a job talk or to a lover in trance, yet autobiographical narrative is always edited. It is formed, variegated, assimilated to the conditions, to the occasions. The more the occasions are, the conditions differ, the more variations the autobiographical narrative will take. Needless to say, in modernity, where we all live, to quote Max Weber, in a polytheistic social universe, that is in different spheres, all of them with their own ethical, pragmatic and behavioral codes, there are no two identical conditions for the formation of autobiographical narratives. We have several different autobiographical narratives ready for different occasions even without directly cheating and lying. One can assume that all of them are based on authentic memory traces, none of them merely invented for making a good impression. Truth and authenticity are here in the last instance identical.

The so-called internal personal identity has three implications. First, only the "I" has access to her memory traces. One can assume that memory traces of heavy emotional loading are normally preserved. At first, (in childhood) memories are

fixed if loaded by empirically universal innate affects such as fear, shame, disgust, rage, eroticism, joy, sorrow and later also by more complex, cognitively altered emotions. Early (and sometimes even later) memories can be recollections of a sight, a taste, a sound (a tree, sunset, a song, touch, and else) but also of something that happened to the subjects (falling down, being smiled at, being scolded or praised and so on). The self's access to those traces is also "dynamic." With the exception of a few traumatic experiences (to which I will return) memory traces emerge sometimes from the nowhere (the non-conscious self) and sink back into the same underworld. The dynamics of forgetting and remembering, these ups and downs and the narrative constructed by them are narrowly connected. They are the raw materials of the different presentations of the self.

A memory narrative told only for ourselves is already a kind of presentation of the self, even if not yet its representation. Internal personal identity is, at first, self-presentation. Self-presentation is mostly manifestation of self-preservation and self-defense. The need to defend myself by narration includes two aspects: the preservation of my singularity (i=I) and the protection of its unity. I forget memory traces that endanger the continuity and the unity of such a presentation, and let emerge the ones who help it. What is termed "self-respect" follows - up to the degree the same logic, or at least it is one of manifestations of this logic.

Second, I, and no one else, create the primary narratives from my own memory traces. I can combine the traces in various ways, thus I can present (to myself) very different autobiographies. Autobiographical memory takes off from one point, and this point is always the absolute present of the identity, creating the identity − strengthening narrator. No one connects her autobiographical memory narrative from the perspective of yesteryear. One, certainly, can ask oneself, what would have happened if…ten years ago, and so on, but one always asks this question today. All autobiographical narratives are retrospective, they are told from a teleological perspective. In this sense, one can construct a final autobiography only at the moment of death. This is, among others, also the message of Heidegger's famous claim to "being towards death.". The teleological-retrospective character of identity narratives does not depend on the fact, whether the teller narrates one's life as a success story or a tragic, defeat story, whether one speaks about oneself as a fortunate or as an unfortunate being. Since autobiographical narratives are constantly variegated and changing, personal identity is also changing.

Third, internal identity can be termed "subjective" only because it is the individual whose experiences it contains who recollects them. Thus internal

identity grants the primary access to self-knowledge. Briefly, it contains the always-changing truth about the self.

Since personal identity is first internal, and identity narratives as self presentations of the individual are fictional, this truth is always also untruth. The inscription of Delphoi "Know thyself" which commanded the impossible also in the ancient ages, sounds in modern times rather absurd. In pre-modern ages, where men were determined first by their *x* rank, the possible situations for actions and judgments were limited. The examples by Aristotle are dealing with possibilities of non-foreseeable consequences of an act, but not with non-foreseeable actions and reactions. In modern times, however, none can know what they would do in a situation they cannot even imagine. Even just to imagine all possible types of situations is impossible in modern age. As a result, we have no idea about our hidden possibilities, we constantly surprise ourselves. In one of his short stories Stefan Zweig tells us how an elegant lady, a virtuous widow goes to bed with a young Polish boy due, she thinks, out of empathy, and how she later confesses, that had this boy asked her to go with him to the end of the world she would have done it. No one knows about her experience, yet she learned about herself something entirely new, something, she never ever suspected. What is important, that this experience has not destroyed her self-respect. Only that she respected herself also for something else, than others did, who respected in her only the virtuous lady, the dignified middle aged widow.

It is obvious, that the "subject" of internal identity is not just the "I," but also the "We." The tree I recollect stands in "our" orchard, the person who smiles at me is someone else, my mother, my nurse. I am a girl, I am a boy, they speak around me this and this language. I am living in a village, or in a town. "We" are winning, "we" are losing, "we" should act such and such. Most of the recollected experiences, whether painful or merry, are experiences with others. Others humiliate us; others love us. They can humiliate in us, or love in us not just the "I" but also the "we". The strongest, for the most emotional memory traces are the ones, which imprint in our minds not just the actions of others, not just the feelings triggered by them in us, but also our reactions, that is, our acceptance or our refusal of the authority of those others.

Internal identity stands in reciprocal relation with external identity. To begin with Leibniz's criticism of Locke: If identity, the "self" is located in our memory, what about amnesia? Does a person who loses his memory thereby also loses his identity? Others see them, they know exactly who they are, perhaps their neighbors for many years, they recognize their faces, statures, voices, as they also

know what they have done, how they behaved, what kind of persons they are. The man who lost memory never saw his face (for the mirror lies), never heard his own voice, never realized fully the impression he made on his neighbors. Those others know many things about him. They also construct his identity. Not from his memory traces, but from their own, in addition from the narratives of others based on their memories, their judgments. External identity is also a narrative, put together from visible traces, such as actions, behavior, creation. These narratives are also fictions and they are also dynamic. The external identity of X can be constructed differently by A, B, or C, and all of them can change it. Contrary to internal identity narratives, external identity narratives are neither teleological nor retrospective. Rather the opposite is typical, albeit not exclusive. External narratives are mainly based on a person's past encounters. One can tell an identity narrative also about people who died centuries before. External identities can also change, albeit they not always do. It can change due to new experiences, new information, and by the change of social judgment or imagination, and most rigid external identities are normally due to prejudices, and those prejudices are against a "we", that is, against the ethnic, religious, national, gender, sexual identity of the object of external identity building.

The constructed identity of the man with memory loss is merely conjectural for the possibility of the interplay between internal and external identity is entirely absent. Even more so than in the case of the external narrative of the dead ones, for in the latter case, as in biographies, one can still rely on internal sources such notes, letters, diaries and memoires.

Sartre and French existentialism in general claimed that the regard of others is the essential factor in identity building, especially in the identity building of the "we". Sartre said that the regard of the anti-Semite creates the Jew, Beauvoir claimed that the regard of men determines the self identity of women. The stories strangers, women etc. will tell about themselves will fit into the image the regard of others has created for them. Moreover, they will not just organize their memory traces according to expectations, but the experiences absorbed as memory traces will already perform the labor of assimilation. That is Sartre speaks of the primacy of external identity as against internal identity. Since Sartre's case of Jews is problematic, I discuss briefly the conception of Beauvoir.

According to Beauvoir women accept the opinion and judgment of the male regard as something self evidently correct, thus they see themselves through the eyes of men. They interiorize men's expectation. They try to please them, they present themselves in the male's image. There is mutual recognition, and also

symmetric reciprocity, yet under the condition that women accept the role allocated to them. They are respected only insofar they interiorize the male definition of their being and play their allotted role well, to everyone's satisfaction. Beauvoir suggests (and not just for women) to reverse the regard: to constitute the image, the external personality of men by the female regard. The moment women learn to reject to play the role allotted to them by men, they will be able of self-presentation, of creating an internal identity, independent from the male regard. Then they can claim respect for their self-presentation, not just for having well assimilated into the traditional female role.

Such a self-presentation is represented by Ibsen's play *The Doll's House* (1879). The drama tells the story of a typical reversal of regard. The wife, Nora, who plays the role allotted to her in The *Doll's House*, suddenly turns around and begins to become, instead of a role player, just herself. The drama illuminates also one of my hypotheses: the moment that a new, not expected, experience makes someone (in this case Nora) realize that she accepted hitherto a life of lies, suddenly her whole internal narrative will be re-written. Now she tells a different story of her life, she attributes different meaning to her memory traces, for example, to her father's love.

The Nora-case makes us return to a previous question. "'I" experiences go also with "we" experiences. I do not want to say, that all "'I" experiences are simultaneously "we" experiences, for such a presupposition would lead us into a dangerous avenue, to the avenue of prejudices. To jump into a conclusion from "one or mine" to "all or ours", to universalize singular memory traces must be selective and thoroughly reflected. It can be that when "I" am the victim then "we" are the victims, for I am victimized due to the membership of the "we". Yet, this is not always the case. From being betrayed by a man does not follow that I was betrayed because I am poor, neither that all men betray women.

I mentioned that Sartre made a claim for the priority of external identity to the internal one. He has not persuaded me. First, because in modern times one can also choose the representative others and re-choose them relying on one's internal identity, individuality, personality, conscience, etc. If this were not so, no prejudice on earth could wither. There is also another frequently raised controversial issue. Internal or external identity is more "'true", more reliable? This question makes sense only if raised from the perspective of external identity, given that the outsider has no direct access to the internal one. True, the "objects" of external identity-building, tell their stories in different versions several times, they confess, they open their hearts, and so on. Yet, even if one believes in their

sincerity, one also knows that all self-presentations of identity are fictions, only for the reason that no one knows oneself. True, the same can be said about external identity-building since no one knows another either. There always remains a gap between self-presentation of identity and the presentation of the same by another, by various others. In case of a conversation between the two identities, perspectives, especially, in situations in love and friendship, the gap can be narrowed down, yet the two identities will, finally, not merge.

Cultural differences cause special problems. Creating objective identity of someone presupposes that we can read the person's signs. We can roughly read the signs of a member of our own culture or of a culture we became familiarized with. In assessing the character of a stranger, the strangeness of his behavior, one gets embarrassed and cannot form the person's objective identity (neither will one understand the narratives of internal identity). One can then withhold judgment of character and simultaneously grant respect to someone one does not understand. (Generally, such advance is not granted, but this is another story.)

Yet, one meets great difficulties to form external identity of someone not only because one is ignorant of the culture of the object of character judgment. The same difficulty arises when the door to internal identity is locked and the key of the lock got lost.

I could best illuminate this difficulty by Stefan Zweig short story "*Verwirrung der Gefühle*" (*The confusion of Emotions*.)

A professor is celebrated by his colleagues and students at the occasion of his 60 birthday. They present him with a *Festschrift* that – among others – described his life. The professor reads the text and realizes that this biography has nothing to do with him. They do not know him, they have no idea who he is. In the vocabulary of this essay, his consensual external identity has nothing to do with his internal identity. Then, in a flash, his youth comes back to him: the long forgotten experience that has changed his life that made him the man he became.

As a twenty-year-old he was deadly bored by university courses. Then, in a small German town, he heard a professor speaking behind a door. He immediately felt that he discovered something astonishing, fascinating, and new: namely the enthusiasm, passion for one's subject matter. The young man became the personal student of the professor and learned from him not just understanding texts but also understanding the world. They got close to each other, the professor dictated him his book. To cut a long story short, in a final confession the professor disclosed him his homosexuality, and that he is in love with him. The boy was

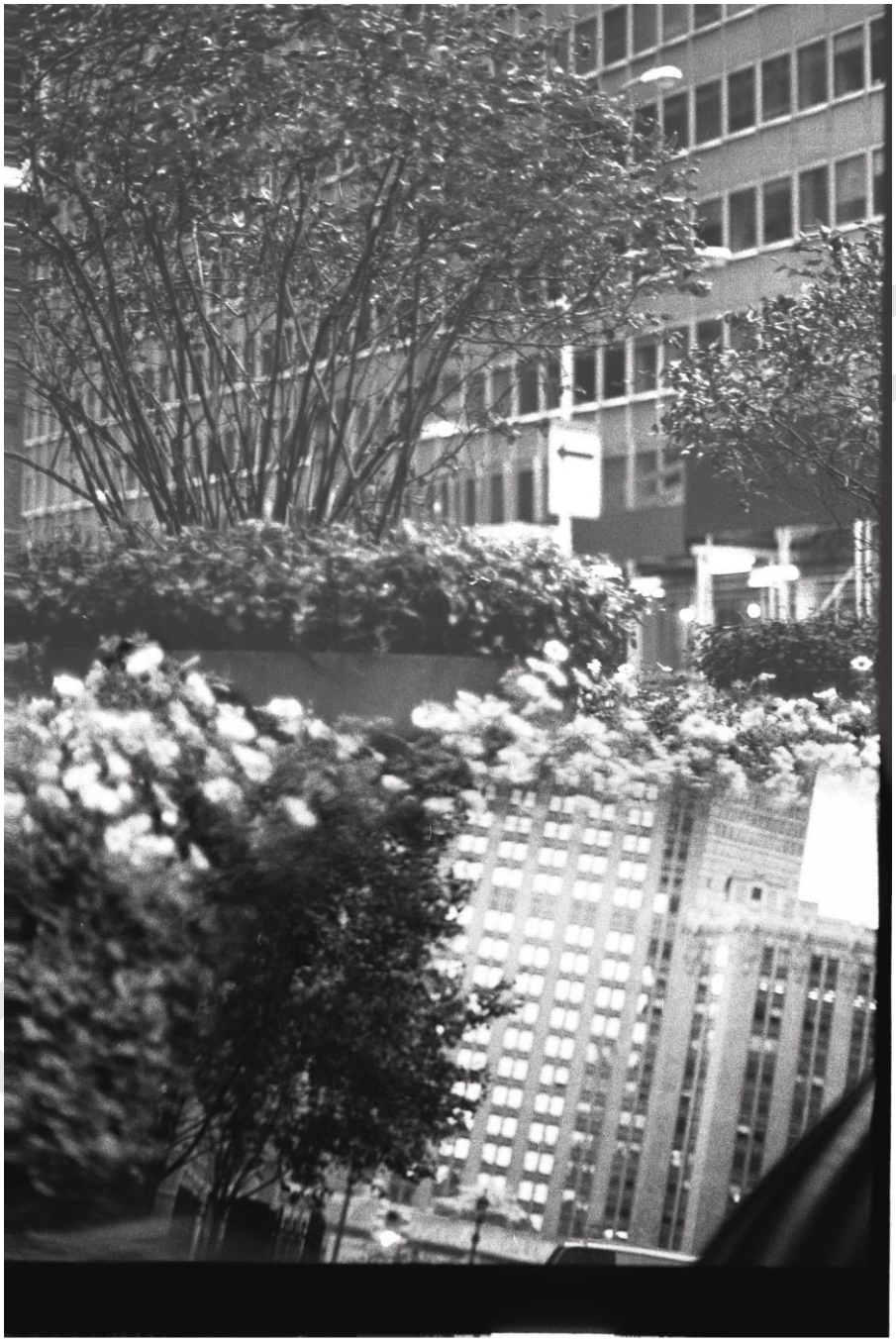
shocked that the beloved teacher was a perverse. He couldn't stay there, he run away, he did not understand anything.

Only now, only after 40 years, confronted with his phony biography, does he find the key to open the deeply repressed experience: the most important event in his life. And it is now that he can remember the most important person in his life, a person he has forgotten even to mention to himself. He ends his trauma narrative with a confession: never in his life, not before his parents, nor after his wife and children, has he loved anyone as much as he loved himself.

Since the confession is written down by a poet. We speak here not about the presentation of self-identity, but about the representation of a self-identity. But is it self-representation? For the man, "me" who represents is the poet, not the professor. Can a non-homosexual represent the self-presentation of a homosexual? Or a non Jew represents the self-presentation of a Jew, or a man represents the self-presentation of a woman? Is it more authentic if representation and self-presentation are personally connected? (I am sorry, but I have no time to follow up on this, to my mind, important inquiry.)

But let me finally return to the question of self-respect. I take as my starting point, for simplicity's sake, the Zweig story. The professor had no self-respect, for he accepted the prejudice against homosexuals. The boy's self-respect was shaken, for he was in love with a pervert, with the evil. Had he judged his professor, and also himself, on the ground of "I", and "you" not "we", "them", there would have been no trauma, no fraudulent life. Thus, the first condition of self-respect is to judge myself and also others not on the grounds of the "we", whether this "we" is rejected or acclaimed, but on the grounds of the "I" and "you".

Easier said than done.



István Bugár

A SYNERGETIC CONCEPT OF AUTONOMY AND PERSONHOOD

Perspectives in early Christian thought

Around 400 we witness the emergence of concurrent anthropological models in several dimensions. First, Augustine luridly opposes Pelagius' concept of absolute human autonomy and self-constitution and develops a vision of humans completely devoid of any valuable initiative – a model so vividly criticized under the guise of Protestantism by Erich Fromm. None of these extreme positions take into account the traditional model developed by early Christian thinkers, i.e. the synergetic pattern, which excludes either complete self-determination or absolute dependence on the Other. Second, in striking contrast to this, in the very same period Augustine appropriates a deeply Plotinian notion of the self, where self-knowledge, self-consciousness and self-love are the highest expressions of the divine element in humans, the reflection of the divine Trinity in a single self. Greek authors of the previous period, however, envisage a Divine Trinity, which can be modelled on the human level exclusively through different interpersonal relations from family through Church community to the entire human society. In my paper I explore the Augustinian option, which was more influential in modern European thought – either positively or negatively – and the Greek alternative that appears to be more promising for a less individualistic anthropology.

Why should one respect oneself? A plausible answer since Kant – and in a way since Pico della Mirandola's *De hominis dignitate* – refers to the fact that she or he is an *autonomous agent*. Another grounds – or possibly another way of expressing the same grounds – can be that she or he is a *person*. In the following, I shall examine the intrinsic tension within these two concepts as they appear in Late Antiquity.

Much has been said of both, especially of the former, autonomy.[1] So I intend to highlight a few aspects that have not been commonly observed. These concerns partly the interdependence of the two concepts as understood by the Greek Christian thinkers, as opposed to Augustine, partly their relevance for modern social theory.

The issues I am going to address are those of anthropology, but this anthropology – strangely for many modern viewers – is not only descriptive but also normative. The reasons for this I do not wish to explain here in detail.[2] The deplored inference from *sein* to *sollen*, however, is not quite alien to modern thinking either; [3] it is enough to recall M. Buber's *Ich und Du*, where one witnesses a similar intertwining of the two spheres.

Autonomy

In the Late Antiquity, anthropology was always theology, since it was the common conviction of most Christians, Jews and Pagans that humans were the image or reflections of God.[4] It is true even in Christian discussions about human autonomy, striking as it may sound. It has been a strong conviction in Christianity since the second century that humans are autonomous because they have been created in the image of the autonomous God. In fact, this is the main trait of

[1] I use the term autonomy for a (metaphysical, anthropological) notion describing a human capacity for autonomous choice, at least partially independent of external and pretemporal determining factors, a notion that along the augustinian line has traditionally been termed „freewill" in the modern Western philosophical discourse. By contrast, the Anceints used to refer to the concept as *autexousion* or *autonomia* (or *eph'hēmin*);this is from where I picked the above term. An ethical, political or social concept of autonomy might be developed independently of it. (allthough „originally", in Kant the two are deeply interrelated).

[2] Briefly, it lies in the concept of the Fall; or in Evagrian terms, the *krisis* present in our world as it is now. Other early Christian thinkers, however, like Irenaeus, shunned to attribute too great significance to the Fall, but considered it a temporary deviation on the route of human evolvement, a deviation even fruitful in its own terms.

[3] For this, see the paper of Milton FISK in the present vomule.

[4] For Jews and Christians it followed from Gen 1, 26-7; for Pagans, see e.g. pseudo-Ecphantus, *De regno* fr. 2. pp. 79-80, ed. Thesleff.

similarity between the archetype and the image.[5] Even those authors, who, like Origen, believed that we are the reflections of God in virtue of our intellectual capacity rather than our autonomous activity, even they strongly emphasised human freedom. In primitive Christianity, a tool has been devised to decide one's orthodoxy and belonging to the community. This was called the rule of faith, or, with later terminology, the creed, recited in some form during the rite of initiation. For Origen this creed included four articles: on the Father, on the Son, on the Holy Spirit, and, finally that on human autonomy.[6] For writers of very different authority, like Irenaeus of Lyons of the late second century, on the one hand, and Lactantius of the early fourth on the other, human autonomy meant a power for self-constitution. (KENDEFFY 2006: 173-2).[7] Certainly not an absolute power – for constituting ourselves in the genetic sense would make nonsense – but a power to determine what we are developed to.

The rather unanimous scene changed abruptly around 400 with the emergence of two strong personalities in the Latin-speaking world. The Irish-born high-respected monk, Pelagius offended by Augustine's *Confessions* advanced a nearly absolute theory of human autonomy. Except for our existence, everything is in our hand, and we need no help from anybody human or divine to achieve our highest goal, except, perhaps, some instructions. Augustine in his turn, offended by Pelagius and his extravagant disciple, Caelestius, developed an anthropology based on a new concept of original sin, which excluded real autonomy after the Fall, and in the long run left *nothing* in humans' hand. The struggle went on between the two authors and their followers for thirty years or so. (BROWN 2000: 345-410; STEAD; 1994: 230-44; CHADWICK 2001: 115-28; 2009:145-68; LANCEL 2002: 325-46 and 413-38; and KEECH 2012) They have understood the issue as a contest between human freedom and divine grace. Moreover, to translate the keen observation of the late Chr. Stead (STEAD 231-5; esp. 234) into a language of game-theory, this contest was for them a kind of zero-sum game. What one partner wins, the other looses, what one gives, the other receives and *vice versa*. Augustine,

[5] Irenaeus, *AH* II 1,1; III 8,3; IV 34,1; V 18,2; Methodius of Olympus, *De autexusione* 16,7; 17,4; Gregory of Nyssa, *Great Catechetical Treatise* 5, 10: p. 26-27 ed. Stawley.

[6] Origen, *ComJoh* 32,16.

[7] Irenaeus is followed by Gregory of Nyssa in this respect also: see *De vita Moysis* II 3; cf. II 45 and II 14.

Pelagius, and their partisans have ignored the possibility that the efforts of the partners in a common business can be proportionate to each-other.

The striking feature of this ignorance appears entirely only if one takes into consideration that the ignored case had indeed been accepted by the majority of contemporary and earlier Christian thinkers.[8] This alternative model has been termed the synergetic pattern (cf. 1Cor 3, 9): God and man operate together; their effort (energy, Gk. *energeia*) is conjoined and enhances each-other. (MÜHLENBERG 1977 and HARRISON 1992: 133-206; CHRISTOV 2012) Humans can do nothing without God's active help, but God chooses to do nothing without the consent of the human partner. The greater our effort is, the greater amount of divine grace we can attract. Slightly altering the simile of Irenaeus[9] and Origen, we may put it like this: the darker an object grows, the greater amount of sunshine it can absorb. If we translate this into human relations, a concept of autonomy emerges, which is a real autonomy but is not independently effective without the Other. In other words, autonomy appears merely negative in the isolation of the individual as freedom *from*, it is only synergy that enables it to be constructive as freedom *for* something.

The synergetic pattern gained expression later in the outcome of the Christological controversy of the seventh century. Following the guidelines of Sophronius of Jerusalem and Maximus Confessor, the Council of 681 finally canonized the position that there are two volitions (*thelēsis*) and operations (*energeia*) in Christ, who accomplished in himself the divine and human encounter and is thus an intrapersonal paradigm for this interpersonal relationship. The two volitions and operations co-operate in the theandric person. Though volition becomes strongly associated with autonomy as its psychological expression,[10] it remains a function of the intellect and does not become the autonomous faculty of will, as we find in Augustine (for Augustine, see FREDE 2011, esp. the editor's note 3. on p. 181-2). Nevertheless, the diothelite answer to the Christological problem

[8] For Origen, see esp. *Philokalia* 26,7 (*ComPs* 4 fr.); as evidence for the consensus before Augustine, see the two authoritative preachers of the time: John Chrysostom, e.g. *In Mt* 82,4; *In Jn* 10,1; Ambrose, *De Isaac* 3.10; 4.33; cf. also Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio Catechetica Magna* 30-1 and the related Ps.-Macarius, *Epistula Magna* 3,1,1–13: p. 238 ed. Jaeger; see and also the most influential Syriac theologian, Ephrem: see BROCK 1985, 34-6 (quoting Ephrem, *Heresies* 11; *Church* 2,18-23).

[9] Irenaeus *AH* IV 29; Origen, *PA* III 1,11.

[10] Cf. John Damascene, *De fide orthodoxa* II 14,58.

exemplifies the synergetic concept of autonomy. One may also conjecture that the late-Augustinian doctrine of grace also paved the way for the – short-lived – acceptance of the monothelite position in Rome under pope Honorius. In this model, a single will replaces the cooperation of two autonomous volitions.

Person

The scheme of synergy, as we shall see, is central to the concept of *personhood* evolving through the activity of early Christian thinkers from the third to the fifth centuries. Here I shall not discuss the details of this process and the different elements absorbed by the term *prosōpon/persona* and the corresponding concept created by the early Christian discussions about Christ (see MEUNIER 2006 and BUGÁR 2013 with further literature) but shall only highlight a characteristic difference of how the concept is used and enriched – and at the same time impoverished – by Augustine.

In early Christian theology, where the concept of person was born, autonomy did not emerge as constituent of personhood. I am not aware of any discussion on the *personal* autonomy within the Divine Trinity. There are some passages that could suggest that it was the autonomous choice of the Son to be incarnated,[11] but when it really becomes a consideration, it is emphatically stated that He has no *private* will in contrast to that of the Father or the Spirit.[12] Similarly, autonomy is predicated of God rather than of the divine persons – as far as anything can be predicated of God at all.[13] It is thus intersubjectivity that constitutes divine persons.[14] By contrast, synergy plays a major role in distinguishing persons from individuals in isolation. Substance/essence (*ousia*) as made unequivocal by the Cappadocian Fathers equals to the second Aristotelian sense of the term and is identified with nature (*physis*). As such, it would be too weak a guarantee for

[11] E.g. Athanasius, *De incarnatione* 16: ὑπέβαλεν ἑαυτὸν διὰ σώματος φανῆναι ὁ Λόγος.
[12] John Damascene, *De fide orthodoxa* II 18 (62) II 14 (58).
[13] *Ibid*.
[14] Intersubjectivity has, in a way, been already encoded into the (prehistory) of the Greek and Latin terms both meaning (among others) human face. Face with its direct and metaphorical senses is the space where an individual is anchored into a society. For an Ancient reflection on the Latin term, see Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae* XIII 30

divine unity. It is common mind (*homonoia*), will, power (*dynamis*) and operation (*energeia*) −lack of isolation − that marks unity.[15]

For the anthropological consequences of this theology, it is illuminating to look at the analogies these authors use to illuminate divine relations on the human level. One of the main actors in creating Christian Trinitarian orthodoxy, Gregory of Nazianzus in one of his five best known and most widely perused orations exploits the pattern of the family to elucidate what the divine Trinity is. The analogy of Adam, Eve and Seth[16] has thus become standard and in fact a sort of canonized later by the theological compendium unique as such in the Greek world, the *De fide* of John Damascene.[17]

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[15] Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *On not three Gods* 49-52.

[16] Gregory Nazianzene, *Or* 31 (*theol* 5) 11; cf. *Carmina dogmatica* 3,37-39: PG 37,411.

[17] John Damascene, *De fide orthodoxa* I 8,119-123; cf. the fifth-century Pseudo-Justin, *Quaestiones et responsiones ad orthodoxos* 488B The analogy Adam-Seth for the Father and the Son is common in anti-Arian theology: Athanasius, *De decretis Nicaenae synodi* 20; Didymus the Blind, *De Trinitate* I 16,41; Hilarius of Poitiers, *De Synodis* 73; Gregory of Nyssa, *Refutatio confessionis Eunomii* 150; Gregory Nazianzene, *Or* 39: PG 36,348; Or 30 (Theol 4) 20; and Ephrem the Syrian, *Contra Haereses* [CSCO 169//170] V 11-2; *In Genesim commentarius* CSCO 152, 54,27-29 (cf. KRONHOLM, 1978, 150-4; I am grateful to Sebastian Brock for this reference) the other half of the analogy, that is between Eve and the Holy Spirit is found in Ephrem the Syrian, *Saint Ephrem's Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaro: an English translation of Chester Beatty Syriac MS 709* with introduction and notes by Carmel McCarthy [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993]) for an overview of the Syriac tradition of the motherly character of the Spirit and an English translation of the passage of Ephrem, see MURRAY 2006: 318. The family-analogy is revived by the contemporary theologian Scott HAHN 2002. In fact this "familiar" image of the Divine has a Hellenized Jewish precedent in Philo of Alexandria. In a passage he speaks of Wisdom (Sophia) as of the consort of He Who Is, and the Logos as their Son: *De fuga* 108-9; cf. De *ebrietate* 31. Since Holy Spirit is feminine in Aramaic (and Hebrew), Aramaci speaking Christianity appears to have been especially receptive for such analogies: see PÁSZTORY-KUPÁN 2009. Traces thereof appear also in the early church orders (preserved in Syriac, but originally in Greek); [17] *Didaskalia* c. 9; p. 36 as well as in Jerome: Jeromos, *Ep.* 36 GCS I/2 54. A precursor of the family-analogy can be found already in Philo of Alexandria, *De fuga* 108-9; De *ebrietate* 31. Nevertheless the Ancients (at least the hellenophones) were not so much obsessed about gender in the trinitarian analogies as some modern theologians. For them a family, the three closest disciples of Jesus, or the martyr ascetic sisters, Menodora, Metrodora and Nymphodora (Simeon Metaphrasta, *Menologium* PG 115,653) would equally do.

For the close colleague of the Nazianzene, Gregory of Nyssa, the elucidating model for the divine Trinity were Jesus' three closest disciples, James, John and Peter, whom he does not hesitate to call one man. Later, a third Gregory, the pope surnamed "the Great" used Trinitarian language to describe the relationship of the principal episcopal sees, Rome, Antioch and Alexandria.[18]

Others were less insistent on the numerical correspondence. In fact, the first decisive Trinitarian theologians in the mid-third century, Hippolytus and Novatian – quoting Jn 17,22-3 – showed that the Christian community is the terrestrial counterpart of the divine Trinity – at least in the ideal state of the former, marked out by unity of intention (*homonia*) and effective action (*dynamis*).[19] This unity – according to Hippolytus' conviction – will be extended to the entire human kind.[20]

At the end of the fourth century, after the debate about the Trinity had been concluded by the Council of 381, John Chrysostom explicitly turns theology to anthropology by beginning to use the conciliar language of *homoousios* (of one essence/substance) to describe different human relationships: that of husband and wife,[21] and the relation between all members of humanity.[22]

This latter move is repeated in a more abstract way by Gregory of Nyssa when he asserts in his treatise cited above that the use of the noun *anthrópos* (a human being) in the plural is inadequate.[23] Gregory's argument here is to a certain extent reminiscent of Plato's theory of Forms. However, – as we have seen in Hippolytus and John Chrysostom – the unity of mankind is a more concrete and less theoretical reality, even if ideal reality, for these authors. This conviction gains the most eloquent expression in Maximus Confessor.[24] For them, God is a community, or even communion, mirrored by different levels of community on the earth. This community – at least in its ideal form – is united by a single operation (*dynamis* or *energeia*), that is to say, by co-operation, just as in the case of the divine Trinity. Thus synergy or co-operation becomes the key both to understanding human

[18] *Ep.* 7, 37 *Ad Eulogium Alexandrinum.*.
[19] Hippolytus, *Contra Noetum* 7; Novatian, *De trinitate* 27.
[20] Hippolytus, *De Christo et Antichristo* 1; 3.
[21] John Chrysostom, *Homiliae in Genesin* 15,1–2
[22] John Chrysostom, *Homiliae in Epistulam ad Corinthios I* 34,3.
[23] Gregory of Nyssa, *On not three Gods* 40-42.
[24] Maximus Confessor, *Ep.* 2: PG 91,396-7; 400-1.

autonomy and personhood, none of which is conceived to be meaningful in isolation of the individual.

Let us now turn again to Augustine. He wrote one of his three *grandes oeuvres*, the *De Trinitate* between 400 and 416, while deeply involved in the conflict with Pelagius. His main concern in the second half of this monograph is to develop the possibly most appropriate model of the divine Trinity. His main guide in this process is that humans are the image of the Divine Trinity. He mainly considers different forms of human perception and intellection, intention and volition. Although one of his starting points is the analogy of the Lover, the Beloved and their mutual love,[25] he gradually excludes all models that involve more factors than a single individual. Thus he excludes sense-perception, as involving an object external to the perceiver,[26] but in the long run he also leaves aside an ordinary concept of thinking which implies external referentiality. Finally, we are presented the highest mental activity as a sheer self-knowledge, self-awareness, and self-love (one might perhaps use also the term 'respect' instead of 'love').[27] Self-reflexivity is the most appropriate feature of the I.

In this process Augustine emphatically and repeatedly rejects all models that involve a plurality of human persons stating that two human beings can never be called one − as if he wanted to contradict the treatise of Gregory of Nyssa written some 20 years before.[28] For Augustine this would do injustice to divine unity, thus leading us into polytheism.

He expresses his rejection most vigorously in the analogy of a human family – prototypically that of Adam, Eve and Seth. [29] His summary verdict is crushing: "this opinion is in truth so absurd, nay indeed so false, that it is most easy to refute it".[30]

What is then that carries Augustine so far from the consensus described above? I assume it is his much treasured Plotinus [CHADWICK 2001: 10; 26; cf. KANY 2000 19-20], for whom the individual soul by contemplating herself discovers the entire

[25] Augustine, *De Trinitate* VIII 10.14 ed. W.J. Mountain, CCSL 50 (1968).
[26] *Ibid*. XI 2.2.
[27] *Ibid*. IX 4.4; XIV 6.8
[28] *Ibid*. IX 4.6; XII 3-7. XV 23.43.
[29] *Ibid*. XII 5.5.
[30] *Ibid*.

universe and its ultimate source, the One, within.[31] To be sure, Augustine had a high respect for Gregory of Nazianzus − and did not read him. He did not, because he could not [BUGÁR 2013: 38]. He did not have a sufficient command of Greek. [cf. LIENHARD 2008, 82 with basic literature] Neither did he read Gregory of Nyssa (LIENHARD 2008, 81). Further, as we have seen, not all authors were so much insistent on numerical correspondence as Augustine who always esteemed mathematics the highest of all human sciences.

Returning to Augustine's possible motives, one may add his natural inclination to introversion, unparalleled in his time (see STOCK 2010; and briefly with further literature BUGÁR 2013: 28). Furthermore after his conversion he preferred a life in a community of friends, this community is intellectually unequal at least as it appears from his early dialogues, where the others turn out to be little more than an audience for Augustine, and indeed are dispersed from the scene in the *Soliloquia* where Augustine in the spirit of the later *De Trinitate* assumes the role of *both* partners in the dialogue. For the Cappadocians, for both Gregories collegiality both in family and friendship appears to be a more immediate experience, as it emerges also from Gregory of Nyssa's dialogue *De anima*, where his sister takes the leading role leaving the author in a subordinate position.

Certainly, I am not saying that Augustine, the most eloquent proclaimer of love,[32] was a selfish and unsocial guy. His correspondence and activity would refute this, as shown by the postscript of the second edition of his biography by Peter Brown [BROWN 2000: 445-7]. Instead, I am talking of inclinations and especially of emphases in a theoretical framework. Already in case of Plotinus, perhaps a similar tension can be detected between theory and personality [HEIDL 2011: 16 n. 9]. Furthermore, the Divine Thou at least was always there for Augustine, both in the *Soliloquia,* and the *Confessions,* and also in the self-reflexive I of the *De Trinitate*. Nor do I think that his intrinsic model and the interpersonally

[31] Eg. Plotinus, *Enn* V 1. The initiating peace of the Late Antique Platonist curriculum, the *Alcibiades I* has recently received exceptional attention in this respect, see JOOSE 2014, esp. 3-6; WERNER 2013, esp. 318-31; REMES 2013, esp. 277-80; PIETSCH 2009, and GILL 2007 with the earlier literature cited. This platonic dialogue, however, as most modern interpretations also note, widens the concept of self-knowledge to an interpersonal horizon, and is thus assimilated to a view of personhood characteristic to the Greek Christian thinkers discussed above.

[32] Augustine, *In Iohannis epistulam ad Parthos tractatus* VII 8: PL 35,2033,35.

anchored concept of personhood are mutually exclusive or lead necessarily to mutually exclusive practices.

Similarly, while the communitarian form of asceticism championed by the Cappadocian Basil the Great prevailed over early eremitism, it did not exclude − on the contrary − it absorbed a practice of such inner concentration as expounded by the leading theorist of the anchorite movement, Evagrius of Pontus. However, there is also a significant difference between the introspection of Augustine and Evagrius's exercise: the latter is achieved not in terms of self-knowledge but in those of apophaticism by the gradual exclusion of all passions, phantasy, mental images, and finally of concepts.

Synergy in the above sense is more than a co-operation based on common interest like in the famous Prisoner-paradox[33]. It is a constructive element in the interpersonal relations intertwined in various ways with such concepts as love, or the psychologically less loaded respect (which, however, has also less generous and more measured and individual-centred connotations).[34] Thus, we have started from self-respect, autonomy and the value of a person and got as far as respect, co-operation and intersubjectivity, or, in other words, at a notion of self-respect, self-love, autonomy and personal value that is fundamentally anchored in respect of, love of, and co-operation with the Other. No wonder that there has been a recent attempt to implement these ancient insights in a contemporary environment. (STÖCKL 2007; *id.* 2008) Whether the implementation successfully meets modern challenges or not, I cannot but share the intuition of many that the Greek Patristic anthropological and Trinitological pattern can infuse fresh blood into a philosophical discussion that has so far been ultimately dependent on Augustine.

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[33] See Kuhn 2007.

[34] There has been a recent debate how far love can be considered en emotion. In Maximus Confessor's *On love* we witness a double tendency: after initially excluding that love is an emotion (*De catitate* I 1), but we arrive at the holy "passion/emotion of love" (*ibid.* III 71), not unlike in Origen (for the latter, see STEAD 1994, 130). *Pathos,* however, the only Greek candidate for emotion has a very complex structure of meaning by Maximus' time. At any rate, it is something beyond the rationally planned and measured. Respect may also be viewed as a more restricted version or – with FROMM 1956: 28 – as a component of love. As a matter of fact, Fromm's "definition" of love (FROMM 1956: 46) comes verbally close to that of Maximus, although direct, or even a close indirect influence is virtually excluded. The real "discovery" of Maximus started after the 50s of the last century.

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Hugh McDonald

IDENTITY

In this paper I will give an outline of different meanings or senses of "identity": the metaphysical, the logical, the political, the cultural, the social, the tribal and the individual. I will argue that this abundance of meanings is itself problematic. I will then argue that three of the meanings are problematic by themselves, the metaphysical, the logical and the individual. But since the political and cultural are in some sense bound up with the logical and metaphysical, the former are problematic by inference. I will discuss the implications of this ambiguity for "identity and self-respect."

I. The ambiguity of "identity"

A. Metaphysical identity: the essence or nature

The metaphysical identity of a thing is its essence, or that which identifies its kind. The essence defines the nature of the thing. Nature defined as essence has a long intellectual history, from Greek philosophy through modern Neo-Scholastic writings and the philosophies of C. S. Peirce, Edmund Husserl and others. Nature as essence is implicit in Plato, explicit in Aristotle[1] and the Medieval Scholastics, notably Aquinas and John Duns Scotus.[2] That this distinction is not currently fashionable indicates some problem with this view, at least in its "realist" form (in the sense that contrasts with nominalism and conceptualism.)

One definition of metaphysical identity involves the contrast of essence with "accidents." An object may change but it remains one object. The changing qualities come and go but the essential nature endures. Grass is still grass in the green of spring and the drab tans of late autumn. What stays the same is its inner nature or essence, which distinguishes it from other kinds. Thus "natural man" is human as distinct from other species and stripped of all "accidental" accoutrements, such as culture, material possessions, and so on (unless culture is

[1] Aristotle. *Meta*., V, 4,$_{1015}$a10

[2] See Windelband for a discussion of the issue in Aquinas and Duns Scotus.

itself the human essence, or one of its modes, such as language is). This essence identifies all humans as humans, for it differentiates the species and is universal in scope in that sense, of applying to all humans.

B. Logical identity: the universal

Corresponding to metaphysical identity is the universal, a concept that applies to a class. While defining a class is problematic in itself, we can roughly state that a class in the requisite sense is a kind. A kind is a genus or species. Elephants are one kind; lilies, another. This concept then stands for elephants in general: concepts are general. The concept identifies the individual as a member of the class, in this case elephants. We can argue whether concepts are or are not merely symbols; nominalism makes this point. But it could still be a universal symbol.

No one would say that elephants are identical with lilies, for they are different. Thus identity is the "contrary" of difference. But there is a paradox here that I will analyze below, for by separating out a kind, the identity differentiates it from other kinds. An identity is at the same time a differentiation so the term identity is thereby problematic.

There is also the issue of the universality of accidents. Grass is green in the spring, but dun-tan in late fall. "Green" is a universal concept with many applications to different kinds. Apart from the metaphysical issues this raises, the conceptual application is an "identity-differentiation," for it identifies as the same widely disparate kinds, including green plants, green glass, and so on.

C. Political identity: the nation

I am an American, Hungarian, Chinese, etc. The political identity identifies the person as a citizen or inhabitant of a nation. One problem here is "nation." "Nation" may just be an arbitrary line drawn on an artificial map: a social construct. Inhabitants of Königsburg, Kant's home city, were at one time Polish, at another German and at another Russian. The same family line thereby had a different identity at different points in history. What then is a national identity?

I hope that we can see that the political identity is closely related to logical identity, that is, one's political identity is a "kind", namely, the class of those within a nation or the kind "American, Hungarian, Chinese, etc." But political identity does not seem to be a "natural" kind, if there be such a thing as a "natural" kind. It is indeed a general concept but does not name a natural kind.

D. Cultural identity: ethnicity

One answer to the problem of national identity is ethnicity, or cultural identity. One remains "Polish" through the partitions of the eighteenth century because of one's native tongue, cultural habits and self-identification. Although Poland was partitioned between the surrounding powers, the same family might identify as Polish through all the political turmoil. Similarly, the "ethnic" Hungarians in Romania are culturally Magyar, not Romanian.

The issue that arises here is when does cultural identity merge into political, ending a previous cultural identity? When do "Irish-Americans" or "Vietnamese-French" become simply Americans or French? One answer is when an ethnic group intermarries within the new culture. The offspring are half of one and half of the other and thereby may exhibit what the sociologists call "anomie," the lack of a "normal" culture. Since they partake of both cultures, neither is definitive. So they become something else.

Another denouement might be when the original ethnic language disappears. The children begin to speak the majority or predominant language of the nation and may adopt its habits. Indeed, dialects are disappearing all over the world and homogenization on the rise. Even here, however, there may be a residual identification with the originary ethnicity.

Again, I hope that we can see that cultural identity, ethnicity are closely related to logical identity, that is, one's cultural identity is a kind, namely, the class of those within a culture or the kind "American, Hungarian, Chinese, etc." However, cultural identity seems a little less arbitrary than political identity, since it is wider and embraces habits, behavior, language and other aspects of our lives: in short, it is a way of life. (Cultural and political identity may also overlap: Hungarians in Hungary.) However, if the Greek distinction of *physis* and *nomos* is valid, it is still not a natural kind, since culture is almost synonymous with *nomos*. It is also a general concept but does not name a natural kind.

E. Social identity: roles

Social and cultural identities at least overlap in meaning. But they are defined slightly differently, since culture is defined by contrast either with other cultures, or with nature. The contrary of social is individual. Social identity has to do with social roles: occupation; religion, if relevant and the part one plays in its rituals; and other social functions. I am a college professor or a lawyer or a mechanic or a

farmer. These roles often transcend cultures and so are more universal. Social identity ties into the meaning of individual identity. Social identity also brings in issues of class.

F. Tribal Identity: a synthesis of cultural, social and political identity

"Tribal" identity is often a mixed form of social identity, in which the individual identifies with the tribe. A tribe can be cultural, social and even political but is usually a combination of these kinds. In so-called primitive cultures, in which there was no large, centralized government, the individual was a member of a local tribe, into which they usually born. Among the Native Americans, tribes would often gather, and brides were exchanged from one tribe to another, perhaps to avoid inbreeding and incest (Diamond). Whatever the reason, the adopted bride was now considered a member of her new tribe even though not born into it. Tribal identity was political in the sense that one followed the rules of the tribe, but also cultural, involving a language and way of life; and social, prescribing intimate association and social roles, especially gender roles.

I would argue that tribal identity is not limited to so-called "primitive" societies, but is often exhibited in modern life, in the form of racism, ethnic rivalries within a country and so on. Moreover, identification with a sports team of which one is not a member, a region, or some organization may be tribal. Whether this is a hangover from earlier forms of social organization or a more modern phenomenon, it has in common loyalty to something larger than and constitutive of the individual, to which the individual is loyal.

G. Individual identity

Individual identity has been an issue for psychology at least since William James's famous chapter on the self in his 1890 *Principles of Psychology*. James cited other contemporaneous works on this topic, so it predated him. (Compare, for example, Locke on the continuity of consciousness in memory in the *Essays*). More recently, the psychoanalyst Eric Ericson presented his "eight stages of man" in which the fifth is the stage of adolescence in which, besides making the transition from childhood to adulthood, youths "develop a sense of identity." This individual identity is contrasted with "role confusion."[3]

[3] Gleitman et al., ch. 14.

"Individual" is a term of both identity and difference. "Individual" identifies a person, including oneself, as an individual while differentiating oneself from other individuals. However, the relation of identity and difference is particularly acute in separating out "individual" identity, since in one sense it is the individuality of the individual. The individuality of the individual differentiates the individual decisively from other individuals and is thereby primarily a difference. Yet we may refer to it as individual *identity*. Is this an example of "conceptual confusion"?[4] Do we mean individual difference by the concept "individual identity"?

Alternatively, is the "me" in James and what I identify with really social? Are Ericson's social "roles" really individual? Can concepts capture the individuality of the individual? Is the individuality of the individual relevant if the individual is social all the way down (G. H. Mead)? Is it important?

Given these seven distinctive concepts of "identity," which I also hope to show are problematic and tied together, we can at least say that the concept "identity" is complex and sometimes ambiguous in meaning. When we speak of individual or psychological identity are we really pointing to the social identity in other terms? Does the social identity presume the logical sense? What is the relation of the logical and metaphysical sense? The cultural and social? Identity is problematic.

Aristotle's *Metaphysics* is famously a study of *pros hen* equivocals (Owen). *Pros hen* equivocals are terms with different meanings that, having been analyzed, are shown in their interrelations. Demonstration of usage and philosophical argument shows that they "refer back" to a justifying first (*pros hen*). A system of interpretation overlays a confusion of meaning. Ultimately, terms refer back to their metaphysical foundation, to "first philosophy. Indeed, there is a chapter on "identity" in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. Can order emerge out of the equivocal, because ambiguous senses of identity?

