Pride and Authenticity

Ulrich Steinvorth

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Part I

Proper Pride

1

Why Pride? Theses

Pride, I claim, is an emotion that we cannot and should not suppress but instead cultivate in its proper form. Considering parents' behavior toward their children, most people agree with this claim because they want their kids to be proud of, for example, being female if they happen to be born female, of being black if they happen to be black, of being small among the tall, stout among the lean. We expect Americans to be proud of being American and Chinese to be proud of being Chinese. Gays and lesbians teach gays and lesbians to be proud of being gay or lesbian, and though it took some time, most people in the West have learned that this is how it should be.

It is no less clear that pride can become arrogant, pretentious and boastful. There is proper and improper pride, and here the problems start. How can we distinguish proper and improper pride? Is pride evil when there is too much of it, as we may argue using Aristotle's claim that virtue is the middle between the extremes of too much and too little? Or is pride evil from the outset, as Christianity teaches, ranking pride among the deadly sins? How then can we want kids to be proud of the properties that they are born with without their merit? Or do we only want them not to be ashamed of their innate properties and mistake lack of shame

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for pride? Yet authenticity is a child of pride, as we need pride in ourselves to want to be true to ourselves. How can authenticity be the ideal of self-loyalty if we are only not ashamed of the properties of our self?

Such problems about pride arouse suspicion that the prevailing ideas of pride are confused when we turn to philosophers. "The social bases of self-esteem" we read in John Rawls' famous *Theory of Justice*, are "primary social goods" of which we can assume that rational beings "normally prefer more…rather than less."[1] So Rawls, it seems, judges self-esteem as so good that normally we should prefer more of it rather than less.[2] Yet pride, like the "passions for power and glory," only moves "a nobility and lesser aristocracy" who want "to earn their social standing and place in the sun."[3] But isn't *self*-esteem pride too? The philosopher Donald Davidson in fact dryly remarked, self-esteem is "what is normally called pride."[4] So Rawls seems to want to reserve the term *pride* to mean bad pride and the term *self-esteem* to mean proper pride.

Yet is this recommendable? Can't too much self-respect be bad? Is self-respect proper in any case? If I am born with a timid nature, should I respect my timid nature? Are there universally valid criteria of what we rightly are proud of or should have self-respect for? What do we commit to in proper pride? What is the self referred to in the term *self-esteem*?

These are questions worth considering, and considering them led me to write this book. But I was neither able nor willing to proceed systematically. I explored the questions like foreign land, without program and method, but with the thrills of an adventure and the joys of seeing the familiar in a new light. Though pride was homeland for ancient and medieval philosophers it has become foreign for us. Twenty years ago, Richard Taylor, the only recent author to write a book on pride, tried to restore pride as a virtue, but he did not rekindle interest in pride. Maybe his scope was too narrow. True, philosophers should have a focus, but pride needs closer consideration of authenticity and authors such as Augustine and Kierkegaard. Therefore, I roam into history and morality,

[1] Rawls 1999, 123.

[2] As did Hoffer 1955, sec. 35 http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Eric_Hoffer

[3] Rawls 1999, 29n and 47.

[4] Davidson 1976, 751.

the self and free will, rational theology and technological unemployment, referring to a lot of authors from perhaps confusingly different backgrounds. Pride, as Ludwig Wittgenstein remarked, but referring to a different topic, "compels us to travel over a wide field of thought criss-cross in every direction."[5]

The most important results of my exploration are two claims. First, proper pride is not a crowing over what I have done but rather a preparation for what I will do. Proper pride is the right emotional response to an obliging endowment we are not responsible for, but want to live up to and be true to. Second, authenticity consists not in self-realization but in doing things for their own sake.

I'll argue for these claims by (1) analyzing the concepts of pride, self and doing things for their own sake; (2) examining historical facts, in particular facts of the Renaissance interest in doing things for their own sake; (3) looking for the role of pride in motivating morality, metaphysics and rational theology; and (4) considering the interaction between modern technology and pride and arguing that authenticity calls for a society different from the current ones. These four tasks correspond roughly to the four parts of this book.

The investigations will show that the self that we want to be true to in authenticity is not a narrative or conceptual construction as contemporary theorists claim, but an innate property of natural organisms, selected in the process of natural evolution. It provides us with the capacity to intentionally intervene in nature and improve or deteriorate it. Thus, in addition to its claims on proper pride and authenticity, this book makes similarly ambitious claims on the self: that our self is what enables us to intentionally change the world and makes us responsible, punishable or praiseworthy, and of which, with good reasons, we can be both proud and afraid.

Yet there is a third and even more ambitious claim that the book implies. Pride demands crying out the injustice of the world (as we'll see when we compare kitsch and tragedy), but it cannot tolerate an absurd world either, a world without meaning. To sober unemotional reason, the world we are born into lacks a purpose for us. Freud claimed that science

[5] As Wittgenstein 1953, vii, said "the very nature of the investigation."

dealt three blows to narcissistic human self-esteem, by Copernicus, Darwin and Freud himself.[6] Though Copernicanism was rarely felt to be humiliating, Freud was right that science was perceived as proving that man's position in the universe is unimportant. To the proud, however, our reason and will are evidence that our existence is not marginal[7]; for our having them enables us to the discoveries of Copernicus, Darwin and Freud, and even enables us to both improve and worsen the world. Even the evils of the world are challenges for the proud to use reason and will to improve the world.

I'll not explore the metaphysical implications of this third thesis but argue for a claim that suits it: Doing things for their own sake is the way for rational creatures to make sense of their lives. As our properties are not marginal in the universe, using them by doing things not for some goal beyond our actions but for the actions' sake is important enough to provide meaning in life. I also imply claims that presuppose my third thesis but that I do not explicate in this book: that doing things for their own sake commits to a life of professional passion incompatible with ideas of a universal man who will "hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner"[8]; and that the dangers of "specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart" that Weber warned against[9] can be reduced in a society of citizens with enough of due pride to participate in its organization.

If in exploring pride we hit upon so various and even deep metaphysical issues, do we hit upon them haphazardly? Is it my accidental subjective interest that leads us, or is there more to it? In a closing remark that stands for a conclusion, I show why it's not haphazard, pointing to a parallel with hermeneutic philosophy that this book (and its author), having an analytic background, finds to be quite strange.

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[6] Freud, "Eine Schwierigkeit der Psychoanalyse," in *Imago* Bd. 5, 1917, 1–7.

[7] Weinberg expressed the idea of man's marginality in the universe by his famous word that "the more the universe seems comprehensible, the more it seems pointless" (1977, 132). For comments, see Steinvorth 2013, Chap. 15; Russell 1918, 47f; Kutschera 1990, 261ff; Tetens 2015, 50.

[8] Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, tr. Dutt and Magill, Pt. 1, A, sec. *Private property and communism*.

[9] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic*, 182; *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie* I, 204.

Who is interested in exploring pride? Pride is a topic in psychology, theology and pedagogy and, in addition, draws the interest of all devotees of the humanities: historians, political and social theorists, anthropologists, literary critics; whoever is interested in the puzzles and paradoxes of human life. As a result of my positive theses, some cherished views on the self and authenticity will prove to be illusions. So this book will be of interest to the field of philosophy as well as to philosophers, and can be used in philosophy classes too.

2

The Meaning of the Term Pride

What do I understand by *pride*? The same as you? The same as non-English authors whose words are translated as *pride*? English *pride* is not the same as Latin *superbia* and Greek *hubris* or (to take Aristotle's word for proper pride) *megalopsuchia*. Different languages have different conceptual nets. Even phenomena as simple as colors are differently parsed; how much so then will be the more complex phenomena of emotions. Yet there is overlapping enough to justify comparisons.[1] Some theorists claim that emotions can be identified with a number of physiological patterns that human organisms show in response to their surroundings. This claim finds support in a fact that Darwin pointed to: there are typical expressions found in all human societies for the best known emotions, such as blushing for shame, dancing and laughing for joy, trembling body and clenched fists for anger, head hanging for sadness and head and body held erect for pride.[2]

To explain the ordinary use of *pride* I refer to dictionaries. In its ordinary use, *pride* has a pejorative, a neutral and an appreciative meaning.

[1] Cp. e.g. Cairns 1993, on the concepts of shame, in particular p. 14.

[2] Darwin 1872. Cp. Harald Wallbott, "Bodily Expression and Emotion," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 28, 1998, 879–96; Paul Ekman, "Facial Expression and Emotion," *American Psychologist* 48, 1993, 384–92; Cairns 1993, 7ff.

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Thus, the *Oxford English Dictionary* states the pejorative meaning: "A high, esp. an excessively high, opinion of one's own worth or importance which gives rise to a feeling or attitude of superiority over others; inordinate self-esteem. In this sense the first of the seven deadly or capital sins"; the neutral meaning: "The feeling of satisfaction, pleasure, or elation derived from some action, ability, possession, etc., which one believes does one credit"; and the appreciative one: "A consciousness of what befits, is due to, or is worthy of oneself or one's position; self-respect; self-esteem, esp. of a legitimate or healthy kind or degree."

In addition to these explanations, we have to state that pride is a *feeling* and more specifically an *emotion*, or *passion* (as emotions have formerly been called). But it is also a *disposition*, that is, a character trait or quality that *predisposes* the proud to the emotion of pride. *Emotions*, such as anger, envy, wrath, fear and shame, differ from other kinds of *feelings*, such as pain, hunger, feeling hot or cold, and from *moods*, such as being ill-humored or good-humored, by having a *reason* known to those experiencing the emotion.[3] No emotion is without a *reason* or *object*, while *feelings* or *sensations* such as pain and hunger have *causes* but not reasons. *Moods* may have, in addition to causes, *reasons* too, but only *diffuse ones*, *not necessarily known* to those who are in the mood. Emotions are *cognitive*; they cognize or give us something to know about the object that is the reason for the emotion. Yet they do not inform us about their objects or reasons neutrally, but evaluate them. Fear recognizes its object as bad or negative; and pride as good or positive. Emotions are *evaluative*. Let us sum up these explanations of the term *pride*. Like all emotions or passions, pride[4]

1. is cognitive and evaluative,
2. the evaluation of what it is cognitive of is positive (in contrast to shame),
3. its object, that which (like shame) it cognizes and evaluates, is the self and its properties, or something the proud identifies with,

[3] Hume distinguishes some feelings as *direct passions* from *indirect passions* (such as pride) as "emotions and attitudes that can be explained, Hume thinks, only by their causal relations to beliefs" (Davidson 1976, 744).

[4] Cp. Lyons 1980; de Sousa 1987.

4. provides a specific feeling of satisfaction because it evaluates its object positively,
5. is a way to become conscious of one's value and moral status of dignity,
6. like shame, envy, love and pity, is not only an emotion but a disposition to be in the emotion.

Now pride and other emotions such as shame, envy, pity and love can be considered a *vice* or a *virtue* because, as Aristotle argued,[5] virtues and vices are *dispositions* to feelings and corresponding actions that education (by others and by oneself) can more or less control. When and how the disposition turns into the feeling or action it predisposes to depends more or less on humans; hence, pride and similar passions are something that either the individual or her social milieu is responsible for and therefore can be morally qualified as a vice or virtue.

How are we to decide when Richard Taylor claims the word is incorrectly used? He says:

> The word "pride" has come to be used so loosely that it has virtually lost the overwhelmingly important meaning it once had. It has degenerated to little more than an exhortation. We are told to *be proud*, of this, that, or the other—indeed, of everything. The downtrodden are urged to be proud, likewise the forsaken, the ignorant, the weak, as if these conditions might themselves be sources of pride. But when everyone is expected to be proud of everything, then there really is nothing left to be proud of, nor can a truly proud person be distinguished from anyone else.[6]

Are we really "told to *be proud*…of everything"? I agree this would be too loose a use of the word. But Taylor is right to assume that we are told to be proud of everything we are *born with* or *cannot change*. This, however, can be understood as an encouragement to make the best of the properties we cannot change, which is certainly a wise exhortation. As Taylor calls his ideas on pride "elitist" he can be understood to claim that just as not everyone can be the best, not everyone can be proud.[7] This claim is

[5] *Nicomachean Ethics* 2, 1106 b16–1107 a32.

[6] Richard Taylor 1996, 23.

[7] Richard Taylor 1996, 15.

false, for every normal human can find some talent and use it so as to be rightly proud of it. Moreover, it was pagan Stoics, not Christians as Taylor assumes, that introduced the ideas that allow everyone to be proud. For the Stoics ascribed reason and the power of choice to all people and considered this property a reason for pride and an obligation to behave the way suitable to creatures gifted with reason and choice.[8]

Taylor is also mistaken in claiming that because "Christians…declared each and every human being…to be a creature of God, to be in some sense God's very *image*," "it of course follows that no one can be any better a person than any other."[9] Christians consider humans to be God's image because humans participate in the divine properties of reason and will and presuppose that people can use these abilities in very different and in good and evil ways.

Despite his errors, Taylor gives fine examples that prove pride to be about having reason and free will. Here is one:

> So the story is told of Diogenes the Cynic that one day, as he was lying outside his tub, which was his shelter, enjoying the sunshine, Alexander the Great rode up on his horse and announced: "I am Alexander, the great king," to which Diogenes, without moving or rising to salute, responded; "And I am Diogenes, the dog." The exchange continued: "Well, are you not afraid of me?" "Are you good or bad?" "Good, of course." "And why should anyone fear that which is good?" Now Alexander was so struck by the aptness of this observation that he exclaimed: "Ask anything you want of me, and you shall have it!" To which Diogenes responded: "Then kindly step out of my sunlight."[10]

What makes Diogenes a paradigm of pride is not that he is proud of what he has done; this is Alexander's pride, even though Alexander has certainly been proud not only of his achievements but of having been born a prince. Diogenes demonstrates the pride of being a human who, whether born a prince or a beggar, has the same abilities as any other human of reasoning and choosing after deliberation and in this way to achieve things

[8] Cp. below Chaps. 19 and 20.

[9] Richard Taylor 1996, 31.

[10] Richard Taylor 1996, 121.

no less valuable than whatever a king might achieve. The "aptness" of his words, his repartee, is something "to stand out among the multitude," as Taylor says, but it is not this talent that makes his behavior proud but the emotional response to the value of human reason and will that everyone has. We may imagine a wordless Diogenes remaining as unimpressed by the shining appearance of Alexander as the quick-witted Diogenes and yet showing the same pride of properties that enable everyone to decide themselves on their life rather than being led by an Alexander.

Diogenes was a Stoic model. Contradicting Aristotle,[11] the Stoics taught that *all* humans have the full powers of intellect and will that they can and should be proud enough to use. They had the experience that people do not essentially differ in their intelligence and will and valued these powers so much that they felt obliged to live according to them. They used the term *pride* in the first place as an exhortation: to live up to one's talents. Yet if we live up to our talents, we are also true to ourselves, which means we are authentic. Authenticity didn't arise only in modern times, as some recent authors claim. The idea of authenticity is as old as the idea of properties that the owners should be proud of and feel obliged to be true to.

[11] Aristotle, *Politics* I, 1252 b7 und 1254 b21; Plato in the *Republic* ascribes full reason only to the philosophers, though this may be understood as an effect of education rather than nature.

3

Pride and Metaphysics

Pride does get some attention. The Canadian rock band Sum 41 sang that "we're all to blame, we've gone too far, from pride to shame." It is recognized that "without a sense of pride, one might not achieve or continue to strive for excellence."[1] Along with its contrast, shame, pride draws attention from psychologists.[2] Eric Hoffer praised it.[3] International relations study it as a factor that, along with honor and prestige, influences and explains politics.[4] Some authors even ask what has become of pride. The novelist Michel Houellebecq, wondering at the Christian idea that "the only true sin is the sin of pride," makes a narrator ask "Where, in me, was…pride?"[5]

[1] Dyson 2006, 1.

[2] Nathanson 1992.

[3] Holler 1955.

[4] Examples are Jonathan Mercer, *Reputation and International Politics*, Ithaca: Cornell UP 1996; Jerome D. Frank, "The Role of Pride," in Ralph K. White, ed., *Psychology and the Prevention of Nuclear War*, New York: New York UP, 1986, 220–6; Barry O'Neill, *Honor*, *Symbols*, *and War*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 1999.

[5] Houellebecq 2006, 55.

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Statistically, use of the word has increased since 2000.[6] All the same, pride is not "in."

History shows us a varying interest in pride. In ancient thought, pride was a favorite topic because it meant much. The Stoics found in pride, without always calling it pride, something they discovered to be more important than life.[7] Like Diogenes the Cynic, Epictetus the Stoic opposed the power of tyrants by the absolute power of man to prefer death to prostration. He was perhaps the first to understand that pride refers us to something absolute or sacred. Renaissance thinkers took up the Stoic idea that having reason obliges to pride. Pico, Erasmus, Machiavelli and Descartes added another quality common to humans as a reason for pride: free will.

Yet the Renaissance changed the mindset of only a small part of the population. It made pride an ideal for the learned and elites rather than for lower classes.[8] English eighteenth-century society took an interest in passions and sentiments, including pride, liberating them from the verdict of being a nuisance to human life and society. Most famously, Bernard Mandeville explicitly mentioned pride as a "private vice" that is a "public benefit": "Fraud, Luxury, and Pride must live;/Whilst we the Benefits receive."[9] However, this interest, taken up by Hume, did not develop into investigating the role of pride in history and society, let alone into revaluating pride. Pride rose again in esteem in the nineteenth century. Schopenhauer[10] distinguished pride from "its worst enemy, vanity," as based on the "unshakable conviction of one's preponderant virtues," and criticized "national pride" as a cheap substitute for people who lack the

[6] www.google.com/search?q=+pride&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&client=firefox-a shows a small rise of mentions of the term *pride* since 2000, after a constant fall until that time. Hume's remarks on pride in his *Treatise of Human Nature*, Book Two, Part 1, prevented academic interest in pride from dying. Cp., e.g., Davidson 1980, 277–90 (first publ. 1976); Páll S. Árdal, "Hume and Davidson on Pride," *Hume Studies* 15, 1989, 387–94.

[7] Cp. Robert LeFevre, "The Stoic Virtues," *Rampart Journal of Individualist Thought*, vol. 1, 1, March 1965, 1–15. http://fair-use.org/rampart-journal/1965/03/the-stoic-virtues; Brooke 2012; Sorabji 2006; and below Chap. 18f.

[8] Cp. Robert LeFevre, "The Stoic Virtues," *Rampart Journal of Individualist Thought*, vol. 1, 1, March 1965, 1–15; Brooke 2012; Sorabji 2006; and below Chap. 18f.

[9] *Private Vices*, *Publick Benefits*. For a critical edition see *The Fable of the Bees*, Oxford 1924, [2]1957.

[10] Schopenhauer 1976, 65f, my transl.

virtues they might be proud of. The labor movement told workers to be proud of being proletarians, and Nietzsche advocated a master morality that exalted the pride of warriors. Yet Schopenhauer did not fit in with rising nationalism; the labor movement couldn't stop most workers from emulating the bourgeoisie, while the blonde beast that Nietzsche sometimes used as a model of pride was unacceptably fascist.

The changeful history of the concept and idea of pride indicates that there is something irritating in pride. In the current net of values and normative concepts, pride is located as a property and value not for people living in the present, but for "a nobility and lesser aristocracy" (to quote Rawls) who suffer from nostalgia for times gone by. It is true, pride is rooted in ways of thinking and feeling odd and alien to currently dominating ways, but in the end this may prove the currently dominating ways to be odd and devious. There is an affinity between pride and the idea of liberty that hints at qualities of pride eclipsed in the light of present preferences. Pride and the will to be free of the rule of other people make us bellicose and ungracious; both are incompatible with Christian love, bourgeois utility and the current need of peace. Hence, isn't this the reason why Christians such as Augustine, bourgeoisie such as Hobbes[11] and current authors who know the destructivity of wars agree in rejecting pride? However, Christians, bourgeoisie and contemporaries embrace liberty, despite its aristocratic heritage and its potential bellicosity. They declare liberty a universal right rather than only a right of aristocrats or a chosen people. Why did they not also declare pride, in its proper form, a universal virtue?

It is obvious enough, though, that pride does not suit the present way of life. Even an interest in *understanding* pride is met with wonder. Pride is an object of folk psychology. A philosopher writing on pride is expected to be soon bogged down in concepts soaked in ignorance. In fact, when probing into pride we'll soon hit upon a value hierarchy incompatible with modern ideas. Thus, pride is often symbolized by the lion and the eagle. These animals are honored as representing the power of nature in its most striking form that the proud want to participate in. Lion and eagle contrast with a worm or pig at the bottom of the value hierarchy that pride entails.

[11] Hobbes, *Leviathan* Chap. 15; 1968, 211f.

Probing into pride entangles us in metaphysical ideas, ideas about the meaning of life. Metaphysics in the sense of a theory about meaning in life is often considered irrational or unfit for the academy. Yet discussion of value hierarchies unlike the currently prevailing one may be just what we need today. In any case, theorizing about the meaning of facts can be as rational as theorizing about the facts themselves, as has been increasingly recognized.[12] Empirical theories are true not if they are based on irrefutable empirical data. Rather, they are considered to be most likely true if they fit the data better than competing theories but will be dropped when another theory proves to fit the data better. The better a theory brings order to a mass of data, the more rational it is to accept it. The data are not only *empirical* evidence; they can also be moral intuitions, explicated by moral theory, and intuitions about what is meaningful, explicated by metaphysics. Metaphysical theories compete no less for rational recognition than empirical theories, and there are similar differences between them in fitting *their* data. Or can we seriously believe that what Plato implies about meaning in life is as arbitrary and unworthy of discussion as what Hitler implies?[13]

Some theorists maintain a difference between the rationality of the humanities, including metaphysics, and that of science. They reserve to science the rationality of universal validity, while assigning to the humanities a rationality of interpretation of facts that cannot attain universal validity. They spot the difference in a *hermeneutic circle* that they say only the humanities are exposed to. The hermeneutic circle consists in the dilemma that to theorize about an item we need to understand its context or the whole that it is a part of, and to understand the context we need to understand the item.[14] This dilemma is thought to rule out for

[12] In particular since Metz 2013. Cp. also Floridi 2011, 358, who states: "Metaphysical questions are intrinsically open to put it bluntly, they are a matter of informed exchange of rational arguments"; and Henrich 1986.

[13] Cp. below Chap. 6; Steinvorth 2010 and 2013, Chaps. 8 and 13. Henrich 1986 too defends the fallibility of metaphysics. Vattimo 2004, claims that "truth is born in consent and from consent." True, but therefore not "grounded in arbitrary acts of will" (p. xxvif) but in *rational* consent, consent reached by comparing competing theories and their pros and cons.

[14] For a hermeneutic philosopher, cp. Vattimi 1997; the analytic philosophy referred to is represented by Otto Neurath and other analytic philosophers who understood philosophy as a science and rejected metaphysics as nonsense.

the humanities the strict rationality possible in science, as only science can distinguish between hypothetical facts and an auxiliary background knowledge of laws of nature that allows for theorizing about the item. Yet as Wolfgang Stegmüller has shown, pointing to similar arguments by Karl Popper and Nelson Goodman, science is no less exposed to the hermeneutic circle. The difference is only that the scientist is used to finding a way to solve the concrete dilemma of understanding her item, while the scholar of the humanities, as far as he believes in the hermeneutic circle, is inclined to mistakenly believe in its insolvability.[15]

No more than the humanities can science rely on finding facts without presupposing interpretations. The most acceptable theory can be found out only in comparing the details and concrete arguments of competing theories, whether the theories are physical, metaphysical or on another subject. Physicists use empirical data or observational intuitions to confirm or refute their theories, moral theorists use moral intuitions, and metaphysicians use metaphysical intuitions to check their theories and to refute competitors. Metaphysical intuitions are provisional certainties about what provides life with meaning.[16] Rationality is not a quality of logical deductibility from some infallible data but of an always fallible judgment on competing theories. Fallibility is the mark and the price of rationality.

To sum up my prefatory remarks, pride is a topic alien to the currently prevailing zeitgeist, and just for this reason, a challenge. Yet, I have talked about pride only in the abstract. This is why I'll turn to the Renaissance, as this age will give us a more detailed picture of the historical effects appreciation of pride can cause. But first, we should look at the deeper and deeply ambivalent sides of pride and its child, authenticity. They bestow both guilt and greatness on man, as Augustine implied; both despair and bliss, as Kierkegaard said.

[15] Stegmüller 1988. Fodor 2000 show that cognitive science is exposed to a hermeneutic circle too. He does not use the term, but that of context and essential properties, and refers to the analog "frame problem" (24, 42).

[16] Camus 1942, 73, saying "Je tiens quelques évidences dont je ne peux me détacher," describes the data metaphysics has to use just as physics uses observational evidences.

4

Augustine on Pride

The best guide to introduce the depths of pride is probably Augustine. His writings on pride, in particular his interpretation of Adam and Eve's fall, are, as Connolly in his study on Meister Eckhart said in intentionally casual terms, "a fascinating blend of optimism…and pessimism"[1]; *optimism* referring to Augustine's reliance on human powers; *pessimism*, to our dependence on lucky circumstances or the grace of God. This blend resulted in concepts and ideas still alive today: the recognition of Christian humility as what is required to transform pagan virtues into true virtue,[2] and the distinction between good works and right faith, and between free choice (*liberum arbitrium*), which makes us responsible for our deliberate actions, and free will (*libera voluntas*), which in addition makes us perfectly sure of an action and at one with it (but we lost it, Augustine says, by the fall of man). It also resulted in a new trust in nature and our *inherited* properties. This trust allied to *inheritance* pride, pride in inherited properties, different from *achievement* pride, pride in what we have achieved ourselves.

[1] Connolly 2014, 72.

[2] Cp. Connolly 2014, 73, 78ff, and his description of Augustine's concept of will ibid. 53f.

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Augustine uses the story of Adam and Eve's fall to condemn pride. Pride, he claims, is the original sin entailing disaster; it "made the soul sinful"; Adam and Eve ate an apple from the tree God had forbidden them and were rightly punished, expelled from paradise, exposed to disease and death and condemned to the labors of hard work and childbirth. Their offspring, humanity, are included in this punishment.[3] This punishment is obviously out of proportion to the trifle of taking an apple from a forbidden tree, which didn't harm anyone. Obviously, to include the offspring in punishing an action they are not responsible for is also a relic of a barbaric age.

No less disconcerting is what Augustine identifies as the reason for the fall: "it was not the corruptible flesh that made the soul sinful, but the sinful soul that made the flesh corruptible."[4] The Bible, in agreement with ancient philosophy, says "the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."[5] Augustine contradicts: the human spirit is unwilling because it is proud of itself. Lucifer, the angel with the most perfect intellect, fell from God's grace because he was too proud of his intellect. Yet Augustine doesn't condemn spirit, which is impossible because God is spirit. He points to the indelible ambivalence of spirit, its power to will the evil as well as the good. As to our intellect, despite some imperfection, it is good enough to understand, with God's grace (there is nothing for which we do not need God's grace, says Augustine), the moral law and to direct us in all practical matters. Like the Stoics, Augustine assumed an eternal natural law that "is, so to speak, inscribed upon the rational soul," telling us what to do.[6] As to our will, it enables us to exercise *free choice*, as Augustine argued in his *De Libero Arbitrio* (published in 395). Later, in his *City of God* Book V, he insisted on God's foreknowledge that Cicero had argued to be incompatible with free will, and in his *Enchiridion* of 422 and

[3] Augustine, *The City of God* XII 12, 1887, understood *Genesis* 2:17 ("in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die") as evidence of the immortality of man's body before the fall. For more condemnations of pride by Augustine, cp. Mattox 2006, 103f.

[4] Augustine, *The City of God* (1887), XIV 3. Cp. Kutschera 1990, 307f.

[5] Matthew 26: 41. Augustine's contradicting the Bible may be a reason why his explanation of the fall was later replaced with declarations that Kierkegaard in the beginning of his *The Concept Anxiety* mocked about.

[6] Augustine, *On Eighty Three Diverse Questions*, tr. Boniface Ramsey, http://lexchristianorum.blogspot.com/2010/03/st-augustine-of-hippo-on-natural-law.html

other later writings "ends up with quite a strong view of predestination,"[7] which would contradict his claim that humans are responsible for their actions. Yet I take him as never abandoning the claim that humans have the free choice of *liberum arbitrium*.[8] For else he could not have condemned Adam and Eve and their offspring for their sins.

To describe his view on free will more clearly, the following distinction will help:

> Call "Pelagianism" the doctrine that we can have faith and earn salvation by means of our own intrinsic resources…Call "*semi*-Pelagianism"…the doctrine that we need God's grace to be fully saved but must (and can) take the first step in God's direction…"Arminianism"…holds both that, on our own, we can make no move whatsoever toward God. God must turn us and draw us. The Arminian addendum, however, is that we can say "Yes" or "No."…we are merely letting God heal our abject sinfulness, but there is enough human freedom to say "Yes" or "No" to the physician.[9]

Augustine may have been a Semi-Pelagian in his younger years and perhaps sympathized with determinism, insisting that we need God's grace even to be ready to ask for his help.[10] Yet in the end I think he favored Arminianism; otherwise he loses the ground on which to understand Adam and Eve's fall as punishable. In any case, Augustine conceives free will as a power to choose between *yes* and *no* in response to an impulse or a proposition. This conception differs from Kant's concept of free will as a power of an absolute beginning because a response to an impulse isn't an "absolute beginning."

According to the presently accepted criterion of free will,[11] the principle of alternate possibilities, the power to choose between saying *yes* and *no* to a proposition, between stopping and admitting an impulse is freedom of the will. This principle requires for an action to be freely willed

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[7] Jackson 1998, 248f.

[8] Cp. Peterson 2006 and Connolly 2014, 43.

[9] Jackson 1998, 236f; cp. Connolly 84f.

[10] As Connolly argues in a private correspondence, referring to Stump 2001.

[11] Moore 1912, Chap. 6, used the principle to define free will; cp Steinvorth 1994, 237. Frankfurt 1969 (arguing—wrongly—that we may be responsible even if the principle is not met) made it popular. On Kant cp. below Chap. 19.

that it could be different from what it is. This is true of actions performed with the power to say no as well as yes to an impulse or proposition. Augustine's *liberum arbitrium* is the same as Epictetus' *prohairesis*, the power of assent and refusal, implied by Aristotle's concept of *prohairesis* as a choice after deliberation.[12] Yet as a Stoic, Epictetus was a determinist, while Augustine recognizes that if we can say both yes and no to an impulse, we are not predetermined.

Now, understanding that Augustine ascribes free will conceived as the power to say no to impulses does not solve the problem of why he says it was sin to eat a healthy apple, harming no one. True, God forbade eating the apple, but we must not think the mere fact of this forbiddance is enough for Augustine to condemn the eating. To find out Augustine's reason for condemning pride and the nature of his views on pride we have to find out why he took God's prohibition so seriously. We have to presuppose he took it as a matter of course that God gave man the powers of reason and free will so that man should use them according to his own, man's, judgment. Yet this is just what Adam and Eve did. Why then does Augustine condemn them so harshly?

The same problem arises for Lucifer. Why should he not use his intellect, the gift of God, to follow his own judgment? Yet there is a difference. Lucifer, according to Augustine, rebels because he is not only proud but also *envies* God the property only the one God can have, to be *causa sui*, of his own origin, as nothing causes his existence but his own will. Such envy is evil indeed, but Augustine does not ascribe it to Adam and Eve. True, he says "The devil…would not have ensnared man in the open and manifest sin of doing what God had forbidden, had man not already begun to live for himself. It was this that made him listen with pleasure to the words, You shall be as gods."[13] But it is vanity, not envy that man is ensnared by. Man is vain when he wants to be "a kind of end to (him) self" and to "live for himself."[14] Yet what is wrong with this kind of vanity? Do we not *owe* it to our creator to use what he has endowed us with?

[12] Cp. below Chaps. 7 and 19, and Connolly 2014, 39f, 73.

[13] Augustine, *The City of God*, Chap. 13. Ibid. (bk XIV Chap. 3, he says the devil "is exceedingly proud and envious."

[14] Augustine, *The City of God*, book 14 Chap. 4; cp. ibid. Chap. 13.

Before attempting an answer, let's list the issues that Augustine can convince us of.

First, he implies that Adam and Eve's action is a typically human act that every man and woman will choose. Our will enables us to reject imperatives; like all creatures we love exerting our powers; and we prove our free will best by stopping impulses.[15] So Adam and Eve, like any sound humans, exert their will against the divine imperative. When Augustine understands this exertion as the *original* sin, he implies every human would do so. In this implication he is right.

Second, he claims that although by our nature we are inclined to use our free will against God's command, this use was not *determined* by our nature,[16] as our power of consent enables us to say both *yes* and *no* to any proposition. So Augustine is right to assign responsibility to men.

Third, Augustine assumes that reason and the power of saying yes and no after deliberation, before and after the fall, are in principle admirable. Like his pagan predecessors he assumes that these powers bestow dignity and are gifts to be proud of. Yet he also points out that by our choice we can misuse any power. He points to their indelible ambivalence, and again he is right.[17]

He may also be right describing pride as an "undue exaltation, when the soul abandons Him to whom it ought to cleave as its end, and becomes a kind of end to itself. This happens when it becomes its own satisfaction."[18] Yet by calling pride an *undue* (or *perverted*, the Latin word being *perversa*) exaltation he presupposes there may be a *due* (or *non-perverted*, *original*) exaltation about having reason and will. This not yet perverted due exaltation would be a form of pride. In fact, as we'll see in a moment, Augustine demands of people to fully use their powers; this requires pride in them, a pride that is the due exaltation. Thus, he allows

[15] Cp. Connolly 2014, 59: "the concept of will makes the notion of primal sin intelligible (even if only barely)."

[16] Yet Augustine says this use is determined by our *fallen* nature; cp. Connolly 2014, 61.

[17] Cp. Augustine *De libero arbitrio* II, 19, 50 on "intermediate goods (media bona)"; cp. Connolly 2014, 58.

[18] Augustine, *The City of God*, book 14 Chap. 13. The Latin text reads: Quid est. autem superbia nisi peruersae celsitudinis appetitus? Peruersa enim est. celsitudo deserto eo, cui debet animus inhaerere, principio sibi quodam modo fieri atque esse principium. Hoc fit, cum sibi nimis placet. (www.thelatinlibrary.com/augustine/civ14.shtml)

authenticity to become an ideal, though this ideal became effective only when the Christian idea of immortality faded, as we'll see.

In any case, how can Augustine think that our soul's becoming "an end to itself" and "its own satisfaction" is the horrible crime that he accuses every human including himself of? What else can he expect of creatures endowed with the powers of reason and free will but that they use them and become what they are: ends in and to themselves? Isn't this even what we owe to our creator, as he provided us with these powers? To impute Augustine coherence, there can be only one answer: Augustine condemns pride as far as it *prevents* us from making full use of our abilities. As a monotheist who considers God as both good and the source of everything, everything is good if only used in the proper way, and the proper way can only be its full, unrestricted use. Far from restricting our powers, he spurs us to use them exhaustively. So when our use of some of our gifts "becomes its own satisfaction" or "an end to itself," what is wrong with it is not that we use our own judgment and will but that we use them to please ourselves rather than focusing on the object of our judgment.

That Augustine's monotheism rules out blaming Adam and Eve for following their own judgment and will becomes obvious if we compare him with Plotinus, the founder of Neoplatonism. Plotinus too deplores that human "souls forget their father, God…even though they…wholly belong to him." He too finds the "starting point of their evil" in "their arrogance (*tolma*)…and their willing (*boulesthai*) to belong to themselves (*heautôn einai*)." Yet their fault lies simply in "their birth, the beginning of their differentiation (*heterotês*)," their "reveling in this self-determination (*autexousion*) and enjoying this self-movement (*kineisthai par' hauton*)."[19] Their fault is tied to their very existence; it is *unredeemable*.

In contrast, Augustine claims man's original willing is good, as it is made by God:

> God, as it is written, made man upright (*rectus*) and consequently with a good will. For if he had not had a good will, he could not have been upright. The good will, then, is the work of God; for God created him with it. But the first evil will, which preceded all man's evil acts, was rather a

[19] Plotinus, *Enneads*, quoted from Sorabji 2006, 120.

> kind of falling away from the work of God to its own works than any positive work. And therefore the acts resulting were evil, not having God, but the will itself for their end…[20]

According to Augustine's *De libero arbitrio* "when the will turns away from the unchangeable and common toward its own private good, or toward external and inferior things, it sins."[21] However, this description does not tell us what the private good and the external and inferior things are that man prefers, not by his "corruptible flesh" but his intelligence. The answer is that they are not "positive work" but *destructive* work. "Positive work" is to use one's will for *constructive* work, to use the many other abilities God gave us in addition to the power of saying no to a proposition. Man falls from God by making *too little* use of his powers, by using his free will to prove its power to stop even God's command rather than using his talents.

Augustine spots the origin of men's misery where Descartes will spot the origin of men's errors: in their *under*use of reason and will,[22] in their rash assent to what they would reject if they used deliberation. This fault, the original sin, is *redeemable*. It will be put right if we see we *cheat* ourselves when we believe that by using our free will to prove its power we improve our life:

> When…man lives according to himself…he lives according to a lie; not that man himself is a lie, for God is his author and creator, who is certainly not the author and creator of a lie, but because man was made upright (*rectus*)…That, therefore, is a lie which we do in order that it may be well with us, but which makes us more miserable than we were.

Augustine presumes that eating the forbidden apple included the self-deceit to think it's not ourselves who brought misery on us. Because of this self-deceit, man is comparable to the devil:

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[20] Augustine, *The City of God*, book 14 Chap. 11.

[21] Augustine, *De libero arbitrio* II,19,53; from Connolly 58.

[22] Descartes, *Meditations* IV. On similarities between Descartes and Augustine cp. Sorabji 2006, 217–22.

> When…man lives according to man, not according to God, he is like the devil. Because not even an angel might live according to an angel, but only according to God, if he was to abide in the truth, and speak God's truth and not his own lie.[23]

The fallen angel wants to live according to himself because he rebels against God, and he rebels because he envies God, and by this rebellion he shrinks the use of his many powers. Man wants to live according to himself because he is vain rather than rebelling, but he shares the devil's error, self-deceit or lie because he too uses his power of denial at the expense of his other abilities.

Let's have a closer look at the background of Augustine's argument, the monotheism he developed because he rejected Manichaeism. Manichaeism explains the world as a fight between a power of good and a power of evil. This explanation allows humans to ascribe their faults to the evil power. Like the Stoics, Augustine insists that there is no superhuman power we can blame for any evil we suffer. There are devils who try to seduce us, but we have the powers to resist them. His harsh interpretation of the fall of man belongs to his harsh fight against our inclination to blame our faults on other powers. Our sin is *not to use* all the powers God gave us.[24]

Augustine follows in this approach Plato who asserted that God is not guilty of the evil of the world. Guilty is "the one who makes the choice," that is, the individuals who choose their life or their "*daimon*" in a prenatal mythical place.[25] Thus, Plato denies there is any non-human evil. The Stoics and Augustine follow this claim. Augustine develops Plato's idea into a system comprehending all aspects of life. His first task is to explain how an omnipotent and all-bountiful God could admit evil to his creation. He had to find a divine contrivance that admits the evil to prove the goodness that is God. Augustine performs this task in two steps.

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[23] Augustine, *The City of God*, book 14 Chap. 4.

[24] On the Stoics, cp. Epictetus, *Discourses* 2.16: "Where is the good? In the will. Where is the evil? In the will. Where is neither of them? In those things that are independent of the will"; Long 2002, 146f; Sorabji 2006, 157–71; and below Chap. 19f.

[25] Plato, *Republic* X, 617e; tr. Grube and Reeve. Max Weber will allude to this daimon; cp. below Chap. 11.

The first step is to identify the good with what is constructive and creative, as already Plato had done as a matter of course that everyone would agree with, declaring that "the bad is entirely coterminous with what destroys and corrupts, and the good is what preserves and benefits."[26] The creation of the world is the paradigmatic act of goodness, and impeding creativity and constructiveness is the paradigm of evil. Any creature is evil as far as it prefers non-being to being. This was probably a popular view in Augustine's days that he could base his first step on.

The second step is to understand the creation of creatures with the power of saying no as superior to a creation without such creatures; as more creative and more constructive. When God created angels and humans with a power to deny, he allowed them to choose destruction, but also gave them a chance to prove the power of goodness, which is the same as the power of creativity, by deciding for a world of creativity. Augustine was not explicit in this second step, crucial for the rise of an inheritance pride that would mark out the Renaissance and the modern age. But he did imply it obviously enough to allow this pride to arise; most obviously by his insistence that right faith is more important than good works. In any case, his condemnation of Adam and Eve is coherent only if we ascribe to Augustine the idea that a universe with creatures gifted with free will is superior to one without because the goodness of God means creativity.

The emphasis on right faith rather than on good works for which Augustine is still famous today is most evident in his insisting that our following God's Commandments out of fear rather than "from love of righteousness" offends God. When acting out of fear we are "held guilty of that which God knew (we) would have chosen to commit, if it could have been without penalty."[27] To prefer love of righteousness over obedience and over what Meister Eckhart in the Middle Ages would blame as the merchant mentality of giving in order to receive,[28] implies preferring a universe with creatures with free will over a universe without such

[26] Plato, *Republic* X, 608e; tr.by G.M.A. Grube and C.D.C. Reeve. Cp. below Chap. 16. The same view is expressed in the self-introduction of the devil Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Doctor Faustus*, line 1338: *Ich bin der Geist der stets verneint*, *I am the spirit that denies.*

[27] Augustine, *De Spiritu et litera* 8, 13. Cp. Connolly 2014, 85.

[28] Cp. Connolly 2014, 136, 198f.

creatures. Such a preference assigns a metaphysical and historical role to humans that implies a pride not thought of before Augustine. By their free will, and only thus, can humans prove the greatness of creativity and creation that Augustine identifies with God. Human life and history becomes the cosmic drama in which the glory of God will prove or fail. It's a proud role indeed that Augustine thus assigns to man. Ascribing to Augustine such a pride of human powers may seem incompatible with his critique of Pelagianism, the thesis that man has sufficient powers to save himself. However, in this critique Augustine insisted that man's powers are not *sufficient* to remove evil because even our best intentions and greatest efforts will fail without favorable circumstances. Yet he didn't deny they are *necessary* and a reason of pride. By condemning Adam and Eve for their fault, Augustine insists that our dependence on grace or favorable conditions is no excuse for our faults.

Augustine's interpretation of the fall implies an extraordinary esteem of creativity not only in God but also in man. This esteem is central to the monotheism that he developed in response to Manichaeism. To the naïve observer, nature is an affair of *many ambivalent* powers. There are good things like love and beauty and bad things like wars and big fish eating small fish; there is creation in birth and growth and destruction in death and decay. However, there is not only happiness and misery and growth and decay and big fish eating small fish, but all kinds of things that shade into each other.[29] It was a bold, but in the end, implausible simplification of Manicheanism to explain nature as the scene of only two contrary powers, the good and the evil. Yet rather than returning to polytheism, Augustine reduced the two powers to one. Once nature was projected as the scene of only two powers, it was progress, under the aspect of elegance of theory and power of explanation, to drop the power of destruction and to understand destruction as lacking creation.

This innovation was revolutionary. Dropping the power of evil allows a view on nature that rules out moralizing natural processes because all natural processes are God-made and therefore good. Yet nature doesn't therefore become a place of harmony that can be trusted without knowing its

[29] Cp. N. Smart 1996, 108f, on the temporary rationality of "magic," "devic" and "mantric" causation models.

mechanisms, as it was for the Stoics, who therefore lacked incentives to develop physics. Because its creator endowed some of his creatures with reason and choice, nature is a place of indelible ambivalence. Augustine's monotheism was an incentive to distinguish between eternal laws and contingencies that have brought the world out of joint, challenging humans to acquire the knowledge to set it right. Even though Augustine did not formulate the challenge, his monotheism of a purely constructive god implies it. It favors trust in our power to understand the laws of nature and to use our knowledge to improve the world. It suggests that we are responsible not only for our life but in principle for any evil. Science prevents us from living in the lie of wishing the best but doing the worst. Like other theologians, Augustine blames false pride and impiety on the "secular knowledge" of the astronomers and insists that God is always free not to follow his laws.[30] Still, as nature is good, scientific curiosity no longer can be condemned; it must be understood as a way of praising God in his creation.

Scientific activities could even become a way of how to be true to one's individual abilities. Just as we must understand the diverse, sometimes contradictory powers of nature as forms of the one power of creation, Augustine suggests that the diverse, sometimes contradictory powers of man are forms of the one God-created human nature. Finding the original cause of evil in the mind rather than the body, he implies that manual work is as valuable as intellectual work.[31] Farmer and artist, merchant and priest, everyone contributes to improving the world if they use *their* talents constructively. Authenticity, becomes an ideal *everyone* can aim for.

Augustine never forgot his anti-Pelagian insistence on the need of the grace of God. His increasing awareness of the role of grace was "one of the most important symptoms of that profound change that we call 'The End of the Ancient World and the Beginning of the Middle Ages'."[32] Yet in its implications it was also the beginning of the Modern Age. His insistence on God's grace conditioned virtues to the humility that became a mark of

[30] Augustine, *Confessiones* V 3, 3–6.

[31] While like Plato, Epictetus, *Discourses* 1.9.10f, calls the body and its needs "chains." Cp. Long 2002, 158f.

[32] Brown 1967, 369f; from Connolly 2014, 75.

Christianity, but it also allowed Augustine to point out and assign to man constructive possibilities that the ancients had not thought of. It enabled him to replace the rigorist ancient and Pelagian view of virtue demanding relentless control of oneself with a leniency that, for instance, allowed "intercourse not only for the sake of offspring, but also for the sake of pleasure."[33] If we must rely on grace, it's vain to trust in one's own powers without trusting that favorable circumstances will lead us the way to what counts more than human effort: trust that God is behind the circumstances we act in. Augustine confirmed what distinguishes Christianity from other religions: its message that we can be free of fear.[34]

Greek paganism, as the philosopher Franz von Kutschera remarked, condemned as hubris to go beyond the limits drawn to man. The ancient Jews too considered such effort the fundamental sin. Yet the more the Jewish priests emphasized man's similitude to God, the more man was considered to participate in God's ruling the world.[35] Augustine turns what was hubris to the pagans into a duty: man has been given powers of creation that oblige him to contribute to God's creation.

[33] Augustine, *Contra duas*, III, 5, 14; from Connolly 2014, 79.

[34] Robinson 2015 marks out the importance of this evangel for the present, though referring to Calvin rather than Augustine.

[35] von Kutschera 1990, 319.

5

Kierkegaard on due Pride

Kierkegaard is another religious author who like Augustine may be expected to teach humility rather than pride. But again he presupposes extraordinary pride in specific human properties, those of being a self. His view on due pride is implied in the following lines:

> Ah, so much is said about human want and misery…but only that man's life is wasted who lived on, so deceived by the joys of life or by its sorrows that he never became eternally and decisively conscious of himself as spirit, as self, or (what is the same thing) never became aware and in the deepest sense received an impression of the fact that there is a God, and that he, he himself, his self, exists before this God, which gain of infinity is never attained except through despair. And, oh, this misery, that so many live on and are defrauded of this most blessed of all thoughts; this misery, that people employ themselves about everything else, or, as for the masses of men, that people employ them about everything else, utilize them to generate the power for the theater of life, but never remind them of their blessedness; that they heap them in a mass and defraud them, instead of splitting them apart so that they might gain the highest thing, the only

U. Steinvorth, *Pride and Authenticity*,
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> thing worth living for, and enough to live in for an eternity—it seems to me that I could weep for an eternity over the fact that such misery exists![1]

This text is an evocation of the self, its value and the bliss of living for it, along with a rather soft reminder that its "gain of infinity is never attained except through despair" and a dig at the Danish state church that defrauds the masses of that gain of infinity. It is steeped in Christian ideas and yet its message is the same that Richard Taylor, despite his opposition to the alleged Christian corruption of ancient pride, conveys in the following story that Kierkegaard might have told too:

> There was a man whose life and interests centered entirely around his role as a stockbroker…He spent long days at his office on the telephone, executing orders to buy and sell, chain smoking all the while, and even having lunch at his desk…His evenings and weekends were spent passing the hours in passive entertainment, keeping boredom at bay until he could get back to his office…until one day he coughed a trace of blood, which was his death warrant…this man…certainly committed no wrong…But…in the end he had accomplished nothing, left nothing that he could point to with pride except, perhaps, his many years of faithful toil. Essentially, his life was spent avoiding boredom, killing time—and, in the end, killing a lifetime…Meanwhile…there are people who have learned…to use their precious days to enhance the only thing they possess that is truly precious, and that is, themselves. To set for yourself an ideal, not of what you want to own, but of what you want to be as a person—this, and only this, is the way to use your time to advantage yourself.[2]

Taylor agrees with Kierkegaard, but also with Augustine and the Stoics, in the following claims:

1. Humans are persons, or selves.
2. Being a person, or self, is humans' greatest value.
3. Being a person, or self, is a value that obliges them to care for their person.
4. Caring for one's self is the only reasonable way to find meaning in life.

[1] Kierkegaard 1941, 26.

[2] Richard Taylor 1996, 129f.

They also agree, though this appears only in other passages than those quoted, that

5. caring for one's self is a constructive activity rather than a merely meditative state.

Taylor and Kierkegaard also agree, while Augustine and the Stoics[3] perhaps do not, that

6. to care for one's self is not a demand of morality but of finding meaning in life,
7. humans tend to evade caring for their self,
8. it is incompatible with due pride not to care for one's self.[4]

Kierkegaard, Augustine and the Stoics share the ideas (and Taylor does not) that

9. being aware of and caring for one's self is impossible without being aware of God,
10. the obligation to be true to oneself is the same as the obligation to be true to God.

Yet for Kierkegaard being a self also means being condemned to choose a life that suits the self. In his *Sickness unto Death* he claims that human life at any time is a form of despair at the choice of one's life. Kierkegaard has given a famous definition of the self:

> A human being is spirit. But what is spirit? Spirit is the self. But what is the self? The self is a relation that relates itself to itself, or is the relation's relating itself to itself in the relation; the self is not the relation but is the relation's relating itself to itself.[5]

[3] On the Stoics cp. below Chaps. 19 and 20.

[4] Cp. Taylor 1996, 227f, on creativity; Kierkegaard 1941, 28: "The more consciousness, the more self; the more consciousness, the more will, and the more will the more self. A man who has no will at all is no self; the more will he has, the more consciousness of self he has also." Hence, caring for one's self means having will, which requires activity.

[5] Kierkegaard 1980, 13.

Howsoever we have to understand this mental acrobatic of relating to a self-relating, one aspect of the self as understood by Kierkegaard is that our existence is determined by the necessity to choose what to do with our self or our powers. This necessity is comparable to the necessity Kant ascribes to a potential awareness of ourselves. According to Kant, we constitute our world of experience and our empirical self by what he calls the original apperception. It consists in an act that I perform by thinking that *I think*. This act "must be able to accompany all my representations," as otherwise "such a representation is impossible, or else at least it would be nothing *to me*."[6]

Similarly, Kierkegaard implies that if there was not an act of thinking *I can choose another life that perhaps suits me better than my present life* then my life would be nothing to me. Yet this thought is not emotionally neutral, as Kant's *I think* is.[7] It is haunting us, much as we try to escape it. It turns every life into despair, much as we deny it. At the same time, it is "the most blessed of all thoughts," it is "the highest thing, the only thing worth living for, and enough to live in for an eternity." It is an ambivalent thought, because being a self, able and obliged to choose one's life, is ambivalent, as ambivalent as man's free will in Augustine's interpretation of the fall of mankind, and as much demanding of us to use all our powers, and to use them perfectly. It's the thought of a choice by which we decide on our own fate but also on the state of the world.[8]

Even if our choice is only a small contribution to a process that involves all living people, it does contribute to a process that may improve the world as well as destroy it. It's a process by which we combine our finite existence with the possibly infinite duration of history. Man is not just a "synthesis" of impressions by the categories, as Kant taught, but "a synthesis of the infinite and the finite, of the temporal and the eternal, of freedom and necessity," because we connect our historical conditions to ideas of eternity.

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[6] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* B 131f, tr. Jonathan Bennett, p. 75, www.earlymoderntexts.com/pdfs/kant1781part1.pdf

[7] It's certainly different in his moral and religious theory, as Connolly pointed out in a private correspondence.

[8] Camus 1942, 60, referring to Kierkegaard's leap into faith, says "si je reconnais les limites de la raison, je ne la nie pas pour autant, reconnaissant ses pouvoirs relatifs. Je veux seulement me tenir dans ce chemin moyen où l'intelligence peut rester claire. Si c'est. là son orgueil, je ne vois pas de raison suffisante pour y renoncer." In the quoted passage, the same intention can be ascribed to Kierkegaard.

However, the choice that Kierkegaard insists on as being necessary is not, as in later theories of the self that also understand the self as a power of choice, a choice by which we constitute or create our self. We choose only what to do with our self that is already given to us. Our self has "been constituted by another."[9] We face in our self, properties of our creator and can trust that our despair will lead us the right way. The only way out of despair is a *leap* into faith. This suggests irrationality, but the leap is not without reason, as we can trust that we follow properties created to do just this. By stressing the irrationality of the leap probably Kierkegaard wanted to reject Hegel's claim that reason alone can lead us in life.[10]

Kierkegaard's evocation of the self and its self-relating as the "highest thing, the only thing worth living for, and enough to live in for an eternity" presupposes pride in one's innate powers, just as Augustine's appeal to take responsibility for the evils of the world presupposes pride in one's innate powers. Yet though Augustine's appeal had the admirable effect of promoting, in the long run, science and technology as powerful means to reduce suffering in the world, its effect is necessarily limited because we'll never be able to eliminate all suffering. Certainly Augustine did not expect mankind ever to be able to eliminate all suffering, but he made it possible to think we might.

In any case, we are left with the problem how the Christian God of omnipotence and all-bountifulness can admit unjust suffering. Christianity has given this problem special treatment by its belief that God himself became man to suffer the hardest pain and injustice. This belief puts unjust suffering at the heart of religion and indicates that suffering is divine, but it doesn't tell us what in the suffering makes it divine. So the philosopher Kutschera is right to state that the Old and New Testaments lack an answer to the question of what sense there is in suffering.[11] Kierkegaard tells us what in suffering is divine: the despair

[9] Kierkegaard 1941, 9.

[10] Similarly, among many other authors, Vattimo 1999, 85–7.

[11] von Kutschera 1990, 318–20.—Taubes 2003, 116f, claims that Scripture delivers the answer that the meaning of suffering is to tell us to free ourselves of life; he even appeals to Nietzsche to support his claim. Yet this answer is similar not only to Gnosticism (as Taubes notes) but also, it seems, to Buddhism and Hinduism (as Taubes does not remark). It is incompatible with Augustine, Kierkegaard and the Christian belief that God took on human life to suffer.

that leads us to recognizing our self. I think this answer is insufficient, as there is suffering that crushes the self and makes it impossible to be led to it. Yet the answer shows the value Kierkegaard ascribes to the self and implies a pride in the self that may even exceed that of Augustine.

Let us sum up some results of this introductory part of the book. Proper pride is pride in properties that enable us to do admirable things. The pride that is due to them requires of us to stand up to them. It prepares us to do things we can look forward to rather than rewarding us for something past. Proper pride also gives birth to the idea of authenticity, as pride in our properties leads to the will to use one's properties and to be true to our self.

However, though Augustine laid the groundwork for authenticity to become important, it was only in the Renaissance that it did. Only then were a sufficient number of individuals proud enough of themselves to dare to be true to themselves.

Part II

History and Its Challenges

6

The Renaissance: Doing Things for Their Own Sake

Renaissance ideas of pride and authenticity had a historical impact, I claim. Can ideas have historical impact at all? Isn't it interests that move and motivate human behavior? According to Max Weber:

> Not ideas, but material and ideal interests, directly govern men's conduct. Yet very frequently the "world images" that have been created by "ideas" have, like switchmen, determined the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of interest.[1]

Augustine was one of the switchmen who put the dynamic of interests on the track of authenticity. He didn't create this track because authenticity has a natural appeal to humans. Yet he helped make authenticity become a prevailing idea in the Renaissance. In the millennium after Augustine, Europe was dominated by the idea of loyalty not to one's self but to a hierarchy of feudal and spiritual lords. Only in the Renaissance when these ideas faded did the idea of authenticity take over. The Renaissance was the revival of ancient Greece and Rome rather than Augustine, yet by his

[1] H. Gerth & C. W. Mills (Eds.), *From Max Weber*. New York: Oxford University Press (1946), 1958, 280.

U. Steinvorth, *Pride and Authenticity*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-34117-0_6

emphasis on the faith and trust of the individual rather than institutions Augustine was an authority not only for the Reformation but also for Renaissance individualism.[2] The Renaissance found in antiquity models of thinking, art and life; of *authentic* life, thinking and art. Renaissance individuals already had their ideas about the right life that they found confirmed by the ancients. They didn't imitate antiquity; they used it to develop their ideas and intuitions. Therefore, the Renaissance became the beginning of the modern age rather than a sequel to antiquity.

Current views on the Renaissance have been formed by Nietzsche's interpretation:

> The Italian Renaissance contained within itself all the positive forces to which we owe modern culture. Such were the liberation of thought, the disregard of authorities, the triumph of education over the darkness of tradition, enthusiasm for science and the scientific past of mankind, the unfettering of the Individual, an ardour for truthfulness and a dislike of delusion and mere effect (which ardour blazed forth in an entire company of artistic characters, who with the greatest moral purity required from themselves perfection in their works, and nothing but perfection);…the Renaissance…was the Golden Age of the last thousand years, in spite of all its blemishes and vices. On the other hand, the German Reformation stands out as an energetic protest of antiquated spirits…who received the signs of…the extraordinary…alienation of the religious life…with deep dejection instead of with the rejoicing that would have been seemly. With their northern strength and stiff-neckedness they…brought about the counter reformation…and…probably made for ever impossible the complete inter growth of the antique and the modern spirit.[3]

Nietzsche is right to point out what distinguishes the Renaissance from its predecessor, "the liberation of thought, the disregard of authorities,… the unfettering of the Individual,…characters, who with the greatest moral purity required from themselves perfection in their works, and nothing but perfection," even if he ignores that just these properties also

[2] I thank John Connolly for reminding me of this fact. Cp. also Gill 2005, and Ettenhuber 2011, on the Renaissance and Augustine.

[3] Nietzsche 2006, sec. 237.

distinguish the Reformation. In fact, these two movements share the pursuit of *authenticity*. Yet the Renaissance protagonists pursued authenticity in a specifically secular form.

Jacob Burckhardt, the historian of the Renaissance in Italy, the most important source of Nietzsche's view of the Renaissance, described perceptively the specificities of the Renaissance authenticity when he pointed to the "impartial delight" in work done "for its own sake," though he didn't use the term *authentic*. Such delight was taken "in Italy, earlier than elsewhere," in the fifteenth century, even in works that formerly drew only utilitarian interests: in "a comprehensive science and art of military affairs." Burckhardt finds the same kind of "impartial delight" in "the practical jokes of" fifteenth-century court fool Ferrara Gonnella, as they "are an end in themselves, and exist simply for the sake of the triumph of production."[4] Like writing on military affairs, jesting is done "for its own sake"; this makes it an impartial delight. It is motivated by "a special sense of honor," not easily distinguished "from the passion for fame" and yet "essentially different." Comparing the sense of honor with "what Mr. Darwin says of blushing in the *Expression of the Emotions*, and of the relations between shame and conscience,"[5] Burckhardt suggests the sense of honor is related to a shame that would arise if the delight was in an action done for fame or money rather than "for its own sake," for then the action would not be authentic.

Authenticity is often considered a typically modern idea. However, as we'll see, to be true to oneself was the greatest virtue for the Stoic Epictetus and a virtue for his model Socrates and probably also for the ancient Chinese.[6] In fact, we should expect authenticity to be a universal ideal. The pride humans take in their talents will always and everywhere predispose them to the ideal of being true to oneself, as in the exercise of our talents we feel to be true to ourselves. It's less obvious that and why in using our talents we tend to do what we do *for its own sake*, as the Renaissance protagonists did. To do something for its own sake, the agent must have an "impartial delight" in his acting; he must be passionate about it. However, not in order to earn money or fame, but in the interest

[4] Burckhardt loc. cit. 79 and 121.

[5] Cp. Burckhardt loc. cit. 334.

[6] Cp. below Chaps. 14 and 19f.

of the perfect performance, of perfectly jesting or waging war or writing on warfare.

This may seem the very contrary to being true to oneself. Yet to have an impartial delight in my work I must not only be passionate about it but also have a talent for it. I do something for its own sake only if I am fascinated by the work, but I can be thus fascinated only if the work suits my abilities and challenges me. I cannot sing a song for its own sake if I lack the gift for music or poetry. Doing something for its own sake goes along with intensely using one's abilities, and in such use I'm true to myself.

Awareness of the importance of authenticity in all ages has been hampered by the accidental linguistic fact that the Renaissance and the following century didn't coin a concept for the idea we call today authenticity, being true to oneself. While the ideas of liberty and equality got names with the same Latin roots in most European languages or obvious synonyms, authenticity did not. Though today the term *authentic* is used in most European languages, with only slight modifications, more terms have been used for someone who is true to herself, such as *true* (*to oneself*), *genuine*, *original*, *sincere*, *integer*, or *echt* in German. Moreover, *authentic* may also refer to originals to indicate they are not forged ("an authentic Picasso"). The term contrasts with *artificial*, but applied to actions its meaning is different from when it is applied to things that can be forged because properties of persons are different from properties of things. Finally, Heidegger added to the insecurity about the meaning of *authentic* by introducing the term *Eigentlichkeit* without explaining that what he referred to had already played important historical roles as the idea of authenticity.

Nietzsche and Burckhardt are important witnesses to the special relation the Renaissance had to the practice and idea of authenticity. Steven Toulmin is another one. Toulmin finds a palpable difference in style between earlier and later sixteenth-century authors:

> When we read authors born in the fifteenth century, such as Desiderius Erasmus (b.1467) and Francois Rabelais (b.1494), it may take time and effort for us to grasp their "modernity"; but nobody questions the ability of such writers as Michel de Montaigne (b.1533) and William Shakespeare (b.1564) to speak across the centuries in ways we feel upon our pulses.[7]

[7] Toulmin 1990, 23. Cp. Steinvorth 2013 Chap. 4.

Montaigne is an example of the ability to "speak across the centuries in ways we feel upon our pulses." Montaigne's aim is "to set aside pretense and attitudinizing, self-aggrandizement or ostentatious self-reproach, and to provide an unvarnished picture of his experience of life, and attitudes of mind." What makes "thinkers like Bacon and Montaigne…congenial to us" is that they are "nondoctrinal" and that their "intellectual modesty…led (them) to adopt a cool, nonjudgmental tone."[8] They showed "respect for the rational possibilities of human experience," which "was one chief merit of the Renaissance humanists,"

> but they also had a delicate feeling for the limits of human experience. They declared that, to those whose trust in experience gives courage to observe and reflect on the variety of conduct and motive, "Nothing human is foreign," and they set out to do this in rich detail, which was new at the time, and has rarely been equaled: the political analyses of Niccolò Machiavelli and the dramas of William Shakespeare are among our permanent inheritances as a result.[9]

Just as Burckhardt is struck by an "impartial delight" in work done "for its own sake," Toulmin is struck by the Renaissance refusal of guises and the courage to show oneself the way one is, unashamed of either ugliness or beauty, and its passion for presenting humanity in its original form, freed from the layers of convention and prejudice.

We should add to Burckhardt's and Toulmin's observations that the Renaissance individual trusts in his own deliberated experience, even if being true to one's own abilities implies bad repute as it did for Machiavelli, or persecution as it did for Galileo, or the stake as it did for Giordano Bruno. Such authenticity requires pride, the pride of having powers that one ought to adapt one's actions to, rather than adapting oneself to given conditions. It existed not only in the Renaissance. Marguerite Porete was

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[8] Toulmin 1990, 37.

[9] Toulmin 1990, 27. 'Nothing human is foreign' is taken from Terence (*Homo sum*, *humani nihil a me alienum puto*). On the roles of humanists (to write state correspondence and public speeches) cp. Burckhardt 2004, 175; on their "inordinate pride," ibid. 210. Though Machiavelli was born only two years after Erasmus, Toulmin rightly takes him as a representative of the later humanists of the 16th century, as he differs by his clarity and lack of attitudinizing from the earlier humanists who inclined to "humanistic bombast" (Burckhardt 2004 79 and 207ff).

burned at the stake in 1310 for teaching to act "without why,"[10] which implies we should do things for their own sake; and many other societies show examples of humans preferring death to betraying themselves. This is evidence that authenticity is a universally recognized ideal. Yet in the Renaissance its recognition became an important historical factor.