II. Identity as problematic: Metaphysically, logically, socially and for individuals

I will make some critical comments about the above senses of identity in the sections below. Above all, the issue for "individual identity" is whether an essence, universal, national identity, culture, class, tribe and the like are at all helpful in analyzing "individual identity." I hope to show that they are not: that in

[4] Wittgenstein 1970.

their various ways they subordinate or integrate the individual into a larger identity.

A. Metaphysical Identity: Nature as essence

I stated above that the metaphysical identity is the essence or nature. The nature, the essence of the thing is contrasted with some other aspect of the thing, whether its attributes, its accidents, or its existence. The classic issue raised in the Middle Ages was whether this abstraction corresponded to something in the object *realiter*, or was instead an *ens intellecti*, a mental "being" without objective status. The essence is abstracted from the object, thus it does not exist *per se*.

The first distinction contrasts the essence with "accidents". An object may change but it remains one object. The changing qualities come and go but the essential nature endures. Thus "natural man" is human as distinct from other species and stripped of all "accidental" properties.

The essence-accident distinction has several peculiar problems. The essence of many species or kinds may be difficult to distinguish. Or there may be more than one difference—which is essential? (compare *zoion ekhon logon* and *zoion politikon* in Aristotle). Or it may require accidents to distinguish it (a featherless biped is still human with its legs cut off). If the essence is not a *per se* being, what is its mode of existence? What is the status of universal accidents? Are there non-white polar bears, for example? If not can this "accident" of whiteness be separated from the essence of polar bear? If accidents have no "true being," because they come and go, then it would appear that the essence could be *per se*, but this would be contrary to the essence-accident distinction. Nor is universality the mark of a nature solely, for "red" and other accidents share the grammar of universality, as they can be applied to different instances: they are "generals," to kidnap a term from Peirce. And if the essence is the nature does this make accidents "unnatural?" Clearly not, so some other distinction must be made to encompass both essence and attribute under natural. If essence alone can be a "nature," then both change and historical phenomena are excluded from nature. Then nature's own history is excluded, as well as natural development over time.

Essential realists have drawn another contrast: between essence and attribute. This shares some features of the essence-accident distinction but not all, for accidents may also have attributes. However, most of the arguments against the essence-accident distinction apply to the essence-attribute distinction as well. We will add that what enables us to recognize a misshapen object as of a kind are

often its attributes, instead of its essential form. A misshapen lemon is still sour to the taste, with a yellow peel, seeds, and so on. Kinds may better be thought of as collections of qualities, than as distinctive essences.[5] Also, some traits may be shared in common between two species that do not mark them off as distinct species, but are essential to them, for example, stems in plants. Further, the essence is in one sense an attribute for any classification of an instance has the linguistic or logical form "this is an x." The "essence" is predicated of an instance as an attribute of it, which both attenuates the essence-attribute distinction and is evidence for the reality of the instance, as the "essence" is predicated of it.

The distinction of essence from existence has no fewer difficulties. It raises, for it presumes, the closely related issue of individuals or individuality, as essences are attached to individual objects. Essences exist as individual objects that they inform with a specific identity. The distinction of essence and existence is untenable as a distinction of what is "real." For the distinction of existence from essence entails that the essence cannot exist *per se*, but only by participation in the existent. If the form must be abstracted from the instance it cannot exist apart. But then it cannot define the existence of the instance, as it is not itself a *per se* existent: if it were, it could exist apart. It must be one aspect of the instance, then, as it cannot be the whole instance *per se*. The distinction is ontically untenable, purely as a distinction of being and not of logic, in that the essence is considered the necessary feature of the thing. Thus the essence is the definitive character or principle for the whole. Yet if the essence is not a *per se* being, its existence is dependent upon the "existence" of the instance. Existence is thus both a necessary feature of the essence and its condition. The instance cannot be composed and existent in the same respect. Form must then be a normative abstraction, the "logical" aspect of "onto-logical," as it cannot exist apart from its instance. If it were existentially distinct it could be separated: a *per se* being (Platonism is excluded from this criticism).

If these criticisms are sufficient to invalidate the essence-existence distinction in the realm of the real, then the question arises of how it is abstracted. Evidently, the abstraction is made by intellect, the specifically human species difference. Upon examination, "nature" proves to be a human-made product, a convention of intellect. One difficulty of assigning a nature is that language is human-made, like an artifice and thereby artificial. The distinction is made with artificial, because conventional concepts and the problematic issue of whether the concept "nature",

[5] Locke, *Essay*

is artificial, a "social construction". A human-made distinction, it is made or constructed out of conventional languages.

Another variety of essential realism identifies essence with form.[6] The form is the unchanging pattern or structure necessary to a kind, which distinguishes it as a kind. Thus it is essential for identifying an instance as a kind. Though the individual may perish, and even the species of which it is an instance, the form is eternal, for the pattern would retain its essential features as an abstraction even if no instances exist.

The Aristotelian notion of form is—by contrast with Platonic transcendence—conceived of as immanent in the individual of a kind.[7] However, form is more than a random aggregate of atoms; form is a distinct principle or cause, a holistic concept identified with species and natural kinds.[8] Aristotle's argument is that the form as essence is eternal, but as realized must come to be by agency of another of

[6] This identification is explicit in Aristotle (*Meta*. VII; cf. *Phys*. II, 3,$_{194}$b26) but is implicit in earlier thinkers (Plato). Cf. Descartes, *Meditations*, where nature, form and essence are equated. Collingwood has remarked that pattern and structure are other terms for form in *The Idea of Nature*, ch. 1. Natural law is derivative from this. Cf. "it's in the nature of the thing," "by its very nature." In Platonism, the forms do not exist in the same way that the flux (or matter) exists. They "are" more truly as their being is eternal and unchanging. They have "being" more than "existence." The eternal being of the forms is not sensuously known but is intelligible or comprehended by intellect in the way that mathematical principles are known. The intelligible world has a different mode of being than the sensuous: it "is" eternally, due to its perfection; it receives this perfection from the form of the good (*Rep*. VI)

[7] Platonism suffers from problems of number: are the forms singular or multiple? If instances participate in the form, a form must be multiple, to account for all the like instances. For how could different instances participate in one form? But if the forms are multiple, a further form is needed to unify the multiple forms. But it too must be multiple to be participated in, and so on *ad infinitum*. In fairness, Plato recognized this difficulty and examined it at the beginning of his *Parmenides*.

[8] Nature is a *pros hen* equivocal in Aristotle, for it refers to the matter, the form, the cause of motion or change, the end, different composites of these, the universal, the species, and even the individual (*Phys*. II, *Meta*. V). These refer back (*pros hen*) ultimately to the form, which is the essential sense of nature (*Meta*. VII-VIII). Interestingly, Aristotle treats form both in the science of nature, the *Physics*, and in the treatise on first philosophy, the *Metaphysics*. Form goes beyond nature and approaches the eternal pattern of the divine. Whether the eternal form treated in first philosophy can be reconciled with the coming to be of form discussed in the physical treatise is problematic. (*Phys*., II, 1,$_{193}$b7; 3,$_{194}$b26)

a kind, for example, sheep from sheep. This is an implicit concession that actualized form is a coming to be, not eternal. As form is identified with the actual, by contrast with the potency of matter (*Phys*. II,1,193b7), its eternity must be identified with actuality. Yet this actuality is a coming to be. Further, it must be identified with immanent, embodied form: the latter comes to be in the instance.[9]

Because it requires specific conditions to achieve its end, however, it is difficult to understand how its nature can be purely immanent. Can it have a nature in this sense if it can become different things under different conditions and circumstances? Genetic transplants might give it a different "nature." Not even matter has an unchanging nature, for we now know that it can be transformed into energy ($E=mc^2$). Gold is not just gold but potentially lead. Nor do these arguments depend upon modern technology. We can give the matter, the *hyle*, an artificial form, as Aristotle acknowledged. Aristotle identifies the form or essence as the substance, but it cannot be if the substance has the potency to be something else. This argues against the eternal "being" of natural kinds as well.

We argued above that essential realism excludes fundamental changes. For better or worse, technology has given us tools which preclude such a view of nature for modern times. If the essence is the unchanging nature, it cannot exist *per se*, but only in abstraction, for with modern techniques nothing is unchangeable. Any nature, in the sense of specific difference, is transformable into any other in principle. By bombarding its nucleus, one element can be changed into another, and not only accidents but their "substance." At bottom, technology means no more actual essences, for identity is reduced to function and anything that can be made to function as something becomes that thing. The essences are human-made concepts which should not be taken as a commitment to conceptualism. Paradoxically, completely synthetic things like plastic can be given a form. Is this then their nature? Technology has vitiated the natural-artificial distinction as well.

To argue that forms exist as aspects of individual things or instances means that the ultimate reality of the instance is not denied. Again, the form as essence cannot exist *per se*, but only as aspects of existing instances. And this can only be

[9] Aristotelian essential realism is inseparable from his teleological view of nature. An acorn has a tendency to become an oak "for the most part". Its nature is to become an oak tree; it is only by "accident" that it might burn and become ash. Given requisite conditions, it will achieve its essential destiny through nature, for an acorn is potentially an oak. Its final nature is an oak tree.

by human abstraction—a *techne*, for they are made. Thus they cannot be a "nature" unless there are only artificial natures, which would invalidate Aristotle's own distinction between artifice and nature. Yet this artificial form is an attribute, for it can be attributed to some artificial substances, such as artworks.

The distinction of "generals" or universal natures and instances immanent in individuals is itself artificial, for the form is united in a composite substance and is not separable. An individual person exhibits personality traits that can be put into words, that is, conceptualized as an instance of a kind. Yet its existence in the individual may be contingent and as an instance it is singular. Such traits, then, are neither strictly general, for they occur as singular; nor strictly singular as an instance. The individual "nature" of the person is contingent not necessary; singular, not universal. These are notions of "nature" which do not have the universal and necessary form requisite to an essence.

The transformations of technology are an echo of theory, for which nature can be understood in terms of quantifiable relations. The mathematization of nature formulated by Newton, following the Pythagorean-Platonic lead,[10] meant that in theory "nature" can potentially be transformed, as equations are potential transformations, for example, from mass to energy in $E=mc^2$. Thus there is no fixed essence to a substance, no natural form. An instance has its form by chance and this "form" can be transformed. Aristotle argued that the form itself is not transformed; it is "eternal" in the sense that the distinct shape of sheep in the abstract will always be sheep shape. This argues for form as a normative conception, however. Form in this sense is an abstraction. Form as embodied can be transformed. Darwinian theory concludes that this holds for species as well, as species have the potential to evolve into new species under new conditions and must do so, in some cases to survive. The species are not in actuality eternal. For if new species can arise then the number of species cannot have been fixed or finite from eternity. "Nature" has a history.

We conclude that there are no ontic "generals" in the sense of nature as the essence, or "natural kind" *per se* apart from instances. The universal aspect or element of the instance is still singular in actuality. The abstraction and comparison of these in the formulation of a conceptual identity is a human task or accomplishment. "Generals" are in individuals as kinds, for only singular aspects of instances "exist." The sum of such instances, a group of similars, is not a distinct or *per se* being but a collection of singulars with some common principle.

[10] Collingwood 1945: 49.; 94.;106.

In one sense, then, individuality is affirmed by our criticisms. In another sense it remains a mystery, as "individual" is conceived in terms of general concepts, and not in itself.

If essential realism is untenable, what is true of alternative theories? Conceptualism is a formulation of a middle position, in which individuals are conceived as actual, while concepts are characterized as general but only in the intellect. Whether this solves the problem or only moves it back a step is moot. Essences cannot be inductively derived, as induction cannot ensure universality. The relation of the universal concepts to the real instance is problematic for conceptualism. The concept cannot be based upon an idea (image) in the intellect as Bishop Berkeley has rightly stressed, for images are singular.[11] The relation of the concept to the image is as problematic as that of the universal to the instance.

The opposing thesis of the late Middle Ages, that individuals alone exist, has been called nominalism. However, this term can cover several distinct approaches to the issue raised by the controversy over universals, for example, conceptualism, termism, individualism, etc. I have avoided using nominalist arguments, as I believe that nominalism may be a disguised or modified type of essentialism: that individuality is a universal characteristic of reals, or of existents. Everything that exists is necessarily an individual; it is the nature of things to be individual. Nominalism interpreted as individual difference would not in any case be useful in investigating the individuality of the individual. The problem is that as it stands it is a term of universal identity.

With respect to individual identity, essentialism does not really tell us about the inner nature of each thing. Species differences and definitions are identities, which forms one external relation of each thing, its relation to others of the same kind. Essence is inconceivable without a relation of kinds. It tells us nothing about the unique aspect of each thing, as nothing can give us essential knowledge of the singular instance according to Aristotle. Is essence a relation, then? But a relation is an "accident" according to Aristotle, and an attribute in relation to substance).[12]

What we can take away from this tradition is Scotus's notion of the contingency of the individual, or in Aristotelian terms, that the characteristics of the individual are "accidents." I will return to this point below.

[11] Hacking 1975, ch. 4

[12] Aristotle, *Categories; Meta*. V, 7

B. Logical Identity: Identity and Difference

Identity is the logical contrary of different. The problem here is that identities differentiate while differences identify. "Individual" is a term of both identity and difference. The term identifies a person as an individual while differentiating her from other individuals. There are logical problems with the relation of identity and difference, as Heidegger remarks.

For one, identity is inductively derived from different individuals. It arises from difference by abstraction. Is the origin of identity in difference?[13]

Another problem is the metaphysical status of the identity, which we examined above. Identities are universals in some respect and with greater or lesser scope. For universals to be real *per se*, they must be either singular or general. If singular, they are not universal, and cannot extend to many instances. If they are general, what gives them common (universal) character? And what does it mean to be a "general" being? Many individuals? But then the universal is a collection of "singulars" not general. The notion of "general being" is problematic. But then a "real" universal does not make sense either. Its *being* is singular, its quantity general. Quantity is abstraction. By singular we do *not* mean individual.

The issue for logic is the relation of logical universals—identities—to the world. One could argue that logic is normative and the metaphysical status of universal identities is beyond the scope of logic.[14] But even if valid, the status of universal propositions, which are required for valid inference, arises. Moreover, logic can be applied to the world validly. Norms are actualized in the world as inherent in an instance. Standards and principles can be brought to earth and grounded: creatively actualized in practice.

An idea prior to application has only hypothetical or potential value. Norms and "oughts" which are actualizable become values, that is, creative

[13] If "individual" is a determination, then theories cannot arise by abstraction from individuals. Theories themselves define the individuals they explain: they create new classes of individuals. Concepts are covered by "higher" order concepts, *ad infinitum*, such as species under genera, but all are hypothetical. (Again, the problem of individuals, like that of universals, may be quantitative. It concerns the identity of a singular—a unity). Competing conceptual hypotheses still must be evaluated, but the hypotheses do *not* represent competing abstractions. Theoretical ideas are evaluated as "covering laws" for a relevant set or field.

[14] Peirce, F. C. S. Schiller and others argued that logic is a normative science.

actualizations.[15] When we act upon an "ought," we actualize it. The actual may reflect previous norms that have been brought into the world through action. If we can creatively actualize norms, "ought" has become "is." Thus oughts are not only some transcendent standard, for they may be creatively actualized over time and intervene in history. Thus what we "ought" to infer can become part of the world: logic has practical significance and is not totally divorced from the actual world in some ideal normative world.

The argument is not that there is no distinction of norms and actualities, but that the two can form a composite or synthesis if norms are creatively actualized in the world. Thus creative actualization constitutes an argument against the absolutizing of the distinction, as if the actual and the normative were in two different universes, one natural and one "non-natural." If they were, logic and math, both normative, could not be applied. They would be useless. "Oughts" and other norms regulate practice, where some norm is put into practice which was not but can be. If this norm is successfully brought about or creatively actualized, then an "is" is made of an "ought."

Since our valid inferences work in the world, the strict separation of logic and fact is untenable.

The question for our theory is: what is the relation of identity and difference? My answer is: the correlativity of identity and difference. In a sense, all instances have as the most general term of differentiation an identity-difference.

If the same identity is a differentiation, they cannot be contraries: "elephant" identifies individual elephants as such, as members of that genus; while differentiating them from other genera. But are they identity and difference "in the same respect" (?[16] Here the difference between identity and difference is subtler. The concept "elephant" means identity with that genus but differentiates it from other genera only by implication. It is not non-elephant, some other genus. Nevertheless, identity does differentiate as such. They are not contraries, then nor are they contradictor. Rather, they are correlative.

Identity refers to both the instance and the kind as their relation. Identity in one sense means that an instance is itself or identical with itself. In another sense it means the identity that an instance has as a kind, which identifies its species. Both of these senses also involve differentiations, however, since to identify an instance with itself differentiates it from other instances, and to identify a kind is to

[15] McDonald 2011.
[16] Aristotle 1970.

distinguish different kinds. I am arguing here for the correlativity of identity and difference: to identify is to differentiate; to differentiate is to identify, since in the latter case one is differentiating out an identity. Correlativity is primarily in the normative dimension, since such identities are norms, that is, they apply properly to all instances. However, there is also the relation of such norms to the actual as instances of principles, and other generals.

In another sense, the individual is beyond the identity-difference opposition, or relation, since the latter is a normative requirement. Individuals of the world combine identity and difference insofar as they combine such contraries in a distinct instance of a kind. The opposition is, again, in the realm of norms or logic, not in the world. Thus an individual is beyond identity defined as the contrary of difference, the normative realm, since it is in the world. I am not arguing that contraries, for example, "cold-hot" can be creatively actualized as such, as an instance. However, individuality is to some degree the combination of identity and difference, and thus overcomes their "opposition."

Once time enters the picture, the emergence or creation of individuals marks a differentiation. The creation of actual novelties, which previously were not part of the world's inventory, changes the world, making the world different than before. There is a new machine in a new historical time and marking one actualizing of the difference of the new historical point from previous circumstances. The most general term of differentiation is the historical point of differentiation, in which a difference emerges or is created.

The same historical process manifests norms as principles, bringing about new kinds as distinct. Copies of planes are made which were not actual prior to that point and which are different than prior historical times. A whole new kind has been creatively actualized which is different from all previous kinds. This category is finite as different since this one is distinct from other categories, that is, it does not encompass the whole, but a limited part in relation to other parts as different from them. In this respect, "individuals" in the plural imply differentiation, since otherwise there would only be "individual."

A distinct instance of a distinct kind also involves its identification as a distinct kind, the normative identity, "flying machine," "airplane," and other synonyms. Reduplication further identifies it as a kind and creatively actualizes a principle, which is a species of normative identity. Individuals can be recreated as duplicates, which bring general to actuality. Further, "individual" as the identity of all distinct instances is necessarily general and abstract. "Individual" itself as a generic term identifies what is common or identical to all such instances but also

principles, and kinds in some respect. Since "individual" is a generic characterization, it is itself a principle or general of a sort, although a principle of all principles, that is, regulative or normative. As principles, they are normative, since principles are a species of norm.

Since the creative actualization of novelties is both differentiation and identity, the problematic of identity and difference is a dead end, since they are correlative. The instance as different from others is itself, self-identical. Differentiation of a kind is also of its distinctive identity. Neither grounds the other, as they mutually imply each other. There is no sufficient ground for distinguishing identity from difference based on identity and difference, since each identity is a differentiation of a sort and each difference an identity. Thus to approach the problem from a logical perspective, that is, from the normative dimension, is a dead end, since neither are ultimate or grounds.

I would argue that correlativity is required for identity and difference as normative. Identity and difference are in the normative dimension, which requires its own rules, since it is not necessarily actual. Their actuality is subject to creative actualization. A flying machine as a type would be different from one that did not fly whether or not the machine had been actualized, that is, in "theory," or in "principle," the normative realm. Similarly, truth and falsity are truth-values in logic apart from their content. A normative realm of pure identity would not encompass differences, and could not account for different norms and different identities. Similarly, a realm of pure difference could have no kinds, no principles, no norms, and no concepts. Thus it would not be part of any normative dimension.

"Individual" includes creative actualization of norms as a composite of identity and difference. It provides the ground upon which identity and difference meet as an instantiated norm, an actualized identity, and the point at which the relation is actualized in the world as an instance. The composite is brought about as actual: identity combined with the different. Although this sounds paradoxical, since identity is the contrary (in some respect of identity) to what is different, the paradox is in one respect the individuality of the individual, as it can combine contraries in an actual instance. Identity and difference are never combined in the same exact respect, except insofar as any identity is different than another. But an instance of a norm, identity, principle, or standard combines a particular, specific or generic identity with a distinct, different instance. A plane is both one individual, different from every other, and the same as itself as such an instance. The aircraft is also the creative actualization of the normative identity "flying

machine," which differentiates it from other kinds of machines. "Individual" is not identity or difference as such but grounds their relation. Only those correlations of identity and difference that prove feasible have value and can be actualized in the world. As a project, the norm is the identity element and achievement of the goal is the differentiating element. Since "individual" as the ground of the relation of identity and difference establish their relation, "individual" is neither identity nor difference, but the ground of their actualization as a composite in the world: the instance as a kind. Each such correlation that proves feasible is in the world, including actualized norms, oughts, principles, and concepts. Since qualities as attributes are principles as general, they are in the realm of norms. Thus individuals establish relations between seeming incompossibles, identity and difference, as novel actualities.

Nevertheless, in one sense "individual" is an identity, as I noted above. "Individual" could also be characterized as the most general term of differentiation. Which has priority? Since the individual is singular, priority must be given to difference. This judgment can be made on several grounds. The first is that individuation involves the emergence or bringing about of the different in time. Indeed, actualization also instantiates some norms. But the point at which it successfully emerges is actualization, a novelty in the world. It changes the world, since the world is thereby made different through new individuals. The emergence of the novel is a historical differentiation. Subsequent actualizations are not as novel or different although they are novel in some respects. They are not different from the first breakthrough in kind, nor as unique events in history. New individuals mark a historical difference, the successful emergence of what "was not," and thereby historical change, grounding novel identities in an instance.

Second, because identity and difference are correlative normatively, their conjunction in the world is a determination of the actual, that is, both an actualized normative identity and a historical determination. The world is given specificity in the changing actual. History is determined in the possibilities that have individuated.

The "habitual" or "general," to use Charles Peirce's terms, follows upon the creative or unique, the initial emergence of creation of some new "individual" or good. Thus the latter is the *sine qua non* of the former and this provides a norm for evaluation of the relation of identity and difference. Generality or identity must be derivative, for generality is manifested, if at all, over time, after emergence of the unique, the different. (This principle is consistent with Darwin's notion of the

origin of species by natural selection. Favorable variations become generalized in a species.) While a general element is needed for individuality, since an individual is specific and thus determinate as a kind ("economic," "religious"), yet such categories also differentiate the activity from other activities identified normatively.

Third, the same actual quality is both an instance of the quality, its mark as the normative instance, and the ground for applying the norm, that is, the basis for the identification as a norm. A normative identity is both instantiated as an "individual" and the mark of the norm qua instance of the identity.

Some aspect of reality is differentiated and considered worth differentiating by normative identities, that is, "concepts." Instances are clusters of normative identities, that is, multiple predications can be made of any individual, whether of size, shape, relation, or other "predicates." Normative identities can be "predicated" of bearers in categorical propositions, for example, "this machine is an economic good", or "friendship is a social good." "Facts" are selective normative relations, for example, "green is a color" brings the normative identity "green" under the normative identity "color" using norms of syntax (copula, article, distribution, and so on). However, these conceptual distinctions must also be grounded in the world, and perhaps justified in terms of its correctness, truth. "Meaning" intends a world in elucidation and evaluation of suitable "concepts," which are a species of norm, normative identities.

"Individual" implies different individuals, at least in some respects, since there are more than one. The unity of the world is differentiated into a plurality of different individuals. Thus the identities of different individuals of the world are pluralistic, and inherently opposed to any monism. The emergence of novelties implies differences in individuals. (Participation, foundation, and *pros hen* are the metaphysical models for hidden monisms). Monism cannot be a principle of individuals, because if each individual was either ontologically, functionally or axiologically attached to, related to or partook of "one principle," it could not manifest another principle or norm, that is, its distinct difference: the individuality of the individual. This differentiation of individuals is the reciprocal relation of distinct individuals. Thus their differentiation is neither a foundation of individuality nor the basis for a hierarchy. As different they are plural, and this cannot of itself provide a ground for subsuming them under an identity. Plurality of individuals is an argument against identity of individuals, since individuality is differentiated. Thus a hierarchy of individuals cannot be their ground, since such a hierarchy would be an identity of all individuals. However, "individuals" is

individuality taken collectively, the sum of all instances of individuality. Individuality as a principle is not distinct as an actuality from any instance. Pure principles as identity patterns are not "ontological." Indeed, individuality is required for the actuality of novel principles.

Individuality differentiates in some respect, if only as a unique copy: unique in the place it occupies, the time it is made, the ingredients, and so on. Novelty as difference is not equivalent to identity through difference, their correlativity. For the world is not identical to what it was before, but different, even if the difference constitutes a novel identity. Making is covered as well as theoretical differences and hypothetical differences, since to make is to differentiate.

Thus the "opposition" between identity and difference is also attenuated. The question remains whether individuality is confined to bringing about a novel type or can be concerned with a unique individual. While the latter is rarer, it does occur, since art works, experiments, and predictions can be singular. These are distinct modes of individuality. What is also singular is the time of each creative actualization: individuality ultimately differentiates in time, transforming the world over time. Finally, there is the individuality of the bearer.

C. Political Identity

In my first book, *Political Philosophy and Ideology, a Critique of Political Essentialism*, I examined the idea of sophiacracy, first proposed by Plato in his notion of the "philosopher-king". In a sophiacracy, intellectuals rule. The intellectual elite can "represent" the masses more ably because the "interests" of the masses can be conceptualized by the former in their intellectual capacity. Formulation of the ostensive identity of interests is a type of sophiacratic public standard: a standard formulated by the intellectual elite in order to represent the identity of interests of a group or class.

The political "virtue" of these intellectual standards is their universality, the identity of certain abstract properties of related individuals. Other human capacities are limited and particular, and only the intellectual virtues are universal. Knowledge and wisdom can grasp the identity of all social differences truly. The identity of social differences has a close relation to unity, which is the goal of political life for Plato,[17] as only the common or identical elements can be a basis for unity.

[17] Plato. *Rep*.

Public standards are identities, which are not derived from culture but imposed upon it. Bureaucratic organization uses sophiacratic public standards in the first sense as well, i.e. intellectualist norms. Bureaucracy is characterized by impersonal rules, including fixed routines, rationalized procedures, and ordered chains of command. Bureaucratic rationality subsumes individual cases under kinds according to rules and rationalized procedures (Max Weber). Cases are not treated on an *ad hoc* basis, but as an instance of a type or kind. The universal or general concept that unites the various cases is used to identify the cases, at the expense of various differentiating criteria. Individuals are organized rationally by the bureaucracy. The identity element is grasped; individuals are fit into *a priori* categories of reason. Whether such identities can do justice to relevant differences is problematic.

Similarly, psychologists and psychiatrists define the standard of normality for society, i.e. universally valid norms, based on an identity model, or an essence. This model is used as a guide in framing laws covering involuntary institutionalization. "Abnormal" individuals can then be placed under psychiatric evaluation in the hope of a "cure."[18]

Modern political ideologies also adopt and depend upon a public standard. Ideologues, especially fanatics, make little distinction between culture and politics, between being a German by birth, or a worker by trade, and making people into a "German" or a "worker" coercively (Nazism, Communism). The public standards of ideology in-form individuals with a single "best" standard: they are formal. Race or class becomes a fundamental, supreme identity, differentiating a group from all others, and giving it a distinctive identity. For the ideologue, this is the sole or primary identity, for the individual is above all "German," or a "worker," and not a person. Under an ideological regime, an attempt is made to inform all individuals with the distinctive identity that will separate them in accordance with the ideological formula—be it race, class, the elite, the masses, or what not. The person becomes formed according to the public standard: becomes the formula as it were. The person becomes molded into a "German" by public agencies, such as youth groups and educational institutions.

Paradoxically, this formal identity is used as a relevant difference for political life. While this paradox may seem like logic run amuck, it reflects the correlativity of identity and difference I mentioned above. Each identity is different from any other; each difference identifies something distinct. "American" both identifies the

[18] Szasz, Foucault 1973.

nationality of some persons and separates them as a class from Asians, Europeans, etc.

Any psychological capacity, predominant faculty, or prescribed behavior used as an essential model of human identity can be a human essence. While such a model can form a species of reductionism, it can also involve subordination of other capacities to a basic essential one. For example, "reason" is taken as the human essence, the specific difference of man from other creatures (*zoion ekhon logon*). Reason identifies man as man by grounding the specifically human in a single identity. The *a priori* origin of the categories of reason is based on the alleged identity of all humans as "rational animals." Other capacities, e.g. desire, stand in a subordinate relation to reason, "accidents" of human nature ("Be reasonable"). Possibilities and activities not prescribed by reason are excluded as "unnatural." All categories must refer back to their "reasonableness" in the judgement of an elite. Human nature-as-rational identifies all of human life but excludes variety and amelioration.

Unfortunately, the priority of identity, or unity, which is the fruit of intellectual virtues like reason, excludes real differences. Though it is deemed common or universal in its scope, the public standard does not usually constitute an attempt to arbitrate differences. Rather, an identical politicized standard is imposed on all differences, without regard to the just claims of such differences. Such universals cannot but ignore some differences, even if others are encompassed. Only a reduced number of differences are allowed, whether personal, categorical, or cultural, namely those compatible with the ideological formula, or prescribed by it. This point parallels the thrust of Aristotle's basic criticism of Plato's ideal political goal, i.e. that diversity, not unity, should be the proper goal of the state.[19] Statecraft should aim at the reconciliation of important differences, and different functions, backgrounds, roles, and categories should be harmonized, not done away with.

An ideologue might argue that such a formal identity gives individuals meaning, and forms a standard for how individuals should be molded. In the latter view, people have no purpose in life unless an identity is imposed upon them, which gives a meaning to their life. Ideology gives such an identity: it makes and forms individuals into what they ought to be. The argument is curiously self-fulfilling, for it postulates one overriding purpose in life which all "need" to fulfill, then sets about proving this by molding individuals into the

[19] Plato *Pol.*, II, 1.

posited identity, which purportedly gives meaning to life. By imposing an exclusive identity, an ideologue can argue that without it an individual would be "nothing."

The exclusive identity compatible with the ideological formula involves a reductionist model. Other possible identities for a person are excluded. The ideological formula excludes individually chosen identities reflecting *self*-development. In the latter scenario, individuals can freely choose and adopt whatever identity they wish, i.e. identities need not be public at all. Individuals can embrace their culture, reject it for another or work out a novel or distinctive approach. A public identity may mar individual and personal development, as personal potential that is incompatible with the identity prescribed by the ideological formula is precluded, and alternative paths of development proscribed, or limited.

The formal identity derived from the ideological formula is a species of essentialism, the notion that humans have a single nature, form or essence which it is requisite that they become. The essence is a standard for all; deviations from this model are exceptions, eccentrics, inferior instances, etc. Ideologies have provided diverse and even contrary standards for such a human essence, which should itself give pause. Nor are they alone in positing such a standard. Certain philosophies have posited a human "nature" and other disciplines have echoed this model construction.

What is insidious is the idea that humans are merely clay objects to be molded into some arbitrary model of human perfection. In *1984*, O'Brien tells Winston that the Party "creates" human nature. It can accomplish this because "men are infinitely malleable." The molding is a denial of the worth of both human autonomy and of all exceptions and differences from the "essential" norm. Similarly, the masses are molded and moved to action by modern propaganda techniques. The ideal man is instilled in each individual in accordance with the ideological formula. It becomes their creed, for which they are willing to live, fight, die and obey.

Paradoxically, unitary models of human nature, behavior, or culture (e.g. Occido-centric versions of history) may be anti-historical, as well as historical. The human essence endures despite seemingly catastrophic historical change. Historical events are "accidents" in this view, for "you can't change human nature." The nature which humans are supposed to share is ascribed to all individuals, and considered abstractly as an identity. "Human nature," if reflected upon, will yield truths independent of the history, or activities of any single

culture. Both the essentialist and the historical views, of which the latter is a species of the former, argue that mankind either cannot pursue alternative historical goals, or should not. If the human species has an essence, or a fixed historical destiny, then the species cannot be free. To fulfill humankind's historically destined essence, only one alternative should be, or can be, pursued. Historical development is trapped in one mold.

There are still other objections to the essentialist view. Why is just this one public identity so important? Why not some other? What makes it so distinctive? Humans survived for centuries without such identities, which only date from very recent times. How can such novel forms be essential? If different cultures stress quite different identities, how can any one be considered essential? If the political border is an arbitrary line, can it encompass what is essential?

We can see that it is difficult to disentangle the political identity from the metaphysical, in the form of a human essence; or the logical identity, which contrasts with difference. Still more difficult is to form an estimate of the individuality of the individual from such public identities. Is the individuality of the individual private? Or does the individual disappear in an ideological regime, subordinated to their public identity?

D. Cultural Identity

No essence or "nature" can be derived from the many different human cultures, in view of this very diversity. Consider the variety of cultures, and in many cases their divergence from one another, and even antipathy: how can a model culture be constructed from these? No "normal" or standard culture can be derived from such differences, regardless of how much care is taken. The differences within a culture vary as well, in many cases. No category of cultural activity is dominant for all cultures or all people within a culture.

If the "essence" is now reduced to being part of some culture at some point in life, of living life within a culture, then this ignores personal differences within most cultures. Such an "essence" evaluates identity higher than difference, by subordinating personal difference to identical essence, in the relation of essence and accident. Finally, if a norm could be derived from all the various cultures and personalities of distinctive humans, it would be a convention or average, not a nature or essence.

Are not all people attached to some race? If ethnicity is meant, there is no anthropological evidence for a racial basis of cultural division. The three most

commonly recognized "races" argue as much against a racial essence as for one, as there is no racial identity common to all humans. While even sociologists speak of characteristics of members of cultures or ethnic groups, and popular talk is full of descriptions of ostensive characteristics of this or that race or class, for the most part it is recognized that these characteristics are generalities. They are not necessarily applicable to any one individual of a group.

We can see that it is difficult to disentangle the cultural identity from the metaphysical, in the form of a human essence; or the logical identity, which contrasts with difference. Still more difficult is to form an estimate of the individuality of the individual from such cultural identities. If the individual is culturally informed, in a way common to other members of the culture, can there be an individual identity, individuality of the individual apart from cultural identities? Is the individual completely defined by their cultural identity? Does the individual disappear into a culture, subordinated to their cultural identity?

E. Social Identity

Social identity can be either social relations in general or particular ones. Social relations can be intimate, as with family, marriage or in friendship; or casual, as in transactions where we neither know the other person nor expect to see them again—riding in a train with other passengers.

The more atomic view is that social relations are between individuals. Plato's and Hegel's idealism accord with a class, rather than an individualistic view of social relations. Classes give a conceptual identity to individuals in a social setting.[20]

A universal is the abstraction of an identity element from all relevant singulars and particulars, not one only. Thus historical particulars like class and race can never be universal, in the sense requisite to a human essence. Such a universal could only be an abstraction from all classes and races, all practices. This is

[20] The distinct functions of these classes, though unofficial, are objective enough to rule out "abstract equality." Yet the law is universal in form, and applies equally to all, which implies equality under law. The law is thus a unifying force for Hegel, for it gives a kind of unity to the divergent private wills in civil society, by identifying a common interest. As with Plato, unity is evaluated as the chief goal of the state. (Outstanding individuals in history—great men—are seen as instruments of the immanent logic of development, rather than as autonomous).

historically impossible given no foreknowledge of the future, to speak nothing of the logical difficulty of such a vast inductive generalization. Given historical limitations, the only possibility open to us is generality, governed by the norm that no particular up to this point in time be excluded.

Social identity again raises the problem of individual identity, the individuality of the individual apart from society. It does so in an acute form, as Mead, *inter alia*, thought we are social "all the way down," that is, before we are even born we are responding to the mother's womb and after our birth are reaching out for contact. If all of our individuality is "mediated" by social relationships, class, "race" and the like, what happens to individual "identity"? It cannot be "individual," if it is social, even if we redefine "individuality" in terms of sociality, an Orwellian move that only philosophical rascals would attempt.

F. Tribal identity

A tribal identity is odd in any logical sense, since it is both arbitrary and inconsistent. It is arbitrary since it stops at a certain level of association and in doing so provides a false identity in some sense. Identities with a group are arbitrary since one identity is chosen over another, generally larger identity. Thus "identity" is equivocal in the sense that the individual has several identities: one's family, tribe, locale, nation, race and species, among others. A choice by the individual or that of a movement to prioritize one involves subordinating the others. One is "American," (or any other nationality) not male/female, human, a sports/music fan, animal, and so on. Here a selection is made in which a part of one's total identity becomes the whole. Other aspects of one's total situation, one's biological identity, one's gender, region, and many other characteristics are arbitrarily ignored for the primacy of the tribal identity.

But why should an individual identify primarily with a tribe, and not all humans, or better, all of life in its interdependence? With much larger identities of which the individual is in more vital relations? Humans are animals because they live, directly or indirectly, off plants. Prioritizing tribal identities that are part of overall individual identity thus cannot be universal. Moreover, they are false if taken as the complete whole, since they distort the larger web of social and biological relations that intersect in individuals: their other identities, especially as humans in a biosphere. Prioritizing race or species not genus as the fundamental identity element constitutes an error in evaluation, in which the lesser is confused with the greater. It is also a misclassification, since it favors the more restrictive

identity over the more inclusive. It is as if mammals were selected as arbitrarily distinct from all other vertebrates, animals and other levels of biological classification. I am not arguing against cultural or tribal identity, only prioritizing one at the expense of other relations.[21]

Tribal identities are thereby inconsistent because they affirm the value of association while at the same time denying it; providing an identity that is also a difference, creating a tension in identification. False identities nevertheless are differences, for they bring an instance under one identity different than another. To identify with is to ally instances, and thereby to differentiate them in some respect from other instances. A racial identity provides an identity, but by doing so differentiates that identity from other "races." Identity as difference involves some sort of contradiction in one's identity. The value of association with those of like identity is affirmed, namely, identity with the tribe. At the same time it is denied, since the value of like identity with larger associations is denied, or at least disparaged. The value of one's narrow identification is affirmed, and its differentiation; the value of other identities is denied. The "logic" of tribalism, racism and other narrow identities is contradictory.

Choosing an exclusive tribal identity involves a decision to conform to tribal mores with their limiting identities, not cosmopolitan ethics with a more inclusive identity. Or better: a biological identity as an animal with recognition of value beyond the human realm (environmental ethics). False identities are tribal, as ingrown not extensive.[22] Obligation is extensive: it extends beyond tribe through identification with all cultures (cosmopolitan).[23] Philosophical ethics is universal, and built on the premise of universality in reasoning. Thus Aristotle takes the

[21] For an explanation see Jared Diamond's latest book, *The World Until Yesterday*, in which he argues that tribal identity is pragmatic. The tribe feels comfortable among themselves ; threatened by others.

[22] Thus false identities can bring strife also (Catholic vs. Protestant "Christians"). Only identification with more universal values, that is life in the form of the biosphere, and universal morals, can avoid such strife. Again, identity as a "worker" or "Marxist" differentiates from "fascist" or "bourgeois", the root of political strife. Only recognition of the moral condition that makes for the best society will allow that "cities see an end to their evil…" I have examined the political aspects of such false identities in my previous book, *Political Philosophy and Ideology*, 1997.

[23] Some religions echo this larger identity with universal love (Christianity, Moism), etc Cf. the notion of "inclusion" and "exclusion" in Alport in (Maslow, ed.) *New Knowledge of Human Values*.

universal nature of humans as the rational animal as the basis on which to examine the perfections or virtues proper to that kind. If one could articulate any Aristotelian moral "imperative" it would be to act from species difference (be human, be rational), not any tribal or partisan perspective. Reason as the identity element of humans undermines social, class, national and racial differences—the fundamental point of the Enlightenment. Normative identities should be grounded in ethics.

G. Individual identity

The problem with "individual" identity is whether there can be any "individual" identity at all. The American philosopher and psychologist George Herbert Mead suggested that we are social all the way down, from the moment of birth. We respond to social as well as environmental stimuli from the beginning and our acculturation and socialization is an indispensable part of us. If we identify ourselves by saying, "I am an American" we have brought ourselves under a political or cultural identity. The self is bound up with the social environment. Even the categories by which we mark the development of each person, e.g. adolescence, are conceptual, that is, general.

Is "individual" identity really social? Can we capture the individuality of the individual?

1. The principle of individuation
a) Form (Scotus)

For Scotistic realism, individuals are an instance of embodied formal differences. Standards of identity are formal. The instance as such cannot be conceptualized at all: the individual person is only the embodiment of formal identities (concepts) and nothing more.[24] For Scotus, individuality is itself formal, if contingently so. Form and instance are one. But other forms, such as its species are united with it in one instance, and not existentially distinct. They are only "formally" distinct.

[24] This view of Scotus has recently been challenged by Scotus scholars, who argue that Scotus was not the arch-realist he has been portrayed by his students. I am indebted on this point to Prof. Giorgio Pini, who read a paper "The Logics of Duns Scotus and the Pragmatists"at the New York Pragmatist Forum in Sept. 2006, and I also had conversations with himon this topic. I am not sure if this affects the point of about the elusiveness of the individuality of the individual, however.

Thus different natures are abstracted from one instance. Essential natures are still aspects of instances.

The individual is a contingent combination of forms. A problem here is that many of the "forms" or formal identities are shared. Religion, culture, nation, etc. are shared with others so do not capture the individuality of the individual. Now Scotists might say that no two individuals share all of the same formal identities. But this is generally untrue for members of the same culture, especially a small one; or the same family. Individuals of the same family may differ in gender or age, but these are general categories. Gender does not differentiate the individuality of the individual, the individual identity as such. The contingency of age is another matter, which we will look at below.

Another problem is that if all attributes have a "form," and the instance is coagulation, so to speak, of different forms, the term is stretched beyond all metaphor. Is color a "form"? Is quantity?[20] Aristotle and Plato are on surer ground when they argue for, respectively, form as confined to substance and not attributes, and participation in a transcendent form.

If "Individuals" have aspects, they are composed. They are thereby not one but "many" in another respect, or from another perspective. A single triangle is not "one" for it has three sides. Or, if preferred, it is an individual in one respect but not others. Forms are composite—multiple—in one respect (analyzable), singular in another respect and general in another: it identifies the individual as a member of a species or genus ("This is a triangle").

b) Matter (Aquinas):

On a metaphysical level, matter makes sense as the principle of individuation. For the matter that composes my body cannot be part of your body; my organs are my own, not yours. The problem is whether "matter" captures the individuality of the individual. If my body is composed of oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, nitrogen and other elements; and your body is composed of oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, nitrogen and other elements; then we are chemically alike, not different, albeit in slightly different proportions. These are larger identities that do not differentiate the individual identity as such.

Nor does this principle capture the psychological sense of individual identity, the private thoughts, desires, feelings and other psychological events that occur during my life and cannot be experienced by another. Even my pains and pleasures, which are at least part bodily, are private in the same sense.

If form or matter could "individuate" they could exist apart. There are no universals apart from instances, for universals could not otherwise instantiate. Instances are not "general" but singular. The universal aspect of the singular instance is still singular in the realm of the actual. We perceive and interact with single horses, cows, and other species, and their shapes are also singular.[18] The sum of instances is not a *per se* being; there is no *per se* universal apart from its instances, for again, it would be singular itself, not universal. Thus universals cannot be *per se* beings for only singular aspects of instances exist. The comparison and abstraction of these into a universal is due to human agency.

c. The chooser

The moral self was the ancient equivalent of the "will," the responsible chooser. The self is in one sense a series of choices. However, an infant is no more capable of making mature decisions than they are of providing their own food or shelter. The ability to make responsible choices, that is, to act with a good character, is formed. The moral self, that is, the person with character, is developed as part of socialization during maturation.

2. Contingency

I would like to suggest another approach to individuality, which perhaps Sartre, Parfit and Rorty have hinted at. In one way this is as hard to imagine as our death—as not being alive, since it is in many ways equivalent to it.

Let us imagine that our mother married someone else. Would the offspring of such a hypothetical union have been I? The hypothetical person would be the offspring of our mother, so like us in that respect. But they would be the offspring of another father, so unlike us. Since their genetic endowment would be different they would stand in relation to us as half-brother or half-sister. So they would not be us.

Similarly, what if our parents had decided not to have children at all? Then I would not be alive. The same point applies if my parents did have children but not when they did. The somewhat unique combination of genetic material that became me would not be the same, except in the statistically improbable case that the exact same genetic combination resulted later. (And even then I would be different).

"I" am contingent upon a series of factors that are in some sense accidental: that my parents met, fell in love (or at least had sufficient sex that a pregnancy resulted), decided to have sex when they did, were fertile, and so on. My parents were just as contingent and so my contingency increases exponentially when previous generations are taken into account.

My individuality is an accident of fate, a happenstance event. Even if the sex act that created me were delayed one day I would not exist. If the "chemistry" between my parents were different, I might never have come about.

Part of who I am, is radically individual in the sense that it is irreplaceable: no other event could replace my unique self, since other genetic combinations would not be me.

Another characteristic of my individuality is that it is historical. My origins were at an exact time in history and any other time would have meant I would not have been born. And a big part of me is growing up in a time and place. A clone of my adult self would not be a "carbon copy," because it would grow up in a different time and place. An identical twin is far closer, but differs in slight degree.

An individual person exhibits personality traits that can be articulated, i. e. put into words subordinated to "generals" or concepts. Thus that trait is an instance of a kind. Yet its existence in this individual may be contingent. And as instance it is singular. Thus it is neither singular nor general strictly, correlative.

My identity is bound up with radical contingency, as Duns Scotus suggests.

III. Self-Respect

The topic of this conference is "Identity and Self-Respect." "John Rawls, an American philosopher stated that self-respect is a primary social good so societies have to provide it for their citizens." However, if individual identity is as problematic as I think, self-respect is problematic as well. Firstly, is not "self" respect a form of social recognition? Of esteem and worth in the eyes of social peers? But then is it "self" respect or social respect?

Can society provide such a good? Given Mead's notion that we are social all the way down, autonomy is at least problematic; there are always social and cultural influences.

Moreover, it is subject to the metaphysical objection that it is a general, social identity or common identity. Each individual of a society is entitled to the same good, viz. self-respect. Its axiological identity belies its individuality.

Another problem is the logic of contraries. Self-respect is the contrary of the negation of such self-respect. Can there be self-respect without its contrary? Let us suppose a Utopia where everyone has self-respect. Would self-respect count in such a world? Since hypothetically, everyone would have it, would it matter? Would it not be like air, which we take for granted and generally do not trouble ourselves over? Would it be a public good, or even a private one?

Now critics might argue for an autonomous version of self-respect in which it is inner respect of the individual for his/her own self. Let us hypothetically grant some version of autonomy. If self-respect is autonomous and internal, without a social element, it is difficult to see how society can affect it. If it comes from society it is not self-respect but social recognition. If it comes from the individual autonomously, it is not a public good that society can grant.

Am I oversimplifying? Can society lay the conditions for self-respect while allowing it to grow and develop within the autonomous individual? But then it is still not entirely individual, for it arises from a social origin and this origin is identical for all individuals, a universal not an individual difference. It cannot provide self-respect within the context of, or for the individuality of the individual: *self*-respect.

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SHEEN ESTEVEZ
A SHOWTIME ORIGINAL PICTURE
RATED X
They turned on America.
Then they turned on each other.
The True Story of America's Greatest Porn Kings.
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NO LIMITS

Alpár Losoncz

HOW LONELY IS THE SELF-RESPECTING AGENT?

This presentation is based on the following pillars: first, I deal with specified tensions between self-esteem and self-respect. Self-esteem and self-respect are here part of the history of self-relationship and of the matrix of self-relating. Second, indirectly I treat the ambivalences of the relationship between the structures of intersubjectivity and selfness in modern society. It seems to me that these contradictions turn out to be the effects of the different paths of modernity in relation to the status of individuality. On the one hand, there is an image of individuality that is self-sufficient, self-contained and isolated in relation to the other human beings: this modality of individuality is denoted as atomistic individualism. On the other hand, there is a representation of the individuality that desperately needs the others to manifest itself: it is deeply involved in the communicative structure and persistently relates to the others within the structure of societal intersubjectivity. In other words, it tirelessly finds itself "outside," in the position of detachment in order to compete with or to measure against others, to compare herself to others, to ask for the recognition of others, thus, its relation to the others is "ecstatic."[1] There is another problem to be identified in connection with the above mentioned issues: the relationship between the self and intersubjectivity. Does the self completely fit into intersubjectivity as suggested by the representants of the *strong* intersubjectivity? It is of course impossible to provide a comprehensive outline of the enumerated issues, yet the confrontation with them requires us to take a clear position. At the end of this presentation, I will conclude my argument by pointing out the necessary and indispensable temporal aspects of self-respect.

It is evident that we are acquainted with the immense and diverse history of self-relationship in different social fields. Indeed, from the earliest epochs, different techniques and practices have served to ensure and affirm the care of the self. It is

[1] See this term in the context of Hegelian recognition-structures, J. Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself*, Fordham University Press, New York, 2005, 27.

to be accentuated that the creation of the self is not the manifestation of the "natural" givenness, but proves to be an exceptional task. Therefore, there is a need for the outstanding efforts to remove the hindrances that make the *normatively* regulated self-relating impossible. Let us mention the term *stultitia*[2] that includes the meanings of indecision and confusion concerning the subject and de-links the ties between the self and will. The will is strongly undermined in this case and we are confronted with the coming to the surface of the week subjectivity. The Romans, for example, depict this notion in a way that due to *stultitia* one cannot practice self-relationship, and become dependent on the uncontrolled streaming of the future. Other interpretations emphasize that in this case, the "oneself" turns to be a captive of the others, be they other subjects of our or "their" culture: the "oneself" losing the capacity of critical self-relating becomes the vulnerable *imitation* of the other. Or there are problems concerned with *akrasia:* the weakness of will that links us to the old issue of the inherent (in)capability of the will. Furthermore, we are confronted with the different forms of self-hatred or self-disdain:[3] These phenomena are closer to us than we would think and this warning is especially valid and important, if the oneself is treated narrowly, that is from the perspective of the guiding of life based on rational self-interest.

Self-relating is to be explained as the result of significant efforts of individuals who are supposed to be "selves" or to bear selfhood. With this in mind, it is unmistakable that we are obliged to take the given form of self-relating into account that are framed only transitorily, henceforth, the self-relationship is always exposed to the dynamics of social contexts. Perhaps most importantly, we must recognize that self-relationship bears the marks of fragility and vulnerability described by phenomena like self-crisis or critical self-account. In the background of the self, we do not see an ossified metaphysical entity, but a self-relating agency who all the time transforms itself. However, for us, this conclusion does not lead to the assessment that the self completely fits into the structure of intersubjectivity. We are only talking about the non-substantial processes of self-relating within the given social context loaded with the conflicts concerning the distribution of resources, power structures, etc.; therefore, the self could not elude the norms of social structures.

[2] M. Foucault, *L herméneutique du sujet*, Paris, 2001, 653.

[3] See comments on self-hatredness by George Bernanos, H. U. Von Balthasar, *Bernanos*, Trier, 1988, 527.

The authors dealing with self-relationship[4] draw attention to the fact that in all societies there are institutionally stabilized practices regulating the modes of self-relating. So if we reduce our investigation to the society (because as the neurobiologists teach us there is a persistent genealogy of self-confronting nature, too) the self is not spontaneously acquired and enlarged. The self is clearly confronted with the social aspects of the given forms of intersubjectivity and its encounters with others. In fact, here we take into account the difference between the *dyadic* intersubjectivity and the social dimensions of the life of the self. Without any doubt, the intersubjectivity is embedded into the social structure. What is more; sociality frames the intersubjectivity because the societal structures with the regulating norms prevail over the modalities of intersubjectivity. Thus the most important conclusion is that the social "matrix" conditions as well as determines the dyadic exchanges between the individuals.

Considering the modern society, we must bear in mind that the constitutive dividing lines of this type of society. *In medias res*, the concept of privacy in modernity alludes to the desiring agent who manifests herself in the manner of authenticity, following idiosyncratic instincts, peculiar life histories, and unexamined beliefs. Of course, there is no equation between the boundary of privacy and the self, but the comprehensive account of the self could not ignore the institutionalizations of privacy or the constructions of the legal agents or the subjectivity as such. Without securing the field of privacy or without analyzing the transformation of the ceasura between the public spheres and the private spheres the self-experience could not be explained. But, again, in accordance with our position, self is not immersed completely into the intersubjectivity. Self is a *contested* entity forced to oscillate between different orientations, between the positions of outside and inside. It always represents itself and self-respect is to be seen as the effect of self-judging through self-representation.

To summarize, we refer to three levels that contextualize self-respect and self-esteem: the non-metaphysical self who is relating to itself that affects itself (this is the phenomenon of autoaffection[5]), the dyadic-type of intersubjectivity and the transcendental social framing. Self-respect and self-esteem is to be treated as the

[4] M. Foucault, *Le courage de la vérité*, Paris, 2009, 13. 17, *Le gouvernement de soi et des autres*, Paris, 2008, 62. A. Nehamas, *The Art of Living Socratic Reflections from Plato to Foucaul*t, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1998.

[5] See, K, Malabou, A. Johnston, *Self and Emotional Life*, Columbia University Press, 2013, 10. J. Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself*, New York, 2005, 68.

effect of the relationship between *self* and *itself* and this process of self-relating has certain autonomy in relation to the dyadic intersubjectitivity and social framing, but it is endangered by the socially impregnated intersubjectivity in modern societies. So far, there is a tendency of integrating, "fitting" the self into the societal intersubjectivity: there is a cost to this embeddedness in modern societies for the self. For us, this is the gist of the difficulty concerning every discourse on the self, namely, how to bring to light the simultaneous and ambivalent processes concerning the self. The self is, procedurally understood, as self-transformation, and in a certain sense, as a self-making animal (to paraphrase a foucauldian notion) but at the same time there is no self-making and self-transformation outside the social norms, outside its „modes of subjectivations." It is essential to consider the forms of articulations between self-making (autonomy, priority of self-relating) and the social embeddedness.

After these considerations, let me concentrate on the difference between self-esteem and self-respect. Is there a real difference between these terms? The answer is not as simple as it might seem. John Rawls, who is, as we know very well, extremely important for elaborating on the political and philosophical relevance of self-respect for good life, does not make a difference between self-esteem and self-respect. He made a strong connection between the life-plan of the individuals and the value-projections: the all-inclusive life plan is the focal point and is connected to the rational deliberation, which treats all times of one's life as of equal concern to one. He puts emphasis on the fact that it is indispensable to act in accordance with the axioms of deliberative rationality for the successful realization of our life plan; in fact, in this way we could protect ourselves against reproach from the future, actually, protect ourselves against retrospective self-blaming. We could be put on the scene of negative self-judgment with the far-reaching consequences in relation to the self-respect. Therefore, a rational individual who acts in line with the deliberative rationality, can *ex ante* defend himself or herself from self-blaming and maybe, from destructing self-disdain. However, Rawls does not distinguish between self-esteem and self-respect and treats them as equivalent notions.

Paul Ricoeur, for example,[6] considers the relationship between self-esteem and self-respect a hierarchical one, with self-esteem placed on a higher level than self-respec. For him, self-respect is no more than self-esteem, which appears on the scene of the world of norms. Self-respect, specifically, stands before us as "something" that is regulated by social norms.

[6] P. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992, 21.

Other thinkers also share the view that it is very important to separate self-esteem and self-respect since self-respect does not depend on meritocratic aspects, in fact, on our social achievements, while self-esteem is deeply dependent on recognition, others' judgments, that is, on others who practice the measurement of our achievements. In the case of self-respect, we could refer to the *unfounded belief* that can put the formal and abstract equality that is the equality based on the comprehensive respect of people into motion. In this case, we can respect virtually everybody, the agents of anarchistic revolts, unpleasant vagabonds and aggressive hobos, and dissident citizens who categorically refuse to work (and to climb on the scale of social rank) and dilettante authors. Paradoxically, self-respect becomes the matter of politics; in fact, it proves to be a public matter, because if we intend to include virtually everyone, this is a genuinely public matter.

Michael Walzer assumes that people are engaged in continuous evaluation practices, so man is the autoevaluative animal and these considerations are integrated into the system of complex equality: evaluation relates to other people and to ourselves as well.[7] For this reason, self-esteem is a strictly relational concept and occurs only in the context where measure does exist. Actually, self-esteem is possible only in the constellation of some forms of competition and diversity derived from different locations on the scale of competition. Self-respect is, in this sense, beyond the practice of evaluation. It is situated in the domain of existence, which is deemed to be universal, meaning equally distributed even to some extent to those who are not legally competent, such as prisoners. This is not the case of excellence, or manifested virtue, magnanimity, nobility or courtesy, and the likes associated with social rank. Paraphrasing Walzer: self-respect is not the result of the intersubjective measure, it is beyond the sphere of intersubjectivity. Our power to do something emerges in self-respect, our opportunity to be able to do something vibrates in self-respect, in fact, to manifest ourselves in the form of self-respect. At the same time, as far as self-respect is linked to some social norms, we find ourselves facing the following issue: in what way should we know the social norms to measure us against it?

Let us take a look at Walzer"s argument: self-respect makes for prigs as same as self-esteem makes for snobs. The values that prigs exaggerate can be shared unlike those the snobs exaggerate. Therefore, prigs deserve self-respect, they are not compelled to ask for the respect of other prigs, but the snobs are determined to manifest themselves provocatively, to be seen in the eyes of others. Respect is part

[7] M. Walzer, *Spheres of Justice*, Basic Books, 1983, 275.

of invisibility; esteem is a feature of socially regulated visibility. But can we draw such a strong dividing line between self-respect and self-esteem? What if this caesura is to be treated as a trembling line?

Walzer points out very clearly that we must know somehow the social norms to respect ourselves. In fact, he opens many doors loaded with dilemmas. Is there self-respect before or after the intersubjective practice? When does the loneliness of self-respect emerge? This philosopher accentuates, for example, that other people judge whether I have a right to respect myself. However, in that case, we already integrate a *strong* intersubjective criterion in our arguments that command our lines of thinking. As we know the philosopher slave Epictetus measures himself against humanity, but what about the fact that other people might judge negatively his right to respect himself? What happens if a member of the modern society is condemned because he is not productive in the market? Does the anarchistic rebel deserve self-respect if his neighbors refuse to endorse this right? It seems that this case is more difficult than that of the thief.

Furthermore, who are the others who judge that I can respect myself? Are they my friends, alluding here to some antic measures to friendship? Or, are they the abstract others? Therefore, the terms "others" or "other people" are impregnated with their abstractness. It is obvious that self should not be constructed out of social "bricks"as he or she is not the mere "looking-glass" or mirror of social tendencies. At the same time, however, we are confronted with the hard issue of the relationship between the loneliness of the agency (the bearer of self-respect) and socially generated intersubjectivity. Loneliness is not the radical solitude, but there is a problem of the limits of social intersubjectivity. Where are the limits of this type of intersubjectivity?

The problem of social intersubjectivity throws us back to the abovementioned orientation of modernity that refers to individuality that the other needs to a great extent to reveal itself. For instance, Adam Smith paradigmatically takes as a fact that there is a separation between human beings, an irreducible distance between men. He tackles/discusses/deals with the rich meaning of self-relationship but projects a phenomenon of imagination as a basis for *becoming an other*.[8] In fact, he presupposes an impartial spectator and the self watches itself as an impartial spectator. In his case, the self is persistently torn apart between certain tendencies

[8] A. Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1982. S. Kolm, Efficacité et altruisme: les sophismes de Mandeville, Smith et Pareto, *Revue économique*, 1981, 1: 5–31.

for the reason that human agency is, in the social theatre, actor and spectator at the same time. Smith's ethical argumentation is similar to that of Walzer"s at certain points: self-love is equated with the longing to be loved by others, or, in other words, you can sympathize with yourself to the extent that others sympathize with you.[9] Emphatically recalling the inversion of the Christian formula Smith points out love yourself as your neighbor is capable of loving you. We realize that this position, which is dependent on strong intersubjectivity, is analogous to the statement that one can respect itself precisely to the same extent as others respect the self. The result is the inherent and indispensable mediatedness: *self-relationship* or *autoreferentiality* is always-already mediated by others, in the strong sense of the word.

Why is this philosophical reflection so relevant to my argument? Self-relationship here leads us to a position that we are obliged to imagine ourselves as impartial observer and we need only a third person to confirm our own actions. In other words, a hypothetical third party is needed in order to transform self-relationship into self-respect. Smith's intention is to find a source of moral law, or of norms in the inner spheres of man, as innate faculty that is at the same time external to him. The human agency can come to contact with himself or herself only through an intermediary instance that is society. Thus, the self here fits completely into intersubjectivity. Is there an opportunity for loneliness in this case? Or to put it in other words: does the socially generated intersubjectivity make loneliness impossible?

Following on this train of thought self-relationship is to be depicted as a result of an impersonal gaze. The human agency can manage to get near to himself or herself but only by others, by third parties. In an extreme case, self-relationship is the construction of others. Roughly speaking, modern men cannot achieve sufficient loneliness. We are not confronted with the problem that men focus too much on themselves, but the central problem is that it is deeply dependent on the measures of others. Pathetically, men lose the "noble feeling" that culminates in the "be yourself" phenomenon. Men anxiously look for the conditions of self-respect. Consequently, we are obliged to think about the multifarious relationships between intersubjectivity and self-respect. Or, to be more precise,

[9] J. P. Dupuy, Vers l'unité des sciences sociales autour de l'individualisme méthodologique complexe, La Découverte | *Revue du MAUSS*, 2004/2, 310-328.

self-respect is based on the quality and the dimensions of intersubjective structures.

There is another problem with intersubjectivity. In his sophisticated and grandiose theory of distributive justice Rawls refers to the problem of envy. It is highly indicative that his libertarian critic Robert Nozick does not use the term of self-respect; instead he broadly articulates the notion of self-esteem. And it is also important that entering the intersubjective structures, Nozick puts emphasis on the different forms of envy. Envy must be excluded from the "original position"; yet, the question arises whether this is not too high a price for the affirmation of self-respect? Rawls' parsimonious discourse on envy ignores these forms or even the well-known fact of fear of envy elaborated on largely by Adam Smith. The Scottish philosopher weighs the combination of self-respect and envy. As a matter of fact, it is very difficult to develop a modern political theory without problematizing the phenomenon of envy as the effects of intersubjective structures are embedded in measuring and comparison. His discourse on envy targets the social intersubjectivity; i. e. the human agency is losing its self, because envy removes us from ourselves. We are forced to be outside to imitate the others or to hate the others. Moralization is not important here as the main point is the constellation that diminishes the chances for self-relationship, i. e., also for self-respect. Envy could be interpreted as the intersubjective *overdetermination* of the subject's relationship to the others. In any case, it could not be ignored. Envy endangers self-respect because human agency is constantly torn between herself/himself and others, suffering from the split that is constitutive for her or his being.

Rawls conception is connected to deliberate rationality. The whole concept is organized in order to escape from blaming ourselves. Avoiding self-reproach requires/necessitates the position and disposition of rational deliberation. Truly, one's perspective is strongly determined by the disposition of rational deliberation. This is the basic condition for self-respect in Rawls' theory. The problem is that our life-plans are not projected on the basis of *fixed preferences* by which we can persistently judge our achievements.[10] Therefore, we cannot delineate a fixed set of preferences that gives us a transcontextual measure and standpoint to measure neutrally the fulfillment of our life plans. We are constrained to judge our acts *retroactively* in accordance with the standpoint of a

[10] See, B. Williams, *Shame and Necessity*, London, 1993, 26., 86. We could also recall the notion of meta-preferences as explained by A. Sen.

later constituted self, i. e., from the perspective of the assessment of the emergent self. We should be more radical than Rawls. Retrospective judgment of our non-metaphysical preferences is indispensable. The perspective assessment of our deliberate choices is necessarily determined by our retrospective gaze and by our retrospective accounts. The modus of life one leads determines one's desires and judgments. Hence, this auto-referential retrospective assessment of ourselves includes contextual, contingent and *emergent* moments. Rawls avoids confronting with the problem of the emergent self. Prospectively, it is impossible to guarantee from what standpoint our self-blaming and self-regrets would come into being. As we know, when dusk begins to fall, Minerva flies.

The dynamics of social intersubjectivity have great influence on this process. Self-respect is deeply connected to protecting ourselves from self-regret, but in this case, it is affected by our *retrospective* judgments. Williams accentuates the position of a retrospective "judge." We do not know in advance how our practices would influence our future in retrospective perspective. We are not able to practice the "prospective retrospectivity." Therefore we are confronted with the fragility of self-respect, which is not linked to the fixed set of preferences as the persistent, meta-contingent measure, but to the processual moments, loaded with the multifarious relationship between the social intersubjectivity and loneliness.

István Bujalos

SOCIAL BASES OF SELF-RESPECT

John Rawls claimed that self-respect is perhaps the most important primary good[1] and it has two aspects. On the one hand self-respect is a person's sense of his own value, on the other hand it is a person's confidence in ability to fulfill his own intentions. A person respects himself when he regards his personhood, his life and his plan of life valuable and he thinks that he is able to fulfill his plan of life. Shortly, a person respects himself when he is capable of living a valuable life.

Self-respect is an essential condition of personal life. Without self-respect the life of a person is empty and he sinks into apathy. "Without self-respect all desire and activity becomes empty and vain."[2]

Therefore, self-respect is a good thing. Something is good when it is rational to want to it. Every person wants to have self-respect because it means that his life is valuable. A valuable human life is a life lived according to a rational plan, and someone is happy when his plans are going well, his important aspirations are fulfilled. So happiness could be achieved by the fulfillment of personal plans. I think that this is a simple description of the valuable life as the source of self-respect.

However, thirty years after the first publication of his *Theory of Justice*, John Rawls emphasized that "it is not self-respect as an attitude toward oneself but the social bases of self-respect that count as a primary good"[3] and in a footnote he remarked that "*Theory* is ambiguous on this point. It fails to distinguish between self-respect as an attitude, the preserving of which is a fundamental interest, and the social bases that help to support that attitude."[4]

The parties in the Rawlsian original position aim to establish such a society in which social institutions provide social bases of self-respect for all members of the society. Such social institutions are the social bases of self-respect. Or more exactly those aspects of basic institutions are social bases of self-respect which are

[1] Rawls, John, 1990, 440.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Rawls, John, 2001, 60.
[4] Ibid.

normally essential for citizens "to have a lively sense of their worth as persons and to be able to advance their ends with self-confidence."[5]

Rawls claimed in his *Theory* that in a hypothetical original position men regard themselves as ends and

> the principles they accept will be designed to protect the claims of their person… Two principles of justice achieve that aim: for all have an equal liberty and the difference principle explicates the distinction between treating men as means only and treating them also as ends in themselves. To regard persons as ends themselves in the basic design of society is to agree to forgo those gains which do not contribute to their representative expectations.[6]

These two Rawlsian principles of justice provide persons to regard themselves as ends. These principles secure dignity and self-respect for men.

Therefore, it has turned out that self-respect as an attitude means regarding human beings as ends and social bases of self-respect are the Rawlsian principles of justice. It has turned out that social bases of self-respect are provided for all citizens in a just society. And a society is just if it is based on the Rawlsian principles of justice.

Self-respect is a primary good. It means that self-respect belongs to the thin theory of good. The thin theory of primary good is in fact just a list of such goods as liberty and opportunity, income and wealth, and above all self-respect. Parties or persons in the original position know the list of primary goods and these goods are premises from which they derive the principles of right.

In the following section of my paper, I shall investigate whether the original position leads necessarily to the two principles of justice. Can we really derive the principles of right and justice from the original position?

At the end of the third section in his work *A Theory of Justice* Rawls declared that he formulated the most appropriate conception of an initial situation and his original position leads to his principles of justice.[7] It seems that Rawls deduced his principles of justice from the original position. At first, Rawls introduced the idea of the original position and then he formulated his two principles of justice. He

[5] Rawls, John, 2001, 59.

[6] Rawls, John, 1990, 180.

[7] „I want to maintain that the most appropriate conception of this situation does lead to principles of justice contrary to utilitarianism and perfectionism."(Rawls 1990, 15)

stated that persons in the original position would not choose utilitarian principles of justice but they would choose their principles of justice. And finally, he claimed that his conception of the original position leads to his two principles of justice.

The characteristics of the original position are the following: persons (or parties) in the original position are equal, free and rational. They do not know their particularities but "they know the general facts about human society"[8], that is, they know general laws of economics, sociology and psychology, the general circumstances of justice and the list of primary goods. Based on their positions and knowledge, persons are capable deciding and formulating necessary principles of social justice.

It is obvious that persons cannot deduce any principles from their free and equal dispositions. If liberty and equality are just positional characteristics of persons in the original position, they cannot provide grounds for inference to principles of justice.

The rationality of persons is also so formal that it cannot be a starting point of deduction of principles. Rawls interpreted rationality in a narrow and formal sense, "it is the standard of economic theory: it means to take the most effective means to given ends."[9] It is natural and not surprising that from such dispositions of persons as liberty, equality and rationality persons in the original position cannot deduce any principles of social justice.

What about general circumstances of justice? Rawls borrowed an account of the circumstances of justice from David Hume. Circumstances of justice in Hume's philosophy are moderate scarcity of resources and limited generosity of individuals. Circumstances of justice describe conditions under which social cooperation is both possible and necessary. The circumstances of justice are general preconditions of any normal functioning of any society.

It is obvious that we cannot conclude any principles of justice from preconditions of a normal society. We cannot deduce any principle of justice from moderate scarcity and from limited generosity. We may say that if circumstances of justice exist, then any conception of justice determines human relations on a social level. However, this conception of justice is not necessarily the Rawlsian conception of justice.

[8] Rawls, John, 1990, 137.

[9] Rawls, John, 1990, 14.

We may also suppose that persons in the original position could formulate principles of justice if they rely on general laws of economics, sociology, and psychology.

It is true that different economists, sociologists and psychologists have worked out different conceptions of justice partly based on general laws of economics, sociology and psychology. They have argued for their conceptions, they have tried to justify them. Those conceptions have been discussed and debated in scientific circles but we cannot say that finally all scientists have accepted one definite conception of social justice. It shows that these sciences do not represent such absolute and unquestionable knowledge concerning social justice from which persons in the original position could derive definite and necessary principles of justice.

Except for primary goods we have already considered one after the other all formal and descriptive characteristics of Rawls' original position and we see that principles of justice cannot be deduced from them either.

It seems that in opposition to his statement, his conception of hypothetical initial situation cannot lead to his principles of justice. It seems that it is impossible to deduce his principles of justice from his original position.

This is an essential question. If Rawls could deduce any principles of justice from formal and fair conditions of his initial situation then he justifies that his principles are necessary and unquestionable principles. However, it seems that Rawls was mistaken when he stated that his original position, which is a pure formal and neutral initial situation, would lead to his principles of justice.

After all, I do claim that Rawls' original position might lead to his principles of justice because persons know the list of primary goods and persons in the original position are not only free and equal but they regard liberty and equality as values. Liberty and equality are not just positions but they are values as well. Liberty, as a value, is autonomy and equality, as a value, means equal dignity and equally better life for everyone.

Persons in the original position regard equality and liberty as values of social life. They want to realize these values in the basic institutions of society as much as possible. They want to create such a society which fulfills the requirements of liberty and equality to the highest possible degree.

Rawls claims that a society has two abstract ends: people cooperate in society to provide inviolability and a better life for everyone. Persons in the original position want to create such a society where those abstract aims of society can be

reached in such a framework of social cooperation which is determined by values of liberty and equality.

And it is possible to deduce Rawls' principles of justice from liberty and equality if liberty and equality are values not just dispositions of persons in the original position.

If liberty and equality are values, they represent standards of fair social cooperation. Liberty and equality together really specify basic rights and duties and determine the possible distribution of goods.

It is not an easy task to reconcile the value of liberty with that of equality. Rawls has attempted to do it. Liberty has to be prior to equality if you regard them as values and you would like to realize both. If equality had priority to liberty then prior realization of equality would mean that (political) enforcement of equality would diminish or eliminate the liberty of individuals.

However, if liberty is not restricted by equality, that is, if liberty is not confined to basic liberties, it would leave no place to equality. Unrestricted liberty makes equality impossible. Rawls' two principles of justice is the equilibrium of liberty and equality.

We see that persons in the original position can deduce principles of justice from values of liberty and equality. These principles have to be applied to the basic structure of society. Nevertheless, how is the original position concerned with society?

We may say that the original position is an abstract model of society because it is an abstraction from every particular feature of an individual and social life. In his later book, *Political liberalism*, Rawls stated that the idea of society "is developed in conjunction with two companion ideas: the idea of citizens […] and the idea of well-ordered society." The citizens are defined as free and equal persons and the well-ordered society means that there is an agreement because "everyone accepts […] the very same principles of justice."[10] The persons in the original position are free and equal and they agree with the same principles of justice. It means that the original position expresses the idea of society.

[10] Rawls, John, 1993, 35..

This analogy between original position and the idea of society is very useful because when the persons go back to their particular society they could base their social life on these principles.[11]

So it seems that if liberty and equality are values then Rawls' original position can lead to his principles of justice. Persons can deduce those principles.

However, liberty and equality can be regarded as values only on the basis of an antecedent conception of justice. It means that the original position cannot be the starting point in the determination of principles of justice. Persons in the original position have a previously and tacitly accepted conception of justice in which liberty and equality are basic values. And they actually deduce the Rawlsian principles of justice from that already existing conception of justice.

Michael Sandel investigated Rawls' contractarian argumentation in his first book (*Liberalism and Limits of Justice*[12]) and he investigated it again in his last book (*Justice*[13]). He ascertained that actual contracts are not self-sufficient. "Actual contracts presuppose a background of morality in the light of which the obligations may be qualified and assessed."[14] I claim that in the case of Rawls' hypothetical contract we may also talk about moral background formed by values of liberty and equality. Rawls specified the basic rights and duties and determined the appropriate distributive shares in the light of liberty and equality.

However, it means that the decision making process of principles of justice in the original position cannot be a pure procedure. Its basic theory cannot be the theory of pure procedural justice. It is an imperfect procedure. Its basic theory is imperfect procedural justice because the values of liberty and equality are independent standards for deciding the outcomes of the process.

Rawls derived his principles of justice from the values of liberty and equality and, in that way, he could not formulate necessary and unconditional principles of justice. The original position cannot justify his principles of justice.

Liberty and equality are main values of modern Western constitutional democracies. From that point of view, we must consider/look at Rawls' theory of

[11] Michael Walzer criticized Rawls' theory by argumantation that when persons go back into their real society they could not rely on principles of justce they had accepted in original position. See Walzer, Michael, 1983, 5.

[12] See Sandel, Michael, 1982, 104-132.

[13] See Sandel, Michael, 2009, 140-151.

[14] See Sandel, Michael, 1982, 109.

justice not as a justification but as an apology for Western constitutional democracies.

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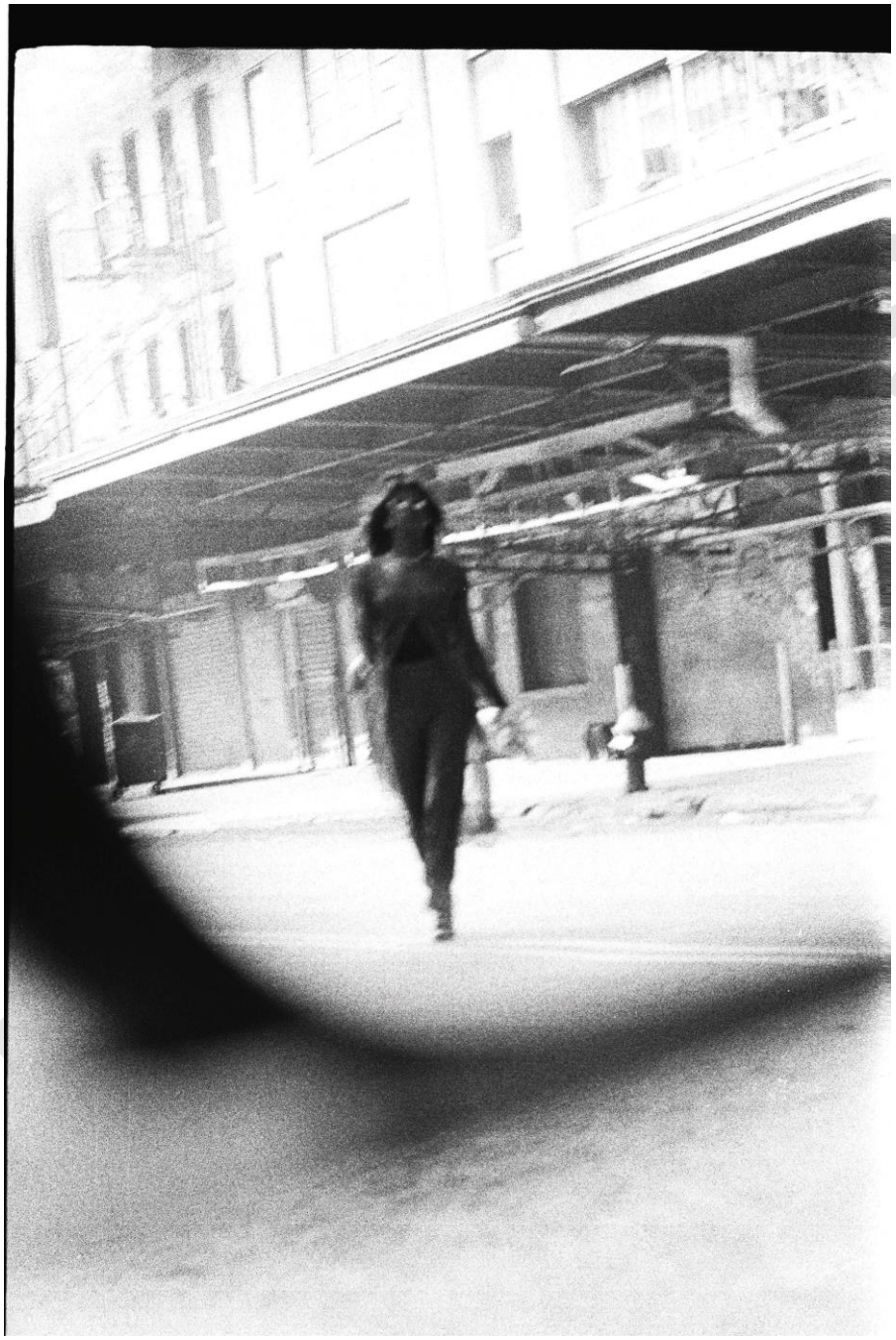

Milton Fisk

Recognition, Society, and Struggle

Thanks to the writing of Axel Honneth,[1] the idea of recognition has made its way to the center of debate over the foundations of ethics. In his work, recognition takes the role of the root of normativity. Certainly, a denial of recognition can have a powerful effect. It can ignite struggles – small and large. For Honneth, a denial of recognition amounts to disrespect. We know that when others show us disrespect we often demand a retraction. Likewise, when faced with extreme disrespect, one can lose self-respect.

In discussing the importance of recognition in ethics, one needs to ask what problem or problems it intends to solve. Honneth gives us some indication of what for him is a problem with ethics based only on interests. He claims that following interests is a pragmatic activity rather than one guided by a sense of morality. So he holds a notion of normativity that goes beyond utility and pragmatics. For him, disrespect is a moral stain independent of what interests might be thwarted by it.

What seems attractive about giving a central role to recognition is that it is a relation between people. Doing so frees us from having to look beyond relations among people to principles above or deep within them. Rather, we are able to act ethically toward others when our action toward them constitutes a recognition of them. We are not told to check the principle we follow in acting to determine whether applying it to all would lead to a contradiction. Nor do we have to see if the principle of our action is one that all reasonable persons would agree to. These tests lead us away from direct relations to persons affected by our behavior. They lead to speculating about what might be true for humanity.

We must though be cautious about the ethical conclusion we draw from this comparison of direct relations to others with abstract principles. Unfortunately, I can recognize that you are hungry and even feel sorry that you are without thinking or feeling that I should do something about it. I might have to accept the

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[1] See in particular Axel Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts* (Cambridge, MA: Policy Press, 1995).

principle of charity in some form before I would recognize you as a person with a right to charity. Thus abstract principles seem to have a place.

I do not claim that the last paragraph is more than a cautionary remark. In fact, I shall follow a path that is one of neither recognition nor abstract principle. My positive effort will consist of a return to an older tradition, in which I include both Hobbes and Hegel. So my view is based on a social view of morality with some strands similar to their views. Recognition is indeed crucial to forming social networks, but it is those networks that ethical thinking has the task of keeping alive. This will be my theme.

1. What Hegel Learned from Hobbes

It is worth listing some of the things Hobbes says we would miss without a governing state. There would be no industry, agriculture, art, geography, society, literature, or transport.[2] Without these things, life would be solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short. He thinks that, to avoid a condition such as this, it is necessary to have something that will turn a state of war of each against all into a state of peace. There must be a means of controlling the forces that lead to such a war, and for Hobbes this is what today we would call a state. It would make it possible to have and to encourage the practice of justice, equality, and solidarity. Only then would it make sense to think of people as either obeying or violating ethical norms.

In thinking about what Hobbes says about the state, two main interpretations have emerged. The simpler one says that, for Hobbes, the state was totalitarian. That is, it not only took measures to end conflicts destructive of society but also decided what the allowable structures of society itself would be. The idea would be that, by shaping society, the state would reduce the number and intensity of potential conflicts.

The more complex interpretation says that Hobbes' story is a parable for the interdependence of society and state rather that for the one-sided independence of the state. We need the state if society is to survive, but society has agendas and resources of its own. The state does enforce a truce among the members of society, but it is more than this truce. Society has sources for industry, art, conviviality,

[2] Hobbes *Leviathan,* chapter 13.

and transport that liberate individuals from being solitary, impoverished, and brutish. This happens under the protection of the state, without being its product.

The two interpretations of the state correspond to two concepts of morality. The touchstone for the totalitarian view of morality is *governability*. Actions and regulations that diminish the ability of the state to impose order diminish its ability to govern and thus are morally wrong. The touchstone for the interdependence view is *social survivability*. Its implication is that a significant level of solidarity, trust, and conviviality are need for social survival. Therefore, actions of a sort that would pose a threat to social survival would be morally wrong.

If we take the social-survivability interpretation of Hobbes, which I believe is more plausible than a strict governability interpretation of him, and then continuity from Hobbes to Hegel is undeniable. The transition in Hegel from civil society to the state, in his *Philosophy of Right*, parallels Hobbes' transition from the state of nature to a commonwealth. But what corresponded to Hobbes' state of nature was something new. The difference was that Hegel was abreast of discussions of the social impact of capitalism during the first decades of the 19th century, as is evident in his discussion of civil society.[3]

Here is a short summary of Hegel's view of capitalist civil society. He lays stress on the inability of civil society to resolve its own contradictions. Capitalism suffers from a tendency toward overproduction, but it is unable of itself to deal with this problem. As wealth grows at the top, poverty grows at the bottom. Handouts from private organizations violate the norm of living by one's work. But make-work schemes that put the unemployed to work add to the already excessive production. The result is a penurious rabble, whose members lose the sense of right and wrong and their self-respect.

We have in the contradictions Hegel found in civil society a 19th century counterpart for the 17th seventh century instability in governance in England that Hobbes lived through. What is the resolution of Hegel's 19th century version of Hobbes' problem of the brutishness of the state of nature? The resolution Hegel adopts bears a striking resemblance to Hobbes' own. That is, just as Hobbes saw the state not as substituting itself for a society without brutishness but as protecting society from brutishness, so too Hegel saw the state as resolving the contradictions of civil society while giving the rights in civil society a broader

[3] Hegel *Philosophy of Right*, paragraphs 231-249.

meaning.[4] Those rights, where they collide, as the investor's right can collide with the worker's right to a living wage, are balanced by the duty to seek a common life together. Both philosophers call for the state to act for a viable society.

2. Is Recognition the Root of the Ethical?

Recognition is important as a relation connecting people. Not recognizing others expresses your view that they fail to qualify in some manner. Not recognizing them in certain ways can amount to denying that they qualify as persons. But this would be a conclusion drawn from not recognizing them as having some feature thought necessary for persons. Non-recognition can be a basis for the charge of dis-respect. If one does not recognize a person as having a right to liberty, despite his or her really having this right, then one disrespects him or her. This dis-respect is a morally charged attitude. Since it is, it is a short step to saying that recognition has a positive moral charge, at least when it is about matters like liberty, equality, and honesty. Can we then also claim that in recognition we have discovered the vital core of morality?

The idea that I wish to advance here is that, in the discussion of ethics, recognition belongs to a second rung of importance. The reason is that it becomes important ethically only when some other requirements are satisfied. Mill said of feelings that they are important for ethics only when they have been "moralized."[5] And I would say that recognition, which normally comes with feeling, is important for ethics only when moralized, that is, when subsumed under some heading whose moral relevance is not in question.

How then do we moralize recognition? Consider the difference between my recognizing your strength and my recognizing your privacy. If I should fail to recognize your physical strength because you conceal you muscles under loose-fitting attire, then to correct the error I should make a more careful observation. But a failure to recognize your privacy, by, for example, intruding on you when you give every indication of wanting to be alone, would come from a very different error. It would be the error of thinking that being together in an encompassing society implies no barriers between persons in it.

[4] *Ibid*., paragraph 261.

[5] Mill *Utilitarianism*, chapter 3.

Exposing the reason for this being an error calls for a more complicated reflection. It would involve showing that a society lacking privacy would have little chance of survival. Complicated, as it would be, this task is the one we need if we are to moralize the recognition of privacy.

I suggest that recognition has moral importance only when its role is to affirm membership in society. However, disrespect has moral importance when it is a denial of membership in society to someone. Such a denial threatens society by dividing it and ultimately weakening it. Those not recognized are rejected as members of society. When groups – racial, class, religious, or gender groups – are denied recognition their members become aliens inhabiting the gaps in an encompassing society. When you disrespected someone, suspicion may arise among others about his or her status as a member of the society.

What though about rights? Don't they play a role here? If they do, we should say, instead, that recognition is an affirmation of others' rights and disrespect is a misguided denial of their rights. Recognition of persons would, then, depend on rights in somewhat the same way that recognizing my friend's strength depends on his muscles. This leads us to focus on what rights are. We then ask directly about what is needed to establish whether something is a right. Since rights address relations among persons, they have to do with social relations and hence with society. They protect us in a society and conversely they protect society. Of course, society is a flexible term, applying both to smallish groups and to larger ones that include them. The movement to establish universal rights for humans parallels one to make the global society we live in less vulnerable.

In sum, the issue is to decide when recognition becomes normative, that is, takes on a moral role. According to my suggestion, recognition has a moral role only when it proclaims that what is being recognized poses no threat to society. In some cases, denying recognition, though, would indicate what is being denied. Recognition is indeed a threat to society.

There is then no conceptual relation between recognition in general and social survival. It is only recognition of a certain kind that has a link to denying a weakening effect on society. Recognition is always through some lens.[6] The lens might not be morality but rather legality, affordability, profitability, or delectability. Knowing what the specific lens is leads to criteria determining whether we should or should not recognize something or somebody.

[6] Honneth 2012: 132-134.

Should we give recognition to a politician who lies to voters? Certainly not, assuming we look at the matter through a moral lens. For then, we view the lies told in terms of the possible effects on society of others' copying his or her lying. But if the lens is electoral politics rather than morality, we might give a different answer.

There are values other than *truth telling* that are relevant to recognition within the perspective of morality. There are also the values of reasonableness, freedom, solidarity, and equality. When others find you acting against any of the values that they consider necessary for society, they break their moral relation of recognition to you. One can deny recognition when faced with a failure of *reasonableness*. Leaders want us to recognize them when they insist on the need to invade another country to forestall destructive acts by it. If they can offer no persuasive evidence that there is a need for an invasion, we can withdraw our recognition. Another precondition for recognition is *equality*. One cannot ask for recognition. The denial of equality to black citizens was a manifestation of white disrespect. To this day, its consequences continue to weaken society. Disrespect is also mediated by a lack of *solidarity*. The austerity measures of the major nations of the world today widen the gap between the continuing enrichment of the entrepreneurial class and continuing desperation of the laboring class. Disrespect in the form of a lack of solidarity is tearing societies apart.

What is so important about the value lenses through which we make or withhold recognition? They show that we should not chase after recognition as of itself the basis of the moral realm. Only when our lens is a moral one, as opposed to some other kind, is our recognition of persons a moral recognition. We cannot use recognition as the basis of moral values. Moral recognition is a way of approaching others from the perspective of moral values. To get to the origin of these values, we need to consult the deep seated fidelity to preserving society.

3. Can Interests Be a Source of the Normative?

Those who promote recognition as a key to finding what is normative in a moral sense start from the conviction that normative claims go beyond interests. But when we look around us it is hard to find normative claims lacking a ground in interests. Nonetheless, Kant offered us a perspective on the normative that requires our legislating from a standpoint of pure practical reason. The resulting

laws, he claimed, deserved our respect or recognition.[7] Being beyond the influence of interests, they had standing as ethical prescriptions. Habermas has a parallel criterion for the ethical as that to which all would agree through reasoning unaffected by interests.[8] Despite these calls to purity, I remain mired in heteronomy.

Honneth quite rightly separates himself from the way these purist standpoints make appeals beyond empirical interests. In place of such appeals, he substitutes recognition, as something charged with feeling and as an empirical relation open to inspection in sociology. I applaud Honneth's plea for the need for empirical studies in ethics.[9] What focus does he think those studies should have? For him the focus should be on the different modes of recognition and disrespect as they appear in a variety of circumstances – leading to a kind of phenomenology of recognition.

My worry is that a phenomenology of recognition fails to advance the effort to say how ethical significance attaches to recognition. I have already noted that recognition gets ethical significance from the values that determine its perspective. So my concern here is ultimately about those values that give recognition its perspective. I address this concern by turning to the concept of society. Our not wanting to weaken society provides a basis for deciding what our values should be. These values then qualify as a basis for deciding when recognition is warranted.

This changes the accustomed focus. The philosophical task within a normative ethics – one that leads to conclusions about what we should do – is to search for a guideline for what is or is not ethical. Having such a guideline is helpful when it comes to deciding when and in what way to respect or to dis-respect people. The guideline here is that behavior that would threaten society if it becomes widespread is wrong.

Far from casting aside the insights of Honneth, this guideline allows us to provide a framework in which to back them up. Recognition and disrespect are ethical responses to others. But to decide whether they are ethically correct calls for investigating their effects on society. Recognizing a serial killer as having the

[7] Kant 1785, chapter 3.

[8] Habermas 1996:, 53-56.

[9] See the critique of the empirical approach in Nancy Fraser, *Scales of Justice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 41-2.

right to the freedom most of us enjoy would be reckless. It is allowable to disrespect a killer by restricting his or her freedom. However, disrespecting a killer, whose freedom has already been restricted by being taken into custody, by mutilation would not protect society. It might even lower the barrier to brutishness, thereby threatening the society. Likewise, disrespecting someone for not sharing my own political affiliation would be intolerant. It would violate a norm of freedom of conscience that we need at this time to avoid wrecking society.

In tracing the practical implications of norms for society, we find them to be supports for the viability of society. What do we mean here by society? In a society, people get access to the material conditions for life, they trust most others, they find helpful people when needed, they have protection from those who would diminish them through overwork or underpay, and they have occasion for conviviality. The determination to protect these features transforms them from conditions for society to ethical norms. As features of society, none of them are ethical norms. Those in a society understandably want their society to continue – they have fidelity to it. They fashion norms that proscribe behavior that would seriously threaten any feature society depends on. The reproduction of society from day to day becomes the concern of ethics.

Honneth is right that recognition and disrespect involve feeling. For him, their component of feeling distinguishes them from pragmatic interests in means to reach a goal. He claims that such interests are never sufficient for ethics. But there is something missing here. Honneth does not give an account of the nature or origin of the feeling he associates with recognition. He simply postulates it as a feeling that accompanies recognition.[10] I have suggested what this feeling is and how it arises. To understand it, we need to look at it from both participant and spectator points of views. For example, as a participant, when I am wrestling with a decision about what to do, I may end up basing my decision on recognizing my own fidelity to society. As a spectator, I may recognize your fidelity to society as instrumental in making a decision you wrestled with.

This accounts for normativity in terms of both the emotional charge coming from wanting to nurture society and the pragmatic interest in the steps to nurturing it. Disagreements over the steps to take to satisfy the desire for maintaining society are far deeper and more widespread than disagreements over

[10] Honneth Ibid., 149.

whether maintaining society should be a goal. The disagreements over how to maintain society are usually ones over whether we should have one form of society or another – say, a liberal democracy rather than a sectarian monarchy. These are important disagreements but are actually about which *form of society* is best to maintain *a society*. In Egypt, this question might now be, "Would Mubarak's secular dictatorship be a better form of society for Egypt than Morsi's sectarian dictatorship?" The question presupposes that we are asking about which one of them would be best for keeping the society together.