The late Renaissance humanists imply that under pretense and prejudice, under dogmas and deformations of centuries, there are people's true selves—the original work of God, as Augustine had said—which we can and should be true to and are true to when we do things for their own sake. They also assumed there is a true nature not only of our self but of everything we may be prejudiced about. Things have to be explored, their nature to be discovered. The Renaissance is not accidentally the era of the great European discoveries. The self that Renaissance individuals want to be true to is one of the original forms that painters and writers tried to uncover. Descartes even looked for the original act that the self consists in and found it in our doubting of everything.

The idea of an original self that we must be true to was passed on to the Enlightenment. Locke and Hume look for the original undistorted impressions and ideas to declare concepts meaningless that cannot be derived from them. In his critiques of reason, Kant presupposes that he lays bare our original powers that dogmas have made unrecognizable. It lives on even in Sun Yat-sen's and other politicians' belief in a true collective self of their nations, dubious though collective selves and referring to them in politics are.[11] Yet the crucial discovery of the Renaissance protagonists was that to be true to ourselves we have to do things for their own sake. Because they enjoyed doing things for their own sake; because Galileo did his research not to please anyone or to maximize the happiness of society; because Machiavelli described the functioning of states for its own sake; because many Italians, as Burckhardt remarked,

[10] Cp. Connolly 2014, 207.

[11] Sun Yat-sen, one of the Chinese revolutionaries who started China's modernization, urged the Chinese to become a modern society like England, however, "not so that they might become English but so that they might become more authentically Chinese." (Fitzgerald 1996, 106). Also Samuel Huntington, in his *Clash of Civilizations*, presupposes collective selves when he assumes that Russia and Turkey are split nations. He assumes that these nations are superficially Western but in their deeper layers are not.

found "impartial delight" in work done "for its own sake" and even a court fool considered his "practical jokes" "an end in themselves" that "exist simply for the sake of the triumph of production"; therefore the Renaissance developed an idea and a practice of authenticity with revolutionary consequences.

Yet the authenticity that humanist Renaissance men pursued revolutionized Europe's history because its pursuit entailed two immensely important, but scarcely recognized properties: the pursuit of *intrinsic goals* and *professionalism*. These two qualities need explication.

7

Intrinsic Goals

What I call an *intrinsic* (or an internal)[1] goal is the goal of an action done for its own sake rather than for money, fame, the glory of the nation or another *extrinsic* goal. If an action is done for its own sake, its goal is intrinsic, inherent or immanent in the action. Doing something for *its* own sake rather than for *my* fun or self-development may again seem to be the opposite of authenticity, since authenticity is often understood as a kind of self-concern. Yet to be authentic, true to oneself, requires knowing the self one is to be true to. How do we know this? The Renaissance protagonists discovered that by doing things for their own sake we learn what our self and our properties are that we are to be true to in authenticity. Though in doing something for its own sake we *enjoy* doing it, we enjoy not *ourselves* but *what* we are doing.

Bacon and Montaigne, and Shakespeare and Machiavelli, were authentic as far as they pursued intrinsic goals. They are known for promoting learning and science, for reflecting about human life, presenting artful theatre plays and clarifying the goals of politics; but they did so not to serve humanity or their countries nor for their own amusement, but for the sake of the things that they dedicated their lives to. When they claimed

[1] I did so in my *Metaphysics of Modernity*.

U. Steinvorth, *Pride and Authenticity*,
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their actions to be useful, they did so to obtain protection and financial promotion. The unconditionality of their actions may seem selfish, but as they were ready to sacrifice life and repute for their goals, they acted not for themselves but for the goals that suited their self.

Intrinsic goals *absorb us*; we focus on the intrinsic goal and forget our self. Yet we also discover that the action and its intrinsic goal fits us, our self. We learn our self by watching not it but the actions that absorb us. The writer Karl Ove Knausgaard describes it thus:

> All writers, artists and musicians know the feeling: when you disappear into what you are doing, lose yourself in it and are no longer aware that you exist, while at the same time the feeling of existing is profound and total and what you make is never better.

Yet Knausgaard, referring to Bob Dylan, thinks the self thus discovered is non-individual:

> Work created in this state really shouldn't be published in the artist's name, because it has been created precisely by the artist's nonpersonal, nonindividual, selfless side. Bob Dylan is the master of the selfless self, the king of the not-one's-one…[2]

This is an error; the work is created by the artist's self else it wouldn't suit his individuality. Though serving only intrinsic goals, authentic actions need an individual self to be found out.

That authentic actions serve only their intrinsic goals has received most recognition in the arts, in particular in the art movement by its motto *L'art pour l'art*, following Edgar Allen Poe's dictum that a poem is "written solely for the poem's sake."[3] It does not imply that only artists should do things for their own sake. Oscar Wilde pointed out that the claim of artists for independence of extrinsic goals is only part of the claim for the universal right of everyone to do things for their own sake.[4] Yet he blurred

[2] Knausgaard 2015.

[3] E.A. Poe, *The Poetic Principle*, in *The Works of the Late Edgar Allen Poe*, vol. 3, 1850, 1–20, 5.

[4] Wilde 1969, 263; www.edwardviesel.eu/0043.html: "'Know thyself' was written over the portal of the antique world. Over the portal of the new world, 'Be thyself' shall be written. And the message of Christ to man was simply 'Be thyself.' That is the secret of Christ."

the specificity of doing something for its own sake by mistaking, like most of his contemporaries, authenticity for "self-realization."[5] Although in doing things for their own sake we do realize our self, self-realization cannot be reached by *aiming* at self-realization, as little as happiness can be reached by aiming at happiness. Both of them are only side effects of aiming at intrinsic goals, at perfecting *actions* and their *objects* rather than our *subject*. Therefore, authenticity excludes selfishness and vanity.

Doing things for *their* sake consists in dedicating our energies to the things that we explore in the pursuit of intrinsic goals. Such pursuit by Renaissance protagonists consisted in *extraordinary* actions in science, art and trade, but more often such pursuit is *ordinary* and inconspicuous: reading a novel, playing chess, mountaineering, flirting, having sex, if we do them just for the fun of it. The difference between intrinsic and extrinsic goals, though, was not discovered only in the Renaissance. Plato and Aristotle, Greek aristocrats proud of living the life of leisure, looked for the best life, which they considered a privilege for the best rather than an ideal accessible to everyone. They distinguished intrinsic goals, whose pursuit constitutes the good life, from extrinsic goals such as wealth and health, fame and happiness, which can be reached by different actions.[6]

To give an Aristotelian example, we can build a house for an extrinsic and an intrinsic goal; for having shelter and for the sake of building a house, as a passionate architect does.[7] In the first case, the goal, shelter, can be reached not only by building a house but, say, by buying or robbing one; the goal is extrinsic to the action. In the second case, to attain the goal you have to *build a house*. The goal inheres in the action. Similarly, we can play tennis for, say, getting slim or because we just enjoy playing tennis. In the first case we pursue an extrinsic goal that we might also attain by, say, fasting or jogging; in the latter, we pursue an intrinsic goal.[8]

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[5] Oscar Wilde, *The Soul of Man under Socialism* (1891), in Wilde 1969.

[6] Plato, *Republic* II 357b–d; Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Θ, 1050 a23–30; *Nicomachean Ethics* I 1094 a5, VI 1140 b4.

[7] In *Magna Moralia II* Chap. 12, 1211 b27ff, Aristotle uses building a house as an example of pursuing an extrinsic goal only and flute playing as an example of pursuing an intrinsic goal. Yet the examples show, I think, that house building can be done for its own sake too and flute playing also for an external goal, such as getting money.

[8] Contemporary psychologists also use the distinction, but neither rely on this criterion nor refer to the ancient sources; cp., e.g., Brian Johnson; www.entheos.com/ideas/brian-johnson/1352/intrinsic-vs-extrinsic-goals

The pursuit of intrinsic goals is not only the place of *authenticity* but also a source, if not *the* source, of *meaning* in life. Aristotle, remarkably, was clear about this quality of intrinsic goals. If we pursued only extrinsic goals then "all desire would be futile and in vain."[9] We may object that obtaining some extrinsic goals, such as fame or pleasure, do provide meaning. Aristotle would reply that extrinsic goals can bestow only *passive* pleasures, as by definition we get at them *after action*; and that only the joy *in* action can provide meaning. His reason is that we find meaning only in using the abilities we are born with; otherwise our having them and therefore also our life that consists in using them would lack meaning. Here, Kierkegaard and Richard Taylor agree with him. I think, though, he is wrong about power. Power is an extrinsic goal, as it can be attained by various actions. Nonetheless, it is an end in itself pursuing, which can provide meaning. This is why winning, the pursuit of power, can and in fact has become an alternative to the pursuit of intrinsic goals.[10]

According to Aristotle, extrinsic goals do not suit a free man because they dictate to the agent what to do to reach them, while to reach an intrinsic goal we have to creatively explore the possibilities of the action. Building a house for its own sake makes us creative, discovering unexpected possibilities. Building it as an extrinsic goal is mere *producing*, *poiein* in Greek, Aristotle said, while building it as an intrinsic goal is *acting*, *prattein*. However, this terminology doesn't fit modern concepts. It fed on the aristocrats' contempt of the manual workers, the *banausoi*, a conceit that lives on in the pejorative meaning of the adjective *banausic*. The difference between intrinsic and extrinsic goals depends on whether we do the action for its own sake, not on whether we act or produce.[11]

Isn't Aristotle wrong to think there is more freedom in the pursuit of intrinsic goals than in the pursuit of extrinsic goals? Pursuing an extrinsic goal we are at least free to reach it by different means. Yet this pursuit is mechanical; a well-programmed computer can perform it today. In contrast, an intrinsic goal is necessarily loved by the agent; he must be

[9] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* I, 1094 a 21.

[10] Cp. Chaps. 14 and 27f.

[11] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* VI 1140 b6; *Magna Moralia* II 1211 b27ff. Korsgaard 2009, 9ff, thinks that Aristotle's distinction can be preserved in English.

passionate about it and such passion makes creative, and creativity is felt to suit human capabilities, if not even to be divine and assimilating us to the Creator, while mechanical work is not.

So we may add to the differences between intrinsic and extrinsic goals that only the former are experienced as objects that we choose in the perfect liberty that makes us feel at one with our action, serving only self-chosen goals that suit our self, and that just this liberty makes our action authentic. Authenticity, I claimed, is a child of pride, but not of pride alone, as we now have to specify. It's a child also of our insight that we are free to do things for their own sake rather than for our sake or some other extrinsic goal. This insight was widely absent in the Christian Middle Ages, as the prevailing idea was that we have to serve God, just as the prevailing understanding after the Industrial Revolution became that we have to serve the well-being of mankind or society, most often measured by the exchange value of goods. In the Renaissance, its protagonists recovered Aristotle's insight in the qualities of intrinsic goals.

The reasons and motives for this insight may have been various, but the most important reason was probably the recognition of our definite mortality. Montaigne has expressed this insight thus:

> Envisager la mort, c'est envisager la liberté. Qui a appris à mourir s'est affranchi de l'esclavage. ("To envision death is to envision liberty. He who has learnt to die has freed himself of slavery.")

For conventional Christians, death entails punishment or reward for what they did before; hence, every action serves the goal to save one's life from condemnation. For the Renaissance individual, there is no such end. Death makes us free to do what is the best, but this is not to serve ourselves, as our life is too unimportant to be worth acting for, but to do things for their own sake.

The freedom we exert in the pursuit of intrinsic goals is not the freedom of free choice or *liberum arbitrium* but of *perfect liberty* (*libera voluntas*) that Augustine, the Scholastics and Descartes distinguished from free (and arbitrary) choice.[12] The deliberation that precedes free choice

[12] Augustine does so in his *De libero arbitrio*, cp. Jackson 1998, 238, 247–51; Descartes in his *Meditations* IV.

can make us *indifferent* to what we choose; so *liberum arbitrium* was also called *libertas indifferentiae*, *freedom of indifference*. Otherwise we would be determined rather than *choosing*, while in *perfect liberty* we are so much convinced of the action we choose that we are not indifferent at all but feel we cannot but choose the way we do. Of this kind is the freedom we experience in pursuing intrinsic goals. Yet also perfect liberty allows us to stop the action that we may feel coerced to do. Some authors claim perfect liberty excludes the power to stop the impulse to do what our deliberation tells us to do,[13] but in fact, perfect liberty doesn't cancel the power to stop impulses; the exercise of both the perfect liberty and free choice implies self-determination or autonomy.

Only in the Renaissance did Aristotle's preference for intrinsic goals become socially prevalent. But probably it was never forgotten in Europe in the meantime. Augustine, though not talking of intrinsic goals, did suggest, by his monotheism of creativity and his insistence on the exhaustive use of all our powers, the idea that by using our specific talents we contribute to and participate in divine creativity, not for some extrinsic goal but for the sake of creative action. But the idea that we live for God and the salvation of our souls didn't allow this idea to prevail. Still, in the High Middle Ages the special value of intrinsic goals was recognized in the ideal of *living without why*, inspired by Bernard of Clairvaux's sentence "I love because I love; I love that I may love" and explicitly defended by the Cistercian Abbess Beatrijs van Nazareth, the Beguines Hadewijch of Brabant and Marguerite Porete and Meister Eckhart.[14] Though this ideal, in the most explicit form Eckhart gave it, is embedded in comprehensive theological ideas and traditions, it shares the crucial property of Aristotle's and the Renaissance idea of pursuing intrinsic goals: it requires us to do what we do for its own sake rather than for anything extrinsic.

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[13] The hero in Michel Houellebecq's novel *The Map and the Territory* describes perfect liberty as necessity when he explains "what it meant, in his eyes, to be an *artist*…Someone who submitted himself to mysterious, unpredictable messages, that you would be led, for want of a better word and in the absence of any religious belief, to describe as *intuitions*, messages which nonetheless commanded you in an imperious and categorical manner, without leaving the slightest possibility of escape—except by losing any notion of integrity and self-respect." (63) But by the final clause "except by" Houellebecq admits the possibility of stopping the imperious command.

[14] Connolly 2014, 207f. Cp. also Connolly 2014, 170–210.

As also the beatitude of seeing God after this life is an extrinsic goal and this beatitude was generally considered the ultimate goal and meaning of life, living without why rejected what had become a pillar of Christianity and was declared to be heretical; Marguerite Porete was burned at the stake in Paris in 1310. Both Renaissance authenticity and living without why are contrary to what Eckhart calls the merchants' mistake, the expectation that by being virtuous we merit celestial beatitude. As Connolly points out, this is a form of moral instrumentalism that Kant would reject as severely as Eckhart.[15] The Renaissance protagonists did so too. They all agree that even though living without why, authenticity or (Kantian) morality forbid referring to a beyond as a reason for authentic action, still such way of action implies belief in something absolute or divine, as acting for its own sake is understood as a value or dignity exceeding ordinary action.

They also agree with Aristotle's claim that only actions "chosen for their own sakes," aiming "at no end beyond" themselves, are "divine," obliging us "so far as possible to achieve immortality."[16] Authenticity, in all its forms, forbids eying the beyond as a reward; so transcendence loses its practical importance. Yet it provides life with meaning in spite of the fact that in more or less a short time nothing is left of us. Thus, authenticity, though it cannot make us immortal, can make us proof against the despair of Ecclesiastes (1:14): "I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind."

But *pace* Eckhart and Kant, authenticity is not morality. Just as, according to Augustine, the fallen angel finds meaning in destruction, so too can humans. We can find meaning in immoral actions just for the fun of experimenting. We need morality and justice to prevent authentic actions from becoming crimes. Wisely, Aristotle added to his definition of the good life by the pursuit of intrinsic goals that virtue is a condition.[17]

Renaissance individuals rediscovered intrinsic goals, yet love of intrinsic goals is probably as old as mankind. Eric Hoffer, referring to the cave at Altamira, seems right to conjecture:

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[15] Cp. below Chap. 9, and Connolly 2014, 197.

[16] Aristotle, *Nicom. E.* X, 1177b 18–34, tr. H. Rackham.

[17] Aristotle, *Nicom. E.* I, 1098 a17. Cp. below Chap. 20.

> Art is older than production for use, and play older than work. Man was shaped less by what he had to do than by what he did in playful moments. It is the child in man that is the source of his uniqueness and creativeness, and the playground is the optimal milieu for the unfolding of his capacities.[18]

Meaning, as Knausgaard remarks when he compares his childhood with his father's life, disappears with the pursuit of extrinsic goals:

> While my days were jam-packed with meaning, when each step opened a new opportunity, and when every opportunity filled me to the brim, in a way which now is actually incomprehensible, the meaning of his days was not concentrated in individual events but spread over such large areas that it was not possible to comprehend them in anything other than abstract terms. "Family" was one such term, "career" another…Meaning requires content, content requires time, and time requires resistance.[19]

Children, if they are not drowned in education, do things for their own sake; they are absorbed in their activities, they live for intrinsic goals, their actions have content and require time, yet also resist time because they do not feel time when acting. The days of adults are kept together by abstract terms such as *family* and *career*. When they become abstract, they are only extrinsic goals.

Yet can't we find meaning in joy, the happiness of having a family, for instance? Some certainly can, but some cannot. As Knausgaard said:

> Joy is not my goal, never has been…I do everything I have to do for the family; that is my duty…The question of happiness is banal, but the question that follows is not, the question of meaning. When I look at a beautiful painting I have tears in my eyes, but not when I look at my children. That does not mean I do not love them, because I do, with all my heart, it simply means that the meaning they produce is not sufficient to fulfill a whole life. Not mine at any rate. Soon I will be forty, and…it won't be long before I'm seventy. And that will be that.[20]

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[18] Eric Hoffer, www.quotationspage.com/quotes/Eric_Hoffer/

[19] Knausgaard 2012, 13–15.

[20] Knausgaard 2012, 38f.

Knausgaard expresses the same care for his self that Kierkegaard described as both despair and bliss. He is not refuted by the fact that some people do find meaning in their family, for they find in living for their family an intrinsic goal. They do so because it suits their self, while it did not, it seems, suit Kierkegaard's and Knausgaard's selves. Children and family, even if we love them, can be too little to suit our self and our (and Augustine's) aspiration to use our powers exhaustively.

8

Passion and Professionalism

Despite the liberty we enjoy in the pursuit of an intrinsic goal, we can miss the goal. We miss it if we no longer act for the sake of it but, say, for money or fame. We also miss it if our house building or tennis play is so poor that it will not be called house building or tennis play. Even though there may be infinitely many ways to perfectly conform to an intrinsic goal, intrinsic goals set a standard of perfection that we can match or miss.[1] Unlike extrinsic goals, intrinsic goals and the standards they set cannot be defined before we have sufficiently explored the activities they inhere in, and we can never be absolutely sure that the exploration was sufficient. Still, this does not stop authentic actions from being judged by immanent perfection standards. The passionate architect who builds the house for the sake of building the house can be judged to be more or less good at his task, even if the standard his action is measured by cannot be defined.

Because it can be judged by an action-immanent standard, the architect can become professional. Artists and art critics are still discussing the standards of artistic activities. Since Popper's *Logic of Scientific Discovery*,

[1] Cp. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* VI 1140 b 4. Aristotle used *eupraxia* for what I call here *perfection*.

U. Steinvorth, *Pride and Authenticity*,
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scientists are pretty sure about the immanent standard of science, but they may become unsure again. Despite this insecurity, artists, scientists and all other professionals do not doubt there are standards by which to distinguish the dabblers from the professionals.

Renaissance individuals started the exploration of intrinsic objects and their immanent perfection standards. They aimed at perfection in their various activities, in science and music, politics, painting and poetry, theater and architecture, warfare and making love. Their activities shifted from being done for external goals, such as entertaining a public or a patron or earning money, to being done for the sake of the activities. This is most conspicuous in the arts and crafts, where the production of things as different as vases and wars turned into the pursuit of intrinsic goals. Also the pursuit of intrinsic goals shifted, some even before, some only after the Renaissance, from dabbling leisure-time activities into autonomous activities of theology, science, political theory, the arts, but also of journalism[2] and sports, measured by immanent perfection standards.

The exploration of intrinsic goals and immanent perfection standards is unpredictable because it is a creative process similar to play. It starts with specific problems of specific actions: how to place a house for this family on this ground so that it looks better than other houses or similar to them; how far this ball of this cannon will fly; which colors to choose for a picture of the sea that is to represent eternity; how to play chess, or tennis, or ride a horse. As the physicist Richard Feynman remarked:

> Why did I enjoy (physics)? I used to play with it. I used to do whatever I felt like doing—it didn't have to do with whether it was important for the development of nuclear physics, but whether it was interesting and amusing for me to play with.[3]

In the process of such explorations *action spheres* develop: classes of activities that because of similar intrinsic goals share perfection standards. The best known of such spheres are science, art, commerce, religion and politics, but they split into standards of different levels and compartments,

[2] Burckhardt 2004, 127 on Aretino who "in a certain sense may be considered the father of modern journalism."

[3] Richard Feynman 1985, 73.

such as the general standard of art splits into those of painting, music and writing, which again split into genres such as watercolors, oils, drawings and murals; or theater pieces, novels and poems. It is the particular problem in whose solution standards are discovered; general standards are abstractions of the most particular ones.

Professionals tend to be proud of their professionalism. If possible, they demand recognition and respect for their perfection standards. They will demand *sphere autonomy*, the right of a profession to follow its specific action-immanent rationality rather than the commands and rules that society tries to impose on it. Thus, in the Renaissance, scientists demanded autonomy for science, and artists for art. Already before the Renaissance, guilds and universities protected the interests of crafts and professions. Most important was the autonomy the Church had acquired in the eleventh-century Investiture Controversy, when the Gregorian Reformers claimed the right of the Church to appoint the pope, bishops and abbots against the established right of the Emperor and princes.[4] Whether or not they had the idea that religious activities pursue a specific intrinsic goal, not to be mixed up with secular or other goals, what they enforced was the sphere autonomy of religion. Yet when the Church claimed to direct secular politics, politicians insisted on the autonomy of politics against the arrogation of the religious sphere.

The claim for sphere autonomy is not a specifically modern phenomenon; only its generalization and radicalization is. In Europe, due to a lucky constellation of conditions such as the rise of the bourgeoisie, the claim was not suppressed. In particular, the idea of the autonomy of science, art and commerce could develop because the factual autonomy of the religious and the political spheres prevented the fight for sphere autonomy from being considered a fight for the dissolution of society. Europe had the experience that the relative autonomy of the Church and that of the State had led not to the death of society but rather to a constructive tension.

Yet demands for sphere autonomy became more radical since the Renaissance. Scientists dissected corpses against piety and defended

[4] Harold Berman 1983 has stressed the importance of the Gregorian reform; cp. Fukuyama 2011, 263f, 270f, 288f.

astronomical theories against what the Bible implies. Artists declared they created their works not to please patrons or publics but for the sake of the arts. Historically, most important was the demand of the merchants to pursue commerce by the standards of their sphere, triggering a revolution that I'll turn to later. Also judges and lawyers demanded respect for the standards of justice rather than for utility or the interests of the powerful. Yet as they relied on the modern state as the enforcer of their judgments, their sphere autonomy never became independent of the state. The state protected them against commercial and religious pressures, but imposed its own interests.

Jacob Burckhardt seems to have understood that the radicalization of the idea of sphere autonomy may lead to the corruption not of society but of the individual when he described a change in "metaphysics" and in the idea of virtue or extraordinariness.[5] Extraordinariness, he observed, was sought in actions that could be done for their own sake, such as writing an *art of war* or explaining politics or the motion of bodies as Machiavelli and Galileo did. He warns that such actions, although not selfish, can easily become immoral. The new quest for extraordinariness, or as we may say, for intrinsic goals, has "unloosed the devilish element of human nature," the "devilish malice," "the devilish delight in destruction."[6] What Burckhardt thus points to is that authenticity is not morality. This fact became most obvious in the atrocities of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. To all probability, many Nazi organizers of the millions of murders of Jews were passionately and professionally dedicated to their goal. Burckhardt discerned the potency of authenticity for immorality already in its relatively mild Renaissance form.

Hence, when we judge due pride and its appearance in authenticity, we have to take the potential immorality of authenticity very seriously. Yet for due pride and authenticity to become practicable for everyone, we

[5] He said loc. cit. 331 that Renaissance morality, which he understands in a broad sense including metaphysics, changed "the relation" of the Italians "to the supreme interests of life, to God, virtue and immortality," probably alluding to Kant's ideas of God, freedom of the will, and immortality (*Critique of Pure Reason* B xxx f), replacing Kant's idea of freedom with that of virtue, well in Kant's spirit.

[6] Burckhardt loc. cit. 80, 306, 351. The Renaissance interest in Dr. Faustus certainly mirrors the ambivalence of authenticity.

need, as will become clearer in Part IV, a society with autonomous action spheres. Authenticity requires the pursuit of intrinsic goals, which must be both passionate, otherwise the goal doesn't fit the self that the agent is true to in authenticity, and professional, as to be true to her self the agent must conform to the action's immanent perfection standards. And professionalism requires the autonomy of action spheres. Sphere autonomy, though, is in danger of becoming immoral.

How then can we cherish authenticity? We can, if we also cherish the special action sphere of *justice*, the realm of activities that pursue the intrinsic goal of justice: mediating and arbitrating between conflicting claims; discussing and implementing laws; suing, defending and judging persons. This sphere watches over the justice of actions and action conditions in all spheres of a society. If it does its job, authenticity is forced to stay in the limits of justice. In fact, the atrocities of authenticity in recent centuries were possible only where and when the justice sphere had lost or never attained its autonomy. Though the justice sphere nowhere in Europe attained complete autonomy, in the more liberal states judges and lawyers succeeded in establishing near-autonomy for the sphere of justice and set a model of how justice can reduce the dangers of authenticity. In fact, the relative autonomy of the justice sphere was the condition of the relatively uninhibited professionalization and autonomy of spheres such as science, art, commerce, religion and politics that marks European post-Renaissance societies. Without it, the power of the spheres of politics and commerce would probably have led to even more and earlier atrocities.

The changes that the idea of doing things for their own sake brought forth in Europe were conspicuous enough to be noted by at least one social scientist. Max Weber must be praised for his insight that "on the territory of the Occident, and only there," there was a kind of "rationalization" that brought action spheres such as commerce, art and science to their sphere-specific perfection.[7] The rationalization he describes results from the pursuit of the intrinsic goals in their specific "value spheres," as Weber calls them. He understood that sexuality also is a sphere with its own perfection—Casanova may be its model—but wrongly contrasted the rationality of commerce as instrumental rationality with the rational-

[7] Weber 1920–21, I 1–4. He discusses value spheres most intensely in his *Zwischenbetrachtung*.

ity of other value spheres as "value rationality." Yet they all are action-immanent rationalities.

Action-immanent rationality differs categorically from both instrumental and value rationality that Weber took as models of rationality. By Weber's concepts, actions are rational if they are the best means to attain an extrinsic goal, a goal that can be reached in different ways. Also a value-rational action pursues an extrinsic goal, as its value can be realized in different ways. In contrast, action-immanent rational actions, pursuing an intrinsic goal, can be recognized as rational only by a standard taken from the matter the action deals with. We cannot judge if it is rational to choose this or that scientific experiment by holding up a goal that is independent of the considerations that lead us to choose this rather than that experiment. That we cannot judge by extrinsic goals which experiment to choose does not mean either that one choice is as rational as the other, or that the choice is irrational. It means the criteria to judge the rationality are action-immanent.

The lack of the concept of action-immanent rationality was an important reason for the rise of positivism in the philosophy of science and legal theory. If rationality can be only instrumental, the many social and individual phenomena, such as science, law, religion, the state, the market, the family and the arts, can be understood only by ascribing to them a goal they serve and by taking their goal to be just a matter of fact beyond rationality, hence beyond rational critique. If I declare the state should serve the happiness of the majority or the purity of the Aryan race, there is no way, positivists say, to criticize me rationally, with universal validity. You can only refute me by fighting me. Reason is no power to distinguish our conflict solutions from those of animals.

Positivism, in particular in law theory, is too unconvincing as not to lead soon to its criticism. Legal positivism can measure the rationality of law only by the criteria of consistency and coherence and then add the condition that the legal system conform to democratic or some other ideas; yet these ideas can be only arbitrarily chosen. The arguments against legal positivism have not avoided arbitrary choices either. Conservatives such as Carl Schmitt and his critic Jacob Taubes[8] referred to religion;

[8] Cp. to his critique of Carl Schmitt, Taubes 2003, 89ff.

Marxists and neo-Marxists such as Adorno and Habermas referred to the interests of the masses as standards to judge the extrinsic goals of law. Neither side offered an alternative to instrumental rationality.

By contrast, if instrumental rationality is only the easiest way to get to an *extrinsic* goal and there are the diverse rationalities to pursue *intrinsic* goals, then we are not free to make arbitrary claims on what phenomena such as the state, law or science serve or should serve. Rather, we have to examine the intrinsic goals of such phenomena. We have to understand states, the law, science, the arts, religion, the family and sports as resulting from actions done for their own sake, committing to specific perfection standards, even if those who created and accepted states, science, the family or the market also pursued extrinsic goals, such as getting power, fame, money and progeny. I have to delay explicating this approach to rationality and restrict myself to pointing out how deeply the Renaissance idea of authenticity, and the pride it is allied with, revolutionizes social theory and our self-understanding.[9]

The uninhibited professionalization of activities that started in the Renaissance was a change not only in practice but also in metaphysics. It was a change from finding meaning in locating oneself in a social context to finding meaning in activities done for their own sake, suggested by our definite mortality. This change separates the modern from the premodern individual.

In Renaissance art, paintings lose their golden background and holy persons lose their halo, which relate events to a transcendent sphere. The painted things are now arranged according to the viewpoint of the observer, but the result is not an arbitrary subjective picture of the world individuals often have. Rather, it is perspective drawing, presenting the world from the viewpoint of an individual, but omitting whatever individuals do not share in viewing the world. Perspective drawing combines individuality with what individuals share, just as the metaphysics of authenticity or doing things for their own sake combines the individuality of choosing intrinsic goals with rationality standards that everyone pursuing the same intrinsic goal acknowledges.

[9] I explicate this approach to rationality in *Rationality and the Point of Action*, to be published soon.

Yet do the justice standards that prevent authenticity from becoming unjust not *transcend* the immanence of a sphere? Don't they relate individuals to universally valid laws? They do, but justice standards are *action-immanent* goals nonetheless. Just as by their sphere-immanent standards scientists discover universally valid laws of nature that any rational action has to respect, lawyers, by their sphere-immanent standards, discover universal principles of justice that any moral action has to respect. Likewise, mathematicians discover the rules of arithmetic everyone will obey by sphere-immanent standards that they discover by exploring number relations.

However, restricting standards to being *immanent to an action* or *sphere* is not the denial that there is anything *transcendent*. This is what Hegel ascribes to the modern age. Its

> knowledge does not go above or beyond the sphere of the finite, nor does it desire to do so, since it is able to apprehend all in its finite sphere, is conversant with everything, and knows its course of action. In this manner science forms a universe of knowledge, to which God is not necessary, which lies outside of religion, and has absolutely nothing to do with it. In this kingdom knowledge spreads itself out in its relations and connections, and in so doing has all determinate material and content on its side; and for the other side, the side of the infinite and the eternal, nothing whatever is left.[10]

Since the Renaissance, science did restrict itself to its own sphere, but its sphere is not opposed to "the infinite and the eternal," as little as the spheres of art, justice or commerce are.[11] Nor is "the other side" left with nothing. Religion does not look like it's dying out as the Enlightenment expected. It lives on as far as it respects the intrinsic goals of science and other spheres and finds its intrinsic goal in delivering "an irreplaceable meaning for our lives," as Charles Larmore said, appealing the ideas of Karl Barth and Dietrich Bonhoeffer.[12] Former ages found the transcendent in a transcendent realm of extraordinariness that comprehends the finite world, just as the golden ground comprehends a painting and the

[10] Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, 1969ff, Bd. 16, 23f, tr. Speirs and Sanderson.
[11] Kutschera 1990, 251ff, criticizes this Hegelian claim too, though not with the argument I use.
[12] Larmore 1996, 43f.

extraordinary appears in the halo of the saints. The Renaissance finds the transcendent in the unconditionality of some intrinsic goals. Their pursuit provides not immortality and a knowledge of God, but meaning in life and authenticity, and as far as the intrinsic goals as those of justice are unconditional commands, they provide something absolute.