The various forms of recognition – recognition of others as equals, as members in a circle of solidarity, as trustworthy, and as recipients of justice – come together as a bulwark protecting society. Each of these forms of recognition has normative relevance since it is a recognition of some feature society needs for protection. Take society out of the picture and these forms of recognition no longer make sense.

To back this claim, we need an answer to the question, "What makes a society good?" The answer is simply that it is in all of us an interest to live in society. Whatever project we adopt depends on our living in society, even the projects that may lead to its demise. Thus it makes sense to say that fidelity to society is the motivating force behind the ethical project of teaching, enforcing, and criticizing norms. Fidelity to society is then the feeling responsible for the emotive content of recognition.

The relevance of Hobbes and Hegel is evident here. Hobbes goes in search of a way to make society possible. We are without society when life is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short. Promoting measures that will restore society or will prevent its demise is a way to guarantee a place for morality. Conversely, having a place for morality is a defense against the kind of activity that undermines society. Hegel pointed to the way post-feudal economic relations were impoverishing significant parts of the population. Avoiding a crisis of self-respect and of social division called for implementing a more comprehensive view that would bring recognition across social divisions. For Hegel, a state bureaucracy was the remedy, but the limitations of this solution do not diminish the importance of his statement of the problem.

4. Socialization and Society

I wish to consider an objection to what I have said about ethics and society. It parallels an objection Honneth raises in regard to Hegel. According to his

objection, Hegel abandoned an effort to understand the integration of people into society and turned instead to changes in society taking place as the dominant factor changed from the family, to civil society, and then to the state.[11] In short, for Honneth the interesting problem is socialization, but Hegel gave it up for a study of the transformation of one type of society into another. So, doesn't my attempt to understand ethics as a protection for society miss the basic problem of socialization by already assuming it is solved?

In Elizabeth Burgos' book *I Am Rigoberta Menchu and Here Is How My Consciousness Was Born* starts with Rigoberta's account of her own birth ceremony in El Quiche, a department of Guatemalan.[12] The customs enacted before and shortly after any birth in her Mayan community are "intended to integrate the child into the community." The parents present a newborn child to relatives, neighbors, and people with special roles in the community. This ceremonial recognition of the infant by members of the community anticipates the later mutual recognition between the older child and any member of the community.

At a more abstract level, Honneth discusses at length various stages of socialization and the types of recognition associated with each of them. He discusses the levels of socialization occurring with the development of recognition in a person arising, at first from parental love, then from being part of a legal system, and ultimately from solidarity brought on through experiencing mutual dependence on an ever expanding scale.[13]

What can we say to respond to this focus on socialization by way of recognition? Are we to say that the project of socialization succeeds due to recognition? We have already seen that some types of recognition are perverse. Recognizing racist killers for their dedication, instead of disrespecting them, is perverse, but sadly more common than we would like it to be. Unresolved issues with the idea of recognition will detract from that idea's usefulness concerning socialization.

So, either we stick with the idea that we extend recognition only to people for acceptable traits, or we stick with the idea that we can extend recognition to people for unacceptable traits as well. However, either idea creates trouble for those who espouse an ethics of recognition.

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[11] Honneth, Ibid., 49; 78-79.

[12] Burgos 1985, chapter 2.

[13] Honneth, Ibid., chapter 5.

As to the first idea, that one grants recognition only for acceptable traits, this idea assumes either that recognition of itself confers acceptability on those traits or that recognition incorporates the uncanny capacity to pick only what is of itself acceptable. If recognition confers acceptability, it is not acceptability in an objective sense, since different people would recognize incompatible traits as acceptable. And there is no uncanny capacity to pick what is of itself acceptable, for nothing is of itself acceptable apart from its being acceptable for certain reasons.

As to the second idea, that we can extend recognition to people for unacceptable traits, this idea uncouples recognition from any role in distinguishing right from wrong. The reply might be that people extend recognition in such cases only when they mistake an unacceptable trait for an acceptable one. Some reason must be given for the traits unacceptability. But the reason for its unacceptability cannot rest on recognition.

After these critical remarks, it is necessary to outline a more hopeful approach. In Honneth's discussion of recognition, the notion of society comes in at certain points but it is assumed everywhere. Recognition and disrespect never appear outside the framework of society. Socialization itself starts and ends in society. As I just tried to show, we cannot distinguish recognition and disrespect from one another outside a context of a normative nature. But what is a condition for having that context? I have suggested that the condition is a society within which fidelity to it is widespread. The fidelity arises from what a society is commonly taken to be – an arrangement of trust, solidarity, provision, and conviviality. Ethical norms, as a response to that fidelity, tend to protect the society.

5. The Place of Recognition in Social Struggles

Thus far the emphasis has been on individual agents. I have considered ways they recognize and disrespect one another. I went beyond individual agents only to consider how what they do or do not do affects social relations. Now I want to consider social agents and their struggles. The question then becomes whether recognition and disrespect are key factors in social struggles.

In the individual case, changing the person who disrespects you will be a matter of getting the offender to apologize with the implied intention of not repeating the offence. If this is not enough, one might need others for protection. But let us turn to struggles of large numbers who suffer together from disrespect at the hands of some coherent group. Apologies and protection by a number of

other individuals will then be futile. Structural change, large or small, comes from struggles between social groups. If you insult me, I demand an apology, but if your business discriminates against us, we demand an end to discrimination.

This is a significant difference. Those who want change need not be asking for recognition from those who oppose their demands. The demands may be granted whether those who rejected those demands ever agree they were just demands. So it would be an exaggeration to claim that those in struggle want recognition from those they struggle against. Fighters for social justice want an end to injustice whether or not those blocking their path ever recognize the justice of these fighters' cause.

This view of social struggles leads to an interesting consequence for recognition. Those who fight for social change fight for recognition from groups they need as allies – groups with an "elective affinity" for them. But they do not fight for recognition from those who oppose the social change they desire. Nevertheless, recognition remains a factor in social struggles. For example, workers on strike in one industry fight for recognition by workers in a related industry. Though recognition of the strikers can spread beyond them to other workers, they do not expect, and do not get, recognition from those they strike against.

Threats to social viability in the form of a decline of recognition are growing in many sectors of society. They are reaching full intensity in the area of class.[14] Where they exist at all, strikes have become isolated affairs. They fail to win the recognition of workers in other workplaces or of significant segments of the populace. (Greece has been an exception to this, but being alone, struggle there has only limited success.) With recognition neither from employers nor from other workers, workers begin to see themselves as part of a declining society. Trust and solidarity extend only to small groups around oneself.

The question in such a social struggle is about an appropriate form of recognition. It is, I suggest, recognition in the form of solidarity. The reason is that the society cannot withstand the atomization it is undergoing. We cannot favor forms of recognition that would lead to continuing threats to society. Those who are encouraging the forces of atomization deserve recognition only as potential but unlikely recruits to the case of healing society.

[14] Honneth, Ibid., , chapter 4,: 56-57.

6. Where Does Recognition Fit into Ethics?

The issues I have raised point, not to a dismissal of recognition, but to finding a rightful place for it in ethical life. When we recognize, we recognize-as. That is, we recognize a person as one we saw yesterday or a group as a non-profit. In general, then, recognition is a matter of being able to place something that draws our attention to a certain category. There are recognitions of a kind that have no immediate connection to morality. How are recognitions of a normative sort different from those we might say have a descriptive nature?

Recognizing occurs in both cases. But recognizing people as tall or as short is very different from recognizing them as being honest or as being corrupt. Thus, not recognizing people who rob in our society is quite different from a failure to recognizing apples of a certain kind in an orchard. Not recognizing people of a certain kind amounts to saying they lack rights others enjoy. If they rob, they have no right to keep what they made their possession. Being denied a right is a contentious matter, so these denials are likely to be contested. Being denied a right implies different treatment for those who would want equal treatment and feel disrespected when denied it.

Denying rights is a context for a struggle for recognition by those denied, rather than a struggle for, say, more material goods for those who are not recognized. Therefore, according to Honneth, it is a struggle of an ethical sort. Specifically, it is a struggle for equality as regards a variety of matters important for living in our society. But for those dominating the society, equality is clearly not a universal norm. They will ask why they should surrender their privileged position to others. Even so, they may recognize certain key rights to those they deny full equality, like the right to a trial when charged.

To avoid ethical issues, one could say that, if challenges to inequality fail to meet stiff resistance, it is best not to risk fracturing society by major struggles to get equality. Inequality is just the way things are and it is futile to try to end it with political or armed struggles. If, though, at some future time inequality declines without special efforts to overthrow it, then equality would become just the way things are for the period of its dominance. Social change would lack ethical significance.

People avoid such an escape from ethical responsibility. The distress they experience impels them to look for ways to end it. Their search for changes takes many forms, but each of them involves recognizing certain rights. These are rights they would have if their society were a viable one. These are not just the rights of

those kept at the margins of society. They are also the rights of those who have enjoyed wealth and status. In making these changes recognition is simply a vehicle for pressing forward to a viable society.

Thus, any struggle for recognition is subject to evaluation. One needs to ask if a struggle for recognition has a likelihood of overcoming threats to the overall society. Since we cannot have certainty about the future, our estimate of the adequacy of certain struggles depends on the present likelihood of success rather than on actual future success. Good reforms can end up giving bad results when unexpected changes intervene. Ethical issues inevitably give rise to arguments about likely outcomes. Therefore, ethical disputes arise, not just because of old loyalties, but also because of different estimates of where different courses will lead us.

Societies, whose viability is a matter of ethical concern, have a variety of sizes. There are small and large ones. Many of their problems are becoming problems at the level of our global society. There are threats to societies at all of these levels. Warming, war, and corruption threaten local and global societies. In these areas a call for various struggles for recognition is warranted by the magnitude of the threats to society coming from multiple areas within society

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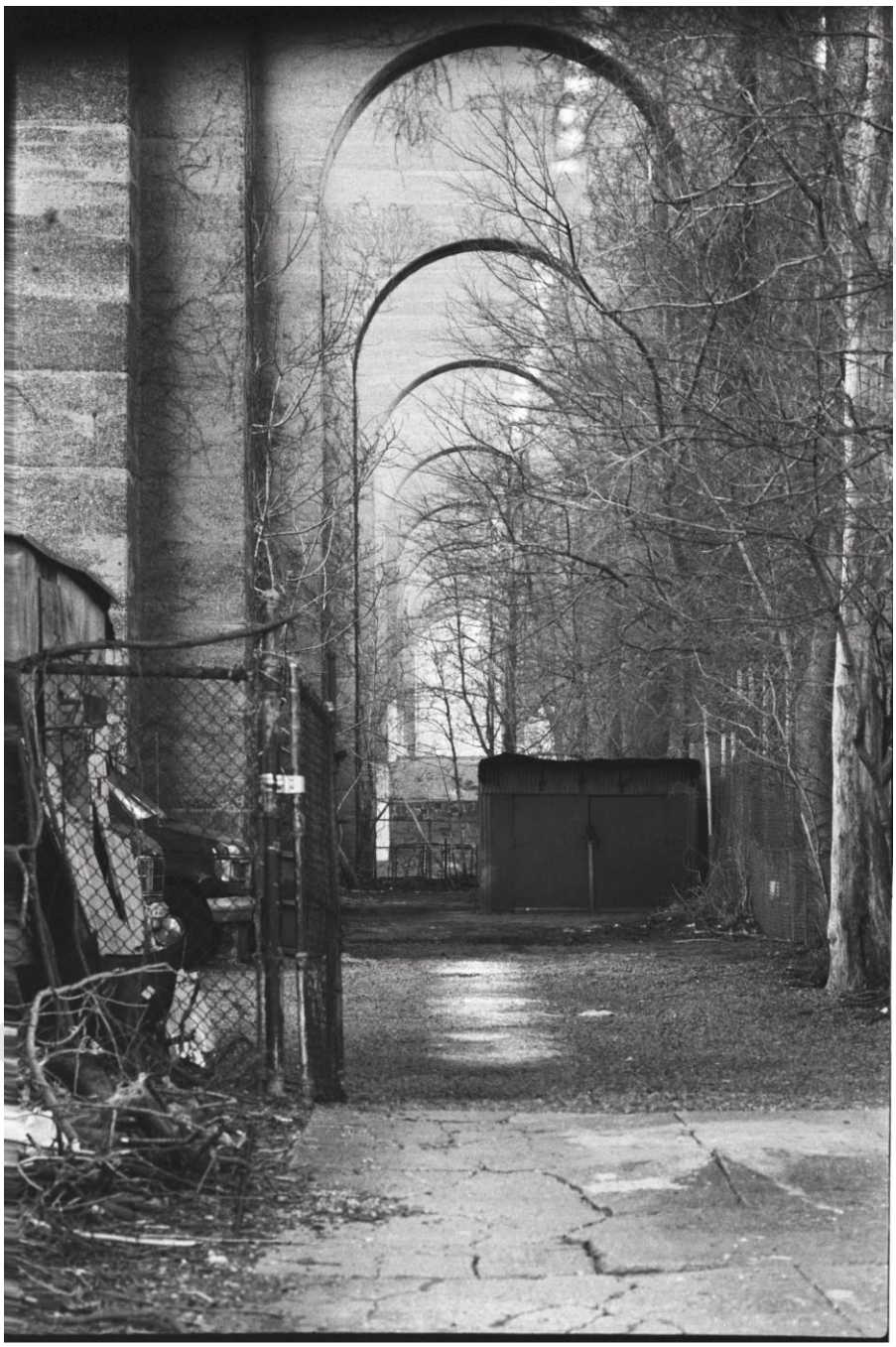

Tamás Nyirkos

RESPECT WITHOUT IDENTITY?

A Short essay on Comparative Metapolitics

With more than twenty of his books translated into English in the past ten years, the French philosopher Alain Badiou, is well on his way to becoming the most influential contemporary communist author in the West. This influence is due partly to his sharp criticism of some established liberal and post-liberal views on respect, self-respect, identity politics, multiculturalism, or the on very idea of human rights, both in an individual and in a collective sense. The following statement, a characteristic example of this criticism, comes from the 2005 edition of Metapolitics, which is a translation of his Abrégé de métapolitique, first published in French in 1998:

> The communitarian designation, or the question of identitarian assignation relates to subsets which cannot be dealt with according to the idea of the impossibility of non-egalitarian statements.[1]

This short but dense passage certainly needs some clarification, so the first task before getting into details is to investigate Badiou's particular use of such key terms as 'communitarian', 'identitarian', 'subset', or 'the impossibility of non-egalitarian statements'. Furthermore, it raises important issues about the possibility of respect without identity. Does the rejection of actually existing identities undermine respect in every sense of the word, or is it just an ideological prejudice against communism? And even if it is more than just a prejudice, should we say that the lack of respect for actually existing human beings is only an infantile or senile disorder of communism, or rather a genetic one that no form of communism can escape? In what follows, I will try to answer my own questions by using, as a heuristic tool, Badiou's own term *metapolitics* for there are at least two other earlier concepts of *metapolitics* to which Badiou may implicitly refer

[1] Badiou 2005b, 93.

here. I hope to show that it is the very concept of the person, of personal identity, the object of respect that distinguishes between the various types of metapolitics.

(1) As for the first: speaking of 'communitarian designation' and 'identitarian assignation', it is striking how Badiou, in the same breath, talks about two political philosophies, which, as most of us would think, could not be any more different. Risking some oversimplifications, one might say that communitarianism, whether it is described as an alternative to liberal individualism, a critique of Rawls' revitalization of liberal theory in *A Theory of Justice*,[2] or as a compromise between classical liberalism and republicanism, between the idea of autonomy and that of the common good,[3] nonetheless stays within the boundaries of a broadly defined liberalism.[4] We might also add that in its most convincing form, communitarianism is more like a descriptive than a normative theory: it holds that classical, individualist liberalism radically misrepresents real life ("the world is not like that, nor could it be,"[5] as Michael Walzer's interpretation goes), underestimating the individual's dependence on community, tradition, history, culture, or religion.

Identitarianism, on the other hand, is a term associated with the European New Right, and most often with white supremacy, racism, and right-wing extremism. Its origins may be traced back to Alain de Benoist's GRÉCE (Groupement de Recherche et d'Études pour la Civilisation Européenne) founded in 1968, in reaction to the left-wing hegemony in French politics and culture. It is recently represented by such groups as Bloc Identitaire and Terre et Peuple in France, or the think-tank Motpol in Scandinavia. In contrast to communitarianism, identitarianism is a strongly normative theory, whose main statement is that Europeans *should* depend on their own, ancient – for most identitarians: Nordic, pagan – but by now mostly forgotten culture precisely because this is *not* the case today.[6] The fact that Badiou treats communitarianism and identitarianism – without even bothering to define them − as if they were almost the same, and he does so merely on the basis of their common adherence to some idea of collective

[2] Daly 1994, x.

[3] Etzioni 1998, xi.

[4] As Spragens puts it, nothing in communitarian concerns "is at odds with the fundamental elements of the liberal tradition", meaning "representative government, legitimacy through consent, the rule of law, civil rights, and civil liberties". Spragens 1995, 51.

[5] Walzer 1995, 56.

[6] On identitarianism, see e.g. O'Meara 2004 and Bar-On 2007.

identity, clearly indicates how Badiou distances himself of all existing lines of political thought; but I shall return to that point later.

About being related to 'subsets': it is impossible here to go into the technicalities of set theory, but anyone slightly familiar with Badiou's work knows that he is reliant on a mathematical ontology, more precisely an ontology derived from Paul Cohen's version of set theory,[7] and prefers such words as 'set' and 'subset' where others might use 'society' and 'social group.' This wording is not without significance, of course, but it is not indispensable for my purpose now. It is sufficient to say, that for Badiou, people can belong to society or be included in it, just as elements or subsets belong to a set or are included in it. Belonging and inclusion, i.e. being an element (a member), and being a subset are different: members belong to a set, whereas subsets are included in it. As Peter Hallward explains:

> The elements of a national set can be distinguished […] according to the subsets of taxpayers or prison inmates, social security recipients or registered voters, and so on. The elements of these subsets all belong to the national set, and in their 'substance' remain indifferent to the count effected by any particular subset. To belong to the subset of French taxpayers has nothing to do with the substantial complexity of any individual taxpayer as a living, thinking person. Such elemental complexity is always held to be infinitely multiple, nothing more or less.[8]

In *Metapolitics,* a few lines under our initial passage, Badiou in fact gives a short list of other subsets:

> 'Immigrant', 'French', 'Arab' and 'Jew' cannot be political words lest there be disastrous consequences. For these words, and many others, necessarily relate politics to the State, and the State itself to its lowest and most essential of functions: the non-egalitarian inventory of human beings.[9]

So these are the ones that 'cannot be dealt with according to the idea of non-egalitarian statements.' In other words, what Badiou wants to emphasize is that these terms which denote certain identities are not 'banned' or 'prohibited': someone who is a communist, i.e. thinks and acts in an egalitarian way (for

[7] For a brief introduction to transfinite set theory and its significance for Badiou's philosophy, see the Appendix in Hallward 2003, 323-348.
[8] Hallward 2003, 85.
[9] Badiou 2005b, 94.

thinking politics and doing politics is one and the same thing, not any one of the two) is simply 'unable' to use them. Hence, the claim is a very powerful one: it actually says that the egalitarian, emancipatory politics of communism and the recognition of particular identities are necessarily incompatible.

(2) This, in turn, raises the question, whether denying the possibility of identities means denying any respect whatsoever of the human being. A quick answer could be: no, because it only abandons a narrow idea of respect for a particular identity in favor of a universal idea of respect for the human being as such. This sort of apology may go back to *Being and Event* (1988) where recognition of, or respect for the so-called 'other' is excluded by a generic idea of politics. As Bruno Bosteels puts it: "Politics, in other words, has nothing to do with respect for difference or for the other, not even the absolutely other, and everything with equality and sameness."[10] Ten years later, in *Ethics* (1998), Badiou calls the same discourse of recognition "commonsensical," which has "neither force nor truth"[11] because it relies on a "vulgar sociology", a "tourist's fascination for the diversity of morals, customs and beliefs."[12] The most obvious celebration of universality seems to be found in *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism* (1997), the title of which already speaks for itself, and the sarcasm of the text knows no boundaries:

> What inexhaustible potential for mercantile investments in this upsurge — taking the form of communities demanding recognition and so-called cultural singularities — of women, homosexuals, the disabled, Arabs! And these infinite combinations of predicative traits, what a godsend! Black homosexuals, disabled Serbs, Catholic pedophiles, moderate Muslims, married priests, ecologist yuppies, the submissive unemployed, prematurely aged youth! Each time, a social image authorizes new products, specialized magazines, improved shopping malls, 'free' radio stations, targeted advertising networks, and finally, heady 'public debates' at peak viewing times.[13]

However, as I suggested earlier, we have good reasons to suspect that the antidote of identity politics does not rely on anything universally human. Badiou not only distances himself from some particular types of contemporary identity politics, but from their metapolitical foundations as well, as his choice of this

[10] Bosteels 2011, 31.
[11] Badiou 2001, 20.
[12] Badiou 2001, 26.
[13] Badiou 2003, 10.

peculiar word indicates. Since, as we shall see, the point of departure for all metapolitics is a given kind of anthropology, either in a particular or in a universal sense, a comparison of metapolitical approaches may shed some light on Badiou's own concept of the individual as a political agent.

(3) Metapolitics is of relatively recent origin. Its first historical type – the first actual application of a metapolitical approach, apart from scattered proposals to establish such a discipline − can be linked to August Ludwig von Schlözer, and his 1793 book *Allgeimeines Staatsrecht und Staatsverfassungslehre* . Being aware of the fact that he establishes a new discipline, he starts his treatise with a definition:

> Metapolitics: an abstract from natural rights, an investigation of human beings before the state, and their physical and spiritual essence. […] The second part of anthropology.[14]

So what we are faced with is the well-known 'state of nature' part of (or introduction to) social contract theories. The reason why this almost two centuries old theory is now suddenly called 'metapolitics' is not entirely clear, but it can be suspected that it has something to do with becoming more scientific, in so far as philosophy itself is treated by the enlightened author as a sort of basic science, or metascience. Nevertheless, the problem with Schlözer's scientific metapolitics is similar to that of any old idea of the state of nature: it is extremely difficult to tell the difference between natural human beings and other, non-human animals. More strikingly, the author clarifies that the lack of difference can be understood both in a physical and in a spiritual sense (*im Geistigen*):

> Physically, with regard to feeling and movement, [the human being is] an animal like other animals […] Spiritually, in the beginning, also an animal like other animals.[15]

In other words, Schlözer creates a sort of anthropology without *anthropoi*: he is forced to admit — very much in the same manner as Rousseau — that natural human beings have no morals, no culture, no social character; which makes it extremely difficult to understand how they become capable of creating a society in the first place.

[14] Schlözer 1793, 13. For passing remarks on metapolitics earlier, see Lolme 1784 and Hufeland 1785.

[15] Schlözer 1793, 32-33.

This is what the second type of metapolitics readily points out. Only a few years later, but still in the wake of the French Revolution, Joseph de Maistre, probably the greatest author of the counter-revolution, makes the following remark in his *Essay on the Generative Principle of Political Constitutions* (1809):

> It is said that the German philosophers have invented the word *metapolitics* to be to *politics*, what *metaphysics* is to *physics*. This new term appears to be very happily invented to express the *metaphysics of politics*, for there is such a thing; and this science deserves the profound attention of observers.[16]

It is true that the Aristotelian analogy is explicitly mentioned by Schlözer, even though there is no proof that Maistre has actually read him. The similarity, however, ends here: Maistre only resemblance to the German philosopher is his insistence on the necessity of political anthropology. This anthropology, however, is the exact opposite of those presupposed by social contract theories: in his unfinished *On the Sovereignty of the People* (1794) Maistre explicitly states that "art is man's nature,"[17] meaning that if it makes any sense to talk about human nature, then all we can say about it is that it is artificial; precisely inasmuch as it is human. In a more famous passage in *Considerations on France* (1796), he adds:

> In my lifetime I have seen Frenchmen, Italians, Russians, etc.; thanks to Montesquieu, I even know that *one can be Persian*. But as for *man*, I declare, that I have never met him; if he exists, he is unknown to me.[18]

Which is to say that if we still want to have a fundamental anthropology, we have to have identities. As can be seen, in Maistre's case, it is first and foremost a national identity, but the broader context suggests that it can be defined as a social and a cultural one as well. Maistre's critique of Rousseau, and the debate between contractarians and counter-revolutionaries at the end of the eighteenth century is very similar to that between liberals and communitarians in our days: the only difference being that today's liberals would by no means admit that they have anything like a metapolitics. However, as such critics of Rawls as Michael Sandel have pointed out, the 'unencumbered self' of hypothetical contracts is just as metaphysical as it is negative: an anthropological presupposition, and not even

[16] Maistre 1847, x.
[17] Maistre 1996, 17.
[18] Maistre 1994, 53.

the right one. So, the dispute between classical liberals and communitarians or conservatives may not be about the necessity of metapolitics, but about its appropriate formula.

Now it starts to become clearer, what sort of metapolitics flows from the rejection of these earlier types. On the one hand, Badiou could agree with Maistre (if he cared to refer to him at all) that it is nonsensical to base politics on a metaphysical anthropology which cannot even define its own object; on the other hand, however, he might also deem it disastrous to correct this mistake through reference to particular identities. (Partly because it is a widespread assumption that the heirs of Maistre and other early conservatives can be found on the far right nowadays.) Badiou's metapolitics therefore follows a third, completely different route: it is not pre-political in the sense of either Schlözer's supposed primordial state of nature, or Maistre's primitive social state; it is rather post-, or perhaps by-political, as the Greek word *meta* may not necessarily mean 'beyond', but also 'after', 'with', or 'among':

> By 'metapolitics' I understand the consequences that a philosophy can draw out in and for itself from the fact that true forms of politics are forms of thinking. Metapolitics is opposed to political philosophy, which claims that it belongs to the philosopher to think the political; insofar as politics would not be a form of thinking in itself.[19]

In other words, Badiou's metapolitics is not normative in the way political philosophy is; it does not judge politics and tell us what to do. It only comes after or with politics, which is itself theoretical, or better still, a theoretical practice. Metapolitical reflection, for instance, can show that there is no such thing as human essence (as Marx has done in the 6th thesis on Feuerbach), but political prescriptions do not need this concept anyway. What is significant from a political point of view is not the 'human being', or the 'individual', but the subject. A subject is not a human being, for the very simple reason that it is not a being at all. When Badiou maintains that the subject is no substance,[20] he may be said to go even beyond the Marxian statement that the human essence, although "no abstraction inherent in each single individual," is still something real, "the

[19] Cited in Bosteels 2011, 20. I could not find the given reference in the English version of *Metapolitics*.

[20] Badiou 2005a, 409.

ensemble of the social relations."[21] In a Badiouian sense, the subject cannot be defined even by such an essence: it is a singularity, whose universality consists solely in the fact that it is just as singular as all others. In a way, this human singularity is both more than the basically animal being of contract theories or the particular identity-bearing social creature of conservatism, and less than any actually existing human person. Politics is concerned specifically with these singularities:

> Organised in anticipation of surprises, diagonal to representations, experimenting with lacunae, accounting for infinite singularities, politics is an active thought that is both subtle and dogged; one from which the material critique of all forms of presentative correlation proceeds, and which, operating on the edge of the void, calls on homogeneous multiplicities against the heterogeneous order of the State which claims to prevent their appearance.[22]

So what might be called the 'real' human is what is always yet to appear. What makes it appear, in turn, is 'truth': as *Logics of Worlds* (2006) puts it: "the subject is […] not constituent, as it is for Husserl, but constituted. Constituted by a truth."[23] A truth (either a scientific, an artistic, a political, or an amorous truth) has an almost transcendent flavor to it, grasping the subject and making it not only a collective 'species-subject', so to speak, but even more than that:

> In fact, a truth is that by which 'we', of the human species, are committed to a trans-specific procedure, a procedure which opens us to the possibility of being immortals. A truth is thus undoubtedly an experience of the inhuman.[24]

To risk some simplification once more: while the first two types of metapolitics were more concerned with the person (either as an abstract concept, or as an historical entity), the third type of metapolitics is not even concerned with the subject, but more with the truth that constitutes the subject. This also explains Badiou's disdain for voting, parliamentary democracy, or freedom of speech: "the idea that politics (the 'political life') is forever devoted to opinion, forever disjoined from all truth. […] Everyone knows that there is a precious 'freedom of

[21] Marx 1888, 71.
[22] Badiou 2005b, 77.
[23] Badiou 2009, 174.
[24] Badiou 2009, 71.

opinion', whereas the 'freedom of truth' remains in doubt."[25] Moreover, even this alleged 'freedom of opinion' is virtual only: for it suggests that the plurality of opinions is sufficiently wide-ranging to accommodate difference, while everyone knows that there is no place for debating *genuinely* alternative opinions. There is a "severe restriction as to what an opinion is — let's be clear: as to what a politically justified opinion is (I will not go so far as to say a 'politically correct' one…)."[26] That is probably why Badiou sees no significant difference between the Fifth Republic or the Soviet Union, liberalism and conservatism, communitarianism and identitarianism, premodernism and postmodernism, not to mention such subtle distinctions as that of classical and political liberalism. They are all rejected — or go unnoticed by Badiou — since they all belong to the regime of the actual, which is always a restraint on the possibility of the Real.[27]

Subjects, as we have seen, are not 'actual': if they deserve respect, it is not for what they are, but for what they might be. Moreover, respect and self-respect are two sides of the same coin: provided that respect for the 'human being' (or 'human dignity', or the like) is something unconditional, we only pay this unconditional respect to others because we want to gain the same unconditional respect for ourselves, whether we are right or wrong, in order to support our uncertain 'ego'. In other words, it is hardly anything more than narcissism. All in all, the suspicion that in the framework of Badiou's communist politics and metapolitics, respect for actually existing human beings is just as impossible as the affirmation of particular identities, proves to be consistently true.

It has to be acknowledged, of course, that all metapolitics pose dangers, not only the communist ones. Ideas – metapolitical ideas not excluded − are sharp instruments, not to be used without caution. The ultimate failure of social contract theories to define natural human beings can always lead to arbitrary political interpretations. If natural, private identities remain separated from social, public identities, and the actual 'will' of the private individuals (*la volonté de tous*) can never produce the common will of the public (*la volonté générale*), political leaders may feel free to determine what the people really want. That is what posthumously happened to Rousseau during the French Revolution; yet it does

[25] Badiou 2005b, 14.

[26] Badiou 2005b, 19.

[27] Badiou is almost completely indifferent to the analytical tradition of political philosophy, or the debates around John Rawls, which had a decisive influence on political philosophy in the past few decades.

not necessarily mean that Rousseau was a terrorist. Dangers can at least be mitigated, as can be seen in the example of none other than John Rawls, who once said that his two principles of justice could be understood as an effort to spell out the content of Rousseau's general will.[28] Without being able to go into details, I would suggest that the bigger half of *A Theory of Justice,* including the concepts of respect and self-respect as primary goods — among many others —, as well as Rawls' later ideas in *Political Liberalism* are just some of those mitigations.[29]

And the same goes for Maistrian conservatism: the emphasis on traditional identities does have its dangers, as we can see in the case of today's European identitarianism. Still, despite all of Isaiah Berlin's heroic attempts to misunderstand him, Maistre was no precursor of fascism.[30] What kept him from becoming a racist, or a white supremacist was his Christian universalism rooted in his Catholic faith, which served as a counterbalance to his otherwise strong reliance on a particular, national identity.[31]

In the case of Badiou's communist metapolitics, though, it is exactly these mitigations that are rejected in the name of novelty, the non-existent subject, or the universality of truth. Without any doubt it helps us to see more clearly that contemporary political ideologies are not open to *real* novelty any more, and Western democracies are not the infinite territory of freedom, let alone equality. On the other hand, compared to other versions of communism, Badiou's is even more hypothetical: even equality, the central term of communism is not to be taken literally.

> It is very important to note that 'equality' signifies nothing objective here. It is not a question of the equality of social status, income, function and still less of the supposedly egalitarian dynamics of contracts or reforms. Equality is subjective. For Saint-Just, what is at stake is equality with regard to public consciousness, while for Mao Tse-tung it is the equality of the political mass movement.[32]

[28] Cohen 2010, 2.

[29] Rawls 1971, 440-446.

[30] See e.g. Berlin 1994. The same accusations were repeated by him in a number of slightly different writings.

[31] The most unequivocal statement of his universalism is his famous *On the Pope* (1819), a vision of a united — curioulsly not exclusively Catholic — world under the moral authority of the Pope.

[32] Badiou 2005b, 98.

Badiou's communism may not be more than a thought experiment, but it is revolutionary in the very sense that it systematically (and rather coherently) outroots the possibility of compromise or moderation. That makes it so exciting, and — along with ominous references to mass murderers — makes it just as dangerous as any other communist thought experiment in history.

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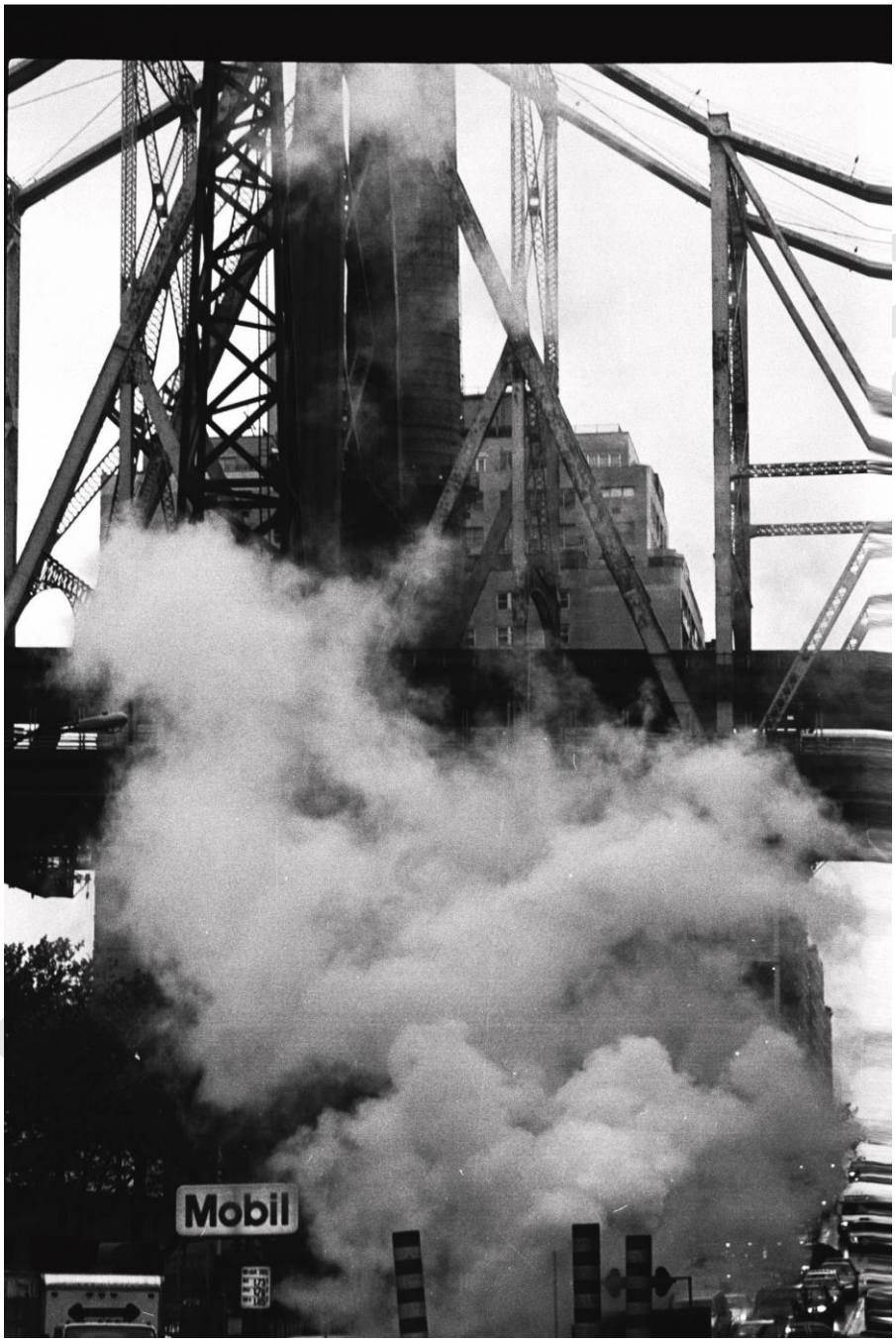
Mobil

Laureen Park

SELF-RESPECT IN THE LIGHT OF NARCISSISM

In this paper, I explore the notion of self-respect in light of the notion of narcissism as it pertains to two of Paul Ricoeur's works – *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation* and *Oneself as Another*. These two works have very different aims, which help to fill out Ricoeur`s ontological point of view. The first work attempts to confront the Freudian hermeneutics of suspicion towards reframing it in the light of a hermeneutics of redemption. In doing so, Ricoeur shows how revolutionary Freud was in his articulations of the mind, a view that informs Ricoeur's own view of anthropology. In *Freud and Philosophy*, Ricoeur discusses the notion of narcissism rather thoroughly as it is a crucial notion in the Freudian metapsychology. He, however, does not address the notion of self-respect in an explicit, thematized way. In the second work, *Oneself as Another*, Ricoeur articulates his mature, reflected view of ethics which he argues for thoroughly and systematically. Self-respect is a crucial concept of this view as it reflects the maturation of our self-concept that has also run the gamut of the moral influences that shape who we become. Ricoeur touches upon self-respect in relation to narcissism or self-love once or twice in *Oneself as Another*, but does not fully articulate the implications for one notion or the other. Neither does he draw from the rich, deep analysis of narcissism that he gives in *Freud and Philosophy*. In this paper, I will be deepening Ricoeur's insights about self-respect in *Oneself as Another* by drawing from his views on narcissism in *Freud and Philosophy*. The basic insight Ricoeur wants to convey about the two notions can be found in *Oneself as Another*. He writes, "Self-love, I shall venture to say, is self-esteem perverted by what we shall later call the penchant for evil. Respect is self-esteem that has passed through the sieve of the universal and constraining norm — in short, self-esteem under the reign of the law."[1] I will be elaborating what he means by "penchant for evil" and how it is that the norm determines our regard for

[1] Ricoeur, 1992, 215.

ourselves in the form of self-respect. Because the norm is universal and pluralistic, its constraining influence can be applied as much to ourselves as to our regard for others. In other words, respect and self-respect are the same kinds of regard — only one is directed to oneself and the other is directed to another. This symmetry is not there in narcissism for many reasons.

One note of clarification is — in the following discussion on ethics — that a distinction is made between ethical action and ethical evaluation, a distinction that is probably not very controversial. But the Freudian view that Ricoeur adopts sees ethical action as indistinct from its thought or intention. Furthermore, the motivating cause of these thoughts/actions is desire or instinct. So wanting to grab that cake when you are on your diet, is motivated at bottom by a desire, and this thought about wanting it, whether it is actualized or not can be the cause for guilt. We call this kind of internal voice 'conscience.' Freud has a precise way of understanding conscience: it is internalized moral authority and is equivalent to the super-ego. When the moral judge is internalized, an illicit thought, much less an illicit deed which proceeds from it is enough to draw moral sanction. In this way, Freud is modern. One need not be caught by an external moral authority to be guilty. It is, first and foremost, a subjective process. When I use the term deed, I have this sense of deed in mind.

I want to briefly justify Ricoeur's use of Freud because Freud is a controversial figure and in many ways Freud`s project is antithetical to Ricoeur`s. But Ricoeur engages Freud for a number of reasons. He sees Freud as leading the way in a dialogue about anthropology and hermeneutics, in part, exactly because Freud presents the greatest challenge. After addressing Freud, one can no longer claim to be ignorant about the dark foundations at the heart of mental life. But the problems Freud presents is as much a hermeneutic one — Ricoeur reframes Freud`s reductive hermeneutical framework in the light of Hegel in *Freud and Philosophy*, which helps to draw out the elements in Freud that help to enrich the ethical point of view. Freud deepens the understanding of the mind by displacing the naïve notion of the cogito (or the view of the mind as a self-justifying, self-evident faculty of pure rationality). He replaces this view with a topographic view of the mind, or in other words, depth psychology. In this new view, the faculty of reason is only one *topos* or place in a larger field of the mental. Indeed, it is actually the smallest place in this field. The *topos* that truly dominates our mental life is actually the unconscious.

Freud used the now famous analogy of the ice berg. The tip that juts out above the ocean is consciousness. The mountain of an iceberg below, hidden to view, is

the unconscious. What Freud does is to make the irrational the condition of the rational. The tip of the iceberg exists because of what is below the surface. Our thoughts, beliefs, opinions and those mental appearances that occur to us in our conscious life are there because unconscious forces have determined that they are permissible and not to be censored and exiled into the unconscious realm "below". Nonetheless, consciousness which later evolves into the ego is also the construct of freedom and choice. It may transform the unconscious and the economics of desire which is the root of the unconscious. It may create art, heal through therapy, and make ethical choices. These dynamics of the topographical view of the mind inform Ricoeur's ethical view and hermeneutics. One cannot tacitly assume the truth of one's thoughts or experiences but one must interpret, argue, and evaluate what appears to us from the perspective of an embodied self living amongst other embodied selves together in historical institutions.

I would like to use a very controversial theory in Freud as a way of introducing Ricoeur's overall view of moral development as he presents it in *Freud and Philosophy* and *Oneself as Another*; it is the theory of the Oedipus complex. I do not want to engage in a debate about its empirical validity. I would not even know how to prove or justify this. But I think it is extremely elucidating in terms of what it symbolizes.

The Oedipal situation is symbolic of the pre-moral state of being human. In a child's moral development, to progress, at some point she must successfully dissolve the Oedipus complex, and its life of the libido and choose instead to prioritize her life of ideals, the realm of law. The symbol of the mother represents pure, unconditional and undifferentiated love which is the starting point of the child. In this state, there is a pre-cognitive sense of self-love governed by something like the pleasure principle or the good life, on the one hand, and solicitude, a naïve way of relating to others, on the other. In this state, we despise anything that gets in the way of our self-satisfaction and perfection. Perfection is a trait of the infantile and of narcissism according to Freud. In narcissism, we strive to revive our original perfection. The father, on the other hand, represents the Other, governed by concerns that are alien to the child's sense of self-satisfaction. Freud represents this hostility to the Other as wanting to "kill the father". To put it less dramatically, the Oedipus situation is one in which identity is governed by one's satisfaction, which bristles against the foreign order of objectivity and law that the father represents.

Note that since humans are born helpless our very survival, our most basic needs are set within an intersubjective context: who feeds us and shelters us is as

fundamental a fact as the fact of being fed and being sheltered. This is why Freud appears ambivalent about what is more primordial, narcissism or identification. In different works, Freud will speak in turns about a "primary narcissism" and identification as the original emotional tie with others. It is not so important that we make a decision about which is more primary, but to keep in mind that the structure for both self-regard and the regard for others is there pre-cognitively. Whether primordially or secondarily, we come with the capacity for self-relation and relation to others.

The child becomes moral when she dissolves the Oedipal situation. This means that she turns her back on the mother who represents her libidinal life, or the life of pleasure, and chooses identification with the father who represents the life of ideals, including the moral, objective order. The child goes from dwelling in an undifferentiated state of identity to becoming open to the process of acculturation that leads to the differentiation of the good from the bad. Later, Ricoeur will talk about adopting the super-ego into interiority as this internalization of the Other as the basis for self-differentiation in one's very core.

Now, to put what I just said in terms of the theme of this paper: narcissism or self-love and self-respect both come from a more primordial sense of self-esteem. Self-esteem and solicitude, as mentioned earlier, are the naïve ways of relating to oneself and to others. These also are mediated by the same cultural and moral influences that mediate self-respect and recognition, but through habituation rather than deliberation. How does this natural sense of self-esteem become "perverted" into narcissism? There are two or more main paths that I reconstruct from Ricoeur.

Narcissism can come from the failure to establish moral authority in oneself or one that is weak. Since in this case, one fails to internalize the Other, solicitude never develops into a sense of responsibility for the other. One withdraws into oneself because one cannot truly recognize the Other. Narcissism can also come about when an overly harsh moral voice is adopted. A super-ego that is overly harsh causes, on the one hand, one to repress the prohibited thought/deed and on the other, to substitute it with an idealization that does not have an organic correspondence with the original deed/thought. This is a withdrawal into the self of another kind. It drives the authentic wishes of the ego into the unconscious, and posits instead a false ego ideal to appease the moral demand. Self-respect, however, arises when the moral ideals of the super-ego are met, not by repressing the deed/thought and substituting it for a false one, but by meeting the demands through transforming the original instinct into an acceptable form. Self-respect is,

therefore, authentic in two ways: 1. It preserves the original wish and thereby affirms the agent of that wish and 2. It achieves the ideals that the super-ego sets forth in actuality through its deeds. It sees itself as the agent of these deeds, and therein self-esteem becomes self-respect.

There is a reason why narcissism is inclined to turn inward and why that inward turn is marked by illusion. Freud believed, at least sometimes, that narcissism was our original state of being, a state he called primary narcissism, which conditioned our responses to the world. Mourning at the loss of a loved one is an example of this inward turn. One revives the lost object of desire/love by reconstituting the object in oneself. Our primary narcissism begins at an age when we are not yet able to obtain what we need through our own devices. We rely, instead on our parents. If our parents cannot obtain what we need for us, we are left only with the capacity to imagine the desired-object. The opposite of action in Freud is illusion. The first is the deed of maturity and the latter is the deed of the infantile. This is how Freud disparages religions of all kinds – magic, taboo, the gods are all thought-images produced by an infantile mind that once obtained things it desired simply by wishing it. What it lacks is deliberation and action, both of which are present in the person of good judgment and maturity. The infantile situation tells us something else: our primordial helplessness speaks to the fact that equally primordial to our original condition is the fact that it is enmeshed in relationships of social dependency. We are always and already immersed in a world of others and our interiority is defined by our social relationships. Indeed our very preferences and habits are determined by the pre-existing preferences and habits of the people we are born to. Those preferences and habits can be further traced back generationally.

In the same way, the mores of our parents that underlie the mores of their super-egos do not develop in a vacuum. To broaden the idea that the Other is always and already in us, within the super-ego is the entire history of mores that have been transmitted since time immemorial. We adopt from our parents a moral authority in the context of an interpersonal relationship and they have faces; they are embodied others with whom we have a reciprocal relationship. The embodied other plays an important role in Ricoeur's ethical view in *Oneself as Another*, but so does the universal law that Ricoeur referred to in the quotation that I began this presentation with. The law is the moral authority of generations past, purged of familiarity and embodiment. A voice without a face. Ricoeur preserves the universalist notion of the law, while maintaining the contextualism of its application. The universal imperative is to respect others, to give what is owed to

the other. This formula has manifested throughout history in various ways, including in Rawls' notion of distributive justice and the Kantian Moral Law.

Ricoeur believes that the prohibition involved in this imperative is inexpungible. The adoption of the super-ego is not fundamentally a rational process. Primary identification suggests that there is primordial attunement to the Other in the child, but there is also an element of that law imposes itself upon the narcissism of the child, wounding it. She can no longer be deceived about her perfection. She can be judged and condemned, and her wishes can be denied. This wounding of narcissism is a necessary step in the process of becoming differentiated and acculturated. One is reminded of Hegel. A life governed by desire is sheer negation — hunger negates objects by consuming and destroying them. The need for shelter can be responsible for felling entire forests. Civilization begins when the negation is negated. This is the primary *modus oprendi* of the master in the master/slave dialectic wherein consciousness sees himself to be the ultimate negator of all negators. In the development of *Phenomenology*, we come to see that the true *telos* governing the desire for mastery was the desire for recognition. But before we can recognize others and be recognized, desire must be held in check in order to develop ourselves and the world around us.

We can call this imposition on narcissism power or force. It is a source of asymmetry. Freud spends a great deal of time articulating the psycho-dynamics of power, which involves the interplay of libidinal forces and the death instinct. The role it plays in Ricoeur`s moral view is dual. I spoke of the first role, which is as the wound to narcissism that opens the self up to the Other. Its other role is as an unjustified asymmetry that does violence to the equality that is the underlying telos governing all levels of social relations, culminating in recognition. The entire scope of morality can be seen as a way of returning this asymmetry to equilibrium. Ricoeur believes that it is no coincidence that so many moral systems have as its basis a variation of the golden rule. The reason, he believes, we ought to do onto others as we would like done onto us is because the original situation must have been otherwise. Individuals were imposed upon, enslaved, disrespected. The golden rule is a call to equilibrium, that is to revive and maintain our underlying equality through respect for others, which is also self-respect.

Narcissism is also a source of asymmetry, except it is one that imbalances the scale in favor of the self. However, this imbalance has the same psycho-dynamic underpinnings as political power – by succumbing to an unduly harsh moral judge (which ultimately trickles down from historical repression), narcissism`s

strategy is to repress genuine desires and instead attempts to find satisfaction in false wishes and ideals. But the more one satisfies these false wishes, the more it drives down authentic ones into the unconscious. The dreams of self-aggrandizement of the narcissist are actually a cover for its actual self-abasement.

The response of the person of self-respect to the asymmetry caused by the pressures of power is conviction. It comes from the part that forms our self-identity through self-sustaining actions that concretize our moral ideals. The person of self-esteem need not aggrandize herself or the Other for she has successfully incorporated otherness and its objective standards of excellence. She has also successfully brought her inclinations in line with those standards by acting in the world and thereby anchoring her ideals in the actual and real. When she evaluates herself, she has evidence for her evaluations that can be tested and applied by others, which is the common thread in determining regard for oneself and the regard for others. This is also the cure for the narcissist`s illusions. These illusions are not the answers of the self to moral demands, but attempts to escape them. By evading the moral norm in evaluating himself, the narcissist also makes it impossible to be evaluated, recognized and respected by others. He thus succumbs to the „penchant for evil," for he holds himself outside the Law.

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Béla Mester

"FROM THE BEST STATE TO THE POSSIBLE ONE"
Origins of the Modern Political Community[*]

I. Introduction

My contribution to our conference, entitled *Identity and Self-Respect*, is that of a historian of political ideas and it deals with the identity of modern political communities in general. For the roots of the identity of modern political communities are connected to the methodological individualism and individualist anthropology of early modernity, in my opinion, historical observations of these roots have some actuality in our age of the emerging leftist and conservative communitarian ideas. A foreseeable result of this investigation will be a clearer picture of the structure of the early modernity's individualism, as a basis and negative counterpart of its contemporary leftist and conservative communitarian critiques.

A fundamental question of the pre-modern political philosophies concerns how an ideal society and state can be established. This was grounded in a relatively solid and conventional anthropology and in shared values. Modernity – independently from the evaluation of this concept – has a new, more fundamental question of political theory. It is whether a political community can exist; and if it can exist; how it can exist. All the questions of the *best* or at least that of the "good enough" political community can and must be derived from the question of the *possibility* of this community.

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[*] This article is an enlarged version of my presentation at the conference *Identity and Self-Respect* held at the University of Debrecen 6– 8 June, 2013. My writing is based on my recent book in Hungarian, see Mester 2010a. Previously, I had two lectures on similar topics: within the framework of the annual conference of the Croatian Philosophical Society in Cres, Croatia;, 19–22 September 2010, and as part of the *Philosophisches Kolloquium* of the University of Leipzig, when I was an Erasmus guest, there on 23 June, 2010. The author must express his indebtedness to the participants of all these events for their remarks, questions, and the inspiriting intellectual climate, which were important for further developing this paper.

II. A Glance Backward from the Modern Posterity – Jonathan Swift's Satirical Resignation

This turn of political thinking became clear as early as in the lifetime of the great prophet *Lustrog*. The only testimony on him was written in the early 18th century, in the fourth chapter of the first part of *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift, entitled *A Voyage to Lilliput*. Let me quote the whole *locus* of the novel, relevant to this paper.

> Besides, our Histories of six thousand Moons make no mention of any other Regions, than the two great Empires of Lilliput and Blefuscu. Which two mighty Powers have, as I was going to tell you, been engaged in a most obstinate War for six and thirty Moons past. It began upon the following Occasion. It is allowed on all Hands, that the primitive way of breaking Eggs, before we eat them, was upon the larger End: But his present Majesty's Grand-father, while he was a Boy, going to eat an Egg, and breaking it according to the ancient Practice, happened to cut one of his Fingers. Whereupon the Emperor his Father published an Edict, commanding all his Subjects, upon great Penaltys, to break the smaller End of their Eggs. The People so highly resented this Law, that our Histories tell us there have been six Rebellions raised on that account; wherein one Emperor lost his Life, and another his Crown. These civil Commotions were constantly fomented by the Monarchs of Blefuscu; and when they were quelled, the Exiles always fled for Refuge to that Empire. It is computed, that eleven thousand Persons have, at several times, suffered Death, rather than submit to break their Eggs at the smaller End. Many hundred large Volumes have been published upon this Controversy: But the books of the Big-Endians have been long forbidden, and the whole Party rendered incapable by Law of holding Employments. During the Course of these Troubles, the Emperors of Blefuscu did frequently expostulate by their Ambassadors, accusing us of making a Schism in Religion, by offending against a fundamental Doctrine of our great Prophet Lustrog, in the fifty-fourth Chapter of the Brundrecal (which is their Alcoran.) This, however, is thought to be a meer Strain upon the Text: For the Words are these: That all true Believers shall break their Eggs at the convenient End: and

> *which is the convenient End, seems, in my humble Opinion, to be left to every Man's Conscience, or at least in the power of the Chief Magistrate to determine.*[1]

In his satirical manner Swift reflects on a recent and – in my opinion – the last relevant form of a substantial political community, based on the idea of the ideal state built on the shared values of citizens. Substantial political communities of *Blefuscu* and *Lilliput* are based on religious values expressed by grotesque, narrow-minded denominational form of *Big-Endian* and *Small-Endian* faiths, protected by one or another earthly power of his fictional world. Swift here clearly uses the terminology and quotes the set of problems of the eighteenth century of England, the age of the debate on the so-called *adiaphora*, or *things indifferent* that is as a religious term refers to the affairs not ordered by the law of God but left to the humans.

The term *adiaphoron* has its roots in the stoical ethics. Later it played an important role in the history of ideas of the Reformation. There is no place to discuss here the modification of the meaning of this term in the Christian thinking, and the differences between the Continental *adiaphora*-debates of the sixteenth century, and the English one in the following century. In what follows I will only refer to the data of the English history of political ideas. For a more detailed analysis of the antecedents, see my recent paper.[2]

The closing sentence of the quoted paragraph contains both possible answers in the debate. The opinion that *the great question of the convenient end of an egg* is "in the power of the chief magistrate to determine" is the so-called *Erastian* answer; "left to every man's conscience" is its non-*Erastian* counterpart.

Erastianism was one of the influential opinions of the early-modern English *adiaphora*-debates. From the *Erastian* point of view, the earthly power has a supremacy over the ecclesiastical one in any cases, including the religious ones. *Erastianism* got its name after *Thomas Erastus*, a follower of *Ulrich Zwingli*. *Erastus* was not the first figure in the time of the Reformation who was on similar opinion; his influential predecessor in Germany, *Wolfgangus Musculus* also deserves a mention here. *Erastus* himself endeavoured to strengthen the jurisdictional position of the earthly judges and courts, and rejected the right for

[1] It is the closing paragraph of the fourth chapter of the first part of the novel, with the orthography of its e*ditio princeps* in 1726, with my italics. For a reliable recent critical edition see Swift 2002.

[2] Mester 2010.

excommunication of the church. It was partly accidental that he became the *Heros Eponymous* of the *Erastianism*. In the field of theology, the best-known representative of the English *Erastianism*, as a definite system of ideas was Richard Hooker, known for his *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*[3]. The influence of the *Erastian* opinions on the ecclesiastical politics in the development of the early-modern English political philosophy cannot be overestimated, as we can see especially in the œuvre of Thomas Hobbes. Hooker was an author of high respect in his field in the early-modern England. Quotations from his masterpiece are common in the works of Locke in the areas of political philosophy, education and divinity.

This question in itself, with the alternative answer, signs the evaporation of the substantive communities. The loyalty to the Big-Endian or Small-Endian earthly powers, or the neutrality of these powers towards the citizens' faiths, naturally, cannot establish a substantial community based on the Small-Endian or Big-Endian faiths. It seems that the single effect of the possibility of a substantive community based on shared values, result in the continuous wars between Blefuscu and Lilliput. It is – by the activity of the great amount of the political-religious emigrants in the counter-countries – a permanent hidden civil war in the world of fiction, similar to the civil war after the English revolution in the real world. However, this Swiftian reconstruction of the recent English political ideas in the world of his novel is quite accurate. It shows the neutrality of the author and his contemporaries concerning these problems. Swift is familiar with these recent questions, but all the possible answers – may they be *Erastian* or non-*Erastian* ones − and a civil war meaning the solution for the problems, are merely *vanitatum vanitas* for him.

We should bear in mind that these traditions and gestures such as the Big-Endian and Small-Endian rites of the above-mentioned faiths described with such irony, are conditions of the possibility of any substantial political community established on shared values and opinions. A similar community can exist on as outrageous bases as the opinions of the "schism of the breaking eggs," and lead to a civil war, only in Swift's world. It is a paradox of all *political rationalisms*. Every single tradition, which could be a basis of an identity of a particular political community – for instance *a nation* – will be unmasked as an irrational, meaningless and dangerous phenomenon; it is similar to the faiths of the zealots of the methods of egg breaking. Since a phenomenon is a general thought, it is not

[3] For a reliable recent edition see Hooker 1989.

useful for making a particular identity, which is in harmony with rationality.[4] We should not forget that the importance of the differences in traditions is a constant element of the argumentation of the ancient and modern *communitarianisms* in their argumentation for a substantive political community and against the methodological individualism of the *political rationalisms*. In this regard Swift's opinions seem to be in accordance with the *political rationalism* of the (early) Enlightenment. We should consider that his *Erastian* and non-*Erastian* answers for the question of the regulation of the egg breaking are connected to a highly satirical form of his greatest predecessors in the English history of political ideas, such as Hobbes' and Locke's thoughts. These ideas were the best-known opinions on the framework of politics in Swift's lifetime, and they are the roots of modern political thinking. From this point of view, we cannot overestimate Swift's resignation in the questions of the possible forms of a political community and its identity cannot be underestimated. It seems to be an ending point of any idea of a traditional substantive community, or, in other words, his view of perfected modernity – *pace* his opinions in the battle of Classics and Moderns. (However, Swift is a classic of the modern English literature, he was a key figure for the friends of the antiquity in an important event of the intellectual life of his age, the battle between Classics and Moderns.)

III. Anthropological Roots of Political Modernity

After discussing this endpoint of a historical chain of ideas in Swift's work, I will show some features of the beginnings of modernity. It is the turn of the early-modern political thinking from the pre-modern question of the *ideal state* to the modern question of the *possible one*; whereas in the second half of my paper. I will discuss some characteristics of the contemporary discontent with the outcomes of this turn. First, I will say a few words about the nature of this turn. Second, I will offer a short description of the anthropological implications and communicational outcomes of this turn in the main works of Hobbes and Locke. Following that, I will mention some relevant structural characteristics of a modern political community, based on the ideas of William B. Gallie. At the very end of my paper I will touch upon some ambiguous contemporary attitudes to the nature of this turn based on the opinion of a renowned researcher of this field, John Dunn.

[4] I use the term *political rationalism* in a similar meaning like Michael Oakeshott introduced it in his *Rationalism in Politics*; see Oakeshott 1947–1948.

This turn does not mean that some of the pre-modern thinkers, writing about the shared values, did not have any relevant opinions about the *origins* of the political community. The most typical idea of the early modern political thinking, theory of contract had an ancient ancestor in the testimony of Aristotle, in Lycophron the Sophist.[5] On the other hand, modern political thinkers in their argumentations for the possibility and necessity of a unified *body politic* cannot avoid the questions of the nature and the method of the functioning of the power incorporated in this body. The turn is connected to the interpretation of the term of *tradition*. What is more, at first glance, it is the elimination of any tradition itself. (It is a most common topic for every critique of modernity, both conservative and leftist.) From the beginning of the modern age it is not regarded as evidence that we were born under "higher powers," into a particular political community, in which the function of the political ruling is regulated by the rules regarded as everlasting ones. Discourse on politics meant the evaluation of the daily practice by these everlasting norms, at least the interpretation of the norms, in this world. A new task of political philosophy is not independent of the changes in the epistemology of early modernity, with their anthropological consequences, nor have the new ideas of the human nature emerged by the theological anthropology of the process of the Reformation. In this fascinating abundance of the intellectual changes, the new elements of epistemology, anthropology and divinity are not actually new ones. They can be familiar from the Hellenistic philosophical schools, and from the Fathers of the Church. (The influence of the thought of Augustine is widely known. I have mentioned above the role of the Stoical ethics in Christian thinking, especially in the time of the Reformation. It should be mentioned here that Calvin himself started his intellectual career as an interpreter of antique stoical texts, especially those of Seneca.) One of the novelties of modern thinking is that these very different ancient opinions – they have only one, highly general common point: their concerns regarding the ideas on human nature – have become inevitable parts of the debates on the constitution of a political community.

The starting point of our investigation was the change of the political philosophy from the problem of the ideal state to the question of the justification of the mere existence of any state. This turn is connected to the structural change of the *ideal typical* models of the political community. (I use the term *ideal typical* in a similar meaning as Max Weber introduced it in his works on sociology of power

[5] Aristotle, *Politica* III 9 1280b 8; DK 83 3

and rule.) The question of the *substance* or *nature* of the political community in itself or that of a particular political community has changed. The endeavour is to describe and define the term of the political communities and the particular, actual political communities based on the analysis of the structure of their public sphere and the rules of communication in this sphere. Partially, due to the needs of this new endeavour of political philosophy, a kind of methodological individualism has emerged from it.

IV. A Note on Thomas Hobbes

From this point of view, Hobbes's conception has a special ambiguity. His anthropology is based on ancient Christian elements of the European political thinking in a secularised form; it is the earthly rule needed by the corrupted human nature after Adam's fall. *Leviathan* is a king over the "sons of the pride," or in other words: he is the ruler of the sinful people because of the sin of pride.

The well-known frontispiece of the *Leviathan* of Hobbes uses the Latin text of the *Vulgata* both in its Latin and English versions. In the quotation of Hobbes, Leviathan emerged as a metaphor for reigning over the sinful people. He is "rex super filios suberbiae (king over the sons of the pride)" Job 41: 34. The Latin expression is a *Hebraism*; "filios superbiae" is a word-by-word translation of the original "b'ne shachatz." In most of the translations of the Scriptures in modern languages, amongst them the English *King James Version* this peculiarity of the meanings is not clearly reflected. Probably it was the reason for Hobbes to use the Latin text of the *Vulgata*.[6] Asymmetry between the nature of the ruler and his subjects is expressed metaphorically in the next verse of the book of Job, quoted above: *Leviathan* is the only one being *without fear*. (In the anthropology of Hobbes *fear* is the root of every human motivation.)

Hobbes derives from this old idea of political theology a consequent methodological individualism of his political thinking; there are only individual citizens and a unified ruler in his political world. This model implicates important consequences for the public sphere and communication. In Hobbes's state, an authoritative communication between the ruler and the subjects is the only possible form of the use of the public sphere. His model does not need more; any form of the open discourse on the politics is incommensurable with his system.

[6] I should express my acknowledgements here for my colleague, György Gábor, an expert of philosophy of religion who helped me to make clear the philological details of this *locus*.

This ambiguity has made Hobbes' works relevant in the moderate conservatism of the 20th century: his pessimistic view of humans "good enough" for describing modernity and "good enough" to fulfil some conservative demands.[7]

V. An Anthropological Turn in the Philosophy of John Locke

In Locke's case, we should consider the different strata of the author's œuvre, separated from each other by disciplines within philosophy and the level of publicity. His œuvre contains published works; writings remained as manuscripts in his lifetime, anonymous works for a large audience and signed books for the scholars, and English and Latin writings. The relationship between the ideas of these works and a reconstruction of the endeavour of Locke in these different genres are the open questions of the Lockean studies. From the point of view of our topic there are two relevant questions. The first one refers to the religious elements of his œuvre; the second one concerns his opinions on education. Both of them are interesting because of their relationship to the problems of a philosophical anthropology; and many interpreters contest both of them. Recognition of the philosophical relevance of these features of the œuvre was not evident during the long history of the reception of Locke.

After some sporadic publications as that of H. McLachlan between the world wars, the Cambridge school of history of ideas has investigated the Unitarian parallels and/or roots of Locke's thinking.[8] In this difficult inter-textual relationship we can verify the followings, only. Locke as a *Fellow* in Oxford had started reading about several central topics of the Unitarian theology, such as the roots of the dogma of the Holy Trinity, and a free-minded interpretation of Adam's fall and its consequences. His interest remained in the time of his emigration to the Netherlands, where he could gain information on the literature of these questions, from the main works of the Polish, Lithuanian, Transylvanian Unitarian writers.[9] It is the same period when he wrote his main works of political

[7] It is enough to refer to a recent classic. See Oakeshott 1975, which was based on his earlier writings.

[8] For the most systematic, but not the first explanation of McLachlan's opinions see McLachlan 1942. For the more detailed opinions of Cambridge school on this topic see Marshall 1996.

[9] Based on the evidence of his personal library we can conclude that he had and used a large amount of heterodox books, amongst them a fundamental work of the early anti-

philosophy and prepared his epistemological masterpiece, his *Essay*. It seems that his opinion, which could be interpreted both as a theory of a social contract established gradually or a theory with two levels of social contracts, has connection with his heterodox, quasi-Unitarian theological anthropology. Humans, *being born free from the original sin*, were not born automatically under the "higher powers" of an everlasting earthly rule, like in the model of Hobbes. Another part of his argumentation is the denial of the concept of an earthly power inherited from Adam, in the same package with the inherited, original sin. It seems that his heterodox theological anthropology and his social contract theory had close relationship. His theory did not have a naïve, enthusiastic image of the freeborn humankind without sins, and capable of an ideal society. Humans, however, are born free from the original sin, probably became sinful persons individually. This difficult system of the sinfulness of humankind, which calculates with individual features and with the concept of probability causes a more difficult, more malleable social contract theory, than Hobbes' was. Frequently quoted and contested *loci* of his *Second treatise of Government* are the ones, where is not clear, whether he speaks about the state of nature, or a first form of the society after the (first level-) social contract.[10]

This complex idea about the human abilities is also reflected in his epistemology. In his *Essay,* Locke in several *loci* speaks about the uncertainty of human understanding in a framework of a theory of human choice and activity.[11] Political consequences of this epistemological opinion implicate a new interpretation of the concept of tolerance. In this framework, it is not a simple demand for the earthly power to avoid violence because of religious reasons, but the rule of political communication and the building of a political community. Because of the uncertainty of our (human) epistemological tools, we have just uncertain ideas on the values, and we must calculate with the uncertainty of each other in our public debates on both the rules of nature and that of the political community.

Trinitarians written by a Unitarian bishop of Transylvania; see Eniedinus 1598. For more on Locke's library see Ashcraft 1969.

[10] For a reliable modern edition see Locke 1960. For this topic see especially: §§ 111 and 166.

[11] Amongst them see the most characteristic one in Book IV, Chapter 16, §. 4. For a reliable modern edition see Locke 1983.

This above-discussed religious approach appears in new form in the educational opinions of Locke.[12]

William Mark Spellman, interpreting Locke's *Essay* adds an explication for his educational booklet.[13] Spellman sketches a conceptual and historical framework for the anthropological discussion of Locke's time. In his opinion, it was a debate between an Augustinian argumentation for the human sinfulness and its consequences on the background of the doctrine of original sin, and a "Pelagian belief that individuals might perfect themselves through the exercise of free will and the help of right education."[14] Of course, there were many mixed opinions between these two extremes. Spellman in this framework argues against the novelty of Locke's opinions on education: "In fact, there is very little in the work to suggest that the author was breaking new and controversial ground in the area of educational theory."[15] His clear aim is to re-connect Locke with the mainstream tradition of the early modern Protestant thinking. In his opinion Locke's sentences on "blank slate", "white paper" and *tabula rasa* are overestimated in the modern interpretations, and he emphasised Locke's *loci* on the weakness of human minds and traces them back to the well-known Christian doctrine of *creature-likeness* of every human being. At the end of this reasoning, he classified Locke as a "typical Latitudinarian believer of Church of England." Spellman interprets Locke's words as being in accordance with Latitudinarian opinions on the consequences of Adam's fall.

Margaret Ezell emphasises another point of view.[16] In her opinion, Locke's educational work has no novelty, as a whole and as a booklet of the famous and renowned author of the *Essay*, had significant influence on European culture, which should not be underestimated. Ezell draws a similar framework of anthropological opinions as Spellman, but from a point of view of a historian of

[12] I have analysed in details the opinions on the education of John Locke in my pre-print paper entitled *John Locke's* Thoughts concerning Education *as a Document of a New Image of Man in Modernity*, it will be published probably in 2014. My first findings on this topic emerged as early as my paper in the conference entitled *Philosophy and Education in Contemporary Society*, organised by the Croatian Philosophical Society, 20–22 September, 2004, Cres, Croatia. For a reliable modern edition of the educational works of John Locke see: Locke 1968.

[13] Spellman 1991

[14] Ibid., 210.

[15] Ibid., 207.

[16] Ezell 1991.

theories on education. She does not speak about human nature itself, but "human nature embodied in a new-born child," which can be innately evil, innately good or "blank" in the opinions of the authors of contemporary educational theory. (Ezell is not interested in the theological consequences; her field of research mainly concerns the earthly circumstances of the educational theories.)

Alex Neill wrote a more serious and unbiased analysis of the role of education in Locke's system of ideas.[17] In his opinion, without this booklet we would not be able to solve an important contradiction in Locke's anthropology. It is a contradiction between the nature of malleability of humans by Locke, which is a condition of possibility of habituation had an important role both in Locke's epistemology (construction of mind), and in his educational opinions (habits instead of rules), and in the human autonomy, both in the epistemological and moral sense. Neill's solution: "A good education, then, fosters autonomy and virtue through habituating the child to self-mastery, however, involves habituating the child to reason."[18]

Surprisingly, the view of political philosophy or that of history of political ideas in connection with *Some Thoughts concerning Education* has hardly ever appeared. The genre of Locke's booklet is close to the so-called "courtesy book", to a manual for the education of noble males, *ergo* politically active citizens; under conditions of the English political system, founded with Locke's content, after 1688. In my opinion, we can interpret Locke's œuvre and its position in England in his epoch in the following way. He explained, what the human beings as minds are in his *Essay*; he explained, what a society and its government is in his *Two Treatises*; then, the last earthly question is to explain the creation of a good human being for a good society: how citizens should be created.

Locke's freeborn individual citizens lack the *original fear* of Hobbes', and they have ethical tools to form new social contracts, new states and societies. However, their moral nature contains their ability to community; it is not based on common ideas, just on their consent about the rules of discussing any ideas.

VI. Instead of a Conclusion – Ending Notes about the Content and Discontent with Modernity

[17] Neill 1991.

[18] Ibid., 256.

A relatively new attitude to the "fathers of modernity" should be mentioned here. My example is John Dunn, an expert on the philosophy of John Locke. I intend to refer to his only well-known short monograph on Locke.[19] The emphasis in his reconstruction is changing with his general ideas about the effectiveness of the process of modernity. When he had a feeling of discomfort in the public sphere under conditions of the crises of the eighties of the last century, he wrote an endnote for his booklet on Locke. In these paragraphs, however, Locke is "the father of the Enlightenment"; he is the father of failed modernity and the cause of every problem in the modern world. It is clear that the subject of the evaluation of Dunn does not directly concern Locke, but Great Britain in the interpreter's epoch. However, Dunn here does not speak about his opinions on his contemporary world; his miscellaneous publications on other topics contain implicit communitarian critique of modernity.

To be an expert of "a father of the Enlightenment" and an opponent of the Enlightenment at the same time means an interesting tension of ideas. A lucrative framework may be offered from a synchronic point of view for an analysis of the consequences of the non-substantial nature and structure of the modern political community and that of the political communication after Locke. My example is the interpretation of modern politics by William G. Gallie, just before the leftist and conservative communitarian "new wave" in political philosophy.[20] Gallie's central concept in the description of modern political communication in a democratic state is the fundamental characteristic of every concept of the modern political discourse. In his words, they are *essentially contested concepts* (ECC). Gallie's theory in itself was *essentially contested* in the last decades, as well. We can regard Gallie's theory as a good description of the radical consequences of the complex and fundamental human uncertainty, described by Locke, in the political community and political thinking nowadays. In this new model of the freedom of the political sphere, we have a liberty for permanent rethinking of the structure of our political identity and our values. I think, using this free and malleable

[19] Dunn 1984.

[20] However, Gallie has explained these ideas earlier in several articles; for the most easily available edition of the work of Gallie concerning the nature of the problems of the political thinking, see: Gallie 1964. Chapter 8, 157–191. There is no space in here to formulate a direct critique of this communitarian "new wave". I have made the first steps in the researches on this topic recently, within a project with the participation of the University of Debrecen, see Mester 2011.

framework for the new analyses of our political communities made by Locke, can be more successful than a simple expression of our discomfort with modernity, and nostalgia for a substantive community.

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Sándor Krémer

IDENTITY AND SELF-ESTEEM IN RORTY'S SELF-CONCEPTION

Introduction

If we speak about Richard Rorty's philosophy in the context of identity and self-esteem, it is worth taking a glance at the psychological connections first. Namely, not only John Rawls, but psychologists, too, evaluate self-esteem highly. Let us see what they say. Most psychologists and psychotherapists agree that self-esteem means the most fundamental relation to the essence of our self. It is not identical with self-concept, self-confidence, self-assurance, but it is a much deeper, mostly non-discursive and a very personal relation to our existence.

According to Maarit Johnson, a Swedish psychologist at the Psychology Institute of Stockholm University and who has been studying self-esteem for quite a long time, there are two main sources of self-esteem, an external one and an internal one. The theory of external roots goes back to William James' psychology (*Principles of Psychology*, 1890) in which he claims that everything that can be seen as part of me (my competencies, my appearance, my family, my wealth) may be regarded as the source of my self-esteem.[1] The theory of internal roots goes back to George Herbert Mead's views (*Mind, Self and Society*, 1934) and he claims that individual self-esteem is created by the reflective judgments of the beloved others, which are passively accepted. Here Mead emphasized first unconditional maternal care and love. As Maarit Johnson notes, the consequences of these original theoretical roots are present in newer theories of self-esteem (from the traditional psychodynamic and socio-psychological schools to the modern social and cognitive theories, but they highlight other — mostly genetic and environmental — factors) as well. Maarit Johnson underscores the dynamic view of self-esteem functioning. She emphasizes that both the internal and the external factors influence the development of our self-esteem, and she creates a dynamic

[1] Johnson, 18-25.

matrix, which is a combination of high and low external and internal self-esteems, which results in four different human types of self-esteem.[2]

Before we combine the views on self-esteem with the views of identity, we obviously have to define identity. What is identity regarding the self? I consider the most persuasive definition regarding self-identity, that it is authenticity in the sense of the overlapping of our words and actions. The more my words and actions overlap, the more authentic I become. (Heidegger's theory of the authentic and inauthentic mode of Dasein's being can be mentioned here as the ultimate existential-ontological basis of this authenticity concept.[3])

If we combine now the views on self-esteem with the views on self-identity, it is possible to create a more general thesis about the relationship between self-esteem and self-identity. According to my thesis there is a mutual relationship between self-identity and self-esteem. They can strengthen each other if their mutual feedback is mostly positive, but they may also weaken each other if they continuously give negative feedback to each other.

Richard Rorty

It is widely known that Richard Rorty is the founder of neopragmatism, and his philosophy can be characterized as an antimetaphysical, antiessentialist, antifoundational, pan-relationist historical constructivism. In his opinion, everything is a social construction, and all awareness is a linguistic affair.[4] The main pillars of human life (language, self and community) are contingent. We cannot recognize any final reality, we may only describe our radically timely and historical and permanently changing world. Every human interpretation of our

[2] The matrix: high external - high internal SE: *happy achiever*; high external - low internal SE: *compulsive achiever*; low external - high internal SE: *pleasure-lover*; low - low SE: *the needy* (cf. Johnson 42-44).

[3] Taking a quick glance at the philosophical background, I am convinced that it would be really difficult to offer a better general philosophical basis of self-identity than the one offered by Heidegger's *Being and Time*. Heidegger contends that Dasein's fundamental existential structure is being-in-the-world, and it has two fundamental modes of being: the inauthentic and the authentic mode of being. In his opinion, everybody lives primordially in the former one, but everybody is able to become an authentic Dasein if she understands that her life is basically a *Sein zum Tode* (*being toward death*). I do not want to dwelve on the details of Heidegger's existential analysis here.

[4] Rorty, PSH 48.

world is a narrative that cannot be universal, only general. Narratives, or in Rorty's words, vocabularies are essentially the Wittgensteinian language games, which can be used minimum on three different levels: a) as a wordplay, b) as a form of life, and c) as a culture. Rorty uses all these three meanings (i.e. his vocabularies are not dictionaries) and claims that we live in the age of narrative philosophy, where, describing our situations, plans, actions, etc. we create not only ourselves, but also our society.

After this short general survey of his philosophy, let us focus on selfhood. As we know, Rorty showed in his book, *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity* (1989), what happens if we give up the idea of a philosophical "single vision," what happens if we do not want to combine the private and the public; and what kind of liberal utopia we could build from a point of view of a liberal ironist.[5] In the second chapter of his book, titled *Contingency* (after and before the chapters on the contingency of language and community, Rorty speaks about the contingency of selfhood. For the most part, Rorty represents narrative identity theory, but the seeds of internarrative narrative identity theory are to be found here as well, since he speaks about a multiple self. Nevertheless, this view was worked out by Ajit K. Maan (*Internarrative Identity. Placing the Self*, 1997), can rather be found in Shusterman's self-conception.

Rorty admired Rawls' theory. I am convinced that Rorty also learnt the importance of self-esteem from Rawls' main book, *A Theory of Justice*[6] (1972), and

[5] According to Rorty, *liberal* means the people who „think that cruelty is the worst thing we do." An *ironist* is a person who, with Rorty's words „faces up to the contingency of his or her own most central beliefs and desires – someone sufficiently historicist and nominalist to have abandoned the idea that those central beliefs and desires refer back to something beyond the reach of time and chance." (Rorty, CIS, xv.)

[6] „We may define self–respect (or self–esteem) as having two aspects. First of all it includes a person's sense of his own value, his secure conviction that his conception of the good, his plan of life, is worth carrying out. *And second, self–respect implies a confidence in one's ability*, so far as it is in one's power, to fulfil one's intentions. When we feel that our plans are of little value, we cannot pursue them with pleasure or take delight in their execution. Nor plagued by failure and self–doubt can we continue in our endeavors. It is clear then why self–respect is a primary good. Without it nothing may seem worth doing, or if some things have value for us, we lack the will to strive for them. All desire and activity becomes empty and vain, and we sink into apathy and cynicism. Therefore the parties in the original position would wish to avoid at almost any cost the social conditions that undermine self–

he claims and defends it very consciously on both the level of the individual and the society.

In the first case, that is on the individual level, Rorty regards the self as the center of narrative gravity that is as self-creation by self-description. As Wittgenstein and Davidson showed the contingency of language, Nietzsche and Freud did the same regarding the self, according to Rorty. Based on their thoughts, Rorty rejects the traditional, metaphysically founded idea of common human nature. He is an anti-dualist philosopher and cannot accept the soul-body (mind-body) distinction. In his opinion, our human life that is our understanding-interpreting being is always a linguistic one, and language is considered a human product. Our language-games, that is vocabularies and our contextual truths are not found but rather made. We, as finite and historical beings are able to create narratives not only about the world, but also about our selves.[7] According to Rorty, we create ourselves (both our self-identity and self-esteem, because they are in mutual relationship) by telling our own stories, by re-describing our own narratives, but this story-telling is influenced very much by the contingent events of our lives. It was Freud who showed us this contingent characteristic rather than Nietzsche.

When Rorty gave an interview to Joshua Knobe in 1995, he revealed the background of his self-concept in saying that:

> I think that Davidson's approach to intentionality, meaning, belief, truth and so on goes together with Dennett's stuff about the intentional stance, and I think, once you see the intentional stance, the attribution of beliefs and desires to organisms or machines as a way of handling the organisms and machines and knowing what they will do next, it is very difficult to think of the self in the way in which what Dennett calls "the picture of the Cartesian theater" requires you to think of the self. I think Dennett has a brilliant chapter in *Consciousness Explained* – Chapter 13 on "The Self

respect. The fact that justice as fairness gives more support to self–esteem than other principles is a strong reason for them to adopt it (Rawls, 1972: 440)."

[7] "(But) if we could ever become reconciled to the idea that most of reality is indifferent to our descriptions of it, and that the human self is created by the use of a vocabulary rather than being adequately or inadequately expressed in a vocabulary, then we should at last have assimilated what was true in the Romantic idea that truth is made rather than found. What is true about this claim is just that *languages* are made rather than found, and that truth is a property of linguistic entities, of sentences (Rorty, CIS 7)."

as Center of Narrative Gravity" – and I think that view of the self is nicely integrated with the rest of Dennett's system and thus *a fortiori* with Davidson's system.[8]

If we look at Rorty's self-interpretation from the point of view of self-esteem, it is obvious that self-creation is the most important dimension of his self-concept. In his opinion self-creation is the best way of realizing the highest form of self-identity and self-esteem, which is manifested in the so-called "strong poet." Who is the "strong poet"? "Strong poet" is the creator of a new vocabulary, rather than the scientist or philosopher in the traditional sense. In Rorty's interpretation it does not only mean the actual poets and writers, but beside them the other types of artists, great scientists who invent new descriptions of the world, political thinkers who changed the world through their new descriptions, but not through their dictatorships or armies. Rorty says: "Someone like Galileo, Yeats, or Hegel is a "poet" in my wide sense of the term – the sense of "one who makes things new".[9] Not everybody will become a strong poet but the possibility is given for every human being, especially in a democratic society. The more liberal and democratic a society is, the more possibilities are given to become a strong poet.

As I have already mentioned, in Rorty's opinion, as Wittgenstein and Davidson demonstrated the contingency of language, Nietzsche and Freud did the same with the self.

As we all know, self-creation is Nietzsche's main goal, and it is manifested in his perspectivism. What is self-creation? It is a permanent overcoming of ourselves in a moral and interpretative sense. Remember Nietzsche's famous

[8] Knobe 1995, 9. Daniel Dennett summarizes his views at the end of Chapter 13 this way: "Now if you were a soul, a pearl of immaterial substance, we could 'explain' your potential immortality only by postulating it as an inexplicable property, an ineliminable virtus dormitiva of soul-stuff. And if you were a pearl of material substance, some spectacularly special group of atoms in your brain, your mortality would depend on the physical forces holding them together (we might ask the physicist what the 'half-life' of a self is). If you think of yourself as a center of narrative gravity, on the other hand, your existence depends on the persistence of that narrative (rather like the Thousands and One Arabian Nights, but all a single tale), which could theoretically survive indefinitely any switches of medium, be teleported as readily (in principle) as the evening news, and stored indefinitely as sheer information." (Dennett 430)

[9] Rorty, CIS 12-13.

statement, "Werde was du bist! (Become who you are!)," and we may see that self-creation is always a permanent becoming for Nietzsche. Even Zarathustra's whole intention, which is Nietzsche's intention, is also devoted to this purpose. The Übermensch, taken strictly in a moral sense, can also be regarded as a manifestation of this purpose. By giving constant new interpretations of our selves, we re-create our self, because the self consists only in our desires, beliefs and knowledge. Both Nietzsche and Rorty consider this permanent linguistic self-creation as a therapy, a way of curing our selves out of old views, especially from Platonism and Christianity. Rorty, however, does not want to use the concept of the Übermensch, because it is still a residuum of metaphysics.[10]

Pre-Nietzschean philosophers said that the particular contingencies of individual lives are not important, and it is only the mistake of poets to speak about accidental accurence rather than essential reality. Contrary to this view, Rorty emphasizes that Nietzsche saw

> *self-knowledge* as *self-creation*. The process of coming to know oneself, confronting one's contingency, tracking one's cause home, is identical with the process of inventing a new language – that is, of thinking up some new metaphors. For any *literal* description of one's individuality, which is to say any use of an inherited language-game for this purpose, will necessarily fail. One will not have traced that idiosyncrasy home but will merely have managed to see it as not idiosyncratic after all, as a specimen reiterating a type, a copy or replica of something which has already been identified. To fail as a poet – and thus, for Nietzsche, to fail as a human being – is to accept somebody else's description of oneself, to execute a previously prepared program, to write, at most, elegant variations on previously written poems. So the only way to trace home the causes of one's being as one is would be to tell a story about one's causes in a new language.[11]

According to Rorty, Nietzsche suspected that *only poets* can truly appreciate contingency. The rest of us are doomed to remain philosophers, to insist that there

[10] In Rorty's interpretation Nietzsche merely "hoped that once realized that Plato's 'true world' was just a fable, we would seek consolation, at the moment of death, not in having transcended the animal condition but in being that peculiar sort of dying animal who, by describing himself in his own terms, had created himself. More exactly, he would have created the only part of himself that mattered by constructing his own mind. To create one's mind is to create one's own language, rather than to let the length of one's mind be set by the language other human beings have left behind." (Rorty, Ibid. 27.)

[11] Ibid., 27-28.

is really only one true lading-list, one true description of the human situation, one universal context of our lives. Nietzsche believed that we are doomed to spend our conscious lives trying to escape from contingency rather than, like the strong poet, acknowledging and appropriating contingency. Nietzsche thought that the important boundary to cross is not the one separating time from a temporal truth, but rather the one that divides the old from the new. In Rorty's opinion:

> He thinks a human life triumphant just insofar as it escapes from inherited descriptions of the contingencies of its existence and finds new descriptions. This is the difference between the will to truth and the will to self-overcoming. It is the difference between thinking of redemption as making contact with something larger and more enduring than oneself, and redemption as Nietzsche describes it: »recreating all 'it was' into a 'thus I willed it.'«[12]

Despite of all this, in a sense, Rorty prefers Freud to Nietzsche. He writes that what makes Freud more useful and more plausible than Nietzsche is that he does not relegate the vast majority of humanity to the status of dying animals. Freud's description of the unconscious fantasy shows us, in Rorty's words, "how to see every human life as a poem – or, more exactly, every human life not so racked by pain as to be unable to learn a language nor so immersed in toil as to have no leisure in which to generate a self-description."[13] For Freud, nobody is boring through and through, for there is no such thing as a boring unconscious.

At the same time, it is obvious that every human being cannot be considered a *strong poet* (who is "only" the highest peak of self-creation for Rorty, that is that of self-identity and self-esteem), because the *strong poet* is a very rare phenomenon.[14] Even she or he cannot live without other people, without the socio-historical context:

> Shifting from the written poem to the life-as-poem, one may say that there can be no fully Nietzschean lives, lives which are pure action rather than reaction — no lives which are not largely parasitical on an un-redescribed past and dependent on the charity of as yet unborn generations. There is no stronger claim even the strongest poet can make than the one Keats made — that he »would be among the English

[12] Ibid., 29.

[13] Ibid., 35-36.

[14] "Autonomy is not something which all human beings have within them and which society can release by ceasing to repress them. It is something which certain particular human beings hope to attain by self-creation, and which a few actually do (Ibid., 65)."

> poets,« construing »among them« in a Bloomian way as »in the midst of them,« future poets living out of Keats's pockets as he lived out of those of his precursors.[15]

In the second case that is of the social level, Rorty speaks more clearly about the relationship between identity and self-esteem. Right away at the beginning of his book, *Achieving Our Country* (1998), Rorty begins with the following chain of thoughts:

> National pride is to countries what self-respect is to individuals: a necessary condition for self-improvement. Too much national pride can produce bellicosity and imperialism, just as excessive self-respect can produce arrogance. But just as too little self-respect makes it difficult for a person to display moral courage, so insufficient national pride makes energetic and effective debate about national policy unlikely. Emotional involvement with one's country – feelings of intense shame or of glowing pride aroused by various parts of its history, and by various present-day national policies – is necessary if political deliberation is to be imaginative and productive. Such deliberation will probably not occur unless pride outweighs shame.[16]

Democracy meant above all human freedom and social justice for Rorty. He supported both the idea of freedom and social justice, in his book, *Achieving Our Country*, which may be regarded as his political testament.[17] In this book Rorty analyzed the history of the American Left. He distinguished the traditional, reformist Left from the new, cultural or academic Left. It is true that he

[15] Ibid., 42. Rorty goes on to say here that analogously, "there is no stronger claim which even the superman can make than that his differences from the past, inevitably minor and marginal as they are, will nevertheless be carried over into the future – that his metaphoric re-descriptions of small parts of the past will be among the future's stock of literal truths" (Rorty, CIS 42). – At the end of this chapter Rorty draws his conclusions: "But if we avoid Nietzsche's inverted Platonism – his suggestion that a life of self-creation can be as complete and as autonomous as Plato thought a life of contemplation might be – then we shall be content to think of any human life as the always incomplete, yet sometimes heroic, reweaving of such a web. We shall see the conscious need of the strong poet to *demonstrate* that he is not a copy or replica as merely a special form of an unconscious need everyone has: the need to come to terms with the blind impress which chance has given him, to make a self for himself by re-describing that impress in terms which are, if only marginally, his own (Ibid., 43)."

[16] Rorty, AOC 3.

[17] cf. Ibid., 45.

acknowledged the results of the latter (e.g. the "closure" of the Vietnam War), but for the benefit of the future of his country, similarly to Dewey, he regarded the reformist Left to be the really progressive social and political movement. We have to emphasize that social-democratic, reformist left-wingism is an organic part of Rorty's liberalism. It is not a surprise, of course, as the American concept of „liberal" means almost the same as the „social-democrat" in Europe. In *Achieving Our Country* we can also find a suggestion for the essential question of our epoch: how can a non-democratic society become a democratic one. In Rorty's opinion, the solution for this acute problem is the common power of the interlocked top-down and bottom-up social initiatives (contrary to the Marxist solution which prefers only the bottom-up initiatives), which reinforce each other.[18]

Rorty's opinion of identity and self-esteem is not accidental, as we can find almost identical approaches in his different articles. I am convinced that one of the best examples of this is in his article titled "The Unpatriotic Academy":

> Like every other country, ours has a lot to be proud of and a lot to be ashamed of. But a nation cannot reform itself unless it takes pride in itself — unless it has an identity, rejoices in it, reflects upon it and tries to live up to it. […] There is no contradiction between such identification and shame at the greed, the intolerance and the indifference to suffering that is widespread in the United States. On the contrary, you can feel shame over your country's behavior only to the extent to which you feel it is your country. If we fail in such identification, we fail in national hope. If we fail in national hope, we shall no longer even try to change our ways.[19]

However, Rorty himself did not want to create a detailed political philosophy, for in his opinion it is not the philosopher's task. In a liberal democracy it is much more of the task of decent men and women, who "sit down around tables, argue things out and arrive at a reasonable consensus."[20] It is not the philosopher's task, for he creates theories on the most general level, contrary to the political scientists and politicians. More harmonization of different and independent interests, views

[18] Cf. Ibid., 53-54. Bujalos István offers a detailed interpretation of AOC in his article, „Rorty a baloldaliságról". (In: *Filozófia a globalizáció árnyékában: Richard Rorty*. (Ed. by Nyírő Miklós. Budapest: L'Harmattan – Magyar Filozófiai Társaság, 2010, 81-93.)

[19] Rorty, PSH 253-254.

[20] Ibid., 112.

are needed in this field and it must be done neither by philosophers, nor by political scientists, but rather by politicians and by the people themselves.[21]

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[21] All this is in conscious consistency with his interpretation of philosophy as cultural politics (Cf. Rorty, PCP) - It is worth emphasizing here that the first paper ("Cultural Politics and the Question of the Existence of God") of Rorty's posthumus volume of his "Philosophical Papers," which has almost the same title as the volume itself, "Philosophy As Cultural Politics" also reinforces his above mentioned views. Let us consider this title: *Philosophy As Cultural Politics*! Rorty shows already with his title that politics is the most important thing for him *in the public sphere,* but not in the private one. It is, since he handles every philosophy as a special type of politics. With this standpoint ("philosophy as cultural politics") Rorty *not only* draws the consequences of the latest development of European philosophy (early Heideggerian phenomenology, Gadamerian hermeneutics, late Wittgensteinian and Derridian approaches, etc.). Not Only does he make philosophy a kind of politics, and emphasizes that every human feature is a social construction, but he makes philosophy and politics connected directly to morality. Social wellfare and democracy, that is *social goods* will be the *highest moral goods*.