9

The Bourgeois Revolution and Bourgeois Authenticity

The Renaissance revolution was the shift of action goals from extrinsic to intrinsic ones that were pursued both passionately and professionally. It raised the pursuit of intrinsic goals in science, art, justice enforcement and bureaucracy, but also in sexuality, above the threshold of consciousness. Yet as Max Weber pointed out, the "fatal" shift happened in the *economy* that became modern capitalism. Unlike adventure and buccaneer capitalism, modern capitalism aims at a "continuous" and "ever renewed" or reused profit.[1] This description implies that modern capitalism aims at profit for its own sake, hence that its rationality is not instrumental but action-immanent.

Earlier, in his famous *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Weber had traced modern capitalism, the capitalism that achieved the Industrial Revolution, to the fear of eternal condemnation that Calvinists hoped to escape by "inner-worldly asceticism" and the economical use of time and money. Yet Weber, as he recognized himself,[2] showed only that Calvinists *contributed* to the rise of industrial capitalism, and he didn't explain why they found a hint of God's grace just in their *monetary suc-*

[1] *Vorbemerkung* (*Prefatory Remark*) *zu den Gesammelten Aufsätzen zur Religionssoziologie*, vol. 1, 1–5.
[2] Weber 1930, 27 (in a note added after 1905): "we treat here only one side of the causal chain."

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cess. This fact is better explained by the phenomenon that humans find meaning in their professional activities and tend to develop a work ethic, requiring of merchants to be economical, commercially inventive and of course successful. Weber may have thought so himself when he later presented modern capitalism as a result of a rationalization that he found only in Europe.[3]

In any profession, individuals will tend to do their work with passion and for the sake of it, whether or not their work began as a means to the extrinsic goal of survival. Everywhere, people tend to be proud of their work, love it, develop standards of perfection and distinguish between amateurs and professionals. But when this trend breaks up social structures, not only the ruling classes but everyone interested in stability will oppose it. In Europe, the opposition was broken, due to the bourgeoisie and other favorable conditions. Merchants became inventive, developing, from the High Middle Ages on, joint stock companies,[4] stock markets[5] and increasingly sophisticated means to ease, extend and perfect commerce for continuously reused profit. *Instrumental rationality* allows deducing the means from a given end, but from the end of continuously reused money the means of instituting the joint stock company or the stock market isn't deducible, as little as the right solution is deducible from the problem of finding a law of physics or composing a dance tune. For such solutions we need the creative *action-immanent rationality* of the pursuit of intrinsic goals.

Merchants are often blamed for their tendency to use everything as an object of barter, for a "spiritual and ethical mercantilism" that commodifies even virtue and faith.[6] Europe's merchants did spread such mercantilism, but they stand alone in how they did it. In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England, they succeeded in creating markets that allowed them to perfect the pursuit of their intrinsic goal of making profits. Free markets allowed them to buy machines that replaced or reduced the number of workers—spinning frames, power looms, steam engines—and to produce goods cheaper than former manufacturers regardless of

[3] *Vorbemerkung* (*Prefatory Remark*) *zu den Gesammelten Aufsätzen zur Religionssoziologie*, vol. 1, 1–5.

[4] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joint-stock_company

[5] Ferguson 2008, 128–137. Cp. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stock_market

[6] This is how Connolly 2014, 136, describes Meister Eckhart's critique of the ethics of his time.

the ensuing overproduction and loss of jobs, which markets regulated by guilds and other associations of producers had prevented. Producing more cheaply, they ousted from the market any producer who did not become an industrial capitalist. Thus, merchants took over control of production and became the masters of society.

This change is rightly called the Industrial Revolution. But it wasn't just a change from non-industrial production, production by farmers and artisans using tools, to production by machinery. The crucial point, as pointed out by Marx's concept of subsuming production under capital, is that production was subjugated to commerce. The intrinsic goals of the various branches of production were replaced with the one intrinsic goal of commerce. Production was to serve a goal extrinsic to it, the gain of profit. This was a revolution the likes of which humanity had not undergone before.

For many artisans and farmers, production was not the pursuit of the extrinsic goal of providing the means for survival or a pleasant life. It was the pursuit of an intrinsic goal, a work that could be done more or less perfectly because it followed professional standards orienting toward healthy food and beautiful and sustainable products. It was work that made them proud and they found meaning in. For the merchants, such work was only a means to make profit. The same Europe that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had started exploring intrinsic goals and claimed autonomy for various activities was reduced in her pursuit of intrinsic goals to that of profit. Spheres such as agricultural and industrial production, science, technology, justice, the arts, sport, journalism, education and even religion, all the various value spheres that had started to pursue their intrinsic goals in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, if not earlier, were gradually subjected to the sphere of commerce. The success of the pursuit of an intrinsic goal in the one sphere of trade stopped other spheres from pursuing their intrinsic goals. Thus, the ideas of a professional pursuit of intrinsic goals, of authenticity in a profession and of sphere rationality, got lost.

Yet the same bourgeoisie that deleted the practice of sphere autonomy and sphere-immanent rationality kept up the ideas of individual autonomy and of individual authenticity. The history of merchants in most societies is a history of humiliation, suffered under the wielders of

power who time and again robbed them of their property. When some merchants, in Europe and a little later in Japan,[7] succeeded in imposing their property rights on society, this was a triumphal restoration of their pride after age-old humiliations. Age-old humiliations did not prevent a humiliated class from losing their pride (raising hopes for presently humiliated classes). This pride also committed the bourgeoisie to keeping up the idea of natural, state-independent rights that everyone must protect in everyone's interest. Though preventing production from pursuing its own intrinsic goals, the bourgeoisie became a fierce advocate of state-independent human rights and self-determination.

The bourgeoisie also celebrated authenticity in the life outside the professions, in what they considered the private life, the life of the family, the life after the working days and working hours. Such authenticity aims at being true to oneself in the choice and love of one's spouse, in one's behavior to one's children, relatives and friends, in one's pastimes and hobbies. If you cannot be true to your talents in a profession then be true to your feelings and choices outside your job. This bourgeois motto, however, is difficult to follow. It requires constancy and unambiguity of our feelings, which are rare. In contrast, being true to one's talents requires doing things for their own sake that we love doing and can be both passionate and professional about. Bourgeois authenticity was more utopian than Renaissance authenticity.

Many intellectuals of the new bourgeois era believed they had found a reliable path to the authenticity of a whole life: love. They found the self that we are to be true to in the sentiments that judge what suits us and when we are true to ourselves. Such judgment by the heart may seem not much different from the judgment that tells us which profession to pursue. In either case, we have to listen to the voice of passion. But the voice that opts for a profession is tested by professional activities and their immanent perfection standards. The voice of the heart is not, and in most humans its judgment soon changes more or less. But we cannot be true to something inconstant.

Moreover, our heart's feelings not only change quickly, but also rarely exhaust our abilities. Following them will not provide a lasting meaning

[7] Landes 1998, 362f.

to our life (as Knausgaard confirms). To find meaning, we need to use our abilities over a long time so we can develop and explore them by exploring an object that we apply our abilities to. This requires a professional use of our abilities. For a professional use, however, the bourgeois metaphysics provides only the intrinsic goal of making money. Barred from finding meaning in pursuing other intrinsic goals, we look for meaning in the pursuit of extrinsic goals. Two extrinsic goals are most promising in providing meaning, self-enjoyment and power or winning, as they agitate the self. We'll consider in Part IV whether they can keep what they promise.

The bourgeoisie modified the metaphysics of the Renaissance. The Renaissance found meaning in doing things for their own sake wherever we can do something for its own sake. The bourgeoisie acknowledged only one intrinsic goal that we can be both passionate and professional about, that of making a profit. It recognized another intrinsic goal in love and fidelity for the sake of one's beloved, spouse and children, but this intrinsic goal cannot be professionally pursued. So it found meaning in making money and in following one's passions in private life. It secured the survival of the idea of doing things for their own sake by transferring authenticity from the professions to private life, thereby upgrading privacy. It also allowed many of its descendants to turn to the spheres of art and science, where the goal of commerce could be more easily evaded. Yet as making money for its own sake cannot serve as a source of meaning for everyone, the bourgeois metaphysics leaves us with its second part, finding meaning in private life. It splits life up into the workday restriction to the pursuit of profit and the Sunday pursuit of private passions and pastimes. This union of restriction with liberty was a cause of permanent discontent, but also a spur to articulate authenticity in art and thought. Such articulation started with Rousseau and has not yet come to an end.

10

Rousseau's Authenticity

Though Rousseau used the term *authenticity* as little as his Renaissance predecessors,[1] the character of the heroes and heroines of his novels, the ideal human that appears in his discourses, and not least his own uncompromising, misfortune-provoking, sentimental character, fascinated his readers and became the most popular model of what was later called authenticity. Yet this authenticity proved to be not much more than subjectivity, turning appeals to authenticity into dangerous tools for arbitrary manipulation.

Unlike the Renaissance protagonists, Rousseau finds authenticity not in the professions but in passions. Like them he assumes an uncorrupted human nature and self that we have to find out and be true to. He finds it in the natural character of "everyone," as he sometimes called common people. He supposed them to be uncorrupted by the civilization and lifestyle of the powerful and the enlightened, the scientists, artists, philosophers and other intellectuals. His trust in the uncivilized was not

[1] Rousseau didn't use the term *authenticity* for the idea of authenticity but rather variable terms such as the French words for *integrity*, *veracity*, *sincerity*, *originality*. He does use *authenticité* in the sense used for non-forged documents, e.g. in his "Réponse au Roi de Pologne," *Discours sur les sciences et les arts*, éd. électronique par Jean-Marie Tramblay, http://sbisrvntweb.uqac.ca/archivage/13868098.pdf p. 36.

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well received by the French élites, but many of the rest, in particular the French revolutionaries and German philosophers such as Kant. When Rousseau declared:

> One principle of morality can take the place of all the others, and it is this: never say or do anything which you would not want everyone to see or hear[2]

nearly everyone but the French élites considered themselves to be *everyone*.

His claim seems incompatible with authenticity, as authenticity requires being true to oneself rather than to everyone. Yet when Rousseau's own judgment disagreed from that of "everyone," he didn't hesitate to trust himself. His "one principle of morality" is a principle of reliance on oneself in one's original uncorrupted state, which is a principle of moral autonomy and authenticity.

This becomes clearer in the opening of his autobiographical *Confessions*:

> I have entered upon a performance which is without example, whose accomplishment will have no imitator. I mean to present my fellow-mortals with a man in all the integrity of nature; and this man shall be myself. I have studied mankind and know my heart; I am not made like any one I have been acquainted with, perhaps like no one in existence; if not better, I at least claim originality,[3] and whether Nature did wisely in breaking the mould with which she formed me, can only be determined after having read this work. Whenever the last trumpet shall sound, I will present myself before the sovereign judge with this book in my hand, and loudly proclaim, thus have I acted; these were my thoughts; such was I. With equal freedom and veracity have I related what was laudable or wicked, I have concealed no crimes, added no virtues; and if I have sometimes introduced superfluous ornament, it was merely to occupy a void occasioned by defect of memory: I may have supposed that certain, which I only knew to be probable, but have never asserted as truth, a conscious falsehood. Such as I was, I have declared myself; sometimes vile and despicable, at others,

[2] The hero is Wolmar in his novel *La Nouvelle Héloise*; the quote is from Williams 2004, 179.

[3] The French doesn't use a word like *originalité*: "j'ose croire n'être fait comme aucun de ceux qui existent. Si je ne vaux pas mieux, au moins je suis autre. Si la nature a bien ou mal fait à briser le moule dans lequel m'a jeté…"

> virtuous, generous and sublime; even as thou hast read my inmost soul: Power eternal! assemble round thy throne an innumerable throng of my fellow-mortals, let them listen to my confessions, let them blush at my depravity, let them tremble at my sufferings; let each in his turn expose with equal sincerity the failings, the wanderings of his heart, and, if he dare, aver, I was better than that man.[4]

Compare the message of these words with the message Augustine implied by his interpretation of the fall of mankind.[5] Augustine tells us that although men's intellect and will are divine, they predispose to a wrong use and seduce into the original sin. Rousseau tells us that with his "depravity," the life he confesses shows him in the "integrity of nature," the way nature formed him in her "mould," and that therefore in the Last Judgment, God has no right to condemn him, as his fellow mortals will confirm, not being better than him. This is a rejection of Augustine's view as proud as it can be. By the same pride it differs from Montaigne's *Essays*, probably Rousseau's second model for his *Confessions*, as Montaigne, though no less proud than Rousseau, never crows over his life.

At the same time, we may wonder how Rousseau can be so sure he did not in some way corrupt his "integrity of nature." Might he not sometimes have acted differently from the way he did; less viciously? If he thought so, isn't this smug? The girl whom he framed his theft of a ribbon for can only have been bitter about someone who confesses the crime he did to her in a book that bestows fame on her defamer. While Montaigne said

> Painting myself for others, I have painted my inward self with colors clearer than my original ones. I have no more made my book than my book has made me—a book consubstantial with its author, concerned with my own self, an integral part of my life; not concerned with some third-hand, extraneous purpose, like all other books.[6]

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[4] http://books.google.com/books?id=rSw6c9q5KUcC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false Tr. W. Conyngham Mallory.

[5] Cp. Ronald Grimsley, Review of Ann Hartle, *The Modern Self in Rousseau*' *Confessions*, in *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 23, 1985, 352f.

[6] Montaigne 1958, 504; cp. Frederick Rider, *The Dialectic of Selfhood in Montaigne*, Stanford: Stanford UP 1973, 67.

Rousseau seems not to have taken into account that writing about oneself changes the writer.

In any case, Rousseau understood the idea of being true to oneself as being true not to the accidental self one happens to be, but to the self formed by "the mould with which (nature) formed me." It is this self that he thought speaks in the voice of the people. But is there a criterion to recognize what corresponds to the original self? Rousseau probably believed the criterion to be finding a reliable mark of authenticity in the nature of the passion we experience. Thus, true love proves itself in the power of love. In fact, the greatest epics and novels show love as a unique power. But it needs time to recognize the authenticity of passion that is not unchecked by perfection standards of action spheres.

In practice, what Rousseau articulated as authenticity, by the heroes of his novels and by his own example in his *Confessions*, led to the understanding that I am authentic if I follow my true passions and that my true passions are my strongest passions. Yet as our passions change and can be manipulated, authenticity became fickle subjectivity and the object of manipulation.

For many contemporaries, Rousseau's commitment to his self was liberation from fettering conventions. In fact, we cannot be true to ourselves without being true to our individuality. But like Augustine, the Renaissance authors and Rousseau too, many British contemporaries felt that to be true to ourselves we must be bound by something transcending subjectivity. According to Lionel Trilling, one of the few twentieth-century authors to discuss authenticity, the representative nineteenth-century English authors found the element that transcends subjectivity in society and its particularities or "thickness." Authenticity before the nineteenth century, Trilling claims, is sincerity, "a salient, perhaps a definitive, characteristic of Western culture for some four hundred years."[7]

He concedes that the idea of being true to oneself was pronounced in the Renaissance. But before the nineteenth century, he argues, to be true to oneself meant to be sincere, and sincere means to be the way others expect us to be. When in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* Polonius, counselor of Hamlet's stepfather King Claudius and father of Ophelia, advises his son

[7] Trilling 1971, 6.

Laertes: "This above all: to thine own self be true/And it doth follow, as the night the day,/Thou canst then not be false to any man," Polonius, "a spirit that is not only senile but small," seems to have "a moment of self-transcendence, of grace and truth," as he tells his son to be true to his self. But in fact, he only advises his son to be sincere, which then meant to be humble to upper class and proud to lower class people,[8] as it suits a smug like Polonius. Such sincerity became an ideal because, Trilling says,

> The decline of feudalism issued in (an) unprecedented social mobility… beginning in the sixteenth century, there was a decisive increase in the rate of social mobility, most especially in England but also in France.[9] It became more and more possible for people to leave the class into which they were born. The middle class rose, not only in its old habitual way but unprecedentedly…the new social mobility…must seem to have been most inadequate to the social desires that had come into being…how effectual these hindrances were may be learned from any good English or French novel of the nineteenth century.[10]

Sincerity became the first social virtue, Trilling claims, because the authors who propagated it had an interest in stabilizing the given power structure. The sixteenth- to nineteenth-century authors are "bound by their society, determined by its particularities."[11] But is this true? The European artists and theorists from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century were not conservative. Even the English became conservative only in the eighteenth century. Trilling's understanding of authenticity shows even a second anachronism. He claims that the present idea of authenticity resulted from a more

> exigent conception of the self and of what being true to it consists in, a wider reference to the universe and man's place in it, and a less acceptant and genial view of the social circumstances of life.[12]

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[8] Trilling 1971, 3.

[9] One should add Italy, with Burckhardt 2004, 76, 136, 277ff, 284.

[10] The first sentence is from Trilling 1971, 20, the rest from ibid. 15.

[11] Trilling 1971, 114f.

[12] Trilling 1971, 11.

But Renaissance writing on the self is full of references to the universe and man's place in it,[13] while today authenticity is most often (wrongly) understood without any relation to the universe.

Moreover, both today and in the Renaissance the idea of authenticity differs from that of sincerity by the notion that it obliges us to develop our abilities. In sincerity, I am true only in my communication; in authenticity, I am true to my original properties. I may be sincere about my consuming passion for, say, opera singing, and yet not be authentic if I do not dare to take opera singing lessons. Trilling ignores there is a universal disposition of humans to be proud of their talents and to be true to them.

Rousseau couldn't have fascinated his readers if they hadn't had this disposition too. What he presented as authenticity lacked reference to action-immanent perfection criteria. Most action spheres no longer followed their immanent perfection standards but that of commerce. Rousseau's heroines and heroes follow the voice of their conscience; it is passionate but cannot become professional. Like in the Renaissance, authenticity provides life with meaning, but now the potential immorality of all authenticity is enhanced, as it is not checked by the action-immanent criteria of perfection of actions spheres. These criteria cannot filter out the potential immorality of professions, but they can control free passion and can be checked by the action sphere of justice.

[13] Cp. Daniel Castellano, *The Renaissance Concept of Self*, www.arcaneknowledge.org/histschol/renaissance.htm; Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*: *From More to Shakespeare*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Pr. 1980; Geoff Baldwin, "Individual and Self in the Late Renaissance," *The Historical Journal* 44, 2001, 341–64.

11

Marx, Weber and Mere Subjectivity

Kierkegaard's evocation of the self was an appeal to be authentic, but he tried to avoid reducing authenticity to Rousseauist subjectivity by binding authenticity to Christian virtues. Yet he found a public only in the twentieth century, and then only for his description of the self and its despair rather than for his tying authenticity to Christian virtues. Karl Marx was another author to save authenticity from fickle subjectivity. In his *Philosophical-Economic Manuscripts* of 1844, which also found a public only in the twentieth century, he didn't talk of authenticity but of alienated work,[1] presupposing a non-alienated activity that corresponds to authentic action. Non-alienated action, he says in hardly understandable Hegelese, is "grounded in the essence of the activity's content and is adequate to the social spirit."[2] In Hegelian terms, he also states as a

[1] *Entfremdete Arbeit*, also translated *as estranged labor.* He did so not only in his *Economic-philosophic manuscripts* of 1844, but also in his *Capital* I, MEW 23: 455, 596, 635, 674.

[2] Marx 2000 (*Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*), 44, my tr. Milligan's translation (publ. 1964) is entirely wrong, Tucker (1978) tried in vain to correct it. The German text reads: "Die gesellschaftliche Tätigkeit und der gesellschaftliche Geist existieren keineswegs *allein* in der Form einer *unmittelbar* gemeinschaftlichen Tätigkeit und unmittelbat *gemeinschaftlichen* Geistes, obgleich… die Tätigkeit und der Geist…überall da stattfinden werden, wo jener *unmittelbare* Ausdruck der Gesellschaftlichkeit im Wesen ihres Inhalts begründet u seiner Natur angemessen ist." "ihres Inhalts" unambiguously refers to the content of "die gesellschaftliche Tätigkeit," *social activity*, and

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requirement for authentic action that man "treats himself as a universal and therefore a free being."[3]

I interpret "the essence of the activity's content" as "the intrinsic goal of the activity," for I assume that Marx, a great admirer of Aristotle, knew Aristotle's distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic goals, and rightly identified intrinsic goals with the essence of the content of an action. "Social spirit" I think alludes to Hegel's idea that the development of societies (like that of nature) is a development of Spirit; so I translate the phrase as "the developmental stage of a society." A "universal being" seems to be a creature able to choose any kind of action and to act like any other man. Yet surprisingly, Marx also says that only the "*particular* individual" is mortal, implying that the universal one is not.[4] So "a universal being" should be understood as "a being able to choose any kind of action and to act in the position of any other man at all ages, as a member of possibly immortal mankind rather as a mortal individual."

So I translate the first sentence as: "Authentic action pursues an intrinsic goal in conformity with the developmental stage of a society," and the second sentence that states the basic requirement for authentic actions as: "Man consciously chooses under all the possible actions he might choose the one that suits him best and acts in the interest of mankind rather than in his individual interest, and therefore feels at one with his action."

In addition to this rather general condition of a non-alienated life, Marx lists more concrete conditions: Such action must be (1) caused by the "diversity of human talents" rather than by the division of labor as the result of exchange[5]; it must (2) neither aim at money nor be made possible by paying money but be motivated by "*real individual* life"[6]; it

"seiner Natur," to the nature of "der gesellschaftliche Geist," *social spirit*. Milligan uses for "Geist" "enjoyment"; Tucker "consumption."

[3] Marx 2000, 31: "Man is a species-being (*Gattungswesen*), not only because in practice and in theory he adopts the species (his own as well as those of other things) as his object, but—and this is only another way of expressing it—also because he treats himself as the actual, living species; because he treats himself as a universal and therefore a free being." Marx describes man's universality thus: "The universality of man appears in practice precisely in the universality which makes all nature his inorganic body—both inasmuch as nature is (1) his direct means of life, and (2) the material, the object, and the instrument of his life activity."

[4] Marx 2000, 45.

[5] Marx 2000, 58.

[6] Marx 2000, 62.

is (3) "self-enjoyment,"[7] yet not passive but the effect of human talents; and (4) requires man's

> relationship to the world to be a human one: then you can exchange love only for love, trust for trust, etc. If you want to enjoy art, you must be an artistically cultivated person; if you want to exercise influence over other people, you must be a person with a stimulating and encouraging effect on other people. Every one of your relations to man and to nature must be a specific expression, corresponding to the object of your will, of your real individual life.[8]

Conditions (1) and (2) rule out that the goal of a non-alienated action is extrinsic; (3) and (4) require it to suit the agent's self, because otherwise she can neither enjoy the action nor exchange love for love or influence other people; (4) requires the action to be of a kind that it can be both passionate and professional because even in the exchange of love for love and trust for trust we are acting in ways that follow their immanent perfection standards. Hence, surprisingly, Marx conceives as a non-alienated action the very pursuit of an intrinsic goal that the Renaissance protagonists aimed at. However, Marx's conception of authenticity remained unrecognized.

Also Trilling tries to understand authenticity so as to avoid its coincidence with subjectivity. To explain it, he refers to the idea of "the sentiment of being," "the individual's experience of his existence"[9] that Friedrich Schiller had described as the "strength" that "man brought with him from the state of savagery" but easily loses in civilization. This strength, Trilling says, is

> such energy as contrives that the centre shall hold, that the circumference of the self keep unbroken, that the person be an integer, impenetrable, perdurable, and autonomous in being if not in action.[10]

Calling the person "an integer" implies the self is a *substance*. It can be broken, Trilling seems to assume, in its integrity. Yet that the person is

[7] Marx 2000, 45.
[8] Marx 2000, 62.
[9] Trilling 1971, 92.
[10] Trilling 1971, 99.

an integer contradicts the prevailing views of the self that follow Hobbes' materialism and Hume's subjectivism. These views conceive the self as a mechanism or a stream of consciousness with incessantly changing impressions, ruling out that it is an "integer" that might last a life time. Perhaps because of this conflict Trilling didn't further explain his description. Rather, he shifted to explaining the sentiment of being by citing Edmund Burke's description of what the sublime produces in the observer: "a sort of swelling and triumph that is extremely grateful to the human mind."[11]

This comparison leaves us wondering what the swelling feeling of the sublime has to do with authenticity, except that both may feel sublime. However, Trilling was right to presuppose for the idea of authenticity something perdurable. The self we are to be true to in authenticity cannot be the changing self we experience. To be true to the factual self shrinks authenticity to fickle subjectivity. In this case, the claim to be authentic would be entirely non-committal.

The Hobbesian and Humean views showed their thought-killing effects also in Max Weber (not discussed by Trilling). Weber found authenticity exemplified in the inner-worldly asceticism of early Puritanism. But as to the authenticity he himself adhered to he said in a famous passage:

> We shall set to work and meet the "demands of the day," in human relations as well as in our vocation. This…is plain and simple, if each finds and obeys the demon who holds the fibers of his very life.[12]

The "demon who holds the fibers of his very life" is the self one should be true to. It is to guide us not only "in our vocation" but also "in human relations"; it's a universal *moral* guide. What then will the self tell us to meet the demands of the day? Referring to the main antagonists of World War I that had just ended, Weber declared in the same essay:

> I do not know how one might wish to decide "scientifically" the value of French and German culture; for here, too, different gods struggle with one another, now and for all times to come.[13]

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[11] Trilling 1971, 97.

[12] Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation," in 1946, 156. The "demon" probably refers to Plato, *Republic* X, 617e.

[13] Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation," in Weber 1946, 148.

If the French and German cultures are antagonistic gods, there is no way for a conflict of interests to be decided *scientifically*. This word is here a synonym for *with universal obligation*, as Weber presupposes that only science can raise universally valid claims.[14] So, if I happen to be born into the German culture, my demon or self will urge me to side with the German culture. As Weber leaves us here without anything to distinguish prejudice from authenticity, we'll judge with prejudice. Would he have stuck to this position had he known that only some years later the murder of all Jews would be declared to belong to German culture? However, incompatibly with this view of one's self, when Weber describes the virtue of a politician, he explains:

> One can say that three pre-eminent qualities are decisive for the politician: passion, a feeling of responsibility, and a sense of proportion. This means passion in the sense of *matter-in-factness*, of passionate devotion to a "cause,"' to the god or demon who is its overlord. It is not passion in the sense of…"sterile excitation."[15]

Here "the god or demon" is not an inner voice that guides us "in human relations as well as in our vocation." It's not a universal moral guide but the specific intrinsic goal of a specific action that can guide only in the specific cause the politician is devoted to. It's the perfection standard inherent in the value sphere of politics, a standard for political authenticity and rationality but not for morality. Here, Weber articulates the Renaissance idea of authenticity.

As contemporaries of Weber agreed that there was no rational way to decide on moral conflicts, authenticity became the only moral judge to appeal to. But authenticity was understood in the Rousseauist way and led to trust in the masses or non-civilized groups. In fact, the first half of the twentieth century was marked by a trend to find the true self in "the poor, the oppressed, the violent, the primitive," as Trilling said.[16] Artists in particular discovered their self in barbaric or savage peoples and tribes. Regarding the civilized as corrupted and the savage as noble, as if

[14] Weber explains a universally valid claim as one that "must be acknowledged as correct even by a Chinese." Weber, *Objectivity in Social Science*, in Weber (1949) 2011, 58. For a critique of this view, cp. Steinvorth 2013, Chap. 8.

[15] Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in Weber 1946, 115.

[16] Trilling 1971, 102.

savage peoples had not a history too that may have perverted the original self as much as the history of a civilization, their primitivism had some constructive effect in the fine arts, but for the rest it contributed to the anti-civilizational tendencies in totalitarian movements.

More fatally, trust in the masses turned into hatred of the establishment, of civilization, the bourgeoisie and of the Jews as representatives of the bourgeoisie. Demagogues such as Hitler and Stalin relied on sympathy with this degenerate form of authenticity. Though degenerate, it was a legitimate child of Rousseauist authenticity, which is to date the prevailing understanding.

There are at least two reasons for the lasting prevalence of Rousseauist authenticity. *First*, Kant and German idealism confirmed it against their intentions. Kant conceived the self as the "transcendental subject" that brings order into the intuitions, connecting them by the categories,[17] in particular those of causality and substance that Hume had shown to be not empirical (arousing him, as Kant said, from his dogmatic slumber.)[18] Locke too had assigned to the self the synthesis of sensations and reflections that correspond to Kant's intuitions. But Locke's synthesis reproduces the world as it is, and such reproduction can fail, while Kant, more consistently, conceives the synthesis as that of intuitions whose origin we can't know; the origin is the ever unknown *thing in itself.* Hence, the self is no longer a reproducer that can err in its reproduction, but a Platonic demiurge that constructs the world of the matter of intuitions by using not Plato's ideas but Kant's categories, as infallible as Rousseau's self. Thus, German idealism fed ideas of the self that reinforced the Rousseauist understanding of an infallible self and favored megalomania. True, the Hobbesian and Humean views of the self are incompatible with the Kantian view, but rather than deflating the idealist view they marked it as outlandish and secured it the attraction of the exotic.

Second, authenticity has become one of the most important values of the emerging global civilization.[19] Current societies can no longer do

[17] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* A 350 and 355. In the 2nd edition he doesn't use this term, as he wants to restrict "transcendental" to the way we *get* a priori knowledge rather than objects (B25).

[18] Kant, *Prolegomena* §§ 4 and 50.

[19] Literature on authenticity, by pedagogues, theologians and aestheticians, is overwhelming. Cp. Dietschi 2012; Kurt Röttgers, Reinhard Fabian, "Authentisch," in *Historisches Wörterbuch der*

without appealing to authenticity. Whether in advertisement, in election campaigns or at church congresses the organizers suggest to their public that by following them the addressees will be true to themselves. Yet for lack of the Renaissance concept of authenticity, being true to oneself is understood as being true to one's dominant passion, and it is a dominant passion that the organizers try to produce in their mass events. Hence, as current societies need advertisement, election campaigns and similar mass events to go on functioning, authenticity in its Rousseauist understanding is kept up.

This dependence on dominant passions taken for authenticity also appears in another feature connected to authenticity. Authenticity attracts by its promise to provide life with meaning. But to provide meaning there needs to be a practice that the authentic can be proud of. Dependence of authenticity on a practice is taken account of in the Renaissance concept, as here authenticity inheres in actions done for their own sake. In the Rousseauist concept, actions done for their own sake are replaced with the actions of "everyone" and the actions that follow the dominant passion. Such practices are produced today in mass events manipulated by élites of very different kinds. While Marx, the leader of the workers' movement, not the author of the *Philosophical-Economic Manuscripts*, may have believed that the workers would develop an authentic practice they could be proud of, his followers increasingly tried to manipulate the masses. Similarly, some neoliberals today may still believe in an original market behavior that sets the model for authenticity, but in fact, market behavior results from decisions of giant corporations and employers. Islamists point to the practice of the religious masses of past centuries as an object of pride and a model for authenticity. All these groups stick to the Rousseauist concept of authenticity rather than the Renaissance concept, and they all can retain power only by relying on the idea of authenticity.

Philosophie, ed. J. Ritter, Basel: Schwabe 1971, 691f; Susanne Knaller, *Ein Wort aus der Fremde. Geschichte und Theorie des Begriffs* Authentizität, Heidelberg: Winter 2007; Ph. Vannini, J.P. Williams, eds, *Authenticity in Culture, Self, and Society*, Farnham: Ashgate 2009; Ishtiyaque Haji, Stefaan E. Cuypers, *Moral Responsibility, Authenticity, and Education*, New York: Taylor & Francis 2008; Jochen Sautermeister, *Identität und Authentizität*, Freiburg: Herder 2013.

12

Heidegger's Authenticity

The various problems of being true to oneself seem to have found a stomping ground in Heidegger's philosophy. It is only for the insufficiency of his claims on authenticity that I include Heidegger in my considerations. I'll judge neither the many other aspects of his work nor the constructive sides of his ideas on authenticity.

Authenticity, for Heidegger, is the only adequate form of human existence but not a characteristic that we may strive for or that we have or do not have. Ordinarily, as he explicates in *Sein und Zeit*, in an emphatic, often intimidating language rich with new creations, we live inauthentically, following not our self but what *one* does or *they* do. To become authentic, we need to be pulled out of the care for ordinary things that we grow up with. We are always concerned about ourselves; therefore, Heidegger, similarly to Kierkegaard's famous definition of spirit and the self, defines man as "that entity which in its Being has this very Being as an issue."[1] Self-concern is unavoidable because we find ourselves thrown into a life that is not fixed but that has to be chosen and formed by us. Yet, necessarily, in the beginning we do what *they* do or *one* does; this is

[1] Heidegger 1962, 68. *Being* might be here better written with a small *b*.