Attila Bánfalvi

IDENTITY AND THE TWO 'PROPRIOCEPTIONS'

There are living people who have lost their bodies. It seems obvious that without a body life is impossible; especially because our modern life-conception is based on the primacy of biology. We think that the biological aspect of our existence is the foundation on which every other aspect of our life is built. Purposes, believes, meanings are the so called life-problems. (The fact that life-problems are not purely bodily problems is expressed in Wittgenstein's famous statement: "We feel that even if *all possible* scientific questions be answered, the problems of life have still not been touched at all."[1]) Therefore, even the latter ones have gone to atrophy — we can still live. But what if it can be unveiled that a biological body cannot be owned by a person, that it does not belong to anybody, that it is nobody's body.

The body can suddenly go crazy, it can hide itself from the personality residing in it. A woman claimed after a shocking experience:

> 'Something awful has happened,' she mouthed, in a ghostly flat voice. 'I can't feel my body. I feel weird – disembodied.' […] *it's like the body's blind.* My body can't "see" itself if it's lost its eyes, right? So I have to watch it – be its eyes. Right?[2]

What is it all about? It is about the so-called proprioception, the sixth sense. This is our capacity of keeping our bodies in balance, our postures and movements in order and under control without the reflection of our consciousness. It means that one can feel exactly where the limbs are, what they are doing, how they can work in an organized way, one can feel the position of the body, and has control over his/her own body. If somebody has lost this capacity then the body posture can only be controlled by way of conscious visual supervision.

In our case "[s]he has lost, with her sense of proprioception, the fundamental, organic mooring of identity — at least of that corporal identity, or 'body-ego.'"[3]

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[1] Ludwig Wittgenstein: *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* London Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc,.1922., 89.

[2] Oliver Sacks: *The man who mistook his wife for a hat*, Harper Perennial: New York 1985., 45.

Proprioception has a crucial role in the feeling that our bodies belong to us. It makes it taken-for-granted and unquestionable that – even in the culture of Cartesian dualism – our body and our psyche are totally interlocking.

However, as we could see from purely biological causes, proprioception can be lost, the sixth sense can stop working thus the body breaks free from the governance of the psyche, but at the same time, it becomes disordered, chaotic and disrupted. The identity of personality becomes severely injured because the core of its ontological security, namely the trust in his/her own body, has collapsed. This is the loss of the sense of oneself, the feeling that I am not one with myself.

In our case, the patient has no other choice than accepting that she is not one with her own body, and she can only control the already independent mass of flesh, if she follows its every movement with her eyes and with giving up her spontaneity, compelling it to make the wished movements with continuous reflection.

The loss of proprioception shows that the overwhelming power of the conscious control aims to compensate serious ontological harm.

> She continues to feel, with the continuing loss of proprioception, that her body is dead, not-real, not-hers—she cannot appropriate it to herself. She can find no words for this state, and can only use analogies derived from other senses: "I feel my body is blind and deaf to itself […] it has no sense of itself"—these are her own words. She has no words, no direct words, to describe this bereftness this sensory darkness (or silence) akin to blindness or deafness. She has no words, and we lack words too.[4]

Moving beyond the bodily issues, we can realize that a resembling malady can be found in the other sphere of the Cartesian human being, namely in the psyche.

The previous bodily problem is an astounding phenomenon, because it is fairly rare. However the one which is so devastating for the psyche and the personality is not so impressive, because it is so common. The loss of bodily proprioception is an exceptional case, unbelievable, or unthinkable for lay persons. However, the loss of psychic proprioception is a general tendency in our times. More or less everybody living in our culture is involved in it. Everybody uses the unitary I (me), with the sentiment that the personal pronoun refers to a real 'thing'. But it seems that we have increasingly more difficulties (at least since Freud) if we want

[3] Ibid. 52.

[4] Ibid. 51.

to create rational arguments for the defense of this unified I. It is shaded by uncertainty: its contours has become more and more blurred, it is surrounded by doubts and anxieties, which create a pressure to escape from it, a wish for self-oblivion. This drive for loosing myself is a symptom of a seriously wounded identity which does not want to be conscious about oneself, because facing the fragmentations, contradictions and ambivalences of the I is unbearably painful. Nevertheless, these escapist tendencies can only break off the almost compulsory pursuit towards self-reflection, which aims to keep up the integrity of the self or wants to put it together from its fragments. Searching for ourselves refers to a disguised sentiment that the being signaled by the I has grown dim.

For the sake of representing the crises of the I or Self, here are some quotes from a very popular novel and film *Fight Club* (Chuck Palahniuk, 1997):

> You have a class of young strong men and women, and they want to give their lives to something. Advertising has these people chasing cars and clothes they don't need. Generations have been working in jobs they hate, just so they can buy what they don't really need.
>
> We don't have a great war in our generation, or a great depression, but we do, we have a great war of the spirit. We have a great revolution against the culture. The great depression is our lives. We have a spiritual depression.[5]

The spiritual crisis causes a kind of somnambulic state of the mind. It is a sort of floating between being awake and being asleep, between life and death. No clear border exists anymore between being and not-being, the self and the outside world. This 'I do not know who I am, why I am' can be alleviated by encountering with bodily and psychic pain. The contact with seriously ill persons and painful injuries in merciless fights can provide some real feelings to the protagonist's existence. The pain can convert the superficial self into a real, a deeper one. Pain gives a stamp of reality onto the hero's self. His body-feelings, which are manifested in pain, can provide a basis for the remnants of his identity.

His moral crisis can only be alleviated by bodily sufferings. While in the case of the loss of bodily proprioception the body can be ordered by way of conscious attention, the one who has lost his/her psychic proprioception has to lean on his/her body, otherwise his/her chaotic identity will collapse. In this way, bodily pain can alleviate psychic agony. We have historical examples when people tried

[5] Chuck Palahniuk: *Fight Club*, Vintage, London, 1997., 149.

to calm down their bad conscience by way of bodily self-punishment. However, the contemporary crisis is much broader than the previous ones; our existential and spiritual doubts have been threatening the grounds and roots of the Western Selves. For those who live a somnambulistic life everything is uncertain and vague – and they are in the centre of this uncertainty. In this condition they have only two possible ways: anaesthetic life-numbness or escaping downwards to the body so as to find some security in its processes – the security of disorder and pathology. (As Chesterton mentioned: 'Vigorous organisms talk not about their processes, but about their aims.'[6]) They wish for some 'abuses', 'harms' against their bodies to fill the emptiness of their psychic life. Beyond these two previous types of people who have lost their proprioception – one their bodily, the other their psychic — we have a very important third type: the traumatized one. In the case of psychic trauma, the personal structure of ontological security has been lost, and as Sándor Ferenczi claimed: "When the child recovers after such an attack, he feels extremely confused, in fact already split, innocent and guilty at the same time…"[7] and during the abuse, the identification with the aggressor' mechanism means that the victim has lost the control over his/her existence therefore the solution for the 'I feel extreme, unbearable pain' with the absence of any other means is to draw out, to cut out the I, to put an X over the I. If I am not able to alleviate the pain in other ways then I have to give up myself with the meaning that it is not me anymore who feels the unbearable pain; it is nobody who is aching. Therefore the proprioception of my Self is lost. This is the clearest moment of the 'gone away' proprioception. In Ferenczi's words: "The body, the cruder part of the personality, withstands destructive process longer, but unconsciousness and the fragmentation of the mind already are signs of the death of the more refined parts of the personality."[8]

And "[t]he person struck by a trauma comes into contact with death […]".[9] It seems that the most important connection between the loss of bodily and psychic

[6] Gilbert K. Chesterton: *Heretics*, New York, John Lane Company, London: John Lane: *The Bodley Head*, 1909., 17.

[7] Sándor Ferenczi: Confusion of Tongues between Adults and the Child, in: Sándor Ferenczi *Selected Writings*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1999., 299.

[8] *The Clinical Diary of Sándor Ferenczi*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, London, 1995., 130-131.

[9] Sándor Ferenczi: Notes and Fragments [1930–32]. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* (1949) 30: 231-242. (237)

proprioception is the death in life phenomenon. In all three cases – loss of bodily proprioception, spiritual crisis and psychic trauma — one half of the human existence becomes dead, and the person loses his/her identity. Now if we turn to the phenomenon of psychic trauma again, one of the most striking traits of it is its double-phase structure:

1. The Freudian 'deferred action': the abuse itself is not traumatic, what makes the abuse traumatic later is a second normal sexual event, which presses the patient to reinterpret – unconsciously — the previous one as unacceptable for the adult ego of the patient. It means that the abuse in itself — although extremely painful – is not the single cause of the later symptoms.

2. In the case of the Ferenczian 'typical manner' of trauma, the abuse in itself is not traumatic either because it creates 'only' a psychotic episode or experience which can have alternative fates. If 'the relationship to a second person of trust' is good then the mother's reaction to the abuse, that is accepting and defining it as real, can rewrite the terrible experience as a part of the abused child's biography. Or, if this trusted person rejects the child's experience then this attitude can prevent the experience of abuse to be a part of the child's narrated biography. It makes the psychotic episode fossilized out of the person's conscious mind, as a kind of 'always present, but not to be remembered event.'

3. From both previous perspectives it is clear that trauma is not a singular, all in one, event. Trauma itself is a historical sequence of events – which is untold and unmentionable for the traumatized person.

We need to emphasize that there is a space between the two — the starting and closing moments in the trauma scenario — and this phase is not empty, and it is not purely a kind of temporal difference without content. During the deferred action, or between being abused and being traumatized, something should happen to connect these two phases and to differentiate them.

It can be said, that the abuse is the seed of trauma, and the second scene or the second phase is the birth of trauma, but what kind of trauma will be born or whether it will be born at all is the question of the pregnancy phase of trauma.

Now we have the abuse, which is not traumatic itself, but the repressed or cut-off memory of this abuse is a fertilized seed waiting to be born as trauma. This means that what happens after the shock of abuse is at least as important as the abuse itself. Therefore, trauma is abuse + something without which trauma cannot exist.

This something is a dynamic, complex flow of meaningful experiences and interpretations. Ferenczi emphasized love and tenderness as the positive

aftermath of abuse by which trauma cannot be born from abuse, because real memory has been created, which can be part of the conscious biography of the abused person. The seed of trauma can be fertilized by the prevention of making a conscious biographical event of the abuse.

In other words, the Freudian-Ferenczian formula of childhood psychic trauma is: abuse + after the event, lack of love and tenderness. If we want to raise this formula to a more general, universal human level, we will find the key in the famous 'confusion of tongues' concept. This means that one meaningful life-world, which was expressed and mirrored in one language, has become destroyed by another one – leaving behind the feeling of existential falling into nothingness. The outcome is the so-called 'destruction of the absolutisms of everyday life.'

When a person says to a friend, "I'll see you later" or a parent says to a child at bedtime, "I'll see you in the morning," these are statements, like delusions, the validity of which is not open for discussion. Such absolutisms are the basis for a kind of naive realism and optimism that allow one to function in the world, experienced as stable and predictable. It is in the essence of psychological trauma, that it shatters these absolutisms, a catastrophic loss of innocence that permanently alters one's sense of being-in-the-world. Massive deconstruction of the absolutisms of everyday life exposes the inescapable contingency of existence in a universe that is random and unpredictable and in which the safety or continuity of being cannot be assured. Trauma thereby exposes 'the unbearable embedment of being' […] As a result, the traumatized person cannot help but perceive aspects of existence that lie well outside the absolute horizons of normal everydayness. It is in this sense that the worlds of traumatized persons are fundamentally incommensurable with those of others, the deep chasm in which an anguished sense of estrangement and solitude takes form.[10] If we refer back to the second type of loss of proprioception, namely to the somnambulist, half-dead, half-alive existence of the spiritual crisis, we come to realize that the resemblance between the condition of the psychic trauma and our contemporary cultural condition has two consequences:

1. We can have an unfounded preconception that abuse and suffering almost necessarily cause posttraumatic personalities. Therefore, wherever and whenever tragic events happen in the world, a psychotherapeutic intervention is necessary so as to prevent or undo the traumatic consequences of those events.

[10] Robert D. Stolorow: The Phenomenology of Trauma and the Absolutisms of Everyday life: A personal Journey, *Psychoanalytic Psychology* (1999) 16: (3) 464-468.

2. We can also have an unfounded assumption that, if we find persons whose character traits and lifestyles look like those of the traumatized persons, we have to assume a traumatic event or series of events in their childhood.

In the first case the assumption is that abuse (with a few exceptions) should be followed by trauma, that is suffering from an abuse is (almost) equal with being traumatized; in the second case, if there is a trauma-like personality structure then an abuse must have been the necessary triggering event. In both cases, we have a tendency to suppose that if one aspect of the abuse-trauma formula is present then the other one should also be there.

However, we know now, at least from the anthropological literature, that a posttraumatic personality is a special Western development. In traditional societies, even the biggest tragedy of life does not create a traumatized personality. This is one of the clearest proves on a cultural level for Ferenczi's trauma scenario. In that kind of societies, tragedies are embedded in a meaningful social net, i.e. in those cultures shocking events land in a padded bed of consolations. They have a 'well-designed' preventive system against traumas, not by preventing the tragic events of life themselves, but providing solid systems of meaning for them. They have inbuilt 'seatbelts' and 'airbags' for the case of serious life accidents.

This is why e.g. counsellors and researchers who had run to Sri Lanka after the tsunami with the hypothesis that they would find huge number of trauma victims were surprised by the survivors' reactions: there were no signs of PTSD, they were not traumatized in a Western way.

As a commentator noted:

> When we looked out at the violence and hardship in the rest of the world and knew that our psychological assistance was desperately needed, we may have been simply projecting our own postmodern insecurities.[11]

That means that our all well-designed nosological systems and therapeutic technics are answers for a cultural order; an order of a culture which is not able to provide stable and secure meaning networks as prevention for its abused, tortured, punished, beaten, battered citizens.

The popular need for early traumatic life events, for a kind of abused childhood and psychotherapies as tools for creating consolation are desperate

[11] Ethan Watters: *The Globalization of the American Psyche*, Free Press, New York London Toronto Sydney 2011., 120.

attempts to find meaning for the abysmal meaninglessness and emptiness of our contemporary cultural landscape. The supposed traumas can provide some 'mythical' starting points for an after-creation of meanings; they try to provide an introduction for texts of biographies for those who do not know where they are in life; paradoxically the role of the supposed traumas is to make an order in dis-ordered life.

As a summary, we can create a three-part hypothesis on abuse, trauma and meaning:

a, If the surrounding culture can provide the tenderness of meaningful system, then no trauma will be created.

b, If no meaningful environment can be found after the shock or abuse, then some kind of post-traumatic pathology will be created as a meaning substitute, a disorder which can fill the gaps in the broken meanings of life.

The popular need for early traumatic life events, for a kind of abused childhood and psychotherapies as tools for creating consolation are desperate attempts to find meaning for the abysmal meaninglessness and emptiness of our contemporary cultural landscape. The supposed traumas can provide some 'mythical' starting points for an after-creation of meanings; they try to provide an introduction for texts of biographies for those who do not know where they are in life; paradoxically the role of the supposed traumas is to make an order in dis-ordered life.

Lenke Németh

SELF–RESPECT RESTORED

The Cultural Mulatto an Postethnic American Drama[1]

French immigrant Hector St. Jean Crèvecoeur's question "What, then is, the American, this new man?" raised in his *Letters from an American Farmer* in 1782 still resonates with the same force at present in the second decade of the twenty-first century as it did during the nascent of a new nation in the eighteenth century. Interestingly enough, Crèvecoeur's answer already contains the oppositional elements shaping the American identity, a striving for oneness, a "new race" vs. recognizing the heterogeneity of "this new man" in terms of cultures and ethnicities: "here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labors and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world."[2] In a similar vein, less than a century later, the bard of American democracy Walt Whitman shared Crèvecoeur's jubilation and joyously declared "America is the Race of Races" in his Preface to *Leaves of Grass* (1855). Prophetically, they both envisioned and welcomed a new race,[3] a new amalgamation of people of different nations and ethnicities who have immense potentials and a great future; nonetheless, they anticipated the elusive nature of American identity.

This paper is predicated upon the suggestion that the post-Civil Rights period from the 1980s onward produces the prophesized "new man," a mixed race American who is not only conscious and proud of the various cultural, ethnic, and racial forces shaping his/her identity but can also freely navigate between them. I find that the term cultural mulatto initially introduced by cultural critic, essayist,

[1] The 21.1. 2015 issue of the *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies* has the prior publication of this essay.

[2] Crèvecoeur 1782: 70

[3] The concept of race refers to discernable biological differences in the outward features of people as used and meant in the 19th century, thus it is devoid of the politicized and ideologically attuned meanings, definitions, and social meanings it gained especially in the 20th century.

and novelist Trey Ellis to identify a new type of African American in the 1980s and then extended to all Americans by theoretician Bertram D. Ashe appropriately describes this "new" American. In his now seminal essay "The New Black Aesthetic" (1989)[4] Ellis defines the cultural mulatto as follows: **"**[j]ust as a genetic mulatto is a black person of mixed parents who can often get along fine with his grandparents, a cultural mulatto, educated by a multi-racial mix of cultures, can also navigate easily in the white world."[5] Ashe argues that "all African Americans are, to one extent or another, naturalized 'cultural mulattos,' as are all Americans, and any other Americans, of any race or ethnicity, who grew up in this country."[6] The non-genetic mulatto is proud of all the cultural heritages s/he is produced by, thus the cultural mulatto redefines the constantly shifting term of the American identity. A mixed race individual's self-respect is restored as the traumas of oppressed existence are removed. The free negotiation between the multi-racial and multi-cultural legacies as shaping factors of the self not only removes centuries-old social and psychological burdens and resentments that people of various ethnic origins have experienced in their marginalized position but also pries open race-imposed cultural boundaries and dichotomies that have long traumatized their consciousness and existence.

The construction of the "healthy, self-aware cultural mulatto,"[7] however, is influenced by the combined effects of social and economic changes occurring in the postmulticultural era, which in turn generate new and experimental ways of the artistic representations of the mixed race individual. Since the theater serves as a public arena for the exploration of various identity formations, for the study of the Post-Civil Rights Movement American cultural identity I will discuss the theatrical representations of the cultural mulatto as dramatized in African American Suzan-Lori Parks's Pulitzer Prize-wining *Topdog/Underdog* (2002) and Asian American David Henry Hwang's autobiographically inspired *Yellow Face* (2007). I will argue that both plays challenge essentialist definitions of race and ethnicity by presenting cultural mulattoesque characters. Before the analysis,

[4] Ellis's essay now ranks among other key documents of Black American consciousness such as Langston Hughes's "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain" (1926), Richard Wright's "Blueprint for Negro Writing"(1937), Larry Neal's "The Black Arts Movement" (1968), and Hoyt W. Fuller's "Toward a Black Aesthetic" (1968).

[5] Ellis 1989: 235.

[6] Ashe 2009: 614.

[7] Ibid., 613-14.

however, I will briefly survey the socio-cultural context that gave rise to the new type of cultural identity and will offer the taxonomy of the cultural mulatto archetype.

The heterogeneous composition of America ensures an extraordinary vitality and vibrancy of American culture; nonetheless, its diversity has generated many tensions over the nearly four hundred-year history of the country. The working of two basic forces, centripetal (directed toward centralization, a united America) and centrifugal (caused by divisive issues like race, ethnicity, and religion thus moving away from the center) ensures the dynamism of this culture.[8] Parallel with these forces, American national identity has been continuously (re)-shaped and (re)-conceptualized. Accordingly, the regular interplay between the opposing forces shaping American culture has produced three cultural models with three distinct identity types: the assimilationist up to the 1960s, the multicultural from the late 1960s to the mid-1990s, and the postmulticultural from the end of the twentieth century. The first aims at the unification of the American nation with the prevalent White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) identity; while the second throws into relief the heterogeneity of the American culture, which allows for the recognition of formerly marginalized groups of ethnicities acknowledged in the "hyphenated" identity designation thus refining the American identity (African–American, Asian–American, Native–America, Mexican–American, and so forth). The postmulticultural era—also labeled as postethnic and postblack—looks at race and ethnicity as a continuum rather than as fixed entities. As Harry J. Elam accentuates: "the postmulticultural discourse seeks to move beyond earlier essentialist definitions of race and offers space for new explorations of cultural and ethnic hybridity, for the interrogation of racial meanings, and for a re-thinking of the politics of cultural identity."[9]

The combined effects of economic and socio-political changes within the US and outside its borders in the 1990s necessitated the revision of race and ethnicity. On the one hand, traditional conceptions of citizenship and nationality radically changed due to the occurrence of globalized industries that forced masses of

[8] In his "Diagnosing American Culture: Centrifugality Versus Centripetality; or The Myth of a Core America," Zsolt Virágos uses the notions of centripetality versus centrifugality to describe the dynamism of American culture. The former "expresses the idea of a centralizing and cohesive pull," while the latter refers to the "operation of excentric and decentering factors" (24).

[9] Elam 2002: 116.

people to migrate from their homelands. On the other hand, a new post-Civil Rights Movement generation of young people free of the nationalist impulses of the 1960s could shake off their parents' traumas and anxieties caused by being oppressed, which entailed a new attitude to race and ethnicity. Additionally, a theoretical discourse on the "whiteness" of the American society since the 1990s also gave impetus to the re-conceptualization of American identity. In the closing decade of the twentieth century Americanists began to ask "on the heels of Toni Morrison's eloquent *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (1992), just how really white is white American culture? Critics of essentialism have stressed the interpenetration and interweaving of black and white American culture and the socially and economically constructed nature of identities."[10] Similarly, discussing the increasing Asian American presence in American intellectual and popular culture, Kyung-Jin Lee predicts the inevitable re-evaluation of whiteness: "it will actually transform what it means to be 'white' in twenty-first century America as the forces of capitalist globalization and the attendant transnationalism of both goods and people put greater pressure on the term Asian American."[11]

The re-conceptualization of race and identity became inevitable after the 2000 census, when for the first time in American history the designation of *multiracial* could be chosen by respondents. Then 7. 3 million Americans, that is 2. 6 per cent of the population (Jones) identified themselves as of mixed race, whereas in the 2010 census "more than nine million Americans self-identified as belonging to two or more race groups."[12] The constantly growing number of multiracial people—by 2050 their number "could account for one in five Americans" according to Joel Kotkin—raised a number of questions pertaining to the traditions of identity politics.

The Cultural Mulatto Archetype and Self-Respect

Induced by the aforementioned changes the artistic representation of the postmulticultural American identity alters. A clearly identifiable new type of character with "a hybrid, fluid, elastic, cultural mulattoesque sense of black

[10] Lionnet 2001: 380.

[11] Lee 2007: 188.

[12] The number of Americans who checked both "black" and "white" on their census forms grew by 134% from 2000 to 2010 (D'Vera Cohn).

identity"[13] occurs in literary works of a new generation of artists—primarily black—who were born into or grew up in a radically altered cultural and political milieu. A common feature of their art is that they are not burdened with those separatist impulses inherent in the 1960s, neither do they define the black experience in terms of segregation and slavery. Relying on distinct features of this new type of identity (hybridity of roots and cultures, constant movement between them) Ashe introduces the archetype of the cultural mulatto. Further expanding the distinctive features of this archetype, however, proves to be not only a useful tool for the discussion of the cultural mulattoesque characters in the two selected plays, but also highlights why a cultural mulatto regains self-respect.

I propose the following criteria for the definition of the cultural mulatto archetype: (1) a quintessential representative of the post-Civil Rights Movement era, the cultural mulatto possesses a composite identity that evinces biraciality and biculturalness; (2) the cultural mulatto's identity is never stable but always in flux; (3) the cultural mulatto transforms the former no man's land, the wild zone between the mainstream and minority worlds into an intercultural sphere, a contact space thus securing long-desired space in between the two cultures; (4) the cultural mulatto crosses the color line and re-inscribes himself/herself in the history of America; (5) the cultural mulatto embraces the iconographic signifiers of both the mainstream and the minority cultures and histories; (6) the non-genetic cultural mulatto echoes the tragic mulatto stereotype, a widely used stereotypical image of light-skinned people of mixed origin.[14] The literary representation of a cultural mulatto does not necessarily possess all the qualities listed above. It is sufficient to qualify as a cultural mulatto, if a mixed race character exhibits one or two criteria from the ones listed above.

In light of the taxonomy detailed above and further clarifying the cultural mulatto designating the new American cultural identity, I suggest that inevitably the cultural mulatto regain self-respect, which is instrumental for a rewarding life as Robin S. Dillon underlies:

[13] Ashe Ibid., 614.

[14] There is a long line of tragic mixed-blood characters who most frequently commit suicide or get lynched in consequence of feeling repulsed by their original ethnicity and being rejected by the mainstream society. Tragic mulattos occur in works penned by white and black writers alike ranging from James Fenimore Cooper, George Washington Cable, Mark Twain and Dion Boucicault down to creations of William Faulkner, and black writers like William Wells Brown, Charles W. Chesnutt, and Nella Larsen.

> Self-respect is among the morally interesting and personally significant dimensions of human life. Individuals who are blessed with a confident respect for themselves have something that is vital to living a satisfying, meaningful, flourishing life, while those condemned to live without it or with damaged or fragile self-respect are thereby condemned to live constricted, deformed, frustrating lives, cut off from possibilities of self-realization, self-fulfillment, and happiness.[15]

When self-respect is regained, its corresponding elements also begin to operate in the personality. In Dillon's view at the core of self-respect is "a deep appreciation of one's morally significant worth,"[16] and the recognition of self-respect involves valuing oneself "as a being with dignity," which has three dominant correlative forms in the Western conception of personhood: "equality, agency, and individuality."[17] The personality of the cultural mulatto is endowed with all these elements: the freedom to navigate between cultures and ethnicities entails the equality and agency, which function as the prerequisites of their individuality.

Pertaining to the mixed legacies Ellis underlies that **"**[w]e no longer need to deny or suppress any part of our complicated and sometimes contradictory cultural baggage to please either white people or black."[18] The cultural mulatto finds his/her place and space in society, whereby s/he acquires "status worth," which "derives from such things as one's essential nature as a person: membership in a certain class, group, or people, social role; or places in a social hierarchy."[19] The cultural mulatto can leave behind the self-hate and an inferiority complex pervasively present in minority people's consciousness due to the hatred from and the rejection by the white dominated society. Thus the cultural mulatto has "evaluative self-respect," which is "merit, the measure of quality of character and conduct which we earn or lose through what we do.[20]

Arguably, there may be some truth in Eric Lott criticizing Ellis, who tends to be optimistic and too general: "[O]ptimism and desire burst [. . .] infectiously from Trey Ellis's essay," whereas the essay itself is "the false totalizing of a generation

[15] Dillon: 226.
[16] Ibid., 228.
[17] Ibid.,: 229.
[18] Ellis Ibid., 1989: 235.
[19] Dillon Ibid.,: 229.
[20]Ibid., 229.

of intellectuals."[21] Optimistic as Ellis's claims may sound, I believe they capture and diagnose shifts in the construction of American identity in the postmulticultural period, which are discernible and clearly identifiable in the theatrical representations of the new American, as the ensuing discussion will show.

Topdog/Underdog and *Yellow Face*

American theater has always been instrumental in helping to construct as well as challenge American identity. In the early days of American democracy the first truly American comedy *The Contrast* (1787) written by Royall Tyler largely contributed to unifying a new nation by defining and glorifying "a distinctive American character embodied in innocence, virtue and sincerity."[22] Produced at the dawn of the twenty first century, Parks's *Topdog/Underdog* and Hwang's *Yellow Face* stage a new kind of American, a cultural mulattoesqe character who embraces a mix of cultures, histories, and heritages, whereby both these dramatists question and deconstruct the viability of monolithic communities. Relying on the achievements of the postmodern theater—especially in the rhetorical and semiotic representation of the fragmented subjectivity and in the handling of theatrical space—they both use innovative methods and techniques to show the constructedness of race, identity, and ethnicity. They populate the space with historical, imaginary and real characters thereby underlining the multiplicity of selves and legacies, which in turn creates a peculiar synchronic presence of various generations.

Parks and Hwang reverse racial impersonation as a means to challenge stereotypical images of blacks and Asians, respectively. By reversing blackface and yellowface, widely used practices of racial stereotyping on stage and screen,[23] both dramatists defy the historical binaries of cultural identities and succeed in

[21] Ellis Ibid., 244.

[22] Siebert 1978: 3.

[23] Initially a style of entertainment that first occurred in minstrel shows, blackface is a pervasive practice of white actors and performers masking themselves with black paint to present racist black stereotypes. Yellowface is the same phenomenon applied to Asian Americans, that is, white actors artificially change their looks with makeup to look Asian. Neither phenomenon is entirely extinct and can still disseminate racist images, attitudes, and perceptions worldwide.

pushing beyond simple racial definitions. In both plays, the cultural mulattos are positioned in scandalous historical, cultural, and political events, which allow the two dramatists to display most acute clashes between different cultures and ethnicities. By providing a highly inventive blend of fact and fiction achieved by populating the stage with historical as well as fictional characters both Parks and Hwang considerably extend the time frame in their plays thus implicitly integrating disturbing phases from the history of blacks and Asians in America into the texture of the plays. Parks arches over more than two hundred years of American history by evoking the assassination of president Abraham Lincoln, while Hwang revisits the 1990 scandalous Broadway première of *Miss Saigon* to comment on the nearly one-hundred year long disturbing practice of yellowfacing in the US.

Topdog/Underdog dramatizes an archetypal rivalry between two black brothers named Lincoln (often used in a short form: Linc) and Booth living in a seedily furnished room in a brownstone, yet clearly, it is not only their names (given to them by their father as a joke) but also their deeds that evoke and, most importantly, repeat the historical tragedy, the assassination of Lincoln by John Wilkes Booth (1865). Linc works as a Lincoln impersonator enacting the president's assassination in an arcade, whereas Booth desperately tries to learn his brother's skills at three card monte game. Unable to acquire his brother's deftness Booth shoots his brother in a fatal fight over money.

In *Yellow Face* Hwang dramatizes how theatrical and political scandals in the 1990s and the New Millennium affected his own career, his family and the Asian American community, thus combining private grievances with public anxieties. The first theatrical scandal concerns casting a white actor, Jonathan Pryce for the main role (a Vietnamese pimp) in the Broadway performance of the musical *Miss Saigon* (1991), even though the role called for a Eurasian; the second is the failure of Hwang's *Face Value* (1993), a play about mistaken racial identities written as a response to the *Miss Saigon* debate. The political event central in the play is the "yellow peril" hysteria at the beginning of the 1990s that nearly destroys two prominent Asian Americans, nuclear scientist Wen Ho Lee and Hwang's father, Henry Hwang, the founder of the first Asian American Bank. Wen Ho Lee was falsely accused of espionage, while the charge against Henry Hwang was contributing to Bill Clinton's campaign, whereby, allegedly, he violated federal laws. These indignities, theatrical and political alike, make Hwang re-consider his initial politically correct understanding of race and shift to a perception of racial

identity as a personal individual choice, thus recognizing indirectly the legitimacy of a cultural mulattoesque identity.

The reversal of racial impersonation, the practice of masking whites as Asians in *Yellow Face* and masking blacks as whites in *Topdog/Underdog* function as an effectively employed metatheatrical element that not only demonstrates the performativity of racial identity but also debunks stereotypical assumptions attached to race. In Parks's play Linc's working as an Abe Lincoln impersonator is a performative act. Adopting the signifiers of identity change by whitefacing himself and putting on the Lincoln costume, a stovepipe top hat, beard and coat, Linc gains agency by crossing the color line between blacks and whites. Ironically enough, he is adamant to assert his own separate and equally significant identity, yet, he is constantly made to remember the figure of president Lincoln as well as the history related to him. A fact that substantiates the composite nature of his identity as a cultural mulatto. His failure to make a distinction between his "real" identity (Linc, a card hustler, a black man) and the one that he assumes when working (Lincoln, the president) shows the unfixed nature of race and identity, and eventually his hybrid, cultural mulattoesque character which is inevitably built of black and white legacies: "Fake Beard. Top hat. Don't make me into no Lincoln. I was on my own before any of that."[24] The Lincoln role creeps into his everyday life and the divisions between his role enacted in the arcade is blurred with his real self. Clothing, a vital element of identification, becomes a paradoxical signifier of identity as well as the means for the performative act. In a hurry to catch a bus home, Linc does not have time to take off his Lincoln "get-up," and a kid on the bus asks him for an autograph. Linc tells the story to Booth: "I pretended I didnt [sic] hear him at first. I'd had a long day. [. . .] They'd just done Lincoln in history class and he knew all about him, he'd been to the arcade but, I dunno, for some reason he was tripping cause there was Honest Abe right beside him on the bus."[25]

In addition to being an "uncanny reminder of the performativity of identity," Linc dressed as the President also "makes us intensely aware of Lincoln's (and the actor's) 'blackness'".[26] As a cultural mulatto, Linc re-writes blacks into history and erases the color line arbitrarily established. Linc is condemned to relive a representation of history he cannot remake. In her essay "Possession" Parks

[24] Park 2008: 30.
[25] Ibid., 11.
[26] Dietrick 2007: 6.

commits herself to re-writing black people's history into the American: "[. . .] so much of African American history has been unrecorded, dismembered, washed out, that one of my tasks as playwright is to—through literature and the special relationship between theatre and real life—locate the ancestral burial ground, dig for bones, hear the bones sing, write it down."[27] Lincoln's oscillations between his masks, clothes, and selves adequately illustrate that the text troubles blackness and holds it up for examination in ways that depart significantly from previous—and necessary—preoccupation with struggling for political freedom.

A summative and self-reflexive play, *Yellow Face* is a highly satirical dramatic rendition of Hwang's transformative journey—termed by him a "mockumentary" (qtd. in Berson, n. p.)—that re-examines the dilemmas he faced and the decisions he made in his attempt to define Asian American identity in a period from 1990 up to 2006. Applying the method of doubling himself in the character of the narrator/announcer DHH (the initials of his name), Hwang is able to distance himself from his earlier self and revises his former responses to his political correctness pertaining to the theatrical representation of Asian Americans with self-criticism. His "Pirandellian comedy" (Chin vii) offers the new model of cultural identity in the transformation of two characters, the Caucasian Marcus Dahlman aka Marcus Gee and DHH, and the dramatist's own progress from his color strict (a politically correct stance according to which only an Asian American can play a role for an Asian American) to his color blind (the color of the skin does not count at all when allocating roles in a theatre) perception of racial identity.

At the beginning of the play DHH is an ardent defender of Asian American actors' rights when he learns that a white actor Jonathan Pryce was cast in the principle role of the Broadway production of *Miss Saigon* in 1990. DHH finds it outrageous that after decades of white actors donning "yellowface," it is morally and ethically wrong for a white actor to play "Asian" because it denies competent Asian actors opportunities: "Yellow face? In this day and age? It's — It's — did suddenly turn [sic!] the clock back to 1920. Are we all going to smear shoe polish on our faces?"[28] Yet, DHH's own political correctness soon vanishes when he is confronted with the ethical question of artistic freedom by the producer of *Miss Saigon*: "How can you support such a blatant restriction of artistic freedom?"[29] DHH's oscillation between his color strict stance and his insistence on artistic

[27] Parks 2002: 4.
[28] Hwang 2007: 11.
[29] Ibid., 11.

freedom saves him from becoming the "poster child of political correctness,"[30] on the one hand, and compels him to think about the performative nature of race, on the other.

In response to the *Miss Saigon* debate DHH writes *Face Value*, which stages an Asian American character infiltrating a production in whiteface only to reveal later that he is Asian. Urged by finding the most suitable actor without typical physical Asian features to avoid stereotypical assumptions about race, by accident, DHH casts the role of the activist to Caucasian Marcus Dahlman, assuming that he is mixed race. Warned at the audition that the applicant does not have the Asian look, DHH replies: "What exactly are 'Asian features'? . . . Asian faces come in a variety of shapes and sizes – just like any other human beings."[31] Ironically enough, at the audition Marcus skillfully performs the role of a mixed race person by obscuring his ethnic origin as by law an applicant cannot be asked that. After realizing his casting mistake, DHH covers it up by going so far as giving Dahlman a new name, Marcus Gee and a Siberian Jewish ethnic background, which underlies the performativity of race. Park perceptively notes:

> With the twist of the Caucasian actor passing himself off as Asian, Hwang is able to examine race and ethnicity in contemporary society, demonstrating not only how Marcus ironically profits from his newfound status as a potentially oppressed man of color, but also how the oppression has less to do with one's actual ethnic background than with how one attempts to perform one's identity in a world fond of neat classifications.[32]

The Caucasian Marcus gains recognition and wealth by yellowfacing himself, whereby he adopts a cultural mulattoesque identity and successfully performs the role of the marginalized Asian American actor confined to accepting stereotypical minor roles. Curiously enough, the fake cultural mulatto transforms into a true cultural mulatto. He goes through a personal metamorphosis by gradually distancing himself from an alienated American culture only to discover a sense of community and peace with the Chinese people. Marcus's turning point in realizing connectedness occurs when he is sincerely moved by a welcoming and supportive group of Chinese students at a meeting: "Do you know how special this is? Out there – in the rest of America – everyone's on their own, fighting, to

[30] Ibid., 14.
[31] Ibid., 21-22.
[32] Park Ibid. 282.

stay afloat. But *you* – you've got each other. No, *we've* got each other!"[sic!].[33] Miraculously, from the stage of confessing he is a "fake," [34] he transforms into a true supporter of Chinese American communities and chooses to be Asian American. Intrigued to learn about Chinese culture he travels to Guizhou Province in China "to find – something real" there.[35]

Marcus's character fully complies with the requirements of a cultural mulatto archetype. Raised in Seattle, the son of a Russian Jew, and by yellowfacing himself first literally, then figuratively, Marcus indeed, has a composite identity. Admittedly, he adopts "the Chinese concept of face […] the face we choose to show the world – reveals who we really are."[36] He creates an interethnic contact space between all the cultures he embraces: Russian, Jewish, Chinese and American. As a cultural mulatto, Marcus troubles Asianness and holds it up for examination in ways that depart from an attempt to establish and sustain coherent Asian American identity in times of multiculturalism and post-multiculturalism.

By the end of his journey DHH understands that "people of color, do not choose to live inside labels: race is acted upon them from the outside in."[37] Indeed, DHH in *Yellow Face* is able to revise his outdated assumptions about race and suggests a new unbiased understanding of this concept when talking to Marcus:

> Years Ago, I discovered a face – one I could live better and more fully than anything I'd ever tried. But as the years went by, my face became my mask. And I became just another actor – running around in yellow face. [sic!] (*Pause*.) That's when you came in. To take words like "Asian" and "American" like "race" and "nation," mess them up so bad no one has any idea what they mean any more.[38]

"In a matter of less than four decades," Zsolt Virágos maintains in the mid 1990s, "the focus of American culture has clearly moved from the once-hypothesized melting pot to the boiling pot," whereby he refers to the conflicted multicultural scene in America towards the 1980s, which was characterized by "divisively multicultural championing of difference."[39] Now, in the second decade

[33] Hwang Ibid., 32.
[34] Ibid., 2007: 23.
[35] Ibid., 2007: 9.
[36] Ibid., 2007: 40.
[37] Park Ibid., 282.
[38] Hwang Ibid., 63.
[39] Virágos 1996: 16.

of the twenty-first century, in less than three decades later American culture is now approaching a form of *symbiosis* of different cultures. The cult of ethnicity celebrated earlier happens to be replaced by the cult of the cultural mulatto. Fluent in both the mainstream and minority worlds, navigating easily in between the iconic signifiers of two or more cultures, the cultural mulatto, the new type of American identity helps break down the arbitrary barriers erected between mainstream and minority cultures. Crèvecoeur and Whitman saw much farther ahead than their contemporaries or many subsequent generations did as their understanding of a "new race" not only foreshadows but largely corresponds to the cultural mulatto in the twenty–first century.

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Kata Anna Váró

THE QUESTION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN BRITISH CINEMA

For film historians and lecturers of film history national identity is one of the key considerations and one of the most challenging notions nowadays. During the early ages of cinema and film history writing (the two were born almost simultaneously)[1] the concept of 'national cinema' did not present any challenges. Especially in the period before and around the Second World War there were numerous comprehensive writings on the history of cinema. Georges Charensol's *40 ans de cinéma, 1895-1935: Panorama du cinéma muet et parlant* (1935); Georges Sadoul's *Histoire de l'art du cinéma des origines à nous jours* (1949); Paul Rotha's *The Film Till Now* (1949); Jacob Lewis' *The Rise of the American Film: A Critical History* (1939). Lewis' book followed the structure of the Bildungsroman, which set an example for film history writings for decades. Film history writings followed a clear, chronological order with emphasis on marked changes in trends, famous people and famous films.[2] Ulrich Gregor and Enno Patalas' *History of Film* (1966); Georges Sadoul's *Histoire générale de cinema*, 6 volumes (1973-77); Jean Mitry's: *Histoire du Cinema* 5 volumes (1967-80) also followed the same structure similarly to Hevesy Iván's *A némafilm egyetemes története I-II. 1895-1929* (1993) or Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell's monumental *Film History: An Introduction* (1994). These books dealt with films of artistic merit from all over the world which had been selected by critics and film historians. The selection was based on quality to emphasize the artistic values of the moving pictures. The films were presented in clear chronological order and were only divided into chapters of different national cinemas to group them around tendencies such as German Expressionism or Italian Neo-realism, for example. In Sadoul's book, the history of cinema before 1950 is divided into six different periods according to major landmarks in the

[1] The early examples come from the USA and include Robert Grau's *Theatre of Science* (1914); Terry Ramsaye's *A Million and one Night*s (1926); Benjamin Hampton' *A History of the Movies* (1931); Lewis Jacobs' *The Rise of the American Film* (1939) (Allen and Gomery 1985: 28).

[2] Vitali and Willemen 2006: 2-3.

history of cinema or world history. For film historians dealing with pre-war cinema, especially with silent cinema, the biggest challenge was the task of finding copies or remains of the films, and related documents discussed in their books, and not how to divide the history of cinema into chapters.

From the 1950s and 1960s the number of films increased dramatically, partly due to the spread of television and the film industry's fight against the new medium, partly because of the ever growing number of independent productions. To make the history of cinema easier to approach film historians began to group films by their nationalities and/or by decades. Most often they divided the post-1950s film history into national sections and those national sections were further divided into decades. These classifications clearly had their limits,[3] but they were only subject to debate and discussion in the late 1970s and 1980s when film history and film theory began to get closer to each other and certain questions and considerations of contemporary film theory found their ways into film history writings and eventually led to some major changes in this field and resulted in the acceptance of film history as an academic discipline. Such changes, for instance, included that film historians discovered the importance of genre films and marginal films, and began to investigate their roles in national film histories. It was almost impossible to make selections from the vast number of mainstream (legitimized by box-office records) and marginal films or art films (legitimized by critics and film archives) in the 1970s and 1980s as early film history writings had done, so comprehensive film books[4] were replaced by specialized film histories such as Sue Harper's *Picturing the Past: The Rise and Fall of the British Costume Film*; Raymond Durgnat's *A Mirror For England: British Movies From Austerity to Affluence*; David Pirie's *A Heritage of Horror: The English Gothic Cinema 1946-1972*. The insufficiency of national film histories also gave birth to the "New Frontiers" books in Great Britain, which deal with a wide range of topics from mainstream to marginal film, the star system, the film industry in Britain and the authors.

[3] For instance, it is widely accepted that the 1970s in British cinema indeed started in 1968, with the withdrawal of the American funding. The end of the decade is more difficult to define. I suggest that it lasted until 1982, the Oscar-winning success of *Chariots of Fire* by Hugh Hudson. So when we talk about the Seventies in British Cinema we have to bear in mind that the particular decade stretched for fourteen years. As opposed to that Sue Harper, for instance, marks end of the decade by the rise of Margaret Thatcher to power in 1979 (Harper in Newland 2010: 23).

[4] Perhaps the best known exception is David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson's *Film History: An Introduction*

Besides specialized books dealing with certain genres or tendencies, dividing film history into national film histories has remained to be popular in spite of its recently often criticized problematic nature. The related theoretical debate started with Philip Rosen's "*Problems in the study of National cinema*"(1984), whose main concern with national film histories was the difficulty of defining and selecting the national corpus. The national corpus provides the basis for the model of a given nation's cinema and without a well-defined corpus it is difficult to draw a clear picture of a nation's cinema. Susan Hayward pointed out in her book *French National Cinema* (1993) the other problematic notion of national film histories, namely that national film histories take the concept of 'nation' and 'national' for granted and fail to define what these very concepts really mean and what characteristic features lend special national character to a movie. (Hayward lists the following attributes of the national character, which might aid the definition of national cinema: narratives, genres, codes and conventions, gestures and morphology, the star as a sign, mainstream and marginal films and film as a representation of the national myths).[5] These factors are capable of shaping, or in certain cases altering, the national character.

The representation of the national myth is also a key factor in shaping the national character. The significance of this was recognized as early as the 1920s by the Soviet Union, where film was used extensively for political propaganda. National identity and the representation of the national character and the grandeur of Britain became important first in the 1930-1940s' cinema and the cinema of World War Two, when filmmakers aimed at forming national consensus and project an image of a strong nation with great historical figures and traditions, a nation that is worth fighting for.[6]

Sometimes the representation takes over the national myth and proves to be so powerful that it alters the facts and creates a new national myth. In literature, Shakespeare's depiction of the villainous Richard III has proved to be so influential that it has become part of the national myth in spite of the fact that the representation was based mostly on the playwright's imagination and the supposed expectations of the House of Tudor. In British cinema the main score of *Chariots of Fire* (Hugh Hudson, 1981) and the powerful images of the runners on

[5] Hayward 1993 in *Metropolis* 2001/I.: 20.

[6] This message was explicitly conveyed in the iconic scene of *That Hamilton Woman* (Alexander Korda, 1941), when the two main characters recollect the great historical figures and victories of the nation, which is once again threatened by enemies.

the shore have become emblematic representations of sportsmanship, willpower and team effort and thus became part of the national myth formed by cinema to the extent that the theme score of Hudson's film became the anthem of the 2012 London Olympic Games. The fact that the score was composed by a Greek composer, Vangelis Papathanassiou and that *Chariots of Fire* is only about seventy per cent based on facts and even the historic facts are often distorted for the sake of the narrative proved to be of minor importance. The iconic images of the runners and the accompanying score of a single film have managed to shape national identity to such extent that decades later the very same score can still evoke grandeur and define British sportsmanship and all related virtues not only inside the country but all over the world.

Returning to the main problems of national film histories we can see that they also tend to assume a certain kind of homogeneity within a given nation and the cinema of that nation, and presuppose clear, distinctive characteristic features from the films of other nations, without ever questioning the relevance of this assumed homogeneity in the post-colonial and globalized world. Especially from the 1970s the British Film Industry cannot be reduced to the perspectives of white Anglo-Saxon male filmmakers, as we are going to see later.

Nor do national film histories ever question or ever recognize that the clear distinctive features might not only be attributed to the national character but to the individual filmmaker's vision, which can be filtered through the filmmaker's own national identity but it is often difficult to separate the national character from the artist's vision.