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the inauthentic life. Only if we become aware that it is we who choose our life can we become authentic or *eigentlich*.

How do we become aware of this? When we anticipate death. In anticipating death we become aware that we will be judged on a life that we have chosen and can no longer revise. Death confronts us with a "possibility that is absolute (unbezügliche Möglichkeit)."[2] Its absoluteness, I understand, is the irreversibility of a life that any time earlier we might have revised. We become authentic when we seriously choose a life that fits our self, taking into account that it can end at any time. What my authentic life is no philosopher can tell me, Heidegger says. Thus far, Heidegger tells us what some centuries earlier Montaigne told us, that "To envision death is to envision liberty. He who has learnt to die has freed himself of slavery."[3] But amazingly, despite this assertion that it's up to me to choose my life, he does prescribe something, reminding us that to be authentic we must be *entschlossen*, *disclosed* or open to our historical situation, the *Situation*, and that we belong to a community, our *Volk*:

> If Dasein (Heidegger's term for man or the self, U. St.), by anticipation, lets death become powerful in itself, then…Dasein understands itself in its own superior power, the power of its finite freedom…and can thus come to have a clear vision for the accidents of the Situation that has been disclosed. But if fateful Dasein, as Being-in-the-world, exists essentially in Being-with Others, its historizing is a co-historizing and is determinative for it as destiny [Geschick]. This is how we designate the historizing of the community, of a people.[4]

Clearly, choosing one's life is necessarily a choice that concerns other people and has an effect on history, small as it may be. So our life necessarily is "Being-with-Others" and "co-historizing" and determines "destiny." Yet from these truisms Heidegger jumps to the conclusion, which he declares to be just another designation for these truisms, that this is a "historizing of the community, of a people." This new assertion means

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[2] Heidegger 1962, 307.

[3] Cp. Chap. 7.

[4] Heidegger, *Being and Time* § 74, tr. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, Oxford: Blackwell 1962, 436.

that by becoming authentic we include in our self the community of a people, a *Volk* and a *Volksgemeinschaft*, the ethnic community or people's community that the Nazis appealed to. Heidegger doesn't give any reason why we should choose just this "Being-with-Others" as our authentic life. He doesn't say why we should not identify with our family or profession, or why it is necessary for our Being-with-Others to include others in our self. There may be other passages that allow another interpretation, but here Heidegger implies that individuals are authentic only if they join their *Volk*.[5]

In their political application, Heidegger's appeal to *Eigentlichkeit* and Weber's appeal to the demon holding the fibers of our lives are equally easily adaptable to social movements that happen to be prevalent. One reason is their Rousseauist understanding of authenticity that deprives them of criteria to distinguish the authentic from the inauthentic. But there is an additional reason. They understand the self one is to be true to in authenticity not as something substantial that might orient actions but as a result of actions determined by social and historical conditions. Weber may have understood the demon he compares the self to as a metaphor for the historical conditions that determine an individual's practical ideals, and Heidegger says the self is constituted by a certain behavior, caring. Caring "need not" be "grounded in a self" because caring gives a self the "ontological constitution" in its different grades between self-determination and dependency.[6] This means that caring is not a result of our self and its natural abilities but that inversely the self is *constituted* by caring rather than by natural abilities we are born with. Yet if the self is not grounded in substantial properties it is born with and only constituted by self-caring, how can I distinguish between *my* caring for me by which I constitute my self and a caring by which I am manipulated?

[5] Camus' 1942, 40f, points to virtues of Heidegger's analyses, but the analysis of authenticity seems to me insufficient.

[6] *Sein und Zeit* 323: "Die Sorge bedarf nicht der Fundierung in einem Selbst, sondern die Existenzialität als Konstitutivum der Sorge gibt die ontologische Verfassung der Selbst-ständigkeit des Daseins, zu der…das faktische Verfallensein in die Unselbst-ständigkeit gehört."

13

Authenticity in the Contemporary Discussion

The twentieth century did not succeed in ridding the idea of authenticity of its Rousseauist subjectivity. This may have contributed to the disasters of the twentieth century. No wonder that critics warned:

> Authenticity now dominates our way of viewing ourselves and our relationships, with baleful consequences. Within sensitive individuals it breeds doubt; between people it promotes distrust; within groups it enhances group-think in the endless quest to be one with the group's true soul; and between groups it is the inner source of identity politics. It also undermines good government.[1]

Current skepticism about authenticity was confirmed by the literary critic Allan Bloom. Talk of authenticity, he says, has become "a certain rhetoric of self-fulfillment that gives a patina of glamour to this life," of which "the great majority of students…can see that there is nothing particularly noble about it." "Survivalism has taken the place of heroism as the admired quality."[2]

[1] Patterson 2006; www.nytimes.com/2006/12/26/opinion/26patterson.html?_r=0

[2] Bloom 1987, 84.

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Bloom scourges not the idea of authenticity but the *appeal* to it. Yet his critique is based on a conception of authenticity similar to that of Weber's Rousseauist understanding:

> Authentic values are those by which a life can be lived, which can form a people that produces great deeds and thoughts. Moses, Jesus, Homer, Buddha: these are the creators, the men who formed horizons…It is not the truth of their thought that distinguishes them, but its capacity to generate cultures. A value is only a value if it is life-preserving and life-enhancing…Producing values and believing in them are acts of the will. Lack of will, not lack of understanding, becomes the crucial defect. *Commitment* is *the* moral virtue because it indicates the seriousness of the agent. Commitment is the equivalent of faith when the living God has been supplanted by self-provided values…Not love of truth but *intellectual honesty* characterizes the proper state of mind. Since there is no truth in the values, and what truth there is about life is not lovable, the hallmark of the *authentic self* is consulting one's oracle while facing up to what one is and what one experiences.[3]

Authenticity, for Bloom, is a property of values and persons in the first place, rather than of actions. The criterion by which he distinguishes authentic values or persons is their power to make people produce "great deeds and thoughts." Hence, authenticity requires commitment without committing to some positive kind of action. The action must be just "life-preserving and life-enhancing." Yet also fascists and fundamentalists, Hitler and bin Laden, can claim their values are life-preserving and life-enhancing, and they certainly did not fail in commitment.

Finding authenticity in any kind of commitment, Bloom's concept of authenticity is as much steeped in cultural relativism and decisionism as Heidegger's concept of *Entschlossenheit* or disclosedness. In its use, Bloom proves to be hollower than the students he blames as they at least do not appeal to something that can be filled with any content. Bloom's hallmark of the authentic, "consulting one's oracle while facing up to what one is and what one experiences," even is a free translation of Max Weber's description of the man who "finds and obeys the demon who holds the

[3] Ibid. 201f.

fibers of his very life,"[4] just as his appeal to "*intellectual honesty*" translates Weber's often appealed to *intellektuelle Redlichkeit.* This use sorts ill with his indicting Weber as a miscreant guilty of the closing of the American mind for spreading cultural relativism and decisionism.

Charles Taylor, in his critique of Bloom, admits that contemporaries look for self-fulfillment rather than authenticity, but insists that their appeal to authenticity implies the claim "that some forms of life are indeed *higher* than others"[5]; at least, as we may add, higher than inauthentic forms. There are "higher and fuller modes of authenticity," requiring a "*matter* or *content* of action," and "flatter and shallower forms," requiring only "the *manner* of espousing any end or form of life"[6] that allows the adherents to be "self-centred."[7] His distinction between matter and manner corresponds to that between the Renaissance concept of authenticity found in the content of intrinsic goals and the Rousseauist concept requiring the authentic only to conform to the manner of their subjectivity. But in overcoming the subjectivity of authenticity, Taylor is not convincing either.

He makes an ambiguous claim when he declares that the "demands" of the full modes of authenticity "come from beyond our own desires or aspirations, be they from history, tradition, society, nature, or God."[8] If he says that authenticity requires us to go beyond the desires of our actual self to our original self, he is right. If (as he seems to) he says we should follow the extrinsic goals of history, society or God, rather than the intrinsic goals that suit us, he is wrong.

He is right again to insist that we must refer to "horizons of significance" in order not to find us "in a silent universe, without intrinsic meaning, condemned to create value."[9] Thus he rejects Bloom's claim (incongruous with his claim to fight relativism) that "there is no truth in the values" and a similar claim by Trilling. Trilling had declared:

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[4] Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation," in Weber 1946, 156.

[5] Taylor 1992, 17.

[6] Taylor 1992, 94.

[7] Taylor 1992, 82.

[8] Taylor 1992, 58.

[9] Taylor 1992, 68.

> We are not under the necessity of discovering in the order of the universe, in the ineluctable duty it silently lays upon us, the validation of such personal coherence and purposiveness as we claim for ourselves. We do not ask those questions which would suggest that the validation is indeed there, needing only to be discovered; to us they seem merely facetious.[10]

We cannot "validate" or justify moral rules by recourse to facts indeed, but facts may *motivate* us to be moral and authentic. Today, theorists assign to humans a role as a "steward of reality" and find in nature and the universe a "source of meaning and responsibility."[11] Physicists profess to their "emotion" "about the beauty of the world," and criticize the artists who "don't understand the underlying generality and beauty of nature and her laws (and therefore cannot portray this in their art)."[12] Hence, Taylor can plausibly insist on our need of "horizons of significance." But he doesn't find them in intrinsic goals and action-immanent perfection standards. Nor does he mark out the dangers of *any* authenticity, subjectivist or not. Referring to Stoic sources, he rightly, as we'll see, recognizes that authenticity takes account of individual demands and is supported by the idea of free will. Yet he claims that "Western Christian moral sensibility took up and accentuated this side of Stoic thought," without pointing out that authentic acts can be immoral.[13]

Today, one reason for authenticity's ongoing attraction is that the use of technology shows us to be crucially dependent on our own efforts rather than on powers beyond our control. It's natural to infer from our use of technology that we are free to decide which life to live and which rules to abide by, and to choose rules that suit both our common human and individual properties. This inference can be stopped only by stopping

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[10] Trilling 1971, 118.

[11] Such as Floridi 2011, 23. Seminal for this approach has been Scheler (1928), 2009.

[12] Feynman 1985, 263 and 276. Feynman says 263: "It's difficult to describe because it's an emotion. It's analogous to the feeling one has in religion that has to do with a god that controls everything in the whole universe: there's a generality aspect that you feel when you think about how things that appear so different and behave so differently are all run 'behind the scenes' by the same organization, the same physical laws. It's an appreciation of the mathematical beauty of nature…a feeling of awe…about the glories of the universe."

[13] Taylor, 1989, 137. He also says, ibid.: "What is morally crucial about us is not just the universal nature or rational principle which we share with others…but…also this power of assent, which is essentially in each case mine ('*jemeinig*', to use Heidegger's term)."

our freedom of thinking. Yet technology-based societies can thrive only if individuals are free to develop their specific qualities. This condition makes authenticity congenial to technology-based societies. However, as authenticity isn't necessarily moral, technology-based societies are exposed to the immoral seductions of authenticity.

Now, if as I claim authenticity is a universal ideal that, like liberty and human rights, will be recognized anywhere and anytime as a universal ideal if its recognition is not suppressed in some way, then we should expect it to find it not only in the West. In fact we find it in China too.

14

Authenticity in China

According to the leading New Confucian Weiming Tu, authenticity is an original Confucian virtue:

> The word "authenticity" even with its modern existential implications seems to me more appropriate than narrowly conceived moralistic terms such as "honesty" and "loyalty" to convey the original Confucian sense of learning for the sake of the self.[1]

Like most Western theorists, Tu understands authenticity as the quality of individuals who act "for the sake of the self" rather than for the sake of intrinsic goals. But this error is not important for his claim that the Confucian sincere do things for the things' sake. For in contrast to utilitarian tendencies in the Chinese past, Confucius said that "The superior man is not an utensil,"[2] implying that the sincere act for neither utility

[1] Tu Weiming, *Confucian Thought*: *Selfhood as Creative Transformation*, Albany: State Univ. of New York Pr. 1989, 52. On traditional Chinese conceptions of authenticity cp. Xunwu Chen, *Being and Authenticity*, Amsterdam: Rodopi 2004.

[2] Confucius, *Analects*, bk. ii., c. xii, tr. Miles Menander Dawson. In Robert Eno's edition: "The junzi" (superior man) "is not a vessel." www.indiana.edu/~p374/Analects_of_Confucius_%28Eno-2012%29.pdf

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nor for fame or money. Moreover, in an influential Confucian text composed after Confucius' death by his grandson, we read:

> It is only he who is possessed of the completest sincerity that can exist under Heaven, who can give full development to his nature…Sincerity is that whereby self-development is effected and the path by which a man must direct himself.[3]

Here, Confucian sincerity is understood not only as honesty but also as demanding the development of individual abilities. This is just the property that distinguishes authenticity from sincerity.

We find more evidence of the importance of authenticity in ancient China in a story by the ancient Chinese philosopher Zhuangzi. Zhuangzi tells of a butcher who boasts of not needing to grind his knife for cutting up an ox because he has learned when cutting through the meat exactly where cutting is easiest. The butcher pursues an intrinsic goal, as what he aims at can be attained only through the way he acts. There is the useful result that he need not grind his knife, but this is a side effect, not his goal. Zhuangzi presents the butcher as an example of how to discover what a rich and noble life is, not what a commodious life is.[4] To find such a life, Zhuangzi tells us, we must discover our abilities and pay attention to how we can act with as little waste of effort as possible, or most adequately to the intrinsic goal. The butcher demonstrates how to do things for their own sake, proudly and authentically, passionately and professionally, according to the concrete action-immanent rationality, the adequacy of the concrete action to its intrinsic goal. He demonstrates the same ideal of a good life that the Renaissance protagonists lived for.

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[3] *Doctrine of the Mean* (*zhōng yōng*), c. xxii and c. xxv, v. 1, tr. Miles Menander Dawson, www.sacred-texts.com/cfu/eoc/eoc06.htm. In A. Charles Muller's translation, the sentences read: "Only the perfectly sincere person can actualize his own essence…Sincerity is just 'perfecting' and the Way is just 'following'." www.acmuller.net/con-dao/docofmean.html#div-2

[4] I follow Michael Puett's presentation of the story in a lecture given at Harvard University published at youtube in Dec. 2013; see www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wOtPOo_vlM. Puett, though, doesn't talk of authenticity.

Ancient China knew the pride, passion and professionalism of doing things for their own sake.[5]

It seems the ancient Chinese ideal of authenticity was adapted to and deformed by the increasing hierarchization of the Chinese society since its political unification. Yet authenticity was not forgotten. The Chinese dissident and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Liu Xiaobo, imprisoned to date (December 2015),[6] deplores among his Chinese co-citizens a lack of "transcendent impulse." They "lack the courage to face an unfamiliar or uncertain world, and lack a spirit of the individual standing alone to challenge a larger world" than the Chinese world. Consistently, Liu also deplores his "fate…of having no transcendent values, and no God."[7] Yet despite his appeal to religion he says his "success or failure" in changing the Chinese society

> will depend…on whether I can muster the courage to be an authentic person. If I fail, at least the failure will be genuine. If it is, at least it will be worth more than all the empty victories I have had.[8]

How can Liu make his success dependent on authenticity? He understands that for a person to be authentic she must not stop her actions

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[5] In fact, developing the idea of authenticity is hardly avoidable in a culture that had the concept of *ziran*. This word refers, as Nanyan Guo, *From* Shizen *to* Nature: *A Process of Cultural Translation*, paper presented to a Conference in Bergen, Norway, 2014, explains, "to a situation 'as it is', unaltered by human beings," implying that things are or should be following "an intrinsic, unaltered principle of the world." Guo refers as a source to a passage in *a text by* Laozi reading: "Man takes his law from the Earth; the Earth takes its law from Heaven; the Heaven takes its law from the Tâo (*way*); the law of the Tâo is its being what it is (*ziran*, (自然))." (tr. James Legge, *The Sacred Books of China*: *The Texts of Taoism*, Clarendon: Oxford, 1891, p. 68). Although "Laozi saw a 'sage' as one who 'helps the natural development of all things, and does not dare to act (with an ulterior purpose of his own)," (Guo ibid., quoting from James Legge, loc. cit. p. 108) purposeful actions conforming to the *tao* became conceivable once a difference was conceived between the original way of acting and a factual, possibly adulterated way of acting. Thus, what today is called *authentic* actions could be contrasted to inauthentic ones.

[6] In 2009, Liu was sentenced to eleven years' imprisonment for "inciting subversion of state power." Sitting in prison rather than on the platform of the Nobel laureates, the awarding Nobel committee placed an empty chair for him.

[7] Liu 2012, 119 and 118.

[8] Liu 2012, 121.

if they bestow pain, misery and death on her. She must do them for their own sake. Liu seems to find in this kind of action the "transcendent impulse" that provides the "spirit of the individual standing alone to challenge" the world. He seems to understand the demand to be authentic as transcendent because the demand is felt to be unconditional. Whether we call such demand transcendent or not is, I think, a terminological rather than a metaphysical question. He probably also thought of his authenticity as setting an example for other people.[9]

Another present witness to the Chinese idea of authenticity is the novelist Hu Fayun. One of his heroes, a dissident old professor, expresses his anger at the prevailing conditions in China thus:

> Even our own most personal emotional memories are soaked in an all-encompassing, all-pervading ideological culture…Within a few decades, they took from us our ability to express suffering and sorrow. They took our ability to express love. What they gave us instead were fraudulent stand-ins…Even today we do not have an authentic, untainted cultural vehicle with which to record our lives.[10]

The professor talks about China, claiming that "Even the poorest and most backward countries have" that "authentic, untainted cultural vehicle." Yet the lack of an untainted vehicle to communicate with both other people and oneself is not a specifically Chinese deficit. It's a universal problem. It was already felt by late Renaissance authors who, like Montaigne, hoped "to provide an unvarnished picture of his experience of life."[11]

Remarkably, for Hu, authenticity requires the same unconditional sincerity that Rousseau claimed for his *Confessions*. Unconditionally sincere communication is necessary for authenticity because without it we

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[9] Liu may have thought of this passage from the *Doctrine of the Mean*: "The possessor of sincerity develops not himself only; with it, he also develops others" (c. xxv, v. 3, tr. Miles Menander Dawson).

[10] Hu Fayun became famous by his originally online published novel Hu 2006. The quote is from Perry Link, "China: From Famine to Oslo," *The New York Review of Books* Jan. 13, 2011. In the excellent English translation by A.E. Clark (Hu 2011) the quoted text, not using the term *authentic*, is on p. 131f. For an illustration of fraudulent stand-ins in present China cp. Liu 2012, 47–57 ("The Spiritual Landscape of the Urban Young").

[11] Toulmin 1990, 37.

cannot learn about our talents and the intrinsic goals that fit our original self and subject. Like the Renaissance humanists, Hu presupposes that people have an original self, buried under "an all-encompassing, all-pervading ideological culture" that distorts the expression of sorrow and love. Most important, his hero Damo, a proletarian intellectual, shows both passionate and professional dedication to his work as a plumber and computer mechanic, just as a Renaissance artist would have done. "Nothing is interesting," he says of his work, "unless it evokes a sensation of beauty."[12] The authenticity that Hu points to is not self-fulfillment but the property of a professional activity that discovers its immanent rationality and its intrinsic goal.

Probably, both Hu and Liu appeal to authenticity as an alternative to the communication used in networks of mutual help known as *guanxi*. *Guanxi* was once an honorable relationship, often taken as the typically Chinese way of social relations and opposed to Western individualism and egoism. Today, it has become a place of mutual and often illegal help between big business and politics, splitting the Chinese society into competing parties even though the Chinese media and government condemn it.[13] *Guanxi* distorts mutual understanding and self-understanding. It urges individuals to first ask what other people expect of them and how they can use them, impeding the distinction between one's own and other people's judgment and powers. They subject the understanding of

[12] Hu Fayun 2011, 185.

[13] Cp. Ying Fan, "Questioning guanxi: definition, classification and implications," *International Business Review* 11, 2002, 543–61. Yadong Luo, "The changing Chinese culture and business behavior: The perspective of intertwinement between guanxi and corruption," *International Business Review* 17, 2008, 188–93, confirms Fan's paper. Similarly, John Osburg, "Global Capitalism in Asia: Beyond State and Market in China," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 72, 2013, 813–29. T. Gold, D. Guthrie, D. Wank, eds., *Social Connections in China. Institutions, Culture, and the Changing Nature of* Guanxi, Cambridge: Cambridge UP 2002, in particular his introduction, provides useful overviews of the discussion. The condemnation of the extremes of *guanxi* does not imply the condemnation of its historical origins. The original *guanxi* is perhaps counted among the Chinese values contrasted to the "'universal values' of human rights, Western-inspired notions of media independence and the advocacy of unrestrained free-market economics," which President Xi Jinping is said to have criticized in a secret document, known as Document No. 9, circulating since summer 2013 among senior leaders. The document lists seven existential threats to the party, including "Western forces hostile to China and dissidents within the country are still constantly infiltrating the ideological sphere" (Andrew Jacobs, "The War of Words in China," *New York Times* August 2, 1914).

other people and oneself to the interest of gaining advantage; they foster servility and blackmail, prevent doing things for their own sake and replace intrinsic goals with goals acceptable to the powerful. As a representative of *guanxi* thinking in Hu's novel says, what people live and fight for "is not about right and wrong; it's about winning and losing."[14] The authenticity Liu and Hu appeal to contrasts with the orientation toward winning. It is a contrast that marks the global civilization that currently is developing.

Guanxi is the Chinese version of the orientation toward winning. This orientation distorts everywhere mutual and self-understanding and forestalls the pursuit of intrinsic goals. "Winning," psychologists tell us, "by whatever means, evokes in young children a feeling of pride; losing evokes a feeling of failure and shame."[15] Pride motivates both winning and authenticity. In one case, it motivates the pursuit of an extrinsic goal, a goal we can attain "by whatever means." In the other case, it motivates the pursuit of an intrinsic goal that can be reached only by an action the goal inheres in. The more we want to win, the less we enjoy doing things for their own sake. Yet authenticity and the orientation toward winning differ metaphysically rather than morally, as they differ in the way to make sense of life. A heroine in Hu's novel expresses it thus: "Of two people, one seeks the overarching values in life, its ultimate meaning. The other seems unable to detach himself from worldly fame and power."[16] In fact, the authentic do things for their own sake rather than seeking meaning; that they do find meaning is a side effect. This is also Hu's understanding, as he refers to historical Chinese who proudly preferred authenticity and defeat to serving power. Their pride is similar to that of Stoic heroes of authenticity such as Cato the Younger, who too preferred intrinsic to extrinsic goals.[17] Authenticity, as Hu says like an ancient Stoic, exemplifies "the nobility, the intrinsic worth, of mankind."[18] It demands "being honest with ourselves and others."[19] Acting authentically makes

[14] Hu 2011, 428.

[15] www.psychologytoday.com/blog/pride-and-joy/201209/winning-and-losing

[16] Hu 2011, 441.

[17] Cp. Chap. 20.

[18] Hu 2011, 118.

[19] Hu 2011, 126.

it "a great joy" that "I can correct myself even in old age." It turns "self-examination" into "happiness."[20] Every authentic action "evokes a sensation of beauty."[21]

For Hu, authenticity is definitely distinct from subjectivity. For the Stoics, in particular for Epictetus, being true to one's self was a challenge for philosophers; for Hu, it's a challenge for intellectuals. The many who content themselves with security, food and clothes can be forgiven; but "for intellectuals to feel that way is inexcusable."[22] Common people may be "like *animals*."[23] Intellectuals must not; they are tasked with keeping up the nobility of mankind.[24] Why? Hu's answer probably is that intellectuals know the special joys of the pursuit of intrinsic goals. If they do not stick to their pursuit, they betray a way of making sense of life that he knows to be the best.

We may also point to the writer Ye Fu to add evidence that authenticity has been and still is an ideal in China. He complains that "We threw it all away, and it won't be easy to get it back," namely, "the traditional culture" that "breathed decency and integrity," "that kept order in the countryside, passed on from generation to generation for a few thousand years." Still, he hopes like a Renaissance author that we "regain the bedrock of human nature."[25]

[20] Hu 2011, 128.

[21] Hu 2011, 185.

[22] Hu 2011, 120.

[23] Hu 2011, 190.

[24] Yan Lianke in *The New York Times*, Apr. 2, 2013, accuses the Chinese intellectuals of accepting "state-administered amnesia," not because he rejects Hu's standards but because he uses them.

[25] Ye Fu, *Hard Road Home. Selected Essays*, New York: Ragged Banner Pr. 2014, 68ff. Tr. A.E. Clark. Clark has duly given prominence to the quoted passages in his instructive Preface.

15

Rethinking Secularization, Liberalism and Religion

My view of the Renaissance as an era inspired by the joy and pride of pursuing intrinsic goals, leading to the perfection and professionalization of action spheres such as science, commerce and art, implies a number of changes in the understanding of the modern age that the Renaissance started.[1] Here I want to point to a consequence incompatible with the usual opposition of *the secular* and *the religious*. We can no longer understand *secularization*, which does characterize the modern age, as replacing religious values with liberal ones. We must understand it as the replacement of extrinsic with intrinsic goals. Secularization seems to oppose religion, but in fact it insists that religions pursue their specific intrinsic goal of providing meaning in life rather than mixing this goal with goals of power and science.

Already Meister Eckhart and the religious movement he articulated considered it necessary for religion to do things for their own sake,[2] implying that it cannot pursue the intrinsic goals of other spheres. Thinking of Jesus' word that "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the

[1] Cp. Steinvorth 2013, Part 1.

[2] Cp. above Chap. 7 and Connolly 2014.

U. Steinvorth, *Pride and Authenticity*,
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Sabbath,"[3] we may understand Christianity as a religion that urges people to do things for their own sake rather than for fear of God, as is expressed also in Jesus' rhetorical question "And why do you worry about clothes? Consider how the lilies of the field grow: They do not labor or spin."[4] Hence, the Italian philosopher Vattimo's claim that secularization "is the very essence of Christianity" is not paradoxical.[5]

Along with secularization and religion we have to rethink liberalism, the complex of ideas accompanying secularization. Like secularization, it is a religious movement seeming to be anti-religious because it opposes the prevalent understanding of religion as an institution to orient people toward extrinsic transcendent goals rather than toward intrinsic goals in any sphere. Like authenticity, liberalism must be understood as a natural result of the development of the human powers of reason and free will that needs favorable conditions to overcome the resistance of habitude and social inertia and liberates not only so-called mundane abilities and activities from historical fetters but also our metaphysical and religious attitudes. More often, though, like authenticity, liberalism is defined as a modern phenomenon. Here is an example:

> In response to the development of modern science and to the religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a new and distinctive mode of political life arose, one devoted to the skepticism, tolerance, and privacy that regularly goes by the shorthand "Liberalism."[6]

True, this Liberalism arose after the seventeenth century, but why this mode of political life could arise, which abilities it satisfies, why it is worth keeping and when it is not, these are questions that liberalism provokes and are left unanswered in the prevailing views of liberalism. If we grasp liberalism as a result of using our natural powers we know the answers. Liberalism stops when it no longer serves the development of the individuals' powers, as it seems to do today in the most developed countries. Skepticism, tolerance and privacy are elements of liberalism

[3] Mark 2:27, cp. Vattimo 1999, 88.

[4] Matthew 6:28, cp. Luke 12:27.

[5] Vattimo 1999, 50.

[6] Norris 2000, at the beginning.

only as far as they favor the individuals' development and their equal rights, today called human rights, to determine their life according to their own judgment. Even markets are only a means to develop individuals' capabilities, hence favored by liberalism only conditionally.

There is a fourth topic we have to rethink, along with secularization, religion and liberalism: sphere autonomy. Sphere autonomy, in particular the autonomy of the markets, of science, art, the law and religion, protects doing things for their own sake. As doing things for their own sake provides meaning to life, sphere autonomy shares with religion the effect of providing meaning in life and confirms the religious character of liberalism and secularization. There is a consensus, due to Max Weber's authority,[7] that the modern age differs from premodern times by the separation of action spheres, which Weber called value-spheres. Yet the deficient understanding of what makes a society modern appears perhaps most strikingly in the understanding of sphere autonomy.

Let's first clarify how there can be action spheres and their separation at all. Intrinsic goals are always goals inherent in *concrete* actions; how then can there be intrinsic goals of *spheres* of actions, which sphere autonomy is to protect? The reason is that the professionals recognize the similarity between their individual goals and therefore unite to demand autonomy for their sphere rather than for themselves as individuals. Scientists recognize the similar intrinsic goals of other scientists, artists of other artists, merchants of other merchants, judges and lawyers of their colleagues, because they can compare their work, criticize one another and make use of the ways their colleagues accomplish their tasks. They also recognize that their common intrinsic goals, of science, art, commerce and justice enforcement, are different from one another and that therefore their action spheres are different. But this does not mean that scientists cannot make use of ideas of art or commerce, or merchants cannot use science or art in pursuing their intrinsic goal, or artists must blind themselves against what is happening in science or commerce, or scientists, artists or merchants need not bother about being just. Nor does it mean that problems that arise in one sphere cannot be recognized and analyzed in another sphere. On the contrary, sphere autonomy makes

[7] Weber's relevant text is the *Zwischenbetrachtung*.

it possible to analyze problems as problems of a specific kind of action outside the sphere it arises in. Only thus is it possible for political theorists, metaphysicians, theologians, legal theorists and other intellectuals to become professionals.

Yet some contemporary theorists understand the separation of action spheres as restricting the discussion of a problem to the sphere of its origin. Thus, the political theorist Mark Lilla claims the *premodern* way of politics is to connect "thinking about the conduct of human affairs… to loftier ones, about the being of God, the structure of the cosmos, the nature of the soul, the origins of all things, the end of time," while "The novelty of modern political philosophy was to have relinquished such comprehensive claims by disengaging reflection about the human political realm from theological speculations about what might lie beyond it." He concedes that "In a psychological sense…it was wildly ambitious. Human beings everywhere think about the basic structure of reality and the right way to live…Psychologically speaking, it is a very short step from holding such beliefs to being convinced that they are legitimate sources of political authority." Similarly, Rawls and other liberal political philosophers forbid politics to rely on answers to "comprehensive" questions, because they are "metaphysical" rather than "political." Politics, they say, must be grounded only on an "overlapping consensus."[8]

Accepting metaphysical beliefs as legitimate sources in politics is what Lilla calls *political theology.* Lilla wants his readers to see the attraction of political theology but not to yield to it. "Political theology is…a perennial alternative to the kind of thinking that inspired the modern institutions," which he wants to defend.[9] Yet Lilla is more successful in demonstrating the attractions of political theology than in arguing why not to yield to it. We cannot expect anything else, as it belongs to the nature of democratic and cooperative problem solving to appeal to more comprehensive ideas that people can agree on. But as Lilla thinks this is what sphere autonomy forbids, he has to fight against what he calls political theology and argues: "We have chosen to keep our politics unilluminated by the light of revelation. If our experiment"—liberalism—"is to work, we must rely on our

[8] Cp. John Rawls 1985 and 1987.

[9] Lilla 2007, 7f.

own lucidity."[10] At the same time, he recognizes that "In the West people still think about God, man, and world today," conceding:

> how could they not? But most seem to have trained themselves not to take that last step into politics. We are no longer in the habit of connecting our political discourse to theological and cosmological questions, and we no longer recognize revelation as politically authoritative. This is a testament to our self-restraint.[11]

If there is no better reason to stick with liberal political institutions but loyalty to a legacy, such "a testament to our self-restraint" just becomes ridiculous.

Anyway, Lilla's dilemma between his infatuation with political theology and his loyalty to liberalism presupposes a misunderstood sphere autonomy. The novelty of modern political philosophy is not at all to have relinquished comprehensive claims about God, the cosmos and the nature of things. Hobbes' *Leviathan* is full of metaphysics; Locke doesn't stop approvingly quoting the theologian Richard Hooker on "loftier" affairs in his *Treatises of Government*; Kant and Hegel base their philosophies of history and the state that were to influence politics and liberalism hardly less than Hobbes and Locke on religious and metaphysical ideas, such as the unconditionality of liberty and law, as does Kant, or the spirituality of the State, as does Hegel. Contemporary liberals cannot do without metaphysical ideas either. Modern liberal politics is no less dependent on metaphysical ideas than premodern politics, even though their ideas do not hark back to religion. Sphere separation separates politics from metaphysics as little as from science, art or justice. Rather, it entitles scientists, artists and merchants to pursue their intrinsic goals regardless of the requirements of other spheres, although within the bounds of justice. Sphere separation in no way forbids the use of arguments started in one sphere in another sphere.

One of the reasons of Lilla's confusion is that he identifies metaphysical arguments with religious ones. Such identification is a common mistake,

[10] Lilla 2007, 309.

[11] Lilla 2007, 7f.

as well as the implication that metaphysical claims are as irrational and unfit for universal validity as religious ones.[12] The mistake is based on the idea that questions of the meaning of life cannot be rationally answered and only the sphere of religion can deliver answers, though necessarily irrational ones.[13] The "thinking…about the being of God, the structure of the cosmos, the nature of the soul, the origins of all things, the end of time" that Lilla claims politics is separated from is bound neither to a positive religion nor to revelation. Such thinking is metaphysics, which can be as rational as physics, as I argued earlier.[14] Political *theology* is incompatible with the "modern West" indeed, but political *metaphysics* is not; it is an essential though often ignored part of liberalism and the modern world. Delegating such questions to religion is a regress to pre-modern times.[15]

A reason why metaphysics is so often identified with religion is that it is taken for claiming *absolute*, *infallible* truth. This is an error. Metaphysics can raise claims on something absolute, but this doesn't imply that its claims are infallible. Any rational claim is fallible; to repeat, fallibility is the price of rationality. Many Catholic dogmas are about something absolute and yet may be fallible, much as some believe in their infallibility. Political theology that fascinates Lilla is a political philosophy that Carl Schmitt based on the authority of Catholic religion and other authors on other religions. Political theologians rightly assume liberalism to be based on trust in the power of reason to ground universally valid rules of justice and politics, though always only provisionally. Used to belief in unshakable religious foundations, political theologians crave an

[12] Thus, Habermas 2012, 252, argues that in the secular state the political is still related to religion, if only "indirectly," tacitly presuming, like Lilla, that as there are metaphysical elements in secular politics they are religious.

[13] Ninian Smart 1996, understands religion more comprehensively so as to include atheistic metaphysics. Political theology, in contrast, is based on revelatory assumptions.

[14] Chapter 3.

[15] Lilla's misunderstanding of sphere autonomy does not affect his convincing criticism that liberal theologians a century ago wanted to "intellectually" reconcile "the moral truths of biblical faith…with…the realities of modern political life." Soaked in the "historical optimism about bourgeois life," they were "too ashamed to proclaim the message found on every page of the Gospels, that you must change your life…And so, in the wake of the catastrophic First World War, liberal political theology was swept away." The "liberal deity turned out to be a stillborn God, unable to inspire genuine conviction among those seeking ultimate truth" (2007, 301f).

unshakable ground for politics and think they find it in religious authority exempted from doubt. As the historian Heinrich Meier pointed out, political theologians "have revolutionary or counterrevolutionary convictions," their "creeds may be Catholicism or Protestantism," and they "may belong to Judaism or Islam,"[16] but they share an interest in unshakable religious foundations. The mistake Lilla commits in his defense of liberalism is to treat liberalism as if it were a creed rather than the result of the universally human power of rational deliberation. Liberal politics, as Meier insists,

> raises the question of what is right entirely on the ground of 'human wisdom' so as to develop the question in the most fundamental reflection and the most comprehensive way available to man. In the most comprehensive way, insofar as all known answers are examined, all conceivable arguments are taken up, and all demands and objections that claim to be authoritative are included in the philosophical confrontation—in particular, those that political theology advances or could advance. In the most fundamental reflection, because the level on which the confrontations takes place cannot be surpassed or outbid by any argument…[17]

Curiously, Meier doesn't take into account that human wisdom has recognized that on *any* level we may hit upon new arguments that can outbid even the most fundamental reflection. For the rest, though, Meier is right; *comprehensive* reflection is the basis of liberalism. Rawls, who wanted to defend liberalism by replacing metaphysical views as its grounding with an "overlapping consensus," is wrong: such consensus elevates accidental historical facts to foundations.[18] Ironically, Rawls and his adherents need a historian to remind them that only reason rather than historical facts can justify universally valid claims.

Lilla's misunderstanding of sphere separation leads to two more errors preventing the modern age from understanding itself. First, he misjudges its causes. "We have little reason to expect other civilizations to follow our…path," he says, as this "was opened up by a unique theological crisis

[16] Meier 2006, 25.

[17] Meier 2006, 29f.

[18] Cp. John Rawls 1985 and 1987.

within Christendom"; it is "unusual"[19]; a fluke of history. In fact, though, sphere autonomy and in its wake liberalism result from the pride that professionals take in pursuing their job as an intrinsic goal. We observed this pride in Zhuangzi's butcher and will find more evidence of the universality of this pride, hence of authenticity and liberalism. Such ideals develop from "human wisdom," as Meyer says, when and wherever the equally natural powers of social inertia can be defeated.

The second error is that liberalism dooms societies to fail by splitting into spheres, which, because of their action-immanent perfection standards, rule out principles that direct the whole of societies. Liberalism, most non-liberal conservatives in particular in the German Weimar republic complained, makes societies ungovernable and tears individuals up into incompatible roles: into a loving father and a ruthless business man, a patriotic citizen and a liberal fighting for universal human rights. As individuals shrink to "specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart," each a "nullity" imagining "it has attained a level of civilization never before achieved," societies degenerate into collectives ruled by experts without prudence and morality.[20]

Weber, himself an expert (in reflection and theorizing), may rightly warn of experts and the departmentalizing of societies and individuals. Yet the current dangers result from the dominance of the intrinsic goal of commerce that has taken over the dominating role of religion in premodern societies rather than from liberalism. Liberalism protects the use of any action-immanent perfection standard, including the immanent standards of production that are incompatible with the intrinsic goal of commerce. It also protects any sphere that criticizes the misuse of perfection standards of other spheres. In particular, it protects the spheres of *justice*, *politics*, *journalism* and *metaphysics*.

Sphere autonomy implies the right, even the duty to judge other spheres if the judgment follows the critique-immanent criteria of impartial judgment rather than criteria of utility. In liberal societies, justice forbids any sphere from misusing autonomy; politics, the sphere not of the state but of public affairs,[21] is the place to discuss and decide on the whole

[19] Lilla 2007, 308.

[20] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic*, 182; *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie* I, 204.

[21] Cp. below Chap. 24.

of society; journalism is a favorite child of liberal societies, protected in its task to inform about public affairs and to include as many people as possible in the sphere of politics. Public affairs is the sphere whose autonomy is probably most endangered today, but it is liberalism that fights for it most coherently. But there is also metaphysics, the autonomous sphere least recognized by liberals, though incessantly used. It is the sphere that reflects on the contributions of the other spheres to a coherent and comprehensive understanding of the world, or to truth in an emphatic sense. Science claims that events in macrophysics are determined by causes, and justice presumes humans can be responsible for some of their actions; how does this fit? Here we need metaphysical reflections.

Liberalism's requirement of spheres such as justice, politics and metaphysics to solve problems that other autonomous spheres cannot solve is a core element that fits in with another core element. It also calls for developing everyone's talents and for the division of labor, so as to allow everyone to find an opportunity to use their talents. Understanding its orientation toward developing the individuals' talents implies that the spheres of justice, public affairs, metaphysics and religion, although they have their action-immanent perfection standards, are not separable from other activities but urge them to grant everyone the use of their talents. What this means more concretely is to be explored in the last part of this book.

Yet, before we explore, we should be clear that liberalism does not just put the individual over society but only her authentic self. Yet what is the self that we are to be true to in authenticity? And how and why does authenticity differ from morality? These are the questions we will address next.

Part III

Morality and the Self

16

What Is Morality and Moral Theory?

In the preceding part, I tracked historical effects of authenticity, which is a child of due pride, as we want to be true to our specific abilities if we are proud of them. Yet I aim at understanding the role of due pride in *current* societies. In this part, I'll track the role of pride for morality and the self. For to understand the role of due pride we need to know how morality differs from authenticity and what the self we are true to in authenticity commits us to.

Whatever else it is, morality is a set of rules directing our actions in conflicts between and within individuals and groups to avoid mutual and self-destruction. The content of morality has been aptly summed up by Arthur Schopenhauer in the form of a double imperative: *Don't harm anyone*, *and help everyone as much as you can*.[1] The first imperative is the principle of justice, forbidding harm; the other is the principle of benevolence, demanding help. "The bad," as already taught by Plato, "is entirely coterminous with what destroys and corrupts, and the good is what preserves and benefits."[2] Destruction of life, of human life and its possibilities in the first place, is what morality acts against. Our dislike of

[1] *Neminem laede imo omne quantum potes iuva*. Schopenhauer (1841), 1977, 176f (§ 6).
[2] Plato, *Republic* X, 608e; tr. by G.M.A. Grube and C.D.C. Reeve.

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destruction may be a natural tendency, but our passions and the pleasure of using our free will can lead us to choose destruction, as Augustine emphasized most dramatically.

The imperatives against destruction and for constructiveness leave space to interpret harm and help. Some Eskimo groups have understood senicide, the killing of old people, as a help rather than a harm (some contemporaries do too), and it very well may be a help for some people indeed. Despite this interpretability, to define morality by the double imperative gives our talk of morality a definite content and prevents considering any system of rules that claim universal obligation to be moral.[3] It also delivers a clear criterion to distinguish morality from religion, which can put up universal rules too but is best defined by its intrinsic goal of providing meaning rather than explaining nature, justifying morality or managing public affairs.

Rules that demand us to help and to avoid harming can restrict our pleasures and desires. So obedience to morality needs another motivation than the expectation of pleasure. What can be such motivation? There are two extremes of motivation, an authoritarian and an autonomous one: fear of punishment and the conviction that the moral action is the right one. As human punishment is unreliable, the authoritarian extreme works reliably only if people fear punishment by an omniscient and omnipotent judge. In the West, before and far into the modern age, morality was firmly anchored in belief in an almighty god. When the belief faded, some people feared morality would collapse. It did not, though the interpretation of harm and help certainly changed. Yet this shows neither that morality needs an authoritarian motivation nor that morality and religion are the same in the end. It shows they can support and impede each other.

In any case, the autonomous motivation probably was never entirely absent in Europe. If morality is anchored only in the arbitrary will of a superhuman, it will be disliked. People often have ideas about what is good and bad that may conflict with an authoritarian morality.[4] The omnipotent Abrahamic god could find many believers because he was believed

[3] Significantly, the ethics of technologies interprets constructiveness. Cp. van den Hoven and Weckert 2008.

[4] As reported by Devereux 1988, 252, about the Polynesian Sedang Moi; from M.-S. Lotter 2012, 39.

to be good. If God is believed to be good, as he also is in Platonism and Stoicism, and ideas of the good are developed independently of the ideas of gods, morality can be based on the properties of goodness, ascribed to God not because he is God but because he is believed to be good.[5] So we can hope to develop a universally obligatory and autonomously motivated morality by analyzing human intuitions and ideas of what is good and just and evil and unjust. Such analysis was done in Greece since the times of the Sophists, in China since the Warring States period, and later, perhaps even earlier, in other places. Later moral theorists, recognizing that moral intuitions and ideas are too messy to make up a coherent moral code, have taken on the task of bringing a coherent order to the mess so that everyone will be convinced of the reconstructed moral order.

This is the method of moral theory advocated by Henry Sidgwick and John Rawls. Rawls described his aim as constructing a *reflective equilibrium* between moral intuitions.[6] The method performs on a more general level what non-philosophers are doing when they examine their conscience: they consider any relevant idea and intuition about the rightness of a possible action, deliberate its weight and its coherence with other ideas and intuitions and settle on an order of their moral intuitions that allows or forbids the action at issue, ready to revise the order when a new intuition pops up. Our moral intuitions are messy, but they are the only source of morality.

The reflective equilibrium also allows distinguishing between rules that we think we have a right and duty to *coerce* everyone to obey, the rules of *justice*, and rules that we should follow but do *not* have the right to coerce anyone to, the rules of *benevolence*. Moreover, the right and duty to coerce is generally regarded as a duty best left to a law-enforcing institution. This institution is most often understood as the state, but we may prefer other law enforcers, such as state-independent judges. Again, such institutional design is considered justifiable by moral intuitions and ideas

[5] Smart 1996, 92: "…moral intuitions are taken seriously alongside religious ones, so that in the long run God has to be good (the Buddha has to be compassionate, Allah has to be merciful, the Great Ultimate has to conform to the Confucian ethos, and so on)."

[6] John Rawls 1972, 46ff; cp. his "Kantian Constructivism in Moral Theory," *Journal of Philosophy* 77, 1980, and his foreword to Sidgwick's *Methods of Ethics*, Indianapolis: Hackett 1981. I argue for this approach in Steinvorth 2013.

that we consider convincing enough to ground a universal obligation to obey the design.

Most people have no doubt about the universal validity of the principle of justice, forbidding force and fraud, and of the principle of benevolence, to voluntarily help everyone in need. They need not proof that morality is universally obliging; like everyone, they need explanations of what force and fraud and help and harm in dubious cases are. Moral philosophers have adduced many reasons to justify moral principles, but their reasons are less convincing than the principles themselves. Morality cannot be plausibly justified, or shown to be universally obliging, by anything that is not itself a moral rule, moral idea or moral intuition. Hence, the rightness of moral rules can be based only on moral intuitions, incoherent as they often are.

Founding morality consists in bringing a coherent order to the moral intuitions not only in Western societies, but all civilizations. Many moral philosophers followed this task, though they certainly leaned on Western intuitions in the first place. Kant proposed a system of moral intuitions made coherent by the idea that everyone merits equal respect of their person; Bentham proposed a system made coherent by the idea that we should maximize happiness. These two systems are still the most convincing today, but there are also strong moral intuitions that fit neither Kant's nor Bentham's system; so we may get a better one.

Yet moral theory does not only ask for the *reasons* of our moral obligations, but also for the *motives* to be moral. Moral theory has two parts: moral foundations, which is on obligation and validity, and moral psychology, which is on motivation and facts.

In principle, questions of motivation and obligation can be easily distinguished. Statements on motivation are empirical, statements on obligation are not. However, we are easily confused. When we ask what makes us abide by morality when abiding by it is very hard, we are inclined to look for an unshakable ground, an unconditional foundation. Thus, the theologian Hans Küng claimed:

> Religion can justify unambiguously why morality, norms, and ethical values must be binding *unconditionally* (and not simply when it's convenient) and hence *universally* (to all classes, ranks, and races). Man persists only

> insofar as he considers himself to be founded on the divine. It has become clear that only the unconditional can force unconditionally and only the absolute can bind us absolutely.[7]

Küng is right that moral norms bind unconditionally and universally, as this is a conceptual truth of moral norms, but wrong that religion can unconditionally justify a rule as a moral one. Nothing can, as there is no justification without a rational argument, and there is no infallible rational argument.

Küng's claim that man persists only if man considers himself to be founded on the divine is empirical and belongs to moral psychology. It is falsified by facts, as there are people who persist although they do not think they are founded on the divine. A Catholic cardinal who said he agreed with Küng even conceded "that there are many people who behave with ethical correctness and sometimes perform acts of great altruism without having or without knowing if they have a transcendental basis for their efforts."[8] Küng probably agrees too, though the concession is hardly compatible with his claim. There are also "many believers," as Umberto Eco in his answer to the Cardinal remarked, whom the "absolute foundation still has not kept…from sinning."[9]

It is irritating that unconditional universal claims, as they are raised in morality but also in metaphysics and science, can be rationally founded only in fallible theories. We have gotten used to this conditioned unconditionality in science, but it is not just a mark of science but of rationality as well.

[7] Hans Küng, *Project for a World Ethics*, from C.M. Martini in Eco and Martini 2000, 83.

[8] C.M. Martini, in Eco and Martini 2000, 85.

[9] Eco, in Eco and Martini 2000, 95.

17

Shame and Pride

In the search for moral motivation, shame rather than pride was early identified as an important motive. Yet shame and honor are closely connected to pride.[1] If our pride is hurt, typically we'll feel ashamed, and if the reason of our shame is removed, typically we'll feel proud. Plato, if we believe Plato, and the Sophist Protagoras before him, claimed that without shame people would lack morality.[2] More recently, the American anthropologist Ruth Benedict, asked by the US Office for War Information to explain the behavior of the Japanese in World War II, pointed out the

[1] On the role of shame in morality cp. Bronislaw Malinowski, *Crime and Custom in Savage Society*, London: Routledge 1949; Helen Merell Lynd, *On Shame and the Search for Identity*, New York: Hartcourt 1958; Gerhart Piers, Milton B. Singer, *Shame and Guilt. A Psychoanalytic and a Cultural Study*, New York: Norton 1971; Takie Sugiyama Lebra, "Shame and Guilt: A Psychocultural View of the Japanese Self," *Ethos* 11, 3, 1983; Bernard Williams 1993; Jan. Assmann, Theo Sundermeier, eds, *Schuld*, *Gewissen und Person*, Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus 1997; Elisabeth Boesen, *Scham und Schönheit. Über Identität und Selbstvergewisserung bei den Fulbe Nordbenins*, Hamburg: Lit 1999; Lotter 2012.—On the difference between shame and guilt cp. Helen Block Lewis, Introduction to H.L. Lewis, ed., *The Role of Shame in Symptom Formation*, Hillsdale: Erlbaum 1987, 17: "the typical self-reproach of the guilty is: 'How could I have *done that?*' The typical self-reproach of the ashamed is: 'How could *I* have done that?'"; Williams 1993, 90, 92f; Cairns 1993, 23f; Lotter 2012, 105.

[2] Plato, *The Republic* 560d–e; on Protagoras see Plato, *Protagoras.*

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importance of pride in moral motivation when she ascribed to Japan what she called a *shame culture*, in contrast to the *guilt culture* that she ascribed to the West:

> A society that inculcates absolute standards of morality and relies on men's developing a conscience is a guilt culture by definition…In a culture where shame is a major sanction…(s)o long as (a man's) bad behavior does not "get out into the world" he need not be troubled…True shame cultures rely on external sanctions for good behavior, not, as true guilt cultures do, on an internalized conviction of sin. Shame is a reaction to other people's criticism. A man is shamed either by being openly ridiculed and rejected or by fantasying to himself that he has been made ridiculous. In either case it is a potent sanction. But it requires an audience or at least a man's fantasy of an audience. Guilt does not. In a nation where honor means living up to one's own picture of oneself, a man may suffer from guilt though no man knows of his misdeed and a man's feelings of guilt may actually be relieved by confessing his sin.[3]

Benedict contrasts shame cultures as based on authoritarian motives with guilt cultures as based on autonomous motives, classifying the Japanese as authoritarian and US citizens as autonomous. It's a useful contrast, as shame is used in authoritarian moralities to shame people into following a rule, while morally autonomous individuals cannot be thus directed. Moreover, shame was used as a means to shame people into obedience in Japan more than in the USA (though Benedict also assumed that shame became more important in the American morality); and guilt culture *is* superior, though, I claim, not because it is more moral but because it allows autonomy.

However, distinguishing the two cultures by whether they follow "absolute standards" is objectionable and has caused objections, arguing that there is no real difference between shame and guilt, or that they

[3] Benedict 1946, 222f. Mead 1937 is sometimes considered a source for Benedict's distinction, as she opposes societies using "ridicule," "abuse," and "execution by royal decree" on the one hand, and societies "obeying a tabu for fear of death and disease" and "abstaining from illicit sex activities for fear of punishment by the ghosts" on the other (ibid. 493). This distinction, though understood as that between external and internal sanctions, does not correspond to Benedict's, as both kinds of sanctions belong to Benedict's shame cultures. Cp. Cairns 1993, 29f.

differ not by Benedict's criterion of "absolute standards."[4] In fact, this criterion is ambiguous. Are standards absolute when obeyed independently of external sanctions, or when given by our conscience that is considered to be absolute? Can absolute standards be internalized without external sanctions such as shaming? However, rules inculcated by shaming, such as not to cheat or murder, can be universally obligatory, and rules motivating by internalized sin conviction can be immoral. The distinction between shame and guilt morality relates to a difference in how we are *motivated* to recognize and abide by a rule, and this difference doesn't say anything about the rule's validity. Both shame cultures and guilt cultures can be destructive, hence immoral.

However, this does not mean that shame and pride are irrelevant for the motivation to be moral and even for what morality commands. What Benedict shows is that to teach kids morality we cannot do so without appealing to their natural inclinations to feel ashamed and proud of what they do, and that whether and what they feel depends to a more or less great extent not on themselves but their milieu. Yet what she also suggests, by appealing to absolute standards, to developing a conscience and to "living up to one's own picture of oneself," is that in addition to the influence of the milieu the morality kids develop can be more or less adequate to their self. She suggests that a guilt culture is superior because it allows a morality to be more adequate to the human self and our abilities than a shame culture does. In this crucial point I think she is right and will argue for her.

Let's try a conjecture on how pride moves humans to accept an autonomous morality that even includes authenticity. I'll call this conjecture P.

1. Pride forbids us to follow norms that do not *suit us*.
2. Pride motivates us to *reflect* about the norms we have absorbed when growing up.
3. We are proud of our abilities; in particular such as they *distinguish us from animals and other people*.

[4] Cp. discussion in Adrienne Lo and Heidi Fung, "Language Socialization and Shaming," in A. Duranti, E. Ochs, B. B. Schieffelin, eds., *The Handbook of Language Socialization*, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell 2012, Chap. 7.

4. We are ashamed of being in states that show us to be *like animals*.
5. Pride and shame motivate us to make *full use* of our specifically human abilities.
6. Pride and shame motivate us to accept *universal rules* promoting the full use of human abilities.
7. Such rules lead to a *constructive* use of our abilities.
8. Hence they are *moral*.
9. We make full use of our abilities only if we also make full use of our *individual* talents.
10. If we use our individual talents, we use our own reason and will; hence are *autonomous.*
11. If we use our individual talents, we are *true to our self*, hence authentic.
12. Pride and shame motivate us to accept *rules that promote constructive authenticity*.

These steps, excluding Steps 8 to 11, are meant to describe empirical facts. P is a scheme of how pride and shame are motives for morality, unless circumstances prevent their effect.

Steps 1 and 2 seem probable enough to be provisionally acceptable. As for Step 3, we may doubt if we are particularly proud of abilities that distinguish us from animals, considering the popularity of animals in comic strips. For example, Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck are humans in the guise of animals who take pride in the specifically human capabilities of intelligence and will. We may also doubt if we are particularly proud of abilities that distinguish us from other people. If I am better than the rest at writing poems, might I not be ashamed of my talent? This may happen, but until refutation we can assume that such shame is not a natural response but results from social pressures.

Step 4 may be the least plausible claim. By states that show us to be like animals I understand actions, sufferings and mental and bodily states in which we are dependent on needs and desires that we want to control because they disturb following our intentions. Such states arise when we lose self-control, by passions or sudden emotions, or by disease and accident; they can also result from our bodily and mental constitution, such as the need to eat and drink, to discharge and sleep and to become sexually active. Even the mere fact that we have bodies that witness to our

dependencies can show us to be like animals. Remarkably, we are ashamed of being publicly shown in a state such as defecation that hardly could be more natural. Societies agree that to present humans in moments of animal dependency to the public is an attack on their dignity or honor.[5] More than any demonstration of our powers of reason and will, such shame proves how deeply humans are steeped in a tacit knowledge of their difference from merely natural creatures, implying that they owe it to their specifically human powers to behave like humans rather than animals.

Unlike our dependence on food, defecation and sex, our dependence on fresh air is no source of shame, as our breathing normally accompanies our actions without interfering with them. Contingencies of our bodies that cross our intentions hurt our pride and shame us. We want to present ourselves in the full use of our abilities. Thus, Step 5 seems to be a natural conclusion from Steps 3 to 4.

Step 6 crucially differs from Step 5 by claiming we are motivated to accept *universal rules* such as apply to *all* humans. Accepting rules to promote the full use of human abilities implies that we recognize we should use our abilities in a way that not only we make full use of our abilities but everyone else can do so as well. By accepting such rules we commit to having regard for other people's possible uses of their abilities, renouncing an action if it prevents them from using their abilities. Whether an action does this is often difficult to decide, yet this does not imply that rules to promote the full use of human abilities are useless. On the contrary, it implies that we need the rules to judge conflicts in a way that takes account of everyone concerned. Difficulties in applying a rule can be reduced by arbiters who understand their task as an intrinsic goal and become professional. Moreover, experience teaches that some kinds of action, such as killing, injuring, cheating, raping and torturing, are as a rule so destructive that they must be categorically banned. Therefore, if people agree with Step 5, they likely will agree with Step 6, which is the crucial step in scheme P.

Step 7 claims that compliance to the rules described in Step 6 does have the constructive effect they are to serve. It's pretty plausible. Step 8 is implied by the definition of morality argued for earlier.

[5] Cp. below Chap. 25.

Step 9 I think is conceptually true; Steps 10 and 11 are implied by the concepts of autonomy and authenticity that I presuppose; Step 12 follows from Steps 5 through 9.

Thus, scheme P has *prima facie* evidence that pride and shame can become motives for an autonomous morality even of authenticity, though only under favorable conditions, in particular if universal rules are accepted that promote the full use of their talents in everyone.

Looking for theories that might confirm, explicate or refute the role that P assigns to pride and shame, the Kantian philosopher Christine Korsgaard allows for instructive comparisons.

18

Korsgaard and Self-Constituters vs. Self-Discoverers

Korsgaard examines the self, not pride and shame. But she implies the falsity of P and of my Benedictian claim that a guilt culture is more adequate to our self than a shame culture. However, she also shares premises. She argues that the young form an ideal of what they want to be. Among Mafiosi they will want to be Mafiosi, but when reflecting will use their reason to end up with a moral self.[1] This claim agrees with presuppositions made in P. Yet, when we look at her arguments we find incompatibilities.

In a more recent version she argues in a *first step* that "self-determination," which she presumes is aimed at by every human, "requires identification with the principle of choice on which you act." Her *second step* is that "particularistic willing," choosing not according to a principle, "makes it impossible for you to distinguish yourself, your principle of choice, from an incentive on which you act."[2] If we act only on an impulse rather than on a reason that implies a principle, then no place is left for a self that determines our acts. To be *self*-determined, we must follow a *principle*.

[1] Korsgaard 1996.

[2] Korsgaard 2009, 75. For an earlier version of the argument, cp. Korsgaard 1996.

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In a *third step*, like Kant she assumes that the required principle is a universal law and that the universal law is the moral law. The conclusion is that to become a self we must become moral.

The *first* step in Korsgaard's argument, her appeal to self-determination, corresponds to steps 1 and 2 in scheme P described earlier. Though these steps presume it is *pride* rather than self-determination that makes us check the norms we have absorbed when growing up, Korsgaard might agree that self-determination, which is autonomy, is motivated by pride, as pride forbids heteronomy. As far as pride includes dignity or self-esteem, it motivates our dislike of an authoritarian morality.

Yet what does she mean saying that self-determination "requires identification with the principle of choice on which you act"? The answer is given in her *second* step. It claims self-determination requires identifying with the reason we act on because otherwise it is "impossible for you to distinguish yourself, your principle of choice, from the various incentives on which you act." She assumes I can distinguish myself from an incentive *only if* I act on a principle rather than on an impulse. Her argument seems to be that when I lack a principle I cannot but consider an impulse to belong to me.

However, this does not conform to my experience, as I do not feel I need a principle to distinguish myself from an impulse. Yet if Korsgaard is right and my experience only results from my unnoticed identification with a principle, then she also has to explain how I can distinguish myself from any principle. She may reply I can do so only because I achieved my ability to distinguish myself from any principle by having once identified with a principle. But this is only a speculation. I am now able to distinguish myself from an impulse without identifying myself with anything; so why should it have been different at a former time?

Korsgaard presumes the self is constituted by some activity of ours, not by care as Heidegger assumed, but by identifying with a principle. Yet there are also authors who argue, as Epictetus already argued and Augustine implied,[3] that we know we are different from impulses and principles because to determine us they need our assent. We discover our self and our difference from objects because we discover our power

[3] Cp. below in this chapter and above Chap. 4.

of *prohairesis*, of stopping impulses and choosing after deliberation. We discover that we are or have a self only because we have this power.

We may say that by *objectifying* an impulse I *subjectify* myself, for by recognizing an impulse as stoppable I distinguish myself from the world of objects as a self or subject. Yet by this process I do not *constitute* myself as a self, as little as I constitute an impulse by objectifying it. I *discover* objects and my self. There is no self-constitution in the process but self-discovery.

So to decide on Korsgaard's *second* step, we have to decide between two philosophical parties: the *self-constituters* who claim we *constitute* the self, and the *self-discoverers* who claim we *discover* it.[4] Before asking why Korsgaard is a self-constituter, let's settle what both parties agree in understanding what the self is that they differ in interpreting. The self is what enables an organism to be the same entity over more or less of a lifetime so it can be punished or rewarded today for an action decades ago and can now prepare things that will result in future events that affect the same individual who is preparing them now. Now, here is how Korsgaard argues for her position:

> A good action is one that constitutes its agent as the autonomous and efficacious cause of her own movements. These properties correspond, respectively, to Kant's two imperatives of practical reason. Conformity to the categorical imperative (the imperative that demands acting only on reasons everyone can act on, which Kant says is the moral law; U. St.) renders us autonomous, and conformity to the hypothetical imperative (the imperative that demands using the right means to given ends; U. St.)[5] renders us efficacious. These imperatives are therefore constitutive principles of action, principles to which we necessarily are trying to conform insofar as we are acting well.[6]

Korsgaard says that by constituting ourselves as an *agent* we constitute our *self*. Yet how we can constitute ourselves as an agent if we aren't yet

[4] A self-discoverer is the novelist Knausgaard 2012, 30, who saw the self in Rembrandt's late self-portrait (in the National Gallery): "what Rembrandt painted is this person's very being, that which he woke up to every morning, that which immersed itself in thought, but which itself was not thought, that which immediately immersed itself in feelings, but which itself was not feeling, and that which he went to sleep to, in the end for the good. That which, in a human, time does not touch, and whence the light in the eyes springs."

[5] cp. *Grundlegung* Akademietextausgabe 414.

[6] Korsgaard 2009, 7.

a self?[7] Her answer seems to be this. We are agents not the way animals are agents. Animals too respond differentially to stimuli, but are not therefore responsible for their responses. Human action, in contrast, "is a movement attributable to an agent as its author." This, Korsgaard argues,

> means that whenever you choose an action—whenever you take control of your own movements—you are constituting yourself as the author of that action, and so you are deciding who to be. Human beings therefore have a distinct form of identity, a norm-governed or practical form of identity, for which we are ourselves responsible.[8]

Korsgaard calls this form of identity the self. As it is something that is an *agent* she defines the self as something *active*; unlike many other theorists who include in the self the receptive and passive side of a person. This, I think, conforms to the prevalent ordinary use of the term *self*. I too restrict the use of *self* to the active side of a person and call the passive side *subject*.[9] Yet, is she also right to say that for this form of identity "we are ourselves responsible?" Even if we constitute the self rather than discovering it, this is impossible. We can be responsible only for something we have deliberately produced, but if we do, we already act as the responsible author that Korsgaard calls the self. We have to distinguish between this *self-as-author* and the self who results from the responsible decisions of the self-as-author. Let's call the result *self-as-result*. Only for the self-as-result can we be responsible, not for the self-as-author.

Why then does Korsgaard think the self is constituted rather than discovered? She lacks an argument. With many other contemporaries she sees the problem not in *whether* we constitute the self but *how* we do. Perhaps she thinks that assuming a discoverable self implies either *supernaturalism*, the idea that the self is a homunculus or another entity beyond the laws of physic; or a *form of naturalism* that implies that the self is determined by the laws of nature, excluding self-determination and morality, and that neither implication is acceptable. I agree they are not,

[7] Cp. Rachel Cohon 2000, 73: "how can I give a law to a self that does not yet exist?"

[8] Korsgaard 2009, xi f.

[9] Cp. Steinvorth 2013, 171. Many investigations of the self suffer from lacking this distinction.

but claim we can conceive the self as a property selected by natural evolution like the ability to walk or talk.

I argue we can conceive the self-as-author as the ability to give or refuse assent to an impulse or principle. This is the very ability that Epictetus called *prohairesis* and distinguished as what makes us responsible[10] and that Augustine and the scholastics recognized as free will or *liberum arbitrium*. Along with reason, which enables us to recognize impulses and to deliberate them, free will makes us selves-as-authors. It is a hereditary property that we get from nature and are born with, discover and use and can neglect and develop and are very proud of in our inheritance pride, but cannot constitute. Though a natural gift, it enables us to stop natural impulses and thus become ourselves causes among the causes that determine the course of nature and history. This seemed impossible to Kant and other Newtonians but, as I'll show in the next chapter, it's not.