Before I go into more details concerning the questions of national identity in British cinema, as Susan Hayward suggests, let us take a closer look at the definitions of the concepts 'nation' and 'national'. Nation is quite often used but hard or – as Hugh Seton-Watson states – impossible to define with a clear-cut, scientific definition.[7] The concept of nation is often defined as people living in the same geographical area, speaking the same language, sharing a common history and common cultural heritage based on a common collective memory. Maurice Halbwachs noted that there are as many collective memories as groups.[8] Thus "collective memory is always group specific and the group is well-defined by space and time" as Jan Assmann asserted.[9] Nation and national identity are

[7] Hayward Ibid., 14.
[8] Assmann 2004: 40-41.
[9] Ibid., 44-45.

shaped by this group specific collective memory, and by the common language, common religion, shared history and cultural heritage, shared myths which help to form communities and define group identity. Collective memory, similarly to myths, helps to hold together communities. It was Benedict Anderson who discovered similarities between the definitions of nation and myth and came to the conclusion that the nation is only an imagined political community.[10]

Again, similarly to myths, collective memory is rooted in the past − therefore the past plays a crucial role in every group's life and in defying the group's identity, as Jan Assmann points out in his book *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination*. The group's relation to the past and the present is also a key feature in establishing continuity between the past and the present, because the relationship between the two defines for the members of the group and to the outsiders who they really are.[11] As Assmann points out, "it is the past that makes 'we' from the 'I' by forming collective memory from the individual memory, thus binding people together."[12] This common past and its most prominent events, which everyone in the group keeps in mind, build up the collective memory and thus lay the foundation for collective identity and also for national identity. Benedict Anderson in his book *Imagined Continuities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* pointed out that the group-binding common past often exists only as a 'narrative of origin', but it is still capable of forming group identity and aiding the group in differentiating itself from other groups. Benedict Anderson lists "modern structures of time and space, capitalism, communication technology and language differences to contribute to a group's identity."[13]

Film as a narrative form can have a crucial role in capturing and carrying cultural memory keeping myths in memory and forming new myths, as the above mentioned *Chariots of Fire* did. It can be seen as an artificial and institutionalized (not to mention industrialized) exteriorization[14] of collective memory. With the disappearance of the milieux de mémoire, lieux the mémoire becomes more

[10] Hayward Ibid., 14.
[11] Assmann Ibid., 16.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Anderson in Hayward Ibid., 14.
[14] André Leroi-Gourhan names different mediums for the exteriorization of collective memory including primitive tools, writing, filing card-punch and computers (Assmann 2004: 21-22).

important because it lives on and helps reconstructing history.[15] Film, as a text and/or narrative form, plays a vital role in forming group identity and preserving and bequeathing the shared values of a group or nation, but at the same time it might leave its impact on national identity or even distort it. Film, as a cultural product, can reflect a certain group's picture of itself or the picture that the group wishes to project of itself and thus identify itself with this reflection and separate or differentiate itself from other nations.

Michèle Lagny in *De l'histoire du cinéma. Méthode historique et l'histoire du cinéma* (1992) remarked that the similarities of cultural values define certain cultural cohesion. Cultural cohesion is a fundamental building block of group identity, which is further enforced by political and economic borders and laws, the territorial unity and the ruling economic and political power further stabilizes the nation and national identity.[16] Most theorists (including Frederic Jameson, Benedict Anderson and Anthony Birch) emphasize the importance of a common culture and common cultural heritage and the continuity they provide.[17] In fact, Birch, for instance, places continuity above separation/detachment and differentiation as the other key criteria in the definition of nation. Language is another essential element in the definition of nation. Hayward mentions Johann Gottfried Herder and Johann Gottlieb Fichte, who both named language as the pillar of nationhood.[18] In the second part of his definition, Herder, similarly to Hegel, emphasized political organization.[19] Michèle Lagny also concluded that the "group identity is further enforced by political and economic borders and laws."[20]

Michèle Lagny also remarks that inside homogeneity is typical of nations that became centralized relatively early, and names England and France as examples, as they are not characterized by regional diversification.[21] However, as we are going to see in the post World War Two England this is no longer true. Instead it is more appropriate – as Andrew Higson suggests in his essay "The Instability of the National" (2000) – that national film histories, especially histories dealing with the history of British Cinema should take heterogeneity into consideration instead

[15] Nora 1999.
[16] Lagny 1992 in *Metropolis* 1997/I. 10.
[17] Hayward Ibid. 14-15.
[18] Ibid., 16.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Lagny Ibid., 14.
[21] Ibid.

of assuming homogeneity within the borders of the country.[22] The films coming from British cinema reflect heterogeneity especially after the 1970s and film history writings should embrace it too. It is especially important nowadays when there is a growing number of remarkable filmmakers who are recent or new immigrants and when national cinemas are kept alive mostly by co-productions or transnational films.

In spite of the above mentioned limits of national film history writings Michèle Lagny argues that it is still relevant to group films in film histories by their nationalities because the world is divided into nations. He also argues that film production should not be separated from the given country's economy, culture, politics and institutions. Film history should be studied in this broader context and not only in the context of the nation's film industry.[23] When we speak about national cinema in a wider context we must keep heterogeneity and regional diversity in mind and recognize the fragility of territorial unity and political stability. It is enough to take one look at the political and economic situation of post-war Great Britain, especially the Great Britain of the 1970s, to see the relevance of the above statement. The social and political context of the Seventies seem to pinpoint why this much neglected period is so important in the history of British Cinema, in film history writing and in the discussion of national identity.

Andy Beckett gave the title *When the Lights Went Out* (2009) to his monograph on the Seventies, which is quite telling in itself. Tom Nairn characterized the period in the *Break-up of Britain* (1977) as a decade marked by "rapidly accelerating backwardness, economic stagnation, social decay and cultural despair."[24] The 1970s witnessed political turmoil in Britain, the renewed outbreak of the Anglo-Irish conflict, especially the Ulster crisis, and an economic crisis triggered partly by the two oil crises,[25] which shook the feeling of comfort of the western world. As a result of the weakening economy there was an increased hostility towards immigrants.[26] Stuart Laing also added inner-city racial tension, the development of the Women's Movement (and general shifts in gender politics), industrial conflicts, the rise of nationalism in Wales and Scotland, and the reappearance of

[22] Higson 2000: 40-43.

[23] Lagny Ibid.

[24] Nairn 1977: 51.

[25] The first took place in 1973 and the second in 1979.

[26] It should be mentioned that the rate of immigration did not increase during this decade but the bad economy made immigrants more visible and led to nationalism and racial tension especially in urban areas.

the North-South split in England.[27] It is also important to mention the accelerated globalization[28] in the second half of the 20th century, which also worked against the national character and together with all the already mentioned factors made it impossible to speak about a singular consensual culture within Britain. Especially the renewed outbreak of the Anglo-Irish conflict questioned the relevance of the present geographical and political borders, political unity, common heritance, and shared religion, as it brought the issue of unity vs. separation to light and made the definition of the nation look quite problematic, even invalid. These political developments induced a crisis of identity and moral values, which, especially on the political level, led to a longing for stability, clear moral values and a strong governing hand. As Stuart Hall noted, the Seventies brought along "the disarticulation of post-war consensus and also it was the period when especially from the second half of the decade elements of Thatcherism were establishing themselves within public discourse."[29] After the failure of the Labour Party at the 1979 elections the Conservatives came to power under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher, which resulted in a return to conservative values not only in society but on television and on the big screen as well.[30]

This transitory period in Britain proved to be a period of transition in British cinema and in film history writing as well. In the 1970s all the film related documents of the wartime Ministry of Information (MOI) Films Division were released, under the Thirty Year Rule and became accessible for film historians and scholars.[31] Moreover, the release of the film documentation of the 1940s

[27] Laing 1994: 30.

[28] However, at this point, I must add that globalization is not pure evil when it comes to the cinema as it helped the rapid spread of the moving picture all over the world, and the globalized film language enables us to comprehend films coming from all over the world. Of course, there are examples of films which refuse to share this globalized cinematic language but most of the time they hardly register and thus remain inaccessible. The 'insider knowledge' – as Thomas Elsaesser calls it – can only be sold outside the country if the film speaks the globalized language of cinema and keeps the 'outsiders' - meaning foreign audiences - in mind (Elsaesser in Friedman 2006: 51).

[29] Hall 1983 in Newland 2010: 12.

[30] TV productions as *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) and *Nicholas Nickleby* (1982) gradually replaced the socially engaged contemporary drama series of the small screen, such as *Play for Today* at the beginning of the 1980s. The number of *Play for Today* plays dropped markedly from 1980 and the series eventually ended in 1984.

[31] Chapman in Ashby and Higson 2000: 195.

foregrounded the collections of the national film archives, as well. Film archives are essential in every nation's cinema as their selection of what to preserve already provides a selection based on cultural values for national film histories. Susan Hayward mentions the role of the archives as one of the key factors in defining national cinema. The film archives' selections function as preservers of culture and maintainers of the national cultural heritage. By selecting a film for preservation, we already pronounce it to be part of the national heritage.[32] In the Seventies the opening of the MOI's film related documents of the Second World War not only pulled the focus back to this period but also reinvigorated empirical studies. Furthermore, it led to the revision of the era, the revision of film history dealing with the war period and by the end of the decade it also led to the recognition of the shortcomings of empirical studies. Thus in the early 1970s a new critical tendency, the so-called 'revisionist criticism' appeared. The first wave of revisionism is more strictly based on empirical studies of the films and all film related documents of the Second World War. The second wave of revisionism also focused on this period and was rooted in the empiricists' studies but it took a major step forward towards bridging the gap between film history and film theory by putting up questions along which the history of cinema could be rewritten again and again. Some authors opened new prospects for studying films and rethinking British Cinema.[33] The most influential writings were pointed out by Jeffrey Richards in "Rethinking British Cinema": James Curran and Vincent Porter's *British Cinema History*; Charles Barr's *All Our Yesterdays*; Andrew Higson's; *Dissolving Views* and Robert Murphy's *The British Cinema Book*.[34]

It was also new to apply the concepts of genres for studying national cinema. Marcia Landy's *British Genres: Cinema and Society 1930–1960*; Sarah Street's *British National Cinema* and Robert Murphy's *Realism and Tinsel: Cinema and Society 1939–1949* are examples of analyzing British cinema from the aspects of its most popular genres. The horror genre, for example, was meticulously analyzed in books such as David Pirie's *A Heritage Horror*; Peter Hutchings' *Hammer and Beyond: The British Horror Film* and Denis Meikle's *A History of Horrors: The Rise and Fall of the House of Hammer*. The ever-popular costume drama was also subject to close examination, for example in Sue Harper's *Picturing the Past: The Rise and Fall of the British Costume Film* which established a model for genre analysis. Harper established a

[32] Hayward Ibid., 19.
[33] Chapman Ibid., 193-197.
[34] Richards in Ashby and Higson 2000: 29.

genre taxonomy to aid social, gender and class studies of the genre, and mapped out the way these films functioned in the representation and consumption of history.[35]

Most of the writers linked to the second wave of revisionism started in the Seventies and their works were rooted in the empirical studies of the decade but they managed to step away from the rigorous scientific method and successfully took a major step closer to theoretical writings. It was significant that the new critical approach came into effect during the first years of the Thatcher era. The most outstanding representatives of the second wave of revisionist criticism were Christine Gledhill,[36] Gillian Swanson,[37] Andrew Higson,[38] Geoff Hurd,[39] Steve

[35] Richards Ibid., 32.

[36] Gledhill, Christine. *Reframing British Cinema 1918-1928: Between Restraint and Passion*. London: British Film Institute, 2003.; Gledhill, Christine and Williams, Linda Eds. *Reinventing Film Studies 2000*.; Gledhill, Christine. *Nationalising Femininity: Culture, Sexuality and British Cinema in the Second World War*. edited with Gillian Swanson. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996.; Gledhill, Christine, Jacky Bratton, and Jim Cook. *Melodrama: Stage, Picture, Screen*. London: British Film Institute, 1994.; Gledhill, Christine. *Stardom: Industry of Desire*. edited collection 1991/6. London: Routledge; reprinted, Vision and Language, Seoul, Korea: Vision and Sound, 1996.; Gledhill, Christine. *Home Is Where the Heart Is: Essays on Melodrama and the Woman's Film*. edited collection. London: British Film Institute, 1987.

[37] Swanson, Gillian. Swanson, Gillian. *Drunk With the Glitter: Space Consumption and Sexual Instability in Modern Urban Culture*. London and New York: Routledge, 2007.; Swanson, Gillian**.** *Serenity, Self-Regard and the Genetic Sequence: Social Psychiatry and Preventive Eugenics in Britain, 1930's-1950's***.** New Formations No 60, Special Issue: *Eugenics Old and New*. 50-65; Swanson, Gillian. *Shattered into a Multiplicity of Warring Functions': Synthesis, Disintegration and 'Distractibility***.** *Intellectual History Review*, Vol. 17 No 3, 305-327., November 2007.; Crisp, Jane, Kay Ferres, and Gillian**,** Swanson. *Deciphering Culture: Ordinary Curiosities and Subjective Narratives***.** London and New York: Routledge, 2000.

[38] Higson, Andrew. *English Heritage, English Cinema: Costume Drama since 1980*. Oxford: OUP, 2003. Higson, Andrew. *Waving The Flag: Constructing a National Cinema in Britain*. Oxford: OUP, 1995.; paperback edition, 1997.; Higson, Andrew. 'The instability of the national': *British Cinema, Past and Present*. Higson, Andrew and Justine Ashby, Eds. Routledge, 2000.; Higson, Andrew. "The Heritage Film and British Cinema" *Dissolving Views: Key Writings on British Cinema*. London: Cassell 1996.

[39] Hurd, Geoff. *National Fictions*: *World War Two in British films and television*. London: BFI Publishing, 1984.

Neale,[40] John Hill[41] and Stuart Hall,[42] the most prominent scholar of the representation of identity.[43]

In the history of British cinema it was not only the troubled economic and political situation of the Seventies which made the 1970s a key period from the perspective of the question of national identity. It was a period marked by a quest for identity and a quest for survival for British cinema. As I mentioned earlier, the 1970s started in 1968 with the "'annus mirabilis', when there seemed to be a break in structures of feelings" – as Sue Harper noted.[44] 1968 was the year when the British film industry received its largest American financial support ever. However, right after that the majority of the American financing was withdrawn, which was a major blow to the film industry.[45] Thus the whole decade can be characterized as a quest for a way out of the crisis, a quest for identity and a quest for images that could be sold both inside and — most importantly — outside the country to secure financing for domestic productions. As Alexander Walker remarked in *National Heroes*: "…[British cinema] looked like the country itself: it had a residual energy, but in the main was feeling dull, drained, debilitated, infected by a run-down feeling becoming characteristic of British life."[46]

This instability and crisis, this – as Christopher Booker noted – "unwelcome explosion into reality," however, laid the foundation for a genuinely British

[40] Neale, Steve, Stuart Hall. *Epics, Spectacles and Blockbusters: A Hollywood History*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2010.; *"Un-American" Hollywood: Politics and Film in the Blacklist Era*, New Brunswick, New Jersey and London: Rutgers University Press, 2007.; Swashbuckling, Sapphire and Salt: „Un-American Contributions to Television Costume Adventure Series in the 1950s", Krutnik F, Neale S, Neve B, Stanfield P Eds. *Un-American Hollywood: Politics and Film in the Blacklist Era*, New Brunswick, New Jersey and London: Rutgers University Press, 2007. 198-209.

[41] Hill, John. *British Cinema in the 1980s.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.; Hill, John. *Sex, Class and Realism: British Cinema 1956-63.* London: British Film Institute, 1986. 228.; Hill, John. "Revisiting British Film Studies." Journal of British Cinema and Television. 7, 2, 2010. 299-310.; Hill, John. "Contemporary British Cinema: Industry, Policy, Identity." Cineaste. 26, 4, 2001. 34-37.

[42] Hall, Stuart. "The Question of Cultural Identity." Hall, D. Held, T. McGrew. Eds. *Modernity and Its Future.* Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992.; Hall, S. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices.* 1997.

[43] Geraghty 1983: 94.

[44] Harper in Newland 2010: 23.

[45] Ibid., 24.

[46] Walker 2005: 15.

cinema as opposed to the almost entirely English dominated cinema of the previous decades.[47] Although many people would describe the British New Wave of the late 1950s and early 1960s as a predecessor of British national cinema, which came to life in the 1990s thanks to the works of such directors as Jim Sheridan and Danny Boyle among others, I would argue that in fact it was the transitional period of the Seventies which played a vital role in the rise of a diverse British cinema, a cinema that truthfully reflected the heterogeneity and diversity of Britain. The reasons for that are the following: this was a period of economic and political crisis, which led to the questioning of unity and homogeneity, which had characterized most films and writings on British cinema before the 1970s. This enforced homogeneity can be understood during the World War Two period, when national unity was a key for survival. Later in the 1950s and 60s, as a result of the New Wave, lower social classes and Northern industrial regions received some attention, but it is important to emphasize that the New Wave did not break the homogeneity, only brought some colours to the picture (for example, the Northern working class perspective in Karel Reisz's *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1960), the female perspective in Tony Richardson's *A Taste of Honey* (1961) written by a nineteen-year-old working class female writer Shelagh Delaney). In spite of all this, the films of the English New Wave did not venture further north than the industrial cities of Leeds, Manchester or Sheffield and did not include the perspectives of the working classes, or as a matter of fact any of the classes in Scotland, Wales or Ireland.

In the Seventies smaller scale, mostly independent productions and TV productions kept the film industry alive. The small independent productions no longer wished to cater for the tastes of mass audiences but rather to smaller sections of audiences. As a result of this mass audiences were gradually replaced by niche audiences with specialized interests. This encouraged more radical filmmakers and filmmaking groups to come to the fore, as pleasing larger audiences was no longer a requirement because there was no big money put into the films and there were no business-minded studio producers and executives supervising the works of these filmmakers.[48]

[47] Booker in Walker 2005: 15.

[48] The London Film-Makers' Co-op (LFMC) was founded in 1966 following in the footsteps of the New-York based The Film Makers' Cooperative founded by Jonas Mekas. They started out in London with screenings held at the Better Books bookstore, which was one of the emblematic places of the counter culture in London in the Seventies. Among the founding members we find Stephen Dwoskin and Bob Cobbing. The most prominent

The other major development was the spread of television and the growing number of television productions, especially the new BBC series called *Play for Today*, which replaced the leftist, politically engaged and socially conscious *The Wednesday Play*. The series started in 1970 and lasted until 1984, and it included over three hundred contemporary plays written for stage or directly for television. These plays were screened prime time all over the nation. Among the directors we find Ken Loach, Alan Parker, Stephen Frears and Scottish director John Mackenzie etc. The BBC earlier established English Regions Drama, which enabled the shooting of several episodes of *Play For Today* in Birmingham. *Play for Today*, as its predecessors such as *The Wednesday Play*, *Second City Firsts*, *Thirty-Minute Theatre* etc. managed to capture what it meant to be British in contemporary Britain, and shape the national identity, as Thomas Elsaesser pointed out.[49] Television, and especially *Play for Today* succeeded in reflecting the diversity of contemporary British society, presenting the lives of the immigrants, human trafficking, as in for instance writer/director, Philip Martin's thriller, *Gangsters* (1975), or Leon

directors of the group were Malcolm Le Grice, Peter Gidal, Michael "Atters" Attree, Annabel Nicolson, Liz Rhodes, Gill Eatherly, Roger Hammond, David Crosswaite, William Raban, and the director of *Orlando*, Sally Potter made her first film there (O'Pray in Higson 1996: 181).

[48] A Berwick Street Film Collective was started in 1972. Marc Karlin, James Scott, Richard Mordant, and Humphrey Treveylan were the founding members. They are best known for their controversial documentary, *Nightcleaners*.
(http://www.luxonline.org.uk/themes/collective/organisation.html retrieved: 22 January, 2013)

[48] Feminist film group working between 1972 and 1976. Its leader was Midge McKenzie. Members included: Esther Ronay, Susan Shapiro, Francine Winham, Fran MacLean, Barbara Evans, Linda Wood. Their best-known films are the following: *Bettshanger Kent* (1972), *Serve and Obey* (1972), *Miss/Mrs* (1972), *Fakenham Film* (1972), *Women of the Rhondda* (1973), *The Amazing Equal Pay Show* (1974), *Put Yourself in My Place* (1974), *About Time* (1976), *Whose Choice* (1976) (http://www.bffs.org.uk/ retrieved: 22 January 2013.)

[48] A radical, politically engaged filmmaking group established in the Seventies in London. The only made one feature length film, called, *Rocinante* (1986).

[48] Liberation Films grew out of the Angry Arts movement with the leadership of VSC activists.
The specialized at distributing 16mm films but also made films and organized screenings. (http://www.liberation-films.com/ retrieved: 22 January, 2013.; Marlene Nadle, 'Angry Arts: Aiming Through the Barrier', The Village Voice, 9 February 1967: 15).

[49] Elsaesser in Friedman 2006: 50-53.

Griffith's *A Passage to England* (directed by John MacKenzie, 1975), football in a country where it is a religion in Jack Rosenthal's *Another Sunday and Sweet F. A.* (directed by Michael Apted, 1972), the lives of the workers and the unemployed, alcoholism, and criticism of the National Health Care System, for example, in Trevor Griffith's *Through the Night* (directed by Michael Lindsay-Hogg, 1975) and Alan Bennett's *Intensive Care* (directed by Gavin Millar, 1982). The lives of the black people in Britain were captured in Michael Abben Setts' *Black Christmas* (directed by Stephen Frears, 1977); Tom Clarke's *Victims of Apartheid* (directed by Stuart Burge, 1978); Horace Ové and Jim Hawkins' *A Hole in Babylon* (directed by Horace Ové, 1979) and Rose Tremain talked about a homosexual South African writer who got into confrontations with his Jamaican landlady in *A Room for the Winter* (directed by Jim Goddard, 1981). The Jewish experience was best reflected in Jack Rosenthal's plays. One of his most outstanding pieces is *The Evacuees* (directed by Alan Parker, 1975) won both BAFTA and Emmy Awards. Female writers and directors such as Julia Jones, Mary O'Malley, Antonia Fraser, Jennifer Johnston, Carol Bunyan, Rose Tremain, Janey Preger, Rachel Billington, Paula Milne, Sue Townsend, Shirley Gee, Judy Forrest and Anne Devlin were also present in the series. The Anglo-Irish conflict was present in Colin Welland's *Your Man from Six Counties* (directed by Barry Davis, 1976); Stewart Parker's *Catchpenny Twist* (directed by Robert Knights, 1977); Caryl Churchill's *The Legion Hall Bombing* (directed by Roland Joffé, 1978); David Leland's *Psy-Warriors* (directed by Alan Clarke, 1981); Anne Devlin wrote and directed *The Long March* (1984-85). The Scottish experience and Scottish national pride were represented in Peter McDougall's *Just Another Saturday* (directed by John Mackenzie, 1975), *Elephant's Graveyard* (directed by John Mackenzie, 1976) and *Just a Boy's Game* (directed by John Mackenzie, 1979).[50] John McGrath wrote and directed *The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black Black Oil* (1974); Roddy McMillan wrote, directed and acted in *The Bevellers* (1974). Antonia Fraser's *Charades* (directed by Roderick Graham, 1977); James Duthie's *Donal and Sally* (directed by Brian Parker, 1978); Douglas Dunn's *Plougman's Share* (directed by Fiona Cumming, 1979); Alma Cullen's *Degree of Uncertainty* (directed by Paul Annett, 1979) all revolved around Scotland and being Scottish. Wales was represented in Dennis Potter's *Joe's Ark* (directed by

[50] Both Peter McDougall and Roddy McMillan were of working class origins and had not received formal training on screenwriting. McDougall was a painter (former shipyard worker) at Colin Welland screenwriter's house, who encouraged him to write for television. McMillan was himself a beveller in Glasgow.

Alan Bridges, 1974), Julia Jones' *Back of Beyond* (directed by Desmond Davis, 1974), Willy Russell's musical *Our Day Out* (directed by Pedr James, 1978) Tony Garner and Robert O'Brian's *Z for Zachariah* (directed by Tony Garner, 1984), Tim Rose Prince's *The Exercise* (directed by Gareth Davies, 1984). To add to the complexity of the picture, the series also contained though only a few pieces about the upper classes, such as Christopher Bigsby and Malcolm Bradbury's *The After Dinner Game* (directed by Robert Knights, 1975); Brian Clark's *The Saturday Party* (directed by Barry Davis, 1975) and its sequel also written by Clark and directed by Davis, *The Country Party* (1977); Mike Leigh wrote and directed *Abigail's Party* (1977); Trevor Griffith's *Counts: A Tory Story* (directed by Richard Eyre, 1981), and Stephen Poliakoff's *Soft Targets* (directed by Charles Sturridge, 1982).[51]

In this respect, television was far more progressive and daring than cinema, mostly because it did not necessarily want to address audiences outside the country. As Mamoun Hassan put it, domestic audiences provided "the bread and butter and the foreign audiences were only the jam."[52] Bread and butter were secured by the license fees. The opposite is true to cinema because there the foreign audiences provide the bread and butter for countries without a sizable domestic market. Hence derives the biggest problem with the *Play for Today* series and with its big screen predecessor, the films of the English New Wave. As Thomas Elsaesser pointed out, neither of them produced 'marketable images of Britain'.[53] *Play for Today* was able to capture the diversity of national identity but was not able to 'project' it in a way that it would have been desirable for foreign viewers. The 'insider knowledge' offered by the plays was mostly interesting for insiders, as opposed to the costume drama of the 1930-40s or the 1980-90s, which produced marketable images which proved to be consumable for audiences outside the country.[54] These two waves of period pieces were able to reinforce and most importantly project national identity, a national identity much desired in the period of instability and crisis. Therefore the key to the way out of the crisis of the Seventies was to project a kind of British national identity (based on much more exclusive representation of ethnicities and social classes) that the rest of the world was keen to see. 'Social imagery' was replaced by 'national imagery' and the whole range of national iconography was put on display to project Britishness, or

[51] TV Cream http://www.tvcream.co.uk/?cat=2682 retrieved: 10 January, 2013.

[52] Elsaesser Ibid., 50.

[53] Ibid., 50-51.

[54] Ibid.

rather Englishness.[55] This dynamic of 'realism vs. romanticism' is a typical characteristic feature of the history of British cinema from the very beginning to the present and was first pointed out by Raymond Durgnat, who called it the "Jekyll-and-Hyde phenomenon of British Cinema".[56] Thomas Elsaesser introduced another, similarly polarizing concept into the discourse, the respectable 'official' and the disrespectable 'unofficial' categories, and he argued that the cyclical renaissance of British cinema is not more than just the occasional reversal of these two poles.[57] The 'official' category contained films that conformed to the cultural politics of the period and cemented the picture of national unity. Thomas Elsaesser listed *Chariots of Fire* as official, for example, while John Boormann's *Hope and Glory* (1988) was named as unofficial. The unofficial category was represented by the films of filmmakers such as Mike Leigh, Peter Greenaway and Derek Jarman, just to mention a few, who painted a wholly different picture of the nation than James Ivory, the director strongly associated with heritage cinema.[58] As I mentioned earlier the history of British cinema seems to be favorable for this kind of juxtaposition when it comes to the representation of national identity and it is based on the assumption that "for every mythic or cliché image of Britain, there is a counter-cliché."[59] However tempting it is to contrast the images of the New Wave and *Play for Today* with the images of the heritage films one must remember that it is just as polarizing as contrasting the official and the unofficial categories. These kinds of juxtapositions tend to ignore that in their own ways all these images are manifestations of the national identity. They are all quite exclusive in their representations as they usually focused on, or biased towards one particular social class or subject matter and rarely show the real interactions between the different classes and social groups, which would be an essential part of the representation of the national identity. Both social imagery and national imagery play vital parts in defining national identity but the problem is that most film critics and academics think in terms of either or and not in terms of both. They usually try to argue for or against which type of imagery represents national identity best without realizing that in their own ways both representations are quite exclusive and reduced to the experience of a certain class or social group. In

[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid., 54.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid.

the case of social imagery it is the working class and ethnic, religious or other minorities, in national imagery it is essentially the middle- and upper classes.

As nations are often described in terms of their differences from other nations, British cinema, as other national cinemas, is often described in terms of its differences or relationship to other national cinemas, especially to Hollywood cinema. British films are often juxtaposed to Hollywood films as they both compete for the same US and European market and also battle against each other in British cinemas. As any national cinema, British cinema has always strived to find its own voice and its own audience both at home and outside in the Hollywood dominated world, but at the same time realized that it is essential to conform to the Hollywood norms because that is the key to the hearts of the domestic and US audiences, and that attracts the investors and guarantees the survival of the national industry. The 1980s heritage films,[60] which reflected a return to conservative values and old moral codes, were made to please the US audiences and reinvigorate foreign investment.[61] They were widely accepted as the manifestation of the 'all-English images and values.' If we take a look beneath the 'all-English images and values' we can see that ironically enough *Chariots of Fire* was financed by two American studios (Twentieth Century Fox and Allied Stars) and by an Arab billionaire's (Mohamad Al Fayed) company because most British filmmaking companies found the script "too British." [62]

The quintessentially English (or rather English looking) heritage films based on E. M. Forster's novels were made by an American director (James Ivory), Indian producer (Ismail Merchant) and a German screenwriter (Ruth Prawer Jhabvala) and most often with large sums of foreign money.

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[60] There is no consensus among the film critics and academics (Andrew Higson, John Hill, Charles Barr and Belen Vidal are some of the most prominent ones) dealing with heritage films on the heritage canon. Most of them agree that it all started with *Chariots of Fire*, and include among others *A Room with a View* by James Ivory (1985), *Heat and Dust* by James Ivory (1983), *A Passage to India* by David Lean (1984) *Maurice* by James Ivory (1987), *Where Angels Fear to Tread* by Charles Sturridge (1991), *Howards End* by James Ivory (1991), and *Remains of the Day* by James Ivory (1993) in their lists.

[61] It was in 1980 and 1981 when British productions dropped to record lowest levels. In 1980 there were only 24 films made in Britain. It would have been a fatal tendency especially after the similarly scarce period of the Seventies if it had not been for the Oscar-winning success of *Chariots of Fire*, which managed to reverse it.
(http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/facts/fact2.html retrived: January 6 2012.)

[62] Leach 2004: 24.

This brings us to the next key consideration of national identity. National identity can be examined on the level of representation and also on the level of production, and this latter, as we can see from the examples tends to be just as problematic. It sounds quite simple that as a rule, in order to be able to claim a film as British, certain percent of the cast and crew should be British. However, what happens when the remaining percent proves to be more influential. Consider the American stars appearing in the main roles of the adaptations of English classics, for instance, Gwyneth Paltrow in Jane Austen's *Emma* (1996) directed by American native Douglas McGrath, or Reese Witherspoon in the lead role of William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (2004) made by an Indian-born, Bollywood-educated director Mira Nair, just to mention two of the numerous examples. Does the presence of foreign talent make these films less British? What really defines a nation's film production: financing? The stars? The language? The director? The topic or source material? Interestingly enough, these questions related to national identity were not part of the discourse in the pre-World War Two years. That is why *The Private Life of Henry VIII* was celebrated as an English masterpiece, a saviour of British cinema even though it was directed by a Hungarian expatriate Alexander Korda (born as Kellner Sándor), the screenplay was written by fellow Hungarian Lajos Bíró and Alexander's brother, Vince Korda, was the set designer. The other example is from the iconic filmmaking duo, Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger, who produced the most remarkable pictures of the World War Two period, which were made to reinforce British national identity which had been threatened and shaken by the war. Emeric Pressburger, alias Pressburger Imre was also of Hungarian origin. Joseph Losey and Stanley Kubrick are other examples of outsiders contributing a great deal to British cinema, although their outsider perspectives are much more broadly discussed. These examples make clear how uncertain and flexible or even elusive the borders of national cinema are. As we can see the more we look into the question of national identity and what really defines this national identity the more problems and questions we encounter and the more difficult it becomes to provide a monolithic answer to these questions. Moreover, the less certain it becomes whether it is still relevant to think in terms of national cinemas or almost all films are part of a globalized film culture with foreign audiences in mind speaking a global film language occasionally with some local colour.

In spite of all these questions and ambiguities, as Michél Lagny suggests it is still relevant to think in terms of national cinemas as we still think in terms of nations in the political, economic, social and geographic contexts. Certain criteria

as the language, political, historical or social contexts aid the grouping of films into national sections while certain aesthetic values or the film language might work against the national character.[63] Lagny also assumes that it is important to differentiate national cinemas from each other and from their Hollywood counterparts because the distinctive characteristic features set against each other help to define a given nation's cinema and its character. Susan Hayward points out that this kind of seclusion and the emphasis on uniqueness seem to tally with the fact the birth of cinema in 1895 coincided with the 19th century's birth of nationalism and narcissism, so no wonder that they left their stamps on cinema and on the writing of film history as well, which is almost as old as cinema itself.[64]

However, it is vital for film historians and film history writings to follow Andre Higson's suggestion to think in terms of heterogeneity instead of assuming homogeneity within a nation's cinema. And the migration of talent and financing should be taken into account, especially in the 21st century when the most exciting directions in European national cinemas[65] are new or recent immigrants and strongly influenced by their indigenous culture, which leave a much more distinctive stamp on their works than Korda or Pressburger did at their times.

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[63] Lagny Ibid., 10-11.

[64] Hayward Ibid., 17.

[65] Fatih Akin working in Germany is of Turkish origin, Abdellatif Kechiche the Palme D'or winner director of the French *La vie d'Adele* was born in Tunisia, just to mention a couple of the numerous examples.

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Lisa Pope Fischer

TALKING BACK

Reflections of a researcher's experience and identity construction

I looked at this woman in her white smock and clogs yelling at me, shaking her finger at me, and shuddered as a crowd gathered around to stare at me. Though I understood what she was saying, she accused me of stealing a shirt, I could not find the words to respond, to explain I was looking at lamps, not shirts, and that I did not steal. She perceived me to be someone I was not. Sometimes one's identity and self-respect can be out of one's hands.[1]

As anthropologists we train to prepare for conducting fieldwork, and yet no one can prepare you for the reality of the fieldwork experience as ambiguities, power dynamics, and subtleties fill the practice of everyday life. As anthropologists doing fieldwork, we must learn our practical understanding of the world in comparison to that of the culture being studied and, inevitably, there are moments in the fieldwork experience where these differences can smack you in the face. Anthropologist can be vulnerable. We know the importance of being sensitive to the subjects we study as many current studies contend that we have a decided advantage over our subjects (in terms of authority, power, resources, etc.). However, there is little discussion about the possible agency of the research subject.[2] The people anthropologists study are not passive, nor are they without a voice as disempowered people can practice everyday forms of resistance (Scott 1985) and at times they can even challenge you: they talk back. Fieldwork challenged my identity, yet also made me think how my identity had impact on

[1] "Reflexive Anthropology" or the "Writing Culture Trend" stems from the belief that purely objective fieldwork and ethnographies are flawed and hence the subjective perspective needs to be incorporated to be truer to reality. Personal narratives that include the voice of the anthropologist are a part of this trend. See Behar and Gordon 1995, Clifford and Marcus 1986, Crapanzano 1977, Marcus and Fischer 1986.

[2] See Behar 1995, Bhaba 1994, Clifford and Marcus 1986, Dirks et al 1994, Foucault 1980, Marcus and Fischer 1986, Rosaldo 1989.

my fieldwork and research analysis. Looking at contentious moments within the fieldwork experience and deconstructing the implications of power, culture, and identity at these moments critically shed insights into the anthropologist and the fieldwork experience. Living in two different societies made me recognize how my definition of self was affected by the society I lived in and how this was symbolically expressed in daily practices and activities.

Going into the field, I did not fully anticipate how my own identity might affect my fieldwork experiences. I have been going to Hungary since 1994 and conducted person-centered life histories with return migrants in 1996 and 1999.[3] Through these return migrants, I became acquainted with their mothers and this inspired an ongoing collection of person-centered interviews and film documentation with elderly women since 2009. Much of my research methodology also relies on informal interviews and participant observation. My intent has been to understand a life span that experienced living during Hungary's communist era, as well as its post-communist transition to create a qualitative research study. In 1996, Fulbright grant in hand, I had a naive presumption that I would go into the field to collect data and that my research subjects would treat me as a respected researcher, and they would respond to my inquiries without question. Freshly cloaked with my anthropological training and theories, I felt prepared for my task. Thinking back, I realize how arrogant I must have been because little did I foresee that fieldwork, like real life, could be messy, unpredictable, and full of subtle and not so subtle difficulties and problems. Identity affected who I was, how others perceived me and what I became in the field and more importantly my identity in my fieldwork influenced my research aims and goals. I realized my identity shifts as I moved from a daily routine schedule as an Assistant Professor born and raised in America to a foreigner in Hungary conducting fieldwork. The societal differences of living in the US and Hungary affect how I see the world and how I live within it.

There were contentious moments, circumstances, situations, that I cannot get out of my head. It is these awkward moments that can be the most revealing, and it is these moments that I will analyze to indicate the role of identity. Identity is complicated as I define myself by my work, yet certainly, my gender, my age, my national and ethnic identities affect who I am and how people react towards me. An American author, Bell Hooks, growing up in a southern black community, suggests "back talk" and "talking back" meant speaking as an equal to an

[3] Pope Fischer 2003, 2005.

authority figure. It meant daring to disagree and sometimes it just meant having an opinion.[4] "Talking back," indicates a conversation. It can be an assertion of empowerment, but also it can mean to answer in an impertinent manner; in terms of my fieldwork experience, it has meanings on several levels: the research subjects do talk back, I talked back, and on some occasions, my tongue was tied. After a description of methodology, I will focus on those contentious moments during fieldwork that illustrate "talking back" to deconstruct the implications of power and culture to critically give insights into the fieldwork experience and the constructive yet ambiguous nature of identity.

Methodology

My fieldwork in Hungary spans approximately twenty years and I have used various forms of data collection, from informal interviews and participant observation, to person-centered life histories, photographic, and videotaped documentations. My early research focused on migrants who left Hungary during the socialist period, immigrated to the US, and after the fall of communism, returned to Hungary. Not only did their life stories reveal how identity adjusts to various societal conditions, but also provide insight into the impact of capitalism on a former communist country.[5] Through the process of these interviews, I gradually became acquainted with my informants' families who in most cases consisted of widowed mothers. Though initially not part of my original research, I would spend time with these women grocery shopping, cooking and going to church. Only after one woman died in 2008 did I realize how important it was to record their stories more formally as well. Since 2009, I have been conducting videotaped person-centered interviews with women over sixty. My intent is to understand a life span that included living during Hungary's communist era, as well as its post-communist transition. This is a qualitative research study that includes participant observation along with oral histories collected using person-centered life history interviews.

I initially found my research subjects through word of mouth or the "snowball effect." Snowball sampling is useful in "studies of small, bounded, or difficult to find populations, such as members of elite groups, women who have been recently divorced, urban migrants from a particular tribal group, or illegal

[4] Hooks 1989: 5.

[5] Pope Fischer Ibid.

migrants."[6] To some extent, to get anything done in Hungary it is best to work through informal personal networks and this practice, I believe, is a leftover from the Socialist system.[7]

Since I have known a number of research subjects for over twenty years, we have formed a long lasting rapport and friendship. There is a tradition of hospitality and reciprocity that I abide by so that if an occasion arises where I may be of assistance, I try my best to comply (e.g. helping to carry a bag of potatoes up from the cellar or transporting gifts for children who reside in the US, helping with shopping or cooking, etc.). This research conformed to institutional review board procedures, including informed consent and pseudonyms.

Life histories enable one to retain some of that sense of complexity and diversity experienced in everyday life. The task should be to "interpret patterns of meaning within situations understood in experience near categories."[8], or as Wikan suggests, to anchor cultural analysis in "real life contexts."[9] In other words, the anthropologist should be interested in what is at stake for the individual and then expand on the individual's concerns to formulate analysis. Memories and individual experience are influenced by the context in which they are presented. This includes not only the interview process itself, but the societal environment as well.

Life histories can be used with a person-centered approach in order to get at what is important to the individual. Douglas Hollan explains that a person-centered ethnography refers to an anthropological attempt

> …to develop experience-near ways of describing and analyzing human behavior, subjective experience, and psychological processes. A primary focus of person-centered ethnographies is on the individual and how the individual's psychology and subjective experience both shapes, and is shaped by, social and cultural processes. Indeed, to the extent that these studies focus on the individual as a locus of psychocultural processes and subjective experience, rather than on "the person" — the definition of which usually emphasizes the moral qualities that distinguish a

[6] Bernard 1988.
[7] See also Wedel 2001, Patico 2002.
[8] Kleinman & Kleinman 1991: 278.
[9] Wilkan 1990: 20.

> human being, either living or dead, from other beings or things — they are more appropriately termed "individual" or "subject" centered ethnographies.[10]

For anthropologists, aiming for experience near approaches, a person-centered ethnography aspires to derive theory based on what the subject says so that instead of imposing a theoretical framework on what people say, anthropologists draw out theory based on what people say. Instead of going in with a set list of questions reflecting the interests of the researcher, the person-centered approach derives its questions from the subjects' responses, in this manner the researcher gets a picture of what is important to the individual, although, the sociocultural environment also influences the individual.

Person-centered ethnographies recognize the importance of situating the individual within a sociocultural context. Levy and Hollan stress:

> [i]t is important to note that these methods are not attempts to study individuals primarily in or within themselves (for, say, the purposes of some comparative personality theory, or some issue in general psychology, or to humanize an ethnography by appending life stories to it). Rather, they are attempts to clarify the relations of "individuality," both as output and input, to its sociocultural contexts. The implication is that the study of individuals is an essential component of adequate social theory.[11]

> Person-centered studies not only entail a form of open-ended life history interview, but also studies of the community or sociocultural environment in which the individuals live.[12]

> While person-centered ethnographers do not necessarily presume that human subjectivity will vary significantly cross-culturally, neither do they rule out this possibility. A primary goal of the work is to examine this issue of variability as explicitly and empirically as possible and to listen to accounts of subjective experience with an ear towards how subjectivity has been influenced by the social surround.[13]

[10] Hollan 2001: 1-2.
[11] Levy and Hollan 1998: 334.
[12] Levy and Hollan Ibid., 335; Hollan 1994, Hollan 2001 Ibid.: 9-10.
[13] Hollan 2001 Ibid: 10.

The emphasis of these studies is to focus on the individual subjective experience, and yet, this experience should be put into the sociocultural context to view its influence on the subjective experience. The open-ended life history interview is the manner in which to apply the person-centered approach.

Presentation of Data

With all my formal training and preparation, what I did not anticipate was how my identity would impact my research as well as the people I studied and these challenges affected my self-respect, the belief in my own integrity, but also made me cognizant of the self-respect of my informants – their ability to assert their sense of worth. What this shows is how a change in societal context can change one's perceptions, one's sense of self, and inspired interest in how these changes could be symbolically reflected in shifting cultural practices. I use the term "talking back" to highlight moments of contention, and though antagonistic moments in fieldwork do not occur frequently, they do provide valuable insights into identity construction and issues of self-respect. This paper explores: 1. Who I Was: My identity as an anthropologist and how my informants challenged this authority by "talking back"; 2. My identity as a person of color and how people constructed their own understanding of what this label meant giving me the inability to "talk back"; 3. My identity as an American and how moments of cultural shock led to being someone I did not recognize: I "talked back". Following the discussion of these three points, I will explore how "talking back" can inform understandings of identity.

1. Who I was – the research subject talks back to the anthropologist

I assumed my identity as a researcher, as an anthropologist, would be how my research subjects would perceive me. I went to Hungary not as a tourist, not as an immigrant, but as an anthropologist. As an anthropologist, I felt I had certain tasks to perform. I felt I was a trained scientist and with that professional credit, I had certain obligations. I unwittingly felt that by being an anthropologist I must carry a certain amount of prestige and that my subjects would respect my research and see it as important as I did. One particular interview made me realize how wrong I was.

Carrying the identity of an anthropological researcher, I assumed my subjects would not question my research methodology, yet one particular woman did

"talk back". I had originally met Ildi (b. 1972) in San Francisco but she returned to Hungary in 1998. I would not say we were close friends, but I knew her, and she knew me. I conducted a life history interview with her in Budapest in 1999. The research method I used was a person-centered approach in order to get at what is important to the individual in an attempt to aim for an experience-near method of presenting and describing personal experience to understand the informant's experience and how the informant sees and understands his or her culture rather than pointed questions that illicit more general descriptions of a culture. Quite simply, the life history interview starts with the open-ended question, "describe your life." The person can begin wherever they want and the anthropologist encourages the subject to expand on their responses such as: "Can you describe what that was like?"; "How did that make you feel?" The hope is to get an insight into what is important to the research subject rather than the researcher.[14]

At the end of my first interview with Ildi, she took it upon herself to talk back. She challenged my research method. She gave me advice on how I should conduct a better interview. Instead of open-ended questions that built on what she said, she felt I should have had a written set of exact and direct questions. In this way, she reasoned, I would get answers that are more explicit for the information I wanted. I began to try to explain the theory behind the open-ended person centered approach, but I could tell by her facial expression that she simply did not believe me. I feared she felt I did not know what I was doing or that perhaps I was too lazy to write out questions. What was clear, however, that she did not blindly accept my research methods and she questioned their validity hence she asserted her own self-respect. However, from my perspective it was somewhat unsettling to have my own research subject openly distrust my research methods.

My identity as an anthropologist gave me the misperception that I was in control of my interviews yet my subjects could talk back, even by remaining silent. Sometimes my research subject's lack of talking demonstrated her agency in an attempt to control the interview and maintain her sense of self-respect. I have been filming interviews since 2010 and have noticed people behave differently on camera, but one particular interview showed how the subject could control what they say on film. Before the more formal videotaped interview, I met an elderly woman and her son to eat at a type of fried fish stand commonly found in lakeside

[14] Hollan 2001 Ibid.; Levy and Hollan 1998 Ibid,.

towns in the summer. She was in an especially good mood and chatted enthusiastically about her life, perhaps forgetting that I had turned on my small digital tape recorder to catch this more informal interview. The previous year she told me some stories about her family's Jewish heritage so I encouraged her to go back to that topic. We then shifted to talking about her career at which point I asked if she went to university. She replied that due to her Jewish family background she was not permitted to go to college under the restrictions of the communist regime. Later, when we returned to her home for the digital filming portion of the interview I wanted her to repeat what she talked about earlier so I could catch this on film. When I asked the same question about her going to university, she replied she simply was not interested in going and moved onto another topic despite my prodding to elicit the same response I received earlier about the power of the communist state to restrict college admissions. Perhaps due to the more formal context of the interview, the camera and microphones, she changed her story. I often find I cannot capture on film the more fluid and spontaneous remarks obtained through more informal interview techniques. Furthermore, some informants simply do not want to be filmed, nor formally interviewed, yet allow me to acquire information only through informal interviews and participant observation. On the one hand this incident illustrates my inability to control the information I wanted to record, yet on the other hand, by changing the subject, my research subject maintained her self-respect, and illustrated how the telling of a life story, integrally linked to expressions of identity, could be altered and changed under different contexts.

My identity as a trained anthropologist is informed by theoretical applications, yet one informant "talked back" to challenge this. I was visiting with friends in the countryside in a small rural village of twelve homes where I met a Hungarian man, Tamás, who had lived in Canada before returning to live in Hungary. He asked me where I was from, to which I responded "California." He then remarked that he heard there was a problem with Mexicans in California. I was a bit stunned by this remark and uncertain if this was a personal jab against my own ethnic identity, but I tried to explain that the Mexican immigrants are not the real problem. I argued that businesses in California rely on cheap immigrant labor and that Americans are not willing to take these jobs, whereas the Mexicans will work for minimum wage if not below. These workers have few rights and employers use this to an advantage to keep wages low. At this point, he replied, "[d]on't you know? We don't believe in Marx anymore." I cannot even remember what I said

after that because I was a bit taken aback by his response. I believe I simply nodded and said "of course". This argumentative moment challenged my identity as an anthropologist and again illustrated the ability of research subjects to assert their voice and maintain their sense of self-worth.

I am not the only anthropologist to have their subjects "talk back." Ruth Behar acknowledged in her first encounter with the subject of her book *Translated Woman: Crossing the Border with Esperanza's Story* (1993):

> I think that many contradictions of my work with Esperanza were dramatized in that first encounter. I jumped on her as an alluring image of Mexican womanhood, ready to create my own exotic portrait of her, but the image turned around and spoke back to me questioning my project and daring me to carry it out.[15]

Dorinne Kondo acknowledged that

> [j]ust as my informants, in writing me and my identity, tried to excise traces of Americanness, I also in the act of writing inevitably fix ambiguity, and attempt to stick together pieces of my 'self,' in order to construct an account of the lives of my co-workers and friends and the ways I came to 'understand' those lives. And in the act of writing, culturally shaped abstractions like 'theory,' 'power,' 'experience,' and 'identity' also emerge.[16]

Although in the end the anthropologist controls what he or she writes, informants may challenge the anthropologist's sense of authority and this can affect the anthropologist's understanding of self.[17]

My identity as an anthropologist had little relevance to the people I studied and I found myself questioning, doubting my own authority. Ruth Behar as well was "at a loss about this assertive 'informant,' who seemed to demand rather than request favors and was much more brash than the other women [of her study] in Mexquitic."[18] Perhaps I had assumed what Ágnes Heller in her presentation at the conference (*Identity and Self-respect*, Debrecen, 2013) described as an "asymmetric relationship" where I, as a researcher, held some power over my research subjects. Ultimately, I still hold the power to use the theoretical and methodological practices that I want though these episodes of "talking back" by respondents do

[15] Behar 1993: 4.
[16] Kondo 1990: 25.
[17] See also Crapazano 1977, Marcus and Fischer 1986, Behar and Gordon 1995.
[18] Behar Ibid., 5.

illustrate that my research subjects could make it clear that who I was as an anthropologist held no control over their criticism of my methods marking the disempowered' s agency and ability to strike back.[19] My research subjects are smart people who may talk back; they may control what they say, and they may challenge my research methods and theories. Who I was, or at least who I thought I was as an intellectual social scientist, was of little importance to the people I met in the field. In fact, as I will elaborate in the following, the way how others perceived my identity affected my research as well.

2. How others perceived my race – my inability to talk back

I did not envision that others would formulate an identity for me based on my appearance. I have always prided myself on my ability to "blend in" in my travels and I try not to stand out; however, whatever I did, I could not "pass" in Hungary. I am a Mexican-American woman with an olive brown skin tone and, as a result, I stood out in comparison to a population that is overwhelmingly White. Furthermore, I began to realize that because of my skin color, I was mistakenly perceived as being Gypsy because Gypsies tend to have dark hair and brown skin. Hence, I looked more Gypsy than the White Hungarian, and because I was associated with Gypsies, I experienced some of the racism they face in Hungary. Being identified as a Gypsy, and the negative stereotypes associated with this identity created some contentious moments in my research that contribute to understandings of the constructive nature of identity. After first describing my own ethnic identity, and the confusion that arises from it, I will address how identity can also be informed by the perception of others. Being labeled as part of an ethnic group allows others to stamp preconceived stereotypes upon me that impact how others react towards me, and ultimately inform my understanding of the self.

Who am I, and how does my ethnic identity influence my fieldwork and sense of self-respect? Throughout my life in growing up in America people, typically acquaintances, will ask me "Where are you from?" I normally answer, "I was born and raised in Berkeley California." In most cases, this does not satisfy their query, so they repeat the question as if I did not understand it in the first place, "but where are you from?" I might reply, "Berkeley is located in northern California close to San Francisco." Often there is a puzzled look so they rephrase the

[19] See also Scott 1985.

question, "where are your parents from?" So I politely clarify, "my father was born and raised in the Madison Wisconsin area, specifically a small town called Spring Green, as were generations of his family, except my Great grandmother who immigrated from Bavaria when she was eleven. My grandmother tells me I look exactly like her Bavarian mother. Most everyone else came from Irish, Welsh, or British immigrants generations before. My maiden name "Pope" is a common British name, but "Evans" is also a strong part of our family heritage." Of course, the person still looks puzzled, so I go on to describe my mother's side of the family. "My mother was born and raised in South Chicago as was her mother whose maiden name was Olguin. My grandfather was from Michoacán Mexico and..." and before I can continue the person typically states in a satisfied manner, "Ah so that explains it!" It does not seem to matter that my identity is a blend of many cultural backgrounds and traditions, but because I have brown skin that label of "Mexican" allowed the acquaintance to understand who I am. The "where are you from?" question is a euphemism for "what is your race?" During my fieldwork, I was playing a game war with a group of people, and Ildi, the one who challenged my research methodology, asked me to place pieces on the map that illustrated my ethnic background. As I started to place pieces on England, Wales, and Germany, she stopped me to ask if I understood her question. She thought I must have been putting the pieces on the wrong areas of the map as she assumed that due to my olive complexion my heritage must be linked to South America. Throughout my life others tend to see me as "Mexican" whereas I see myself as Mexican, Irish, Welsh, Scottish, British, and German. I see myself as an academic, as an anthropologist, as a part of my family, a daughter, a sister, a wife, as a Californian. Of course, how I label myself today may change tomorrow, or may change depending on the social context. Identity can be based on one's heritage, but identity is also informed by how others "label" or understand what that identity might mean.

Identity construction can be informed by the society or the cultural context, not simply by how I view myself. Being categorized as a Gypsy, a primary target of racism, put a great deal of strain on my identity and understanding of self-respect, and at one point, I had the inability to "talk back". Common racist beliefs towards gypsies describe them as poor, thieves, and pickpockets, but they are great dancers and musicians. Post-socialism there has been a rise in racist attacks, particularly against Gypsies.[20] When I went shopping in Hungary, it was not

[20] Stewart 1997, Helsinki Watch 1993.

unusual to have the store security guard quite literally breathe down my neck. He did not even try to hide the fact that he was following me and it felt as if he was trying to intimidate me by his close proximity. I made a point to speak English, and to dress up to go shopping in order to indicate that I was American and had money and, therefore, would not steal. No matter what I did, I was still targeted as a potential thief. This brings me back to the anecdote I started this paper with. At the Corvin department store in Budapest, I went in to look at lamps, as one of my informants needed a new one. When I left the store, one worker came running after me and yelled and screamed at me for stealing a shirt. People gathered around and stared. I had not been anywhere near the shirt department. I was shocked and speechless. How could I be so openly and wrongly accused of something I would never do? Eventually, perhaps because of my stunned and hurt expression, the woman stopped yelling and went back into the store, and I left. No apology. Nothing. I often found myself going home after shopping feeling bad about myself, as if there was something wrong with me that caused me to be accused so blatantly and rudely. I kept thinking of things that I could have said to defend myself instead of staring meekly back at the shopkeeper with a mute expression. The everyday practice of shopping became a stressful challenge. This uncomfortable fieldwork experience highlighted my inability to control my identity, as others had preconceived notions of who I am, based on my appearance.

The research subject and the pressures of the cultural environment can influence the anthropologist's identity. Dorinne Kondo acknowledges the power her research subjects had in terms of constructing identity. She states:

> both the fragmentation of self and the collapse of identity were results of a complex collaboration between ethnographer and informants. It should be evident that at this particular point, my informants were hardly inert objects available for the free play of the ethnographer's desire. They themselves were, in the act of being, actively interpreting and trying to make meaning of the ethnographer. In so doing, the people I know asserted their power to act upon the anthropologist. This was their means for preserving their own identities. Understanding, in this context, is multiple, open-ended, positioned- although that ongoing can shift dramatically, as I have argued – and pervaded by relations of power. These power-imbued attempts

> to capture, recast and rewrite each other were for us productive understandings and were, existentially, alternately wrenching and fulfilling.[21]

This experience provided insight into how her identity played a role in her fieldwork and ultimately her theoretical stance in her research to explore how individuals "craft" the sense of self in their everyday practices. Kondo found that her identity and the way her subjects perceived her affected her fieldwork experience but also how she interpreted her data. Antagonistic moments in one's fieldwork can highlight the way and manner in which identity is culturally understood and crafted.

Identity can be linked to self-understandings but also struggles with how one is defined by others. Foucault suggests that "labeling" an identity creates a category by which one is defined, and stereotypes may be misapplied once categorized within that box. Foucault suggests a form of power:

> applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power, which makes individuals subjects. There are two meanings of the word "subject": subject to someone else by control and dependence; and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power, which subjugates and makes subject to. Generally, it can be said that there are three types of struggles: either against forms of domination (ethnic, social, and religious); against forms of exploitation which separate individuals from what they produce; or against that which ties the individual to himself and submits him to others in this way (struggles against subjection, against forms of subjectivity and submission).[22]

Identity in this respect can be a form of power subjugating individuals to how others define them and then how individuals in response consider these meanings. That "a ha" moment when the acquaintance learns of my Mexican heritage is the label that will be put on me, including his or her prior understanding of what they think a Mexican identity should be. Identity has to do with ethnic domination − how the subject has labeled me a gypsy − forms of exploitation, the racist treatment I encountered and my individual understanding of myself. Being misidentified as a Gypsy carries with it the racist subjugation that

[21] Kondo Ibid., 17.
[22] Foucault 1982: 782.

such a label entails. I do not like to be judged by a label that would allow people who do not know me well to predetermine an assumption about me ignoring the more complex nature of my identity. I have my grandmother's Bavarian nose, I like the family recipes handed down from my German side, yet I also have my maternal grandparents' brown skin and a proud sense of my rich Mexican heritage. Furthermore, beyond my ethnic heritage, I define my life in terms of my academic achievements, my love of photography, and laughing with my husband. Who I am cannot be summed up in a simple label, and yet society defines me and to a certain extent and my response has become a part of who I am as well. Who I am, my identity, influences my fieldwork in ways I did not anticipate.

I could not control how others perceived me and I could not "talk back", because my identity was given to me based on my appearance. Heller described how the "objective identity" is related to how others perceive me.[23] My external, so called, "objective identity" entails the other's perception of me. Yet is it objective if there are cultural "subjective" differences in that label whereas I am seen as "Mexican" in the US, I am perceived as "Gypsy" in Hungary? Though objective identity is related to the other's perception of me, I would argue that this is not truly objective as it can be culturally defined. The perception of my ethnic identity is different in Hungary from my ethnic identity in the United States indicating the cultural subjective. The cultural environment and society constructed their own understanding of my ethnic identity indicating that one's self-understanding struggles with how one is defined by others. I cannot change my skin color nor can I change my genetic heritage. My uneasy experiences and loss of self-respect indirectly affected my fieldwork research and eventually my interpretations of my research. I only realized this after I returned to America and began to write up my data when I found that I was focusing on the difficulties of immigrants to adjust to a different society. Though I was not an immigrant to Hungary and I fully intended to return to the US, I still got a sense of how difficult it is to be in a different society. Though my difficulties were subtle, the everyday anxiety and stress to perform benign tasks began to affect me. In fact, my identity changed, I became a different person in the field.

3. What I became in the field – I talked back

[23] Heller 2013.

My understanding of self-identity changed when I was in Hungary, as I did not recognize my behavior. I was born and raised in Berkeley, California, so the civil rights movements and student riots protesting the Vietnam War enveloped my childhood. Still, I consider myself rather mild mannered if not conservative compared to my radical upbringing. I tend to avoid confrontations and political protests, and yet when I was in Hungary I found myself on more than one occasion defending women's rights and gay rights. I never argued about these topics before; why would I start now? Bell Hooks argues that:

> [m]oving from silence into speech is for the oppressed, the colonized, the exploited, and those who stand and struggle side by side a gesture of defiance that heals, that makes new life and new growth possible. It is that act of speech, of "talking back," that is no mere gesture of empty words, that is the expression of our movement from object to subject – the liberated voice.[24]

Perhaps feeling disempowered liberated my voice to "talk back", and yet I became someone I did not recognize and did not like.

My normal passive and neutral way of handling difficult situations became stressed and challenged when I was in the field. Perhaps it led to a change in my identity that encouraged me to "talk back". I was at a David Bowie concert in Hungary when I started to argue with an acquaintance, "Paszkál (b. 1963), who said David Bowie was stupid and gay and should be killed. I am not a huge David Bowie fan, yet I found myself arguing with this man as I felt I had to defend the right to be gay. The argument escalated to the point where I actually threw a beer in this man's face. This was the first and only time I had done such a thing. What happened? Why did I — a typically timid and shy person — act in this way? The fact that I "talked back" was not part of my understanding of my self-identity.

On another occasion at a Szilveszter (meaning New Year Eve's party in Hungarian) I felt compelled to defend against female abuse. In a drunken stupor, Maxy had smacked his wife Erika as she, also drunk, had been dancing with another man. Anthropologists are supposed to be neutral to practice "cultural relativism", yet I was disturbed by this blatant act of domestic violence. I did not see Maxy hit Erika, but everyone was aware of her loud sobs behind the locked bathroom door. I was trying not to get involved until several men at the party approached me and said something had to be done, and since it was a woman who got hit, a woman had to hit Maxy. Perhaps because I was American, perhaps

[24] Hooks Ibid., 9.

because I was sober, I was the woman selected to confront Maxy. Of course, I could not hit him but I tried to defend Erika's honor by arguing with Maxy, who in his drunken stupor, crawled onto the floor to sleep handing me his glasses in the process. Realizing nothing was going to be resolved I left the party but I did not know I was still holding his glasses tight in my hand as I exited the apartment, and in that moment of frustration, I tossed them over the balcony. The next morning, however, Erika did not remember having been hit and the only thing she did remember was that I, angry with her husband, had thrown his only pair of glasses out into a snowy courtyard. Why did I find myself in this position? How did I become this confrontational person? These contentious moments illustrate identity construction as I "talked back" in a manner that did not reflect my normal identity.

An anthropologist's own identity might change due to the stresses of the fieldwork experience yet sometimes it is these unexpected moments that give insight into the "crafting" or construction of identity. Dorinne Kondo, a Japanese-American who conducted fieldwork in Japan, noticed a reflection in a window that mirrored the body movement and form of dress of a typical Japanese housewife. To her shock, she realized it was her own reflection and she feared she had lost a sense of her own identity prompting her to isolate herself more from her research subjects. "For ultimately, this collapse of identity was a distancing moment. It led me to emphasize the *differences* between cultures and among various aspects of identity: researcher, student, daughter, wife, Japanese, American, Japanese American."[25] Her insights reveal how her research subjects crafted her identity leading her to assume an identity that she no longer recognized as her own.

Moments of conflict, moments of "talking back" shed light on the difficulty of defining identity. To some extent, the confrontations during my fieldwork were results of different expectations in different cultures. To some extent, these confrontations were results of my vulnerability as a foreigner and anthropologist eager to gain acceptance. Though Maxy slapped his wife and often made rude and racist comments, he is actually a funny and generous person whom I consider a friend. Several years after the David Bowie beer incident I saw Paszkál at a crowded party. He caught my eye and began to weave his way through the crowded room, bowed, grabbed my hand, and kissed it. Though it is a common salutation to say "Kezét csókolom" (meaning I kiss your hand), I had never seen

[25] Kondo Ibid., 17.

anyone do this. With a huge grin he stated, "You are the most amazing woman I have ever met," leaving his wife and my husband to give a puzzled look at one another. Paszkál had attended our wedding in 1999 and explained this inspired him to marry his longtime girlfriend. Maxy and Paszkál ignored my outbursts and continued to treat me as a friend. How could I justify being their friend if they could be so disturbing? Why would they want to be my friend if I behaved so badly in their presence? As a foreigner doing research, I was grateful that some Hungarians would befriend me and let me into their lives. I also felt that as a researcher I should be neutral in order to simply observe from a culturally relative perspective. Yet there was only so much that I could bear and perhaps that is why I had these two incidents. Perhaps I simply could not contain my frustrations any longer and this caused my self-integrity to slip.

My perception of self, my identity, changed as I became a person I did not like, a person who behaved badly. I was ashamed of myself for "talking back" in a disrespectful manner. Heller suggests the problem of self-respect is that you can deny self-respect of yourself to commit an act that one does not recognize as being part of your own self-identity. Heller referred to an example of a fifty-year-old widow who had a brief affair and behaved in a manner that did not reflect who she felt she was.[26] As in this example, I found I did something that I had never expected of myself, my internal subjective identity did not match my disrespectful actions that led me to "talk back". Despite the cause of these moments of contention, they give insight into the ambiguity of identity and its fleeting ability to shift, mold, and change related to numerous constantly changing factors depending on the person and the context.

How does "talking back" inform understandings of identity?

Contentious moments in my fieldwork experience illustrate the equivocal constructive nature of identity. My research subjects "talked back" to challenge my identity as an anthropologist by questioning my research methods and theories, and when they withhold information or change their own stories, they are showing their ability to control the interview. These sorts of confrontations lead me to doubt my own authority, my own identity as a trained researcher. Going into the field, I did not anticipate that people would formulate an ethnic identity for me based on my appearance and though I have experienced racism in

[26] Heller Ibid.

the US, I had never experienced such extreme forms of humiliation and embarrassment until I conducted research in Hungary. This I could not control, this led me to have the inability to "talk back". What this clash reveals is that identity construction is linked to power and subjugation that is informed by the societal and cultural environment. The stress of fieldwork lead me to change my identity, to behave as someone who did "talk back" in an impertinent manner and I became someone I did not like and did not recognize as being who I am. Yet it is these moments of conflict that give insight into the confusing crafting of identity.

What is identity and how can it inform fieldwork? The presentations at this conference highlight the range of approaches to identity, and in particular Hugh McDonald's presentation gives a nice literature review of identity to suggest "the metaphysical, the logical, the political, the cultural, the social the tribal and the individual" approaches to identity illustrate the problematic and ambiguous nature of identity.[27] Often in Philosophy, identity or sameness reflects what is identifiable about myself, so that even though I may adjust and change to try to fit into different cultural environments and situations, there is an essence of what makes me the person I am, still identity can be linked to the mind and body. My personal identity is what remains constant over the time yet my physical being informs who I am as well. Heller, in her presentation at this conference, explores identity formation and consciousness to weave understanding of asymmetric and symmetric reciprocity in relation to identity and self-respect. Identity, from her perspective, is relational and it deals with issues of inequality and equality, it is also objective and subjective. She said: "Every story is fiction" as you have as many identities as stories because narratives are presentations of identity and these narratives change depending on the circumstances and yet "[t]here is a sense of continuity. You are what you are now." The presentation of self is a social constructive.[28] A popular theory in sociology, interactionism, suggests that people alter their behavior to how they perceive others would think of them. In this respect, it makes sense that I as a foreigner in Hungary would try to alter my behavior to fit into their culture based on how I believed they would perceive me but sometimes my understanding of that was wrong leading to culture shock. Barth (1969) suggests that people's identities can be linked to ethnic boundaries framed by cultural diacritics, but what happens when my own ethnic boundaries cannot be clearly defined? Sociology and psychology tend to address social

[27] McDonald 2013.
[28] Heller Ibid.

identity, the various groups in which people belong: me as an anthropologist, me as a woman, me as a Mexican-American, me as a foreigner. For the psychologist, Erik Erikson, identity can relate to selfhood acquired through dealing with various life stages so that I might face different struggles when I am twenty dealing with intimacy or isolation, versus fifty when I may start to think of my legacy or become more self-absorbed.[29] My fieldwork spans over twenty years of my life suggesting my aging process crossed several life stages that might affect how I perceive the world and my place in it. My identity certainly developed over time, and over the life course of my experiences, still, these approaches to identity do not fully fit my experience.

Some approaches to identity fall into the trap of a dichotomous argument. "Me" and "self" in contrast to others,[30] or approaches to the individual in contrast to the collective that sets up a dichotomous argument, however, "identity" can be more complex and contradictory. Looking at identity as a "social construction"[31] attempts to detract essentializing dichotomies yet this approach as well has flaws. Constructivist approaches challenge understandings of gender,[32] ethnicity and race,[33] and national identity,[34] yet these arguments tend to see identity in a dichotomous contrast with the individual self to either gender, or race, or national identity. I am not Hungarian but to some extent, my exposure to traveling distances me from being American as well because I have absorbed some of the worldview and traits of the people I study. I cannot pose my identity as me in contrast to them as my role as an anthropologist places me at the border.[35] Identity draws on multiple formations, personal history, and personality.

A postmodern method to understanding identity suggests a more fragmentary approach to get away from dichotomous arguments that includes issues of power and individual variations inspired by the French post-structuralist.[36] Németh Lenke, in her presentation at this conference, argues:

[29] Erikson 1976.
[30] Mead 1934, Cooley 1998.
[31] Goffman 1956, Becker 1966.
[32] Fausto-Sterling 1985, Bordo 1993, Martin 1987.
[33] Balibar & Wallerstein 1999, Nagel 1995.
[34] Brubaker 2002, Hobsbaum 1992, 1983, Gellner 1983, Giddins 1984, 1991.
[35] See Gupta 1992.
[36] Derrida 1992, Foucault 1980.

> essentialist and constricting definitions of race and ethnicity are no longer acceptable in the post-multicultural era; instead the paradigm shift necessitates the re-conceptualization of cultural identity and a re-definition of the every changing concept of Americanness. I argue that the *cultural* mulatto embodies a new model of cultural identity that challenges historical binaries of racial identity formation […] I suggest, among others, that the identity of this new type of American is perceived in spatial terms and readily embraces various cultures thus ensuring a contrast space between cultures, where a prerequisite of identity construction is the respect and recognition of and a constant negotiation with the other culture(s).[37]

For me, identity has always been complicated due to my mixed heritage, but my fieldwork highlighted the challenges I faced in terms of how I have been defined by the way others see me, and how my behavior changed in response to these challenges. Being labeled as an anthropologist I expected my informants not to question my research methods. Being labeled as a Gypsy, and potential thief altered the way I shopped and behaved. Being labeled a foreigner, and facing the challenges of cultural differences, I became someone I did not like – I turned timid, I had emotional outbursts, I embarrassed myself. In this respect, "labeling theory" seems to hold true, yet it is far more complicated than that, because I have agency despite societal expectations and constraints, and my agency is based on my unique history, my unique background, my personality, my identity. A postmodern approach to identity in this vein becomes contested and complicated and tends to reread prior understandings of identity.[38] Cerulo argues: "[d]espite their differences, the issues raised by social constructionists and postmodernists alike direct scholarly attention to a collective's struggle to self-name, self-characterize, and claim social prerogative."[39] A problem with self-definitions is the ability to form a general description of a culture or society.

Others explore identity as expressed symbolically in material artifacts such as food,[40] commodities,[41] style or clothing,[42] or architecture[43] or gardens.[44] These

[37] Németh 2013.
[38] Butler 1990, 1993, Haraway 1991, Hooks 1984, Trinh 1989.
[39] Cerulo 1997: 393.
[40] Counihan and Kaplan 2012, Appadurai 1991.
[41] Zukin, Appadurai 1986.
[42] Rubenstein 1995, Candelario.
[43] Zukin 1991.
[44] Mukerji 1994, 1997.

studies tend to explore the role of symbols and discourse to the understanding of identity. I do see identity as somehow linked to the ways people symbolically represent themselves through food, style, or discourse. However, is this a patterned collective expression of identity? Do all people express themselves in these same symbolic forms? Though there are patterns of coherency, in this respect I believe it depends on the person and how they consciously or subconsciously choose to represent themselves. While in Hungary, I certainly cook differently and dress differently trying to fit in symbolically.

Similarly to Ruth Behar, I have chosen to focus on the vulnerable moments in my fieldwork and identity to illustrate their affect my fieldwork and analysis. Ruth Behar found that her graduate school training had forced her to

> put aside all the burning questions of my own identity and the painful memory of the torn personal and literary letters that had propelled me into anthropology in the first place. I had come to feel that my personal identity was neither relevant nor important. There was nothing special about me. Society, culture, history: didn't those collective forms have everything to do with what we are? […] As an anthropologist, I had an obligation to give voice to others. To give myself voice was narcissistic, indulgent; even now, I still feel the weight of this view.[45]

Ruth Behar's ethnographic writing is known for her personal voice and her ability to focus on emotionally vulnerable moments to explore her identity and subjective experience as integral to her fieldwork and ethnographic writing. Though my intent was to learn about another culture, my fieldwork experiences provided insight into what constitutes identity including my voice.

In summary, highlighting contentious moments during fieldwork − those moments of "talking back" − gives insight into the complicated nature of identity. Identity is an elusive concept that is difficult to define as indicated by the range of approaches from philosophy, sociology, and psychology. Postmodern approaches try to get away from dichotomous understandings of identity to address the implication of power and individual variation. Yet identity can also be understood in terms of symbolic expressions of the self. Contentious moments of "talking back" during fieldwork lend insight into the ambiguity of identity. Living within a culture outside my own highlights the societal and cultural impact of identity, yet certainly my own unique self in terms of personality and ethnic background inform who I am and how people react to me. My experience would be different

[45] Behar Ibid., 331.

from someone else's, yet clearly my identity and sense of self changes and shifts under different contexts and with different people.

Conclusion

What did I become in the field? What made me a radical who publicly brawled in defense of gay and women's rights? Many aspects of doing research in Hungary were out of my control and simple tasks became struggles. I was appalled by openly racist and sexist remarks and I could not communicate as profoundly in Hungarian as in English. I believe I felt vulnerable, as I was dependent on the kindness of others. My personality changed, as I felt uncomfortable being an outsider and an American woman living in Hungary and as a perceived Gypsy. The identity I saw for myself was not the identity that the people in my fieldwork gave to me. Perhaps it was culture shock, I did not have the power to control the difficulties that I faced, and this affected who I was as a person. This shift and struggle with identity inspired my fieldwork experience and research interests.

The fieldwork experience is related to the people the anthropologist studies, the place where the anthropologist carries out the studies, but also the anthropologist's identity. Power, culture, and identity interplay in ways you cannot always predict. Though I intended to learn about Hungarian culture, in the process, I learned about myself in ways that I had not expected. Fieldwork can be messy as sometimes it is not pretty and sometimes it is embarrassing. Who I was as an anthropologist was not necessarily important to my research subjects. They talked back. They challenged my assumptions or ideals. Ultimately I had the power to continue my research in the way I wanted, however, their criticisms did bother me − or at least made me question myself. How others perceived me was out of my control. My brown skin color aligned me in the category of Gypsy − a racist target in Hungary. There was nothing I could do. My tongue was tied. What I became in the field is in part due to the awkward experience of adjusting to a different culture. I surprisingly talked back, whereas at home, in America, I most likely would not.

My fieldwork experience highlighted for me the complicated nature of identity that includes power and agency, yet also individual experience, personality, and heritage. Fieldwork both influenced who I am, but also my identity influenced my fieldwork. Who I was and who I am, melds into how others perceive and react towards me and then how I perceive my worldview ultimately affects my fieldwork and ethnographies. Living in another country illustrated how cultural

code switching can be a part of identity as well as the fieldwork experience. Identity becomes an ongoing, fragmented and fluid process dependent on an indeterminate number of variables (race, gender, nationality, age, personality, experience, symbolic etc.) defined by the individual person as well as the particular context yet there is a sense of continuity in that I recognize myself. Everyday practices can serve as ways in which to view the expression of identity and how it responds to societal change.

Yes, there are power dynamics between the anthropologist and his or her subjects, but on occasion, it is the anthropologist whose self-respect is challenged. We awkwardly come to a practical understanding of life in contrast to that of the society we study. Power and culture affect the identity you have, and the identity you will become as you conduct fieldwork. Different expectations of identity, both on my part and the people I studied, explain the awkwardness of my confrontations. "Talking back" indicates the point in which some of these confrontations occurred and illustrates the complicated and confusing nature of identity construction.

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Walter Brand

HIJACKED

It rarely happened that a passenger entered the cab from the front door unless more than three were going. Three passengers is the limit according to "New York City Taxi & Limousine Commission Regulations" and you could receive a ticket for taking more than three, but once the fourth person tapped on the glass with a forlorn look, it was difficult to respond with rules and regulations.

That night was different. The front passenger door flung open so quickly that it would have snapped back shut had not an outstretched arm clothed in the sleeve of a winter coat blocked its way. "Hey, I'm taking this cab." Two men stood beside the open door speaking loudly and aggressively. It looked like they knew each other and one was trying to diffuse an argument and reassure his friend.

"Please guys," I said politely, "won't you calm down so I can be on my way?" leaning toward the open door, trying to let them know that I too was present. His friend addressed him consolingly. "Take it easy now. You have no business with that cab. Come on, let it go."

The man holding the door open lost his patience, drew a gun from the inside of his coat pocket and pointed it at his friend. The friend's face relaxed from shock as he mechanically stepped backward, turned and vanished along the sidewalk.

I recognized the gun. It was long-barreled in the style of the Wild West but contemporary looking with brushed steel and a matte black handle, an elegant almost harmless looking piece of art. He would call it his "Clint" during the many hours we spent together that night. Now, he was sitting beside me gently pointing the tip of the gun against my tenth rib.

I recalled visiting a physician once due to a broken rib − the spot that the gun was now touching − and the physician concluded, "There's nothing to be done except to let it heal on its own." She was flatly confident and, while admitting that a broken rib was certainly painful, she dismissed the break as an insignificant injury. She spoke with a French accent and walked from one table to another, arranging surgical instruments left in disarray from an earlier visit. She placed several tools on starched white cloths with care and precision, gazing downward, briefly forgetting herself. In contrast, she dismissively tossed other instruments

into a steel basin, unmoved by the jarring sound of metal clanking. My presence disrupted her concentration as she stopped short of her next task and noticed me needlessly waiting, slouching over the edge of the examination table. She walked toward me with a wry but reassuring smile and, pointing with two fingers toward the wound, brightly added, "Once the fracture fuses, this part of your ribcage will be the strongest, most calcified part," and for emphasis she tapped on that tender spot, envisioning the day when the bone would be healed.

"Go," he screamed, getting me back on track.

He directed me onto a highway and we went on a bridge over a river. Nothing looked familiar.

Drivers noticed me as they flew by from both sides. He was nervous, restless and shifting to find the right position. "Where are we heading," I said calmly, still imagining this was an ordinary taxi ride.

"Just shut the fuck up and go." Everything seemed so light and playful, a stupid little trick that would soon be over, something we would joke about in no time. "Remember when I pointed the gun at your side and drew back the hammer? You should have seen your face," and he would slap my back and the two of us would laugh.

"C'mon, move it, can't this thing go faster?" He kept moving from side to side, unable to find the right way to settle into the seat.

"Yes, I can go faster but what if we attract the police? We're almost doing seventy." The highway now in New Jersey was crowded and agitated. Cars and trucks rushed along, veering within inches of each other, zigzagging, suddenly braking then darting forward, frustration everywhere from not being able to move freely. Amazing, I thought, one would think there would be ongoing bangs and scrapes. Vehicles nearly touch but contact is rare.

He indicated that he wanted to pass every car in front of us by firmly depressing his foot on an imaginary accelerator. It might have seemed petty of him to worry about speed limits having taken a taxi driver hostage by gunpoint. Still, he must have realized, he's right, what if the police stop us?

"Slow it down a bit," he agreed, relaxing his foot, "but keep it at sixty."

Why had I done this? Isn't that what I wanted, or should have wanted, to be stopped by the police? But could I be certain of what would happen if the police

pulled us over? He could easily panic and fire at the officer who would slowly approach with bent elbows. He might take the lives of both officers. Policemen, after all, are trained professionals so it wouldn't be surprising if the two of us died within seconds. Perhaps all of us would end up dying on the road. Who could say what calamity I might have prevented had I not reminded him of the speed limit?

Of course, even an obtuse observer could see through this line of thought as a pathetic sham. I had prodded chance to the edge by working the early morning hours in hard and desolate neighborhoods, allowing the cab to move on its own without touching the accelerator, using the brake only for lights and pauses, taking wide lefts and sharp rights, so the cab felt like a living being moving around the corners. I listened for voices that I might hear behind the windows although at this hour everyone was sinking into their mattresses, their breathing keeping different rates of time and their dreams occurring all at once. I sought mischief peripherally, seeking to back into it unknowingly. Could I now be so duplicitous as to turn my passenger over to the police? It wouldn't do to say, "After all, he was threatening me with a gun, demanding that I accelerate." And I should have accelerated because when someone is threatening you with a gun, you should do what you're told. The idea would occur only as an afterthought. This might work out well. If I drove fast enough, recklessly cutting off vehicles, I might attract the police. If I were skillful weaving and darting among the nexus of cars and trucks and waited for the right time, I might cause an astonishing yet innocuous accident, leaving myself the opportunity to flee. Everyone would have understood. And if, in the process, I trapped my victim within a ring of police, I might have been awarded a commendation. Still, I would have betrayed the man in a most underhanded manner. Instead of jolting along, speeding up the demise of my fare, the safer course of action was to resolve the situation with a more genuine spirit and convince my companion that I was thoroughly trustworthy. This was the first step in gaining that trust, slowing down for his, for our best interest.

"Just drive and don't look at me."

He was twisting, bending, searching, and going through his bag, repeatedly getting organized, apparently forgetting the previous arrangement. He pulled out a short, hand-molded pipe of aluminum foil, flicked a lighter and drew the flame deep within the bowl. That's odd, I thought, there's no smoke and there's no aroma. Could it be crack or meth-amphetamine? Normally, I would never

consider experimenting with these drugs but under the present life threatening circumstances, I wondered if he would share.

"You don't know how fortunate you are to have met me," I said. "With anyone else, you'd be in danger. I'll help you in any way possible and I'll do whatever I can to make sure you're safe. I honestly have your welfare in mind." Gaining his trust, that was the correct way to act.

"Just go and drive and don't look at my face." Again he snapped at the lighter, lit up a smoke, and was beginning to settle more comfortably into the seat.

"What's your name?"

"Dave," I reacted, which is not my name but warnings such as "Be careful who you give your name to" and "Don't tell anyone your social security number" suddenly took hold and I spoke before I thought. He could easily check the name on my hack license slipped between two plastic panels facing the rear seat. If he made the discovery and objected, I would simply say Dave is just a nickname. Everyone calls me Dave. I've always hated my name so after I tell people my real name, I ask them to call me Dave. Why, you know the taxi license is in clear view for everyone to see. I'm sorry. I spoke without thinking but I wouldn't lie to you. Surely he would understand.

Now the gun was resting on his lap. If only I knew what I was doing I could snatch the gun from his lap and fire at least one round into his stomach. It works in the movies but here it seemed obvious that many things could go wrong and that instead of him I could be shot. It struck me that I had the opportunity to kill a man without having to worry about being charged for murder. For if the gun were loaded, it would have been easy to empty all the bullets into him before he knew what was happening since he had grown more relaxed and was becoming more trusting. There would be an investigation but in the end I would get off on self-defense. No one would have blamed me. It would have been a perfect crime. However, I've never handled a gun and maybe it was not even loaded.

Time passed quickly. We didn't speak much since he was continuously lighting up the aluminum bowl. I didn't dare look at his face. I began to wonder whether my entire plan of trying to gain trust from an armed man who had been smoking a drug all night made sense any longer. From ease or forgetfulness, he slipped the

gun off his lap and rested it on the floor next to a box of bullets against the hump that separates driver from passenger. Oh, I thought, the gun's not loaded. That's why the bullets are near the gun. Just in case, he'll be able to load quickly. No, that can't be right. The gun must be loaded. Why rush last minute when you can leisurely load beforehand?

"Now," he asked, almost politely, "give me all the money on you."

"Sure," I said, groping at the cash in my waist-bag, pulling out a chaotic bundle, approximately three hundred dollars as the night had been good.

"Is that all of it? Are you sure you don't have more in your pockets?"

"No, that's it, that's all the cash I have."

"I believe you Dave but if I check you later and find one dollar, I'm going to kill you."

I tipped my head to meet his eyes. "I told you not to look at my face," he said with some irritation and I turned away. It was just for that moment that I saw my fare. Now, I would not be able to recognize him and the next day I would not have recognized him as the glance had been too brief to note details. There were, however, impressions and a sense of things. His thick, black-rimmed glasses gave him a studious, even distinguished appearance and his eyes were sedate yet lucid. His probing gaze showed that his perception of reality exceeded ordinary consciousness. There wasn't a trace of callousness, or insensitivity, or any sign of malice. But whatever consolation I took from the man's appearance conflicted with the plain fact that malevolent people usually have an air of kindness about them.

"I'm telling the truth," I said. "You can check me now if you like." The hack license came to mind. What if he gets curious and walks around to the back seat? Having grown accustomed to calling me "Dave," would he now think that my whole way of thinking and acting were false? How would I be able to convince him that it was those stupid warnings that made me speak as I did? He wouldn't look for an excuse to kill me. No, he wouldn't plant a bill just to search in order to accuse me of lying although I thought he might as well kill me if he discovered the lie, a fundamental breach of trust which would be especially shocking under the influence of drugs. But he neither checked my hack license nor searched for cash.

We drove into the parking lot of a shopping area in an industrial suburb of the city where he met someone and they made an exchange. He was clear and focused, took his gun, did the transaction and was back in the cab.

"Now, go this way." He had another appointment in the neighborhood but thought it was time for a break and had us pull into a Dunkin' Donuts. As we were leaving the cab he jokingly asked, "Should I take the Clint?" "No, leave it in the cab, you'll draw attention, you don't need it. Just take a little money. Let's just relax for awhile."

"Alright Dave," he said, genuinely laughing.

We had come a long way, I thought. We walked like friends into the bright and shiny, pink and white franchise, empty of all customers except for two police officers sipping coffee at a corner table. We knew everything at once. There was no time for deliberation. The two of us respectfully acknowledged the officers with confidence yet lightheartedly. Half-jokingly, I made the gesture to pay but he cordially countered, "I've got this." We spoke in such a way as to let the officers know that, odd as we looked together, we were friends and everything was fine. One detail soured the experience. I was irritated that my companion bought only two donuts with the coffees. He had taken all my night's earnings and many hours in the taxi. Why not be gracious and ask, would you like another donut, or something cold to drink? Surprised at myself, I saw this as a serious flaw in his character, something that went far deeper than a simple taxi hijacking. He did an excellent job concealing his nerves despite his precarious position. Now, in the company of two police officers, I began to feel indignant and the impulse to turn him in and reclaim my hard-earned cash challenged my sense of humanity. It wouldn't take much to put an end to all of this.

While waiting for our donuts and coffee, I excused myself to the Men's Room without giving any thought to how this might affect my companion, to separate him from myself and to conjoin myself with the police. A moment later, it dawned on me. How thoughtless. He must be feeling isolated and vulnerable. I became nervous just thinking about his predicament. This is it, he must have concluded. The hallway leading to the bathroom made it impossible for him to see me. I knew he was tense but smart enough not to walk past the officers to join me knowing that he might arouse their suspicion. The entrance of the Men's Room, now forbidden to my adversary, was in clear view of the corner table where the officers

were sitting. Alone in the bathroom, I didn't give the situation much thought. It was settled from the start. I recalled the saying, "The most decisive battles are fought at the gates," even there, in that garish Dunkin' Donuts. Pushing open the door to the Men's Room disturbed the officers' whisperings and they simultaneously looked up at me. Their attention appeared to be an inspection, alerting me to become composed. Approaching them through the narrow corridor, I politely nodded, smiled in a reassuring manner, and turned to my companion who was sitting alone in a booth.

I wondered. Why had he waited? Why not simply walk away? How could he know that I wasn't going to inform the police?

No, he must have thought "he won't do it, he's too cautious, but now, who could have expected this, and me, how stupid, I should have taken my gun and bag. There's too much money there, and drugs, and I owe people. But what good is it if the cops drag me away? Maybe I'll leave and wait for him around the corner. But, as soon as he saw that I left, he would surely tell the police. He would never walk to his taxi alone, vulnerable and unprotected. He wouldn't do that but he'll probably figure out a way to walk and talk with the police on the way to the taxi and then take off with everything. After all, I took all his money. Do I deserve more?"

I had no idea what the man was thinking. But from my standpoint, it was clear that he could no longer have any doubt. He would trust me completely.

"Ready to go?"

"Yeah, let's go," he said, without a hint of relief or surprise.

On our way to the cab, he said there would be another stop, this time by a large apartment complex that was not well kept up. "Park over there," he said, waving his arm at a vacant lot, and I described a wide arc and allowed the cab to coast precisely between the lines for parking. The surroundings were suburban with short grass and flat shapes of black pine trees. The terrain of the land mimicked a choppy sea. Impatiently, he grabbed his gun. "Oh yeah, let me have the keys." I was waiting for him to ask, hoping he wouldn't forget. "You still don't have confidence in me after what just happened back there in that Dunkin Donuts? Do you think I would drive off and leave you in this empty lot?"

He dropped his head, sighed, took the keys, and ran up and over a nest of rolling hills. It was a moonless and overcast night. A number of tall street lamps lit up circles of light in the sky but did little to illuminate the immediate surroundings. I felt complete and fully confident, even triumphant, alone in the taxi, looking forward to my companion's return. For that night, after receiving the keys from the dispatcher, I discovered that the cab already had keys in the ignition. I had kept the second set on my keychain inside the front pocket of my pants. Waiting, I pictured his reaction after revealing the keys. Finally, I thought, breathing deeply, would be safe. Without noticing his approach, he returned to the cab and dropped into the seat. I couldn't wait. "I want to show you something." I was grasping the keys the whole time waiting. I proudly opened my fist to reveal the keys on the palm of hand. He violated his own rule and directly looked at me in a searching manner, his round eyes tracking the salient features of my face.

"You're crazier than I am."

"I said from the start you'd be safe with me." He had finished his errands. This was the last stop. We were about to go our separate ways and now he wanted to reward me in the best way he could imagine.

"Hold this. I'll light it up."

It was the hand molded aluminum pipe he had been drawing from all night. Blood rushed from my face and cold air seeped into the cab. Why was he offering me the substance? Why now, when we were about to part, if not to make me thoroughly oblivious so I wouldn't pose any resistance when he was ready to fire. We're in a desolate location − he must have thought − and with all the windows up the gunshot wouldn't be heard. Why take chances? This guy's a nut. Who knows what he's capable of doing. He's only a taxi driver but, that's right, he's probably familiar with the neighborhood. Maybe he'll contact the police the moment I let him go. No, he's not to be trusted, and he stole a glance at me after I repeatedly told him not to look at my face. Just look at him sitting there with all his kindness and concern. I bet he'd kill me if he had the chance.

He would ask me to close all the windows so as not to waste the precious fumes. Yes, we would laugh and joke and he would want to become friends, and in the years ahead I would change his life in a meaningful way. Then, without warning, he would discharge the fatal round. In this neighborhood of projects and

warehouses he could easily unload a corpse. It would take months before the body was discovered. All night I hid behind humanitarian impulses where I could stealthily play. Now he would have his turn.

"Shut the windows so we don't lose any smoke."

This is only a coincidence, I thought. I was horrified but perhaps I was exaggerating or affecting a dramatic attitude for I honestly didn't believe the man would kill me. However, there was some chance he would so, I was able to play with the idea that my life would soon end. I drew from a dream. I was shot with an automatic rifle. The experience was not terrible so I hoped that now I would have a similar experience. Approximately twenty of us were armed waiting to meet the enemy in the corridor of a modern office. I asked a co-worker, "Are we really going to do this? This is madness." But the option of removing ourselves from the situation was unavailable. Their leader spotted me among the others as if he had finally caught up with someone he had long been seeking. Without delay, he aimed, fired, and planted a bullet into my chest. I was glad that I hadn't hurt myself as I hit the ground. Moreover, I was thoroughly grateful that I was not in any pain. As he walked toward me, I understood that I was selected as a deterrent for the others not to put up any resistance. So, my coworkers had to silently watch as he fired several more rounds into my chest near the first wound. Again, I thought, there's no pain. And in the same way that a wisp of cloud or a toxic vapor dissipates into an icy blue sky, I was gradually losing consciousness until I was nearly unconscious and then I awoke.

"No, no," he persisted enthusiastically, clicking the lighter and motioning my arm to move the pipe toward my mouth.

I drew from the mouthpiece but with no success. "Come on, relax. Lean backward. Haven't you ever smoked before?"

"Well, some marijuana a long time ago," I admitted, "but I'm feeling fine now."

I was scared and felt vulnerable leaning back with my legs outstretched and my head resting against the seat. He could pull out the gun at any moment. He snapped the flicker and moved the flame toward the bowl signaling for me to draw from the pipe, but I didn't feel fumes of any sort strike my lungs nor did smoke emerge as I exhaled.

He gave up on me. “I’ll be taking off Dave.”

“You’re not going to shoot me now are you, after all we’ve been through?

“No,” he said, and he turned away to conceal a smile.

He told me to stop the engine and asked me to wait before driving away.

“Good-bye, Dave,” and he shook my hand and said, “thanks for everything.”

He flung the door shut and disappeared over the mounds of grass.

I sat still with my hands folded on my lap imagining he was waiting, lying prone against a hill ready to approach and fire through the glass as soon as I began to move. Instead, I heard the tires freshly crunching against the gravel as I turned from the driveway.

The highway was wide open and the overcast morning light was visually soothing. Occasionally, a car would speed by. In the city, the day was just beginning with the familiar sight of heads descending and ascending along the steps of the subway.

There was no overwhelming sense of relief.

He was still there sitting beside me.