For now let's focus on the conceptual problem that the self-constituters face. It's difficult to conceive how an animal without the natural property to enable it to be an author can acquire the property by its own effort. Such a self-transformation looks like Baron Munchhausen's feat of dragging himself out of the swamp by his own hair. To solve this problem Korsgaard argues:

> If, when we act, we are trying to constitute ourselves as the authors of our own movements, and at the same time, we are making ourselves into the particular people who we are, then we may say that the function of action is *self-constitution*.[11]

Yet how can we *try* to constitute ourselves as the authors of our movements? To try, I must already be a self-as-author. Korsgaard presents such trying as *self-constitution* by adding the different act of "making ourselves into the particular people who we are," that is, into selves-as-result. This act, of course, can be tried and is something we are responsible for, but it's not what she claims it is, a self-constitution; rather, it presupposes a self.

[10] Cp. beginning of the next chapter. Aristotle calls *prohairesis* the act, Epictetus the ability of choice.

[11] Korsgaard 2009, xii.

Korsgaard assumes, as we saw, that we constitute our self by acting on a reason or principle. She also assumes that by thus acting we differ from animals. But we differ (as of course she would agree) not because we follow principles or universal laws; even stones follow universal laws. We differ because we *choose* whether to follow a principle. But if we choose, we are free not to choose, hence we are responsible, and hence we already have a self. We cannot try to choose and we cannot try to acquire a self, either. But the self-constituters, to show it is possible, are driven into the Munchhausen acrobatics of pulling a self out of something self-less.

This becomes obvious in the way Kierkegaard tried to describe the self as self-relating:

> A human being is spirit. But what is spirit? Spirit is the self. But what is the self? The self is a relation that relates itself to itself, or is the relation's relating itself to itself in the relation; the self is not the relation but is the relation's relating itself to itself.[12]

How can there be a self-relation without a self that relates? A "relation relating itself to itself" that does not in the end relate to a substance[13] or something existing without a relation is logically as impossible as the Cheshire cat's smiling without a cat. Yet Kierkegaard produced only an intentional paradoxical description, not a conception, as he explicitly said that the self is constituted by the creator, while Korsgaard claims, "the only way in which you can constitute yourself well is by governing yourself in accordance with universal principles which you can will as laws for every rational being," and infers: "It follows that you can't maintain the integrity you need in order to be an agent with your own identity on any terms short of morality itself…The moral law is the law of self-constitution."[14] Yet already her words reveal her mistake, as in a self-constitution there is no way that "you can constitute yourself well"—you constitute yourself or don't, but you don't do it "well."

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[12] Kierkegaard 1980, 13.

[13] in Aristotle's sense of a primary substance, of "what is neither in a subject nor said of a subject" (*Categories* 2a10).

[14] Korsgaard 2009, 7f.

How author-less motions following universal principles can bestow on the motions a responsible author remains a miracle. Stones or computers moving according to universal laws don't become a self either. They would become selves if they *chose* the principle. Yet if they did they would have the power of free choice that presupposes the power of assent and makes everything having it a self and a self-as-author, whether or not it chooses a principle.[15]

Some contemporaries think the idea that we *make* us into selves has a long history. In his study of ancient views of the self, Richard Sorabji refers to the claim that the self has been "molded, not waiting for inspection. And if we ask, 'What is the self that has done the molding?', the answer is clear. It is the whole embodied person."[16] But this is no answer, as we can go on asking what in the whole embodied person does the molding. Curiously, Sorabji finds his answer confirmed by Epictetus. Yet Epictetus understands the *prohairesis* as a power of a self that we cannot constitute. We cannot delegate *prohairesis*; it cannot be taken from us without our consent. To delegate it or let it be taken we have to assent to the act. Epictetus heaps up arguments that we cannot but keep the power of refusing what the attacker wants to get from us: our consent to his will. We can, of course, mold our self in the sense that we, as selves-as-authors, form us as selves-as-results. But as to the self-as-author, there is no way of molding, and Epictetus is very clear about this.

Sorabji also claims it is "Epictetus' basic message: that you are inviolable, so long as you are your will."[17] True, but this implies that it is our *prohairesis* that is unalienable; that we can neither choose nor lose nor mold it. Epictetus indefatigably points out[18] that our power to assent or withhold assent is given us by nature or God and cannot be taken from us

[15] Heidegger too seems to conceive the self as arising by a relation we take on toward ourselves. In contrast, when Locke defined the self as "that conscious thinking thing…which is sensible, or conscious of Pleasure and Pain, capable of Happiness or Misery, and so is concern'd for it *self*, as far as that consciousness exists" (*An Essay concerning Human Understanding* Bk II, Chap. 27, § 17), he presupposed an individual that is concerned.

[16] Sorabji 2006, 182. Epictetus lived from 55 to 135AD.

[17] Sorabji 2006, 185. The Stoics' view on *sunkatathesis* harks back to Aristotle's argument in *Nicom. E.* III 1–3 that *deliberation* is what makes a decision responsible.

[18] E.g., Epictetus, *Discourses* 1.4.32, 1.6.40ff. Sorabji 2006, 187, quotes such an argument himself.

even by God. Not we, but God (or nature or fate) has endowed us with a will whose use is only up to me.

Epictetus, though, is so enthused over his discovery that we have a power to assent or not to the things that depend on us that he insists that it is the whole self rather than its crucial core. Thus, he can claim that the many things we cannot control and yet need to be true to our self are just not important to us and should not affect our happiness or "serenity (*euroia*)." This is an error. Although our original self is made up by our power to stop impulses, we find a happy or meaningful life not in restricting our actions to what depends on us alone but in activating and developing all our talents that we are born with or have acquired without our own choice (within the limits of justice, if we are proud enough to prefer constructiveness to destructivity). The self that we are to be true to in authenticity, therefore, is not just the power of negation but all our abilities.

Let's have a look at Korsgaard's *third* step of her argument. Here she assumes that the principle we identify with to constitute a self is the universal *moral* law. In her argument about good action quoted earlier she assumes that when an action is *good as an action*, it is *morally* good too. An action good as an action is autonomous, as she rightly assumes, but such an action is not necessarily moral. We can autonomously choose immoral actions. This point can be overlooked because often the term *autonomy* is used to imply morality. Yet in Korsgaard's argument autonomy does not imply morality, as she wants to show that we have to commit to morality once we have committed to autonomy. Claiming a good action is *morally* good she presupposes the very claim she is to prove.

Her argument implies a curious calamity. As the self that she says is constituted by identifying with the universal moral law is necessarily a moral self, *immoral* agents by definition lack a self; hence also lack responsibility, which, as we'll see, is as implausible as Kant's similar claim that the self of free will can only follow morality. Why does she nonetheless try to conceive the self as constituted by some activity rather than as constituted by innate properties that we can discover and develop? The reason, I think, is a deep distrust in the idea that the self can be discovered.

Hume has expressed this distrust in his famous remark:

> when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe any thing but the perception.[19]

Hume implies the concept of the self is just a fiction somehow suggested by our perceptions.[20] Today, the idea has spread that the self results from a narration, "rooted in the human propensity to remember and project, in our readiness to make sense of things in terms of continuity and change."[21] Also the contemporary novelist and essayist Tim Parks follows this way of thinking. He argues, referring with "here" to meditation:

> Like ghosts, angels, gods, "self," it turns out, is an idea we invented…It needs language to survive…But here,…there is no story, no rhetoric, no deceit…Intensely aware, of the flesh, the breath, the blood, consciousness allows the "I" to slip away.[22]

What Parks loses sight of is what he describes himself at other places: that the meditator has to prepare for the I to slip away. Meditators need to be "concentrating *worldlessly and thoughtlessly*,"[23] to avoid "self-regard,"[24] aim at the "most sincere effort,"[25] even at "charity."[26] They couldn't do this without a power to stop the mental gabble that Parks impressively demonstrates is preventing us not only from meditating but from being

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[19] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* bk. 1, pt. 4, sec. 6, 252.

[20] According to Davidson 1976, 749, Hume claims "that pride causes the idea of self."

[21] Seigel 2005, 653. Cp. discussions, e.g., in Schechtman 2014, 10–41, and Seigel 2005, in particular p. 653.

[22] Parks 2010, 316.

[23] Parks 2010, 144.

[24] Parks 2010, 253.

[25] Parks 2010, 151.

[26] Parks 2010, 285ff. In contrast to Parks, some novelists feel the assumption of a self is indispensable. Cp. Knausgaard 2013, 27, describing Rembrandt's self in his late self-portrait in the London National Gallery: "what Rembrandt painted is this person's very being, that which he woke up to every morning, that which immersed itself in thought, but which itself was not thought, that which immediately immersed itself in feelings, but which itself was not feeling, and that which he went to sleep to, in the end for the good. That which, in a human, time does not touch, and whence the light in the eyes springs."

in contact with reality. Though this power feels like a power that comes over us it needs the effort of the meditator; her power to stop impulses. The process of meditation shows not that there is no self, but rather that we can learn how to extend the power that makes us selves, just as we can learn how to use our faculties of moving and talking. It doesn't show, though, that we have the power to stop *any* impulse.

Most of us will be unable to stop the impulse to protect our kids from an aggressive attack. The addicted are unable to stop the impulses to do what they are addicted to. Free will has sometimes been distinguished from voluntariness, or "free action," by being either entirely given or not at all.[27] But the scope of free will, and hence of the self, is more or less limited.[28] Free will breaks entirely down only if we are no longer able to consider any impulse and stop it. In any case, the power to stop some impulses is sufficient to decouple our actions from nature's determination and become self-determined. By such decoupling we become to some extent masters of nature.

Nonetheless, the idea that the self is an invention or "narrated" or constituted is attractive. It allows talking of a self without committing to a theory of free will. It also fits the tendency of the humanities to look at the social rather than the natural conditions of human phenomena. In any case, the claim that the self is constituted or invented needs more argument than it is given.

[27] E.g. Nicolai Hartmann, *Ethik*, Berlin, Leipzig: de Gruyter 1925, Dritter Teil.

[28] Descartes, AT IV 174, points to Medea's killing her children to prove her liberty as an example of the greatness of free will. Most people wouldn't be capable of following this example.

19

Kant, Free Will and the Self

The concept of free will resulted when the Stoics transformed the *act* that according to Aristotle makes an agent responsible, *prohairesis*, into the ability of *sunkatathesis*, of assent, that makes us responsible. Epictetus called this power *prohairesis* and identified it as the self, Augustine called it *liberum arbitrium*, freed it from Stoic determinism, and contrasted it to the *perfect liberty* in which I feel not that I can make myself *indifferent* about my options but that my choice comes as if it allowed no alternative.[1] The Scholastics and Descartes took over these distinctions.

Kant broke with this tradition. As a Newtonian he considered a power that might be given us by nature subject to the laws of nature and therefore predetermining us. He declared free will, as it was understood since Augustine, to be *Willkür* (*arbitrary will*) and defined free will as a power "of absolutely beginning a state."[2] This definition may seem to match the very essence of free will, as in free will we do become a power to start a

[1] Cp. Chaps. 4 and 18.

[2] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of pure Reason* A 445, B 473 (*ein Vermögen*, *einen Zustand…schlechthin anzufangen*), transl. Norman Kemp Smith, 1929, 409a.

U. Steinvorth, *Pride and Authenticity*,
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new chain of events in nature. Yet in fact it is inadequate and plunged Kant in a bunch of incoherencies and paradoxes.

First, by understanding free will as a power of *absolutely* beginning a state, Kant conceived free will as something that cannot be rationally ascribed to humans. An absolute beginning is inconceivable. Nothing comes out of nothing, *ex nihilo nihil fit*, as philosophers agreed since Parmenides. Even if God created the universe out of nothing, the universe does not come from nothing, but from God. Accepting Kant's definition commits any rational theorist to denying humans free will. But Kant defines free will the way he does to ascribe free will to humans.

In contrast, the Aristotelian tradition understands free will as the power to assent as well as not to assent to an impulse or a proposition, to say yes as well as no to them after deliberating them. This power is an empirically observable ability. A judge investigates if and how far a defendant was able to stop the impulse to the act he is accused of. It is a power of negation that most theorists ascribe to humans, though many of them, such as Habermas, declared it to be different from free will.[3] It is difficult to deny humans the power of negation, as we can observe that humans under normal conditions are able to, say, leave their home without repeatedly checking whether they have locked the door. Some are unable; hence, for empirical reasons their free will is judged to be limited.

The power to deny does not start absolute beginnings, as it presupposes the perception of an impulse or the understanding of a proposition to respond to. True, in the decision whether to stop or admit an impulse we start something not *predetermined*; but it is *determined* by our will, hence imputed to us as its responsible author. The act comes not from nothing but from the agent's decision to stop an impulse and admit another one and her power to do so, just as the world in monotheism comes from God's decision to create and the power to thus create.

Second, Kant's conception of free will deviates widely from our ordinary ideas of free will and responsibility. The concept of free will developed as that of the property that makes us responsible for our deliberate actions, and punishable if they are crimes. In Kant's conception, free will has lost this connection with responsibility. He declares free will to be "a

[3] Habermas 1981 I 370 and II 113f. Also Tugendhat 1976, 110.

pure transcendental idea that, first, contains nothing that is taken from experience and whose object, second, cannot be met in any experience."[4] Yet if a judge has to decide whether a defendant is fully responsible for the crime he is convicted of, whether he acted not only voluntarily but also deliberately, in a way that he might have acted differently from how he did act, we'd be shocked if as a good Kantian she declared it not her task to look for empirical evidence, arguing that free will "cannot be met in any experience." If she told us that the decision we expect relates only to arbitrary will, and arbitrary will is irrelevant for responsibility, who would accept this?

Third, Kant rejected the power to say no as well as yes to an impulse, the *liberum arbitrium*, as mere arbitrary will that is not free will, for reasons of his approach to the problems that Hume had left behind. His *Critique of Pure Reason* was a response to Hume's arguments that in experience we find neither a self nor a power that connects effects to causes nor a relation that makes a property the accident of a substance. Thus, our world of things with properties experienced and acted on by selves seemed to dissolve into a chaotic stream of impressions. Against this consequence Kant argues that our intellect imposes order on the chaos of impressions by connecting them according to the *categories*. Imposing the categories on the "manifold of ideas", the intellect acts like the demiurge in Plato's cosmology who forms resistant matter according to the Platonic Forms into the world we know.[5] As among the categories by which we construct, out of chaotic impressions, a Newtonian world belong the categories of cause and substance, Kant believed he had refuted Hume's claim that the world is without substance and causality.

But Kant also believed he implied a refutation of Hume's claim that there is no substantial self that could be made responsible for our actions. He believed we have to understand the power that creates the order of science not just as an intellect but as our *self-consciousness* that is the self, or *rational subject*, as he calls the self. The rational subject, he claims, constitutes both the laws of science and the moral law and is the responsible subject of our actions. His argument is that we have to presuppose

[4] *Critique of Pure Reason* B 561; tr. Kemp Smith.

[5] Plato, *Timaios* 28.

something that (1) produces the idea "I am thinking" that must be able to accompany whatever is in my mind, (2) enables me to get aware of my identity in my ideas, and (3) subjects both nature and human actions to the principles of its thinking.[6] Kant believed he could in one sweep explain what he considered, along with his contemporaries, the necessity of Newton's laws, justify the universal validity of an autonomous morality despite his assumption of predeterminism, and refute Hume.

Yet Kant had to assume that the self of free will is the rational subject that gives the laws to nature and action rather than the self of arbitrary will, the power to say no as well as yes to an impulse. The self of arbitrary will of course can choose to act immorally as well as morally, but the self that legislates the moral law cannot. So Kant had to claim that freedom of the will can "by no means consist in this, that the rational subject is capable of making a choice that contradicts his law-giving reason."[7] Yet this means that by our free will we are not free to act immorally. When we act immorally we revert to an animal state where nature rather than our rational subject rules us. When acting immorally we lack a responsible self. We are responsible only for our moral acts.

Why does Kant's concept of free will despite these incoherencies still have adherents? The reason, I think, is their belief that our actions are predetermined. Quantum physics and other discoveries of physics may show that not everything in nature is determined, but as Hume rightly insisted, if actions are not determined, they are haphazard and can be ascribed to lunatics but not to responsible authors.[8] Yet this belief is false. Actions need not be *pre*determined to be imputable to authors; they only need to be determined by ourselves, and self-determination does not entail predeterminism. To assume self-determination we only have to take account

[6] The crucial statements in Kant's argument are these: "Das: *Ich denke*, muß alle meine Vorstellungen begleiten *können*; denn sonst würde … die Vorstellung … für mich nichts sein … das: *Ich denke* … ist ein Aktus der *Spontaneität* … Ich nenne (ihn) die … *ursprüngliche Apperzeption*, weil (dieser Aktus) dasjenige Selbstbewußtsein ist, was, indem es die Vorstellung *Ich denke* hervorbringt … von keiner weiter begleitet werden kann … Nur dadurch, daß ich ein Mannigfaltiges gegebener Vorstellungen *in einem Bewußtsein* verbinden kann, ist es möglich, daß ich mir *die Identität des Bewußtseins in diesen Vorstellungen* selbst vorstelle … Verbindung … liegt nicht in den Gegenständen …, sondern ist allein eine Verrichtung des Verstandes" (*Critique of Pure Reason* B 131–5).

[7] Kant, *Metaphysik der Sitten*, 30; Rechtslehre, Einleitung in die Metaphysik der Sitten IV.

[8] Hume 1896, 404

of our ability to use new information to change a predetermination and thus to become an unpredictable cause without losing responsibility. We are used not to distinguish *predetermined* from *determined* because we call *determinism* what in fact is the claim that everything is predetermined.

Think of the following case. A brain scientist, after investigating your brain and your history, makes predictions on your behavior that prove true, confirming (pre)determinism. Now you get to know his predictions.[9] When you hear of a prediction, this will enable you to act against it and falsify it. Does this show that, given your spiteful character, you are predetermined to falsify the predictions? No, because sometimes you may not falsify them, say, by allowing the dice to decide. Is your behavior then determined by the dice? No, you can replace dicing with arbitrary decisions. These possibilities show that the information we get about our allegedly predetermined behavior becomes a determinant for our decision, a new cause in nature that can make us unpredictable.[10]

Determinists may argue that unpredictable behavior isn't undetermined behavior. Thus, the weather is often unpredictable but therefore still predetermined. Yet the weather is unpredictable when its causes are too many, or their interactions too complex, to calculate their effect before the effect materializes. In contrast, your behavior is unpredictable if you use the information about your probable behavior to act unpredictably. In the first case, *deficient knowledge* of the determinants makes an event unpredictable; better knowledge might make it predictable. In the second case, *knowledge* of the determinants makes the event unpredictable; the unpredictability is caused by a factor of which we know why it makes predictions impossible; our new knowledge makes us a new cause. If I still claim your behavior is determined I maintain a thesis logically impossible to refute or confirm; it is unscientific and, serving to uphold an irrefutable claim, ideological.

Once we understand free will as a power of negation and for empirical reasons ascribe it to humans, we can conceive the human self as an agent endowed with free will and reason, refuting the self-constituters and their mental *Munchhausen* acrobatics. A self has reason, because it

[9] The importance of this condition appears in data processing. Cp. below Chap. 27.

[10] Cp. Steinvorth 2013, Chaps. 18–21, and Steinvorth 2009, Chaps. 3–4.

has the power to recognize impulses and deliberate the pros and cons of following them, and it has free will because it can stop impulses. So, without resorting to a dualist model, I *naturalistically* conceive a deliberate choice as freely willed.

I understand the core abilities of the self, reason and free will as innate properties of a peculiar product of evolution. Not only are they conceivable without assuming supernatural substances or acts, but they are only understandable as properties, processes and acts of products of nature. My premise is that a mental state, process or act not only has a physical correlate but is identical with a specific physiological state, process or processing. Correlation requires for a mental item M a bodily correlate B but not for B an M. Correlation allows the zombie and similar arguments that assume that a B that is the correlate for an M can be conceived also without being conscious. The identity thesis rules this possibility out. For a B to be a correlate of an M it requires that B is necessarily conscious and the very same item as M. So not only must M be embodied in B, but also B must be "enminded" in M. Yet considering the more detailed facts we know about our nervous system, a B is not likely to be a specific state or process in the brain or some brain area but rather an interaction between the central nervous and the peripheral nervous system.[11]

Such identity may seem strange, as we may point to a process B and say, "But this process *cannot* be my *conscious experience*!" Yet we meet the same identity when we see on an ultrasound screen our heartthrobs and wonder that *this* can be *my life*. What we experience and what we can point to are two different senses or ways that the same object is given us, just as the Morning Star and the Evening Star are two different ways Venus is given us, to take the classical example that Frege (1892 in *Über Sinn und Bedeutung*) introduced to distinguish between sense and reference, the way a thing is given us and the thing. Just as the Morning Star and the Evening Star are the same thing, what I experience, say, as a pain or conceive as a thought is the same as a specific interaction that I can publicly point to, between the central nervous and the peripheral nervous system, between a central processor of stimuli and the stimulated body parts. And just as the Morning Star is as good a presentation of Venus

[11] I follow arguments well presented by Aranyosi 2013, Chaps. 2–7. The quote is from p. 144.

as the Evening Star is, the bodily items B are as good a presentation of an experience, a thought, a conscious choice, as the mental items M are. What is referred to by both the B and the M, by the bodily and the mental processes, are special states and activities of an animal that differ from other of its states and activities by being conscious.

Thus, we can conceive a deliberate and therefore freely willed decision *d* as the M presentation of the activity of deliberation for which the B presentation is the last part of neural interactions that are the B presentation of the deliberation. The B presentation starts with stimulations of our senses that may cause neural firing (B presentations of wishes) that pass through brain states *C* connecting to states that are the B presentation of higher level intentions or goals *G*, such as the goal to survive, as they certainly do in animals, but also the goal to be independent of any preceding determination. If brain states *C* prove the neural excitations (B presentations of wishes) to be incompatible with goals *G*, *C* stops the excitations from passing on to a B presentation of the ability *J* to judge. If they are compatible, *J* may still decide for stopping the impulse, just to prove its arbitrary power.

The B presentation of *J* might be a force field that mirrors the causes of impulses to be decided, the possible consequences of possible decisions, and the history of its judgments. In this model, the self is B-presented in *J* that decides whether to stop excitations that urge toward an action *A* and will admit them only if they are compatible with the goal to be independent of any preceding factor. So the self has an innate predisposition to admit only impulses that the self can consider its own ones, by choosing them after deliberation, although it might as well not have chosen them.

In this naturalistic conception, the self is constituted by our innate abilities of reason and of stopping impulses and has a desire not to be determined by any factor that it has not chosen itself the desire for autonomy or self-determination.

We can also investigate into how the human self developed from animal properties. We find a *proto-self* in the animal faculty of organizing the stimuli that impinge on an animal. Thus, a rat is good at running through mazes thanks to its faculty of processing data relevant for local orientation. More generally, the rat is good at protecting itself and its progeny because its neural system enables it to attain the goals that it is born for.

What it lacks is the ability to stop the pursuit of such inborn goals or to modify them. It cannot feel the existential *angst* of missing one's life, nor be responsible for its actions. Yet just as the rat owes its *proto-self* to its nervous system, we owe our self-as-author to our nervous system. And just as the proto-self of a rat is tied to the many other properties of an individual rat, so a self-as-author is tied to the part of the subject that consists of inborn and other properties that we are not responsible for.

Such union of our self-as-author and other properties that we are not responsible for makes us unique individuals. Therefore, to be true to oneself means to be true not only to our reason and free will, but also to the specific endowments we are not responsible for either. As far as we know, Galileo could not have been true to himself had he used his talents to write theater pieces, nor Shakespeare had he used his talents to explain movements of bodies. Authenticity requires knowing oneself, and knowing oneself is more than knowing that one has a self that is constituted by reason and free will.[12] It implies knowing one's *subject*, as I call the receptive side of a person.

[12] Hence Epictetus, who teaches to be authentic, admonishes to know oneself. Cp. Sorabji 2006, 187.

20

Inheritance Pride, Authenticity and Morality

The self we want to be true to in authenticity is not the self-as-result, nor the self-as-result plus the factual properties of our subject, but only the *original* properties of our self and subject, those that we are born with or have acquired in early childhood without our responsibility. These include the autonomy of the self, its power to say yes or no to an impulse; so autonomy is the condition of authenticity. But the self is not necessarily moral; so nor is authenticity. Casanova and perhaps even Hitler may have been authentic, but therefore not moral.

Nor is the self, whether the self-as-author or the self-as-result, a private entity that only I can know about. The privacy of the self is a consequence of the thesis that words get their meaning from associating a sign with an impression or an idea rather than with an interaction between a language user and a language learner. Words, as Wittgenstein argued, get their meaning from the role they play in such communications (in *language games*, as Wittgenstein called them) as already have a distinct and shared meaning for the communicators. For instance, a baby reaches for a red apple, impatiently crying, and her mother says something like "Ah, you want the apple, here is the apple, isn't it gorgeously red", thus teaching her the words *want*, *apple*, *here*, *red*. Yet not only words for physical but

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also for mental objects are thus taught. When a baby cries and squirms with pain, her mother may soothe her, stroking her belly and saying words like "Big boo boo, you have such a terrible pain." Thus, the child learns the concept of *pain* as something known to the language partners equally well, excluding even the possibility of referring with our common language to something that might be private in the sense of being impossible to know by anyone but you.[1] Therefore, also the self is something known to the language partners equally well.

We also can know what we are proud of and why we are. No doubt we can be proud when we have *achieved* something; this is *achievement pride.* Yet if we are proud of being endowed with reason and free will and of being a self-as-author, we are proud of something that has been given us. It is *inheritance pride*, similar to the pride that offspring take in their ancestors. It's a fact that people are proud of inheritances, but is it reasonable? Is it not rather vain?

It's also a fact that parents want their kids to be proud of their accidental properties, of being a girl or a Chinese or black-haired when they are thus born. Doesn't *proud* here mean *not ashamed of*? When gay activists and representatives of the handicapped call on the gays and handicapped to be *proud* of being gay or handicapped, isn't what they really mean they shouldn't be *ashamed* of being gay or handicapped? Similarly, when parents want their kids to be *proud* of their accidental properties, do they not want them *not to be ashamed* of the properties they may be ashamed of?

Suppose it's not pride they want to produce but only shame they want to stop. What would be the difference? If it's silly to be proud of inherited qualities, why is it not silly not to be ashamed of them? If we think we shouldn't be proud of our inheritances, why is it right to think we shouldn't be ashamed of them? True, not to be ashamed of something we need not be proud of it; so *logically*, we can stop someone's shame of, say, being black or gay without making him proud of being black or gay. Yet *psychologically*, the way our minds are, it's not possible. We cannot be not ashamed of something without being at least to some extent proud of it.

It may seem irrational to be proud of something we have not achieved it. But inheritance pride is not irrational if it includes the feeling of

[1] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, in particular Pt. 1, §§ 1–33 and §§ 243–273.

obligation to be true to the inherited property. Authenticity could not have become an ideal anywhere without the inheritance pride felt as an obligation to prove worthy of it. If this is true, we can answer the question I mentioned at the beginning of this book. I wondered if the pride of the accidental properties that we happen to be born with is always right. Can we be proud of having the nature of a worm rather than the nature of a lion or an eagle? Are there universally valid standards of what we rightly are proud of?

The answer is that among the properties all humans are born with we find some that rule out being like a worm, the properties of reason and free will. These properties enable us to raise our head, look down on minor troubles, and target and attack obstacles in a way reminding of a lion or eagle. They also make us proud of having them. We feel similar to animals such as lions and eagles, and feel obliged to act like a lion rather than a worm. Such obligation commits us to universal standards of due pride.

Recognizing that both we and other people have or are selves, gifted with reason and free will and desiring autonomy or self-determination, suggests that just as we want to determine our actions ourselves and can think we have a right to do so, others have the same will and right. This is no sufficient proof that the rules of justice are universally valid, but it supports my conjecture that as a matter of fact, most people will take the crucial Step 6 in scheme P of Chap. 17, that is, will accept universal rules promoting the full use of human abilities. So recognizing ourselves and others as selves suggests to us that selfhood requires a form of interaction that radically differs from interaction with creatures lacking reason and free will. It suggests their owners are both entitled to the protection of morality and human rights and obliged to respect them. It's only a suggestion but an important motivation to accept the universality of morality.

The standards of due pride, however, are not moral. They are standards of authenticity. They attract because they commit to a way of making sense of life. We may call them *metaphysical* standards. They may support but also harm morality. Committing to a way of making sense of life they compete with religion, as religion too attracts as a way to make sense of life. They can oppose but also improve a religion. But they are of the same

kind as the standards of religion. And like authenticity, religion can be utterly immoral.[2]

The standards of authenticity even require an attitude toward nature that is not free of *vanity*. To feel obliged by our natural endowment and even enjoy the obligation, we must trust nature with the basic trust of people who have been raised in emotionally reliable conditions, or the way Augustine taught Christians to trust nature as the product of an all-bountiful and omnipotent God. In contrast, if we look at nature with Hume's sober eyes we'll judge nature to be a brutal mother abandoning its creatures to suffering.[3] Nature *is* terribly destructive. Big fish eat small fish and galaxies are incessantly annihilated. But nature is also terribly creative, having produced us with reason's critical power, free will's selective power, and imagination's creative power. To consider us important, we must be a bit vain, not only proud of our natural properties.

Still, if we want to be true to our abilities, in particular our intelligence, our vanity must not blind us to the dark sides of nature that Hume focused on. Even if with Augustine we take nature as God's creation, we can assume that God loves us in a way we can understand only with much vanity that seems to me too much. It's very difficult not to consider God to be as ambivalent and contradictory as nature: admirable and scaring, sublime and brutal, divine and monstrous. Rational theology must take account of this divine ambivalence, not only by developing a theodicy but by avoiding, against Gianni Vattimo, too human a picture of God,[4] and by assigning to man the task of a co-creator.[5] Because we are entangled in nature's creativity and destructivity and usually prefer creativity without yet being able to stop our destructivity and even to be fascinated by it, trust in nature, as Umberto Eco said, is a "form of religiosity," a form to find meaning both in the universe and in our actions.

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[2] Cp. Lucas 14:26: "If any man comes to me, he must hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sister. Yes, he must hate himself too. If he does not, he cannot be my disciple." Referring to this passage, Kierkegaard in *Fear and Trembling* (in *Problem* II) rightly explicates that faith, represented by Abraham, rejects the universality essential to morality and imposes on him the most terrible crime of killing his son.

[3] Cp. his *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*.

[4] Vattimo 1999, 89ff.

[5] Tetens 2015, 50, states that man's position in the universe cannot be taken as "marginal," though he emphasizes our non-marginality by pointing to our increasing rather than decreasing evil.

Considering nature we cannot but feel "a sense of the sacred, of investigation and expectation, of a communion with something greater—even in the absence of faith in a personal and provident divinity."[6] Nature is for us an object not only of scientific but metaphysical investigation because we want to understand the relation between creativity and destruction.

It is not morality that we want to be confirmed by nature but our ability to make sense of life. We couldn't find meaning in life if nature could not confirm us in our creative powers, but what we expect of our metaphysical investigation of nature is not the strengthening of morality but of authenticity. Kierkegaard was clear about the difference of authenticity from morality. Authenticity for him belongs to *faith*, and faith, as a Kierkegaard interpreter points out, answers "an existential question, one about the meaning of my life and how I shall live it."[7] Yet we can find meaning also in destruction. This is irritating, but it makes nature fascinating.

Yet why should we limit meaning by morality; why not prefer the standards of authenticity to the standards of justice? Why not recognize authenticity as a higher order, the code of superman or the true believer? The simple answer is that authenticity cannot replace morality because it has a categorically different task. It is to prevent absurdity, while morality is to prevent destruction.[8] However, a Nietzschean will insist that whether or not the authentic are destructive, their life is nobler than the moral one. So the simple answer is not sufficient.

A better answer is that the Nietzschean insistence is incompatible with the idea of equal rights of individuals, as negligence about destructivity implies the right of the stronger to defeat the weaker. In his effort to replace morality with authenticity, Nietzsche was consistent enough to proclaim a morality of the *Herrenmensch* or *Übermensch* and declare ordinary morality (and the morality of democracy) a *slave* morality. Sacrificing the idea of equal human rights to elitist authenticity stops authenticity from being a universal idea. Yet I'm interested in authenticity as a universal idea, a way of life everyone can follow. We cannot prevent

[6] Eco in Eco and Martini 2000, 90.

[7] Merold Westphal, "Kierkegaard and Hegel," in Hannay and Marino 1998. 113f.

[8] I here take *absurd* in both the ordinary sense and the sense explicated by Camus 1942, 47f.

a Nietzschean from declaring authenticity the higher morality, but are obliged to prevent him from sacrificing ordinary morality to authenticity.

Cicero clearly recognized authenticity, though he lacked a term to refer to it, as a virtue. He argued that after Caesar's victory in the civil war Cato was right to commit suicide, although it would not have been right for others "in the same circumstances."[9] He did not oppose authenticity to morality. Sorabji implied this when he remarked that because "Cicero and the Stoics…are concerned not only with making the right *moral* decision (e.g., whether to defy injustice), but also with making the right practical decisions in general (choosing the right career). In contrast, Kant is concerned only with the right *moral* decisions." Blind to "being true to yourself as a second requirement," Kant only recognizes the standard of "our common human rationality." But there are two "requirements," the "right moral" and the "right practical decision."[10] Cicero's text cannot confirm this opposition. But it does confirm that Cicero recognized authenticity as a virtue of its own.

Sorabji is right, though, that against Cicero's view authenticity can be immoral. Calling a decision *moral* or *immoral* judges it by the standard of whether it is *destructive*; calling it *authentic* or *inauthentic* judges it by the standard of whether it makes *sense* in the life of the decider. Cicero judges Cato's suicide to be authentic because he understands that suicide made sense in Cato's life. Authenticity is different from morality because we can find sense in life also by immoral actions.

Let's finally come back to our hypothesis, P, that pride motivates accepting an autonomous morality of authenticity. Recognizing that authenticity isn't a moral ideal, can we still maintain P? We can, because we have already confirmed the crucial Step 6 in P that "Pride and shame motivate us to accept *universal rules* that promote the full use of human abilities." We have seen that recognition of our own and others' selfhood suggests that everyone with a self deserves the protection by morality and is obliged by moral rules. This suggestion weighs the more the prouder we are of being a self, as such pride obliges us to be up to our selfhood. So pride and shame can prevent us from practicing pride and authenticity without regard to the selfhood of other people.

[9] "in eadem causa"; Cicero, *On Duties* bk. 1, 112.

[10] Sorabji 2006, 159f; cp. 167.

Yet can't we also claim that by pain of irrationality we *must* develop the inheritance pride of our natural powers, of our reason and free will in the first place, and therefore *must* recognize that these powers oblige us to moral behavior and authenticity? Can't we add to P a more ambitious genealogy of morality, a scheme Q that might start thus:

1. Reason recognizes that our selfhood gives us a specific value.
2. Reason recognizes that our selfhood obliges us to a behavior adequate to this value.
3. Reason recognizes that the adequate behavior is moral behavior.

The problem with 1 and 2 is that it is by the cognitive character of *pride* rather than pure reason, unaffected by an emotion, that we recognize that our inborn abilities give us a special value that obliges us to a special behavior. Though we may acknowledge the cognition of pride as rational and a form of reason, traditionally in an argument such as Q reason was understood as an emotionally unaffected understanding.

But even if we assume 1 and 2 to be true, 3 is the crucial obstacle. We may recognize that selfhood obliges to a behavior adequate to selfhood, but argue that the adequate behavior is not that of morality, the morality that protects human life, but authentic behavior that can find meaning also in destruction, or a behavior of constant warfare, of a war of everyone against everyone in which everyone has to prove the strength of their selfhood. Only if we assume, with P, that pride and shame motivate us to make full use of all our specifically human abilities can we make it plausible how we have come to accept morality and to abide by it. Yet this is only an empirical conjecture that cannot found or prove the universal validity of morality.

Neither reason nor pride can ground morality. Morality has its own ground in human preference (in ordinary conditions) for constructiveness over destruction, a preference that shows in our moral intuitions that make up our conscience. Pride can be immoral, yet it does support morality if we are proud and even vain enough to take our natural gifts as an obligation to support nature in its constructive powers. But we are not *irrational* if we are not proud enough; we are *immoral* and unduly proud, which is bad enough.

Plato said that to rule greed or desire, reason needs the help of passion, *thumos*, which is not necessarily rational (he represented it as a shepherd dog and a lion).[11] We may well recognize in *thumos* a form of pride. Yet we should vary Plato, saying morality needs the help of pride and reason, even though neither pride nor reason are necessarily moral.

In this chapter we took up a question about worms and eagles asked at the beginning of this book; in the next part, to understand the role of due pride in current societies, we'll take up another question presented earlier: why is there so little interest in pride in current societies?

[11] Plato, *Republic* II 375f, IX 589f.

Part IV

Prospects of Proper Pride

21

Technology and Society

In this chapter, I argue there is little theoretical interest today in pride because the concept of pride is considered too much entangled in unacceptable metaphysical views. Such entanglement would not deter if interest in being proud was greater. Now, having seen the revolutionary effects that due pride and authenticity had in the Renaissance and its motivational role in morality, we may well wonder why there is so little interest in as valuable an emotion as due pride.

My claim is that there is little interest because there is little understanding of what pride is, and there is little understanding because there is little opportunity to experience proper pride, and there is little opportunity because today the most important factors of present societies—technology, a commercial economy and politics, but also the prevailing metaphysics—diminish opportunities. These factors humiliate the masses, intoxicate the elites with power and shrink the emotions of both poor and rich to atrophies incapable of due pride.

Kant wondered why there was so little interest in liberty among his contemporaries. He answered that it resulted from an "inability to use one's own understanding without the guidance of another." He added: "This immaturity is self-incurred if its cause is not lack of understanding, but

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lack of resolution and courage to use it without the guidance of another,"[1] implying that disinterest in liberty resulted from lack of resolution and courage rather than of understanding. In contrast, I claim disinterest in pride results from lack of understanding pride and authenticity. Though due pride is inheritance rather than achievement pride, we need the practice of using our inherited abilities to be proud of them. It's not enough to intellectually grasp why due pride is a good thing. We need not more information but more practice of the kind that made Zhuangzi's butcher proud. Such practice is missing because modern economies impede the pursuit of the intrinsic goals of production, imposing on them the intrinsic goal of commerce.

However, modern technologies make it increasingly difficult to keep the commercial goal of profit as the goal of production. The difficulties appear most conspicuously at three levels: in the economies themselves, which suffer from crises and stagnation; in politics or the sphere of public affairs, which can no longer efficiently perform its tasks in the hands of nation states; and in the use of the special technology of data processing, which presents us with the choice between the loss of autonomy by total administration or increasing autonomy by democratic control of data processing. At all three levels, we face the alternative between less or more individual autonomy, a choice between a life that fits the human self and one that does not. Modern technologies do not allow the present status quo to last; but where it will go depends to some extent, though not solely, on our choice, and our choice depends to some extent on the strength of our pride, for pride urges us to fight for autonomy. Yet our pride is not only weak because of lacking practice that promotes authenticity, but also because it is stifled by an indulgence in kitsch and a metaphysics of power or winning. To use dramatic terms, our future hangs on a battle between competing metaphysics. Although this is only one of several battles, it is one we have perhaps the most influence on.

Dramatic terms and emphasis on the role of our choice are justified, I think, because there is still a strong inclination to consider history and our future determined by forces beyond our control. This inclination is favored by and favors a harmonistic view of society and technology.

[1] Kant (1784), 1970, 54.

Marx told us that up to now, societies have been to the disadvantage of the lower classes. Yet he expected societies to become mutually advantageous, associations in which "the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."[2] He assumed modern technology can be rationally used only in a cooperation advantageous for everyone. Rawls even defined a society as "a cooperative venture for mutual advantage."[3] He did not state if the venture *is* or *should be* to everyone's advantage, but suggested that to opt for mutual advantages is rational also for the ruling classes.

We cannot understand societies and their future if we don't recognize the error of both Marxists and Rawlsians about mutual advantages and technology. Rawls may have been influenced in his view of society by Durkheim. Durkheim distinguished modern from primitive society by its *organic solidarity.* Primitive society is kept together by a division of labor in which labor is "mechanically" added up, allowing producers to separate from society without harming themselves or society. Society is kept together like the cells of a polyp that live on after separation, because they contain in themselves what is necessary and sufficient for survival. Modern society, in contrast, is kept together "organically" because its division of labor is too complex to allow separation, just as a developed organism has too complex a distribution of functions as to allow a part to separate without damaging itself and the whole organism. Durkheim inferred that modern society is cooperative to every individual's advantage.

However, current technology substitutes robots and computers for the lower classes that the proletariat was recruited from. Automata are taking over the mechanical and executive work of the armies of former employees and even managers, leaving only creative and care work as needed jobs. Durkheim could hardly recognize at his time that technology can perform the function of parts of society that once seemed necessary for its survival, just as artificial organs, hips and hearts, and joints and corneas take over the functions of their natural predecessors and often better than them. Therefore, the current ruling classes no longer depend

[2] *Communist Manifesto*, at the end of Chap. 2.

[3] Rawls 1971, 4.

economically on the lower classes. The lower classes are no longer needed and are threatened by extinction.[4]

Historical facts confirm what present technologies suggest. When groups were able to exclude others from exploiting nature, they often did so, extinguishing the defeated. Societies have been ventures that compete in exploiting nature, vying with other societies and split into vying classes ready to cooperate with other societies and classes if it serves their particular interest. Today, natural resources are again objects of intranational and international competition and warfare, making the idea they might be the objects of "a cooperative venture for mutual advantage" look rather bizarre.

Durkheim and Rawls agree that it is in the *rational interest* of everyone, also the powerful, to respect the interests of the worse off. They took up the age-old argument of Aesop's Fable, *The Belly and the Members*, which rejects the claim of the feet to get as much food as the belly by appeal to their belonging to an organism in which every part needs every other one, but has special needs. Today, however, the belly no longer needs the feet; artificial ones may be better.

Recognizing society as what it is, a competitive venture for exploiting nature that threatens everyone with exclusion from enjoying the resources of nature, technology proves to be the most dangerous tool not just to control humans but to exclude many of us from sharing the benefits of nature. This threat becomes obvious when we look at another current particularity, globalization. Globalization makes present civilizations mutually dependent, yet it's not a venture for mutual advantage either. Still, it also opens up opportunities for initiatives and practices that everyone can become duly proud of. So we must take account of globalization. The exclusion threat, however, is the downside of the fact that machinery allows people to stop doing hard and boring labor and start doing what they love doing, such as doing things for their own sake.

So when I look at the three levels that show current technology busting the status quo, we should keep in mind that we face a choice between more or less autonomy, between exclusion (and extinction) of the masses or everyone's chance of doing things for their own sake, between a more human global civilization or a suicidal war among civilizations, between proper pride or shame.

[4] Cp. Nozick 1974, 190–97.

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Problems of the Economy

As we have seen,[1] the Industrial Revolution replaced the many goals of production with the one goal of commerce, which is not the goal of production. Even the idea that we can do something for its own sake got lost. As Russell said in his *In Praise of Idleness*:

> The modern man thinks that everything ought to be done for the sake of something else, and never for its own sake. Serious-minded persons, for example, are continually condemning the habit of going to the cinema, and telling us that it leads the young into crime. But all the work that goes to producing a cinema is respectable, because it is work, and because it brings a money profit.[2]

Russell's criticism may seem petty considering the immense riches and the enormous powers of technology that profit-oriented economies have bestowed on us. However, there is a hitch in the profit condition even though Adam Smith, the founder of modern economics, which teaches that producers should stick to the profit condition, had a good reason

[1] In Chap. 9.

[2] Russell 1994, www.zpub.com/notes/idle.html p. 7.

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to believe in the condition. John Locke, in his *Treatise of Government*, formulated the reason thus:

> Find out something that hath the use and value of money amongst his neighbours, you shall see the same man will begin presently to enlarge his possessions.[3]

Smith and Locke believed the prospect of getting money, a thing allowing its owners to buy whatever they like, spurs the producers on, otherwise they'd prefer leisure. This belief may be true of the economies Smith and Locke analyzed: economies *before* the Industrial Revolution. Yet the productive potential of economies has exploded since machines were introduced into production.

By their machines, producers decrease most products' *scarcity*. They also decrease the scarcity of labor time because in the same amount of time much more of the demanded goods can be produced than before. But scarcity is a measure of the *exchange value*, the value money indicates. The scarcer a good, the higher its exchange value, as Adam Smith made clear by the example of water and a diamond.[4] Water is very useful (has high "*use value*") but not scarce (in eighteenth-century Britain), hence cheap. A diamond is scarce, as its demand exceeds its supply, hence it is dear. So, what happens when production by machines reduces the scarcity of most goods and of labor time? The average exchange value of products falls. Success in production entails loss of exchange value. The average investor cannot get back the exchange value he invested in successful production, let alone make a profit. Only investments in the most competitive firms can hope for a profit.

Thus, paradoxically, the very means to make a profit, the use of machines that decrease production costs, decreases the exchange value that investors want to get back. Industrial capitalism cannot grow without constant devaluation of the exchange value of its products and its currencies. As most investors invest to get back their exchange value with

[3] Locke, 2nd Treatise of Government § 49.

[4] Smith 1986, 131f. Smith follows, even in his examples of water and a diamond, John Law 1750, 4; https://archive.org/stream/moneytradeconsid00lawj#page/4/mode/2up. Law develops ideas of Locke 1691; www.marxists.org/reference/subject/economics/locke/part1.htm. That modern economies suffer from the subjection of useful production to exchange value production is the core of Marx's economic critique; cp. Steinvorth 1977.

a profit, business breaks down or stagnates when their odds are short. Hence, industrial capitalism cannot flourish without crises that break out when the decrease of the exchange value due to successful production becomes palpable. Such crises are good for the most competitive firms, as they take over the production of the losers, and bad for the average investor, producer and employee, losing their investments, sales and jobs.

Therefore, states are asked to help avoid crises. This is possible only by stopping scarcity from shrinking, which is difficult when everyone is free to use technology for diminishing production costs. Communist governments that controlled investment but went on measuring their economies by the exchange value they produced stopped scarcity from shrinking by slowing down innovation. Yet stopping technological innovation stops realizing mankind's old dream of a society without labor,[5] one of the few goals of whose pursuit people can still be proud of in economies that subordinate the pride producers take in the quality of their work to the commercial goal of profit. Yet scarcity can also be kept up by producing new products, demand for which exceeds, at least for some time, supply; by subsidies to firms avoiding technology (in administration, for instance) and to firms in the military complex that produce means of destruction that in the end will make many goods scarce again. Scarcity also returns by pollution making former paradigms of abundance scarce, such as fresh water and fresh air, and by rising consumption.

In any case, an economy capable of enormously increasing the *use value* of its products but measuring the value of its products by their *exchange value* is paradoxical because by increasing productivity it decreases exchange value. Its paradox also appears in unemployment. Automation reduces not only scarcity but also employees. Yet the employees are the mass of the customers who must buy the products to make investments profitable. Hence, again, productivity, reducing employees and the buyers of the products, obstructs investment, hence production. By its productivity industrial capitalism shows us the land of milk and honey, a society of abundance without hard or boring labor. Yet by its profit condition, disallowing abundance and requiring scarcity, it cannot enter it, as little as Moses could.

[5] Aristotle, *Politics* I, 1253 b34; quoted by Marx, *Capital* I, Chap. 15 sec. 3, B (who also refers to the Stoic Antipatros).

So, why not stop conditioning investment on getting back its exchange value plus a profit? Dropping the profit condition for investments would return production to the pursuit of its many intrinsic goals of its many branches, such as producing, in a way most adequate to the producers, healthy food in agriculture, durable machines easy to handle in industry, education to autonomy in schools, sustainable health in medicine, relevant truth in the media and inspiring entertainment in the show business. The value of an economy would again be measured by what has been called use-values, its benefit in consuming it, rather than by exchange value.

However, mainstream economists argue there isn't a dysfunction in current economies that causes problem. If an investment doesn't produce a profit, this indicates, they argue, an uneconomical waste of resources. Nor is there necessarily a decrease of employment if only exchange value is invested in the suitable branches. The coachmen and carters made superfluous by railways and automobiles resurrect as train guards and car workers. They raise two claims:

1. Everyone can get a job if exchange value is invested in the suitable branches.
2. The profit condition is necessary to produce what is demanded.

Claim 1 may be true, but only if economies do not use their social productive powers to replace hard or boring labor with machines, and claim 2 is a tautology, as *what is demanded* is understood to mean *what is demanded under the profit condition*.

To prove claim 1 true, politicians are expected to secure jobs for everyone. Yet, rather than creating jobs to reduce the jobless figures politicians should look for ways to abolish the need to have a job, which is that having no job means having no money and social respect. One such way is an unconditionally paid basic income that allows people to do less or no work and incentivizes firms to use machinery and offer work that people can do for its own sake and with more effect and satisfaction and less interest in monetary reward. As for claim 2, it's not only the leftist critics of capitalism who maintain its merely tautological sense, but also liberal economic experts.

In 2005, Ben Bernanke, then chairman of the Federal Reserve, used the concept of a *global saving glut* to point to the abundance of financial means stored in banks as a cause of economic stagnation. The saving glut indicates that potential investors expect not to get profit enough. Alan Greenspan, Bernanke's predecessor, Lawrence Summers, Secretary of the Treasury under President Clinton, and Martin Wolf, chief economics commentator at the *Financial Times*, took up Bernanke's idea. The latter two proposed,

> to use today's glut of savings to finance a surge in public investment. That might be partly linked to a shift to lower-carbon growth. Another possibility is to facilitate capital flows to emerging and developing countries, where the best investment opportunities must lie.

The proposed investments are obviously useful. If they were also profitable, there wouldn't be a saving glut. Summers and Wolf addressed those who decide on "public investments" and can "facilitate capital flows,"[6] state administrators. They wanted them, as Wolf called it in another article,[7] to incentivize the proposed investments by "monetary financing of government deficits." Such incentive would evade the profit condition by rejecting it for state or public investments.

Nobel Peace Prize laureate Paul Krugman too understands the tension between the profit condition and the full use of the given resources as a case of *Business vs. Economics*. As he explained,

> a successful businessperson sees the troubled economy as something like a troubled company, which needs to cut costs and become competitive. To create jobs, the businessperson thinks, wages must come down, expenses must be reduced; in general, belts must be tightened.[8]

Yet economists who "do know a lot about economic theory and history" recognize that to cut

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[6] Martin Wolf, "Why the future looks sluggish," *Financial Times* Nov. 19, 2013.

[7] Martin Wolf, "Hair of the dog risks a bigger hangover for Britain," *Financial Times* Feb. 13, 2014.

[8] Krugman, "Business vs. Economics," *New York Times* 11/2/14. The following quotes are from this article. On economic crises in 2015 he commented ibid. 8/24/15: "too much money is chasing too few investment opportunities." See also Krugman, "Profits without production," *New York Times* 6/20/2013.

> wages and spending in a depressed economy just aggravates the real problem, which is inadequate demand. Deficit spending and aggressive money-printing, on the other hand, can help a lot.

Money-printing, we may say, adjusts the value of a currency to its reduced exchange value resulting from the reduced scarcity of commodities. It can help, Krugman says, because "a country is not a company." Firms, Krugman implies, pursue the goal of commerce to gain a profit, but societies must pursue the various goals of production, and their value must not be measured by profit or exchange value but by use values.

Orthodox economists will argue that *public* offices can forget about profit only if they can rely on the profitability of *private* firms, as only they produce the riches of which states rake in a juicy piece to spend it by their non-economic standards of use value. However, is it *impossible* for private firms to measure their success by the use value of their production? Already today, farmers want to produce healthy food rather than profitable food, schools want the young to become autonomous rather than serving the ruling system, writers want to produce good rather than profitable papers. If everyone produced the way they think is right, pursuing the intrinsic goal of their activity, would the economy collapse? Would countries sink into poverty? Would we lose more than the chance to make profits? It rather seems that capitalism has bestowed productive powers on us that make its profit condition for investment obsolete.

However, even if we stick to the profitability condition there is an amazingly simple institutional reform to use the increase of economic productivity for the benefit of the whole society, without subjecting markets to government or another public control. This institutional reform is the introduction of basic income. Basic income does not abolish the profitability condition of investments but contributes to a society that makes this condition obsolete.

23

Basic Income

One response to the unemployment that John Maynard Keynes called *technological*,[1] as it results from the use of technology, is to reduce average labor time. Bertrand Russell pleaded for a reduction of the workday to four hours.[2] An obligatory decrease, though, neglects a result of automation. The employments not replaced by machines are creative, care and council work, often loved by the people who do them. It would be better to provide everyone, jobless or not, with a basic income that allows for a decent life and leaves employment attractive for an additional income.

Basic income is not a minimal income, paid only to the employed, but money paid to every citizen, though higher incomes would lose it to taxation. It has been proposed for various reasons and in various versions, first

[1] Keynes 1930, www.econ.yale.edu/smith/econ116a/keynes1.pdf sec. 1, p. 3. For more recent views, see Matin Ford 2015, the publications by Scott Santens and Sue Halpern on robots in *New York Review of Books* Apr. 2, 2015.—Also cp. the Wikipedia article on basic income; on basic income in Switzerland cp. *New York Times* Nov. 11, 2013; Steinvorth 2014 and 2015; the German language film www.youtube.com/watch?v=gEsKRsjou5k. Remarkable is the initiative by Michael Bohmeyer; cp. *Der Tagesspiegel* Sept. 24, 2105. For a blog on basic income cp. http://notesbroken-society.wordpress.com/2013/11/17/the-case-for-a-basic-income-time-to-rethink-incomes-and-work/

[2] Russell 1932, www.zpub.com/notes/idle.html p. 3f.

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in 1797 by Thomas Paine for reasons of justice.[3] Milton Friedman, the protagonist of economic neo-liberalism, advocated it rather for utility, calling it *negative income tax*.[4] For a while, it had the sympathy of politicians; Martin Luther King, Richard Nixon and his then aide and future Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan tried to enact it in the early 1970s, as did his 1972 Democratic opponent George McGovern. Economists including Nobelist James Tobin and John Kenneth Galbraith signed a 1968 petition endorsing the idea. Swiss groups have found enough popular support to initiate a national referendum on basic income in 2016.

Basic income is not a sectarian idea but a rational response to fundamental problems of current economies: overproduction, unemployment and the loss of ownership rights to natural resources. It is not a welfare state institution but a means of a liberal society to maintain its justice.

The first objection to basic income is that it's unaffordable. This does apply, to some extent, to undeveloped and developing economies, but as to the developed economies of the West, the objection ignores the radical difference between modern and premodern economies. The problem of modern economies is not underproduction but overproduction. In premodern economies there were never too many workers; every hand could improve production; laziness was rightly condemned as sponging. In modern economies, workers can be replaced with machines; in all mechanical work, machines are better than humans. Merely being employed is a vice, as it prevents the better work of machines. The unemployed are an economic problem not because they don't work but because they can't buy.

The question is not *whether* basic income is affordable but how high it should be to keep the production running. There are detailed calculations for Switzerland[5] to prove that a basic income of CHF 2300–2500 ($2600–$2800 US) can be afforded without great changes in money distribution. But conditions on receiving education might be attached to the basic income to prevent the uneducated from remaining passive.[6]

[3] Paine 1797; www.constitution.org/tp/agjustice.htm

[4] Friedman 1962, 192; and M. and R. Friedman 1980. David Sherman 2014 argues that Friedman's negative income tax cannot pass as basic income.

[5] Ulrich 2014.

[6] Recommended by Osterkamp 2014 for poor and by Martin Ford 2015 also for rich countries.

Economically, basic income is what current economies require. It provides money to those superfluous in production but who are needed as customers. It allocates to the economy only people who are motivated, creative and able to push on cost-reducing automation. It allows everyone to pursue intrinsic goals, which again stimulates creativity and promotes production.

Yet for many observers, basic income offends ideas of dignity formed by, and forming, our feelings of pride. Basic income allows the lazy to live without labor. John Rawls expressed the deep resistance to this consequence when he said that "those who surf all day off Malibu must find a way to support themselves and would not be entitled to public funds."[7] His resistance is based on the deeply rooted idea that "he who does not work, neither shall he eat."[8] Such ideas of dignity are not reconciled by the argument that modern economies need buyers rather than workers.

More relevant is the fact that basic income is not a welfare state institution but required by justice.[9] It is a compensation for most people's loss of ownership of natural resources. Also defenders of liberalism, such as Locke and Robert Nozick,[10] consider natural resources the property of the whole of mankind. As more than two centuries ago Thomas Paine argued for his *Natural Fund*, basic income is "a compensation in part for the loss of (individuals') natural inheritance by the introduction of the system of landed property,"[11] that is, of private property of natural resources, which, as natural resources are everyone's property, is illegitimate. Yet Rawls could argue that we lose a necessary condition of pride and dignity if what we contribute to the common good is not duly accounted for. Don't we have a right to be recognized in proportion to what we give to society? Isn't there a duty to organize society correspondingly? So let's look at an alternative that presumes such a duty.

Jaron Lanier, a computer scientist and musician, suggests an alternative. As present computer technology leads to mass unemployment and

[7] Rawls 1993, 182 n. The paper formulating the objection was published in 1988.

[8] St. Paul, Thessalonians 3:10.

[9] Van Parijs 1991 argues against Rawls that such surfers should be fed but I think with insufficient reasons.

[10] Locke, *2nd Treatise of Government* §§ 24ff; Nozick 1974, 180f.

[11] Paine 1797, 400.

"a new kind of class division between full economic participants and partial economic participants," preventing "shared economic interest to support long-term democracy,"[12] he proposes, appealing to dignity and a "humanistic information economy,"[13] to change the Internet into "two-way linking" so that "provenance"—the right to own one's product—"is treated as a basic right, similar to the way civil rights and property rights were given a universal stature in order to make democracy and market capitalism viable." The two-way linking would not only make "the Internet faster and more efficient"[14]; it would also secure everyone the value they merit.[15] Here is an "example of how you might make money… in a humanistic future of more complete accounting":

> You meet a future spouse on an online dating service. The algorithms that implement that service take note of your marriage. As the years go by, and you're still together, the algorithms increasingly apply what seemed to be the correlations between you and your spouse to matching other prospective couples. When some of them also get married, it is automatically calculated that the correlations from your case were particularly relevant to the recommendations. You get extra nanopayments.[16]

Thus, Lanier tries to secure for everyone the reward that society owes them. Yet there will always be things in a life—the smile of a friend, the jeer of an enemy inspiring me to an invention—that cannot be registered and translated into an exchange value. Moreover, Lanier implausibly assumes that any contribution to society can and should be measured in exchange value or money. Yet some things are better recognized by a prize or applause or a smile.

Basic income does pose a justice problem: how are we to determine the value of the natural resources of which the unemployed command

[12] Lanier 2013, 248, and ibid. Chap. 8 on mass unemployment.

[13] For the many appeals to dignity, use the book's Index.

[14] Lanier 2013, 245.

[15] This value is "partially determined by buyers and sellers in the moment and partially determined by universal policies. Each price will have two components, called 'instant' and 'legacy'." *Legacy* is to exclude unfair price demands and to include taxes or "infrastructure fees" (ibid. 272f; "infrastructure fees" are explained p. 290).

[16] Lanier 2013, 274.

less and the very busy command more? Liberals say the value of natural resources is tiny,[17] as they locate the crucial source of value in human labor rather than in natural resources. Considering that wars are fought to secure access to natural resources such as oil and fresh water, this is implausible. Yet it is difficult to quantify the value of natural resources. Are we to measure their exchange value—what we would give to get them—or their use value—where we would rank them in a list of needed goods?

The problem becomes even harder if we include cultural resources, such as writing and arithmetic, in common property. The best solution I can see is to take mankind's common property of natural and cultural resources as something to be used most economically in the interest of mankind, granting those who are excluded from work the right of co-owners to participate, by their basic income, in using the result of the work spent on property of mankind.[18] This solution subjects basic income to the condition of an economical use of resources. Basic income must be the lower the easier it is to get a job, and the higher the more difficult it is. Therefore, the amount of the unconditional income, though it should be democratically determined by the majority of a society, needs to be subject to a veto of experts in the economical use of resources.

Some critics take offence at basic income because it increases the power of the market and of the state. They distrust markets, regarding them as destructive. Yet markets are destructive only if they systematically favor one side of the exchange. Basic income would reduce imbalances by securing to the suppliers of labor power the same liberty to refuse offers that the demanders of labor power enjoy. In no way does the introduction of a basic income justify limiting the right of unions to strike, as van Parijs argued.[19] On the contrary, it belongs to the liberty of the market strengthened by basic income to guarantee this right. More devices may be necessary to restore to markets their function of indicating the demands of consumers, but basic income is one of them.

[17] Less than one per thousand of the value of labor spent on a good, according to Locke, *2nd Treatise* § 43.

[18] Cp. Steinvorth 2013, 60ff.

[19] van Parijs 1995, 213.

As to the power of the state, basic income can increase it only if the state levies and distributes the money to finance basic income. Yet conforming to the disaggregation of the nation state that I'll turn to in the next chapter, the fund should be raised by glocal offices whose authority is restricted to levying the fund.

Basic income will not abolish money, so it may perpetuate what Marx called *commodity fetishism*, the belief that the value of a thing is what is given for it on the market, its exchange value; rather than something money cannot buy. However, such fetishism is undermined to the extent that we need not fight for money; people used to having much money over generations are rarely commodity fetishists. In particular, if basic income is accompanied by social services such as education and health care that are not paid for, it will reduce the magic of money. It would reduce the role of money to indicating exchange value without inviting commodity fetishism and the ensuing corruptibility.[20]

There is another objection to basic income. It is the fear that modern technology and the robots it provides will make life so easy that it stops being human. Humanity needs challenges to develop its virtues, and technological societies undermine this condition of humanity. This is the fear of Nietzsche and many of his followers.[21] Basic income too seems to undermine this condition; so prevent it as long as possible. Yet it's a fear based on a mistaken understanding of modern technology. As the founder of cybernetics Norbert Wiener said in 1964,

> The world of the future will be an ever more demanding struggle against the limitations of our intelligence, not a comfortable hammock in which we can lie down to be waited by our robot slaves.[22]

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[20] Ignatieff 2014 delivers another argument for basic income when he claims: "what is required is…a return to constitutional democracy itself, to courts and regulatory bodies that are freed from the power of money and the influence of the powerful; to legislatures that cease to be circuses and return to holding the executive branch to public account while cooperating on measures for which there is a broad consensus; to elected chief executives who understand that they are not entertainers but leaders." He refers to the economist's Stiglitz proposal of a tax reform to fight the "hyper-inequality that is…starving the liberal state" but he might as well refer to basic income.

[21] Cp. Steinvorth 2013, 103f.

[22] Floridi 2008, 40. Doug Hill, "The Eccentric Genius," *The Atlantic* 6/11/14 quotes the same sentence.

Basic income is a step not to that hammock but to more opportunities to use our intelligence and creativity and experience due pride. It would restore markets as the indicators of demand, enable the jobless to lead a decent if frugal life, create equality between employers and employment demanders on the labor market, and enable people to find meaningful work worthy of recognition outside commerce, the sphere of profit. It would lead to higher salaries and to tasks pursued for their own sake, as it would force employers to render employments more attractive. It would restore the pursuit of the many intrinsic goals of production, end the era of commercial societies, unite passion with professionalism and enable everyone to be authentic. As it is the economy that today requires basic income, even the economy favors a source of authenticity.

True, basic income can be used to administer and manipulate people with the help of data processing. Yet this is not probable, as it liberates people from the passivity that the ordinary exhausting jobs lead into. And to come back to the surfers off Malibu, we shouldn't forget that surfing is a pretty admirable sport that even the non-surfers enjoy watching,[23] while the way many employees use the little free time they have by watching stupid televisionshows or movies is rather disgusting. If the majorities are still against basic income, this indicates the weakness of proper pride and the strength of countervailing forces, such as the attraction of kitsch.

[23] Cp. William Finnegan, *Barbarian Days*: *A Surfing Life*, Penguin 2015.

24

The Shrinking of the Nation State

Contemporary societies are marked by the shrinking of the nation state. From their very beginning, nation states have seduced into the pride of nationalism. It is an undue pride, as it has led to wars and discord. Yet to understand the specific seductions of the modern state we have to consider whether the privilege of the so-called monopoly of power that the defenders of the modern states say is necessary, really is necessary.

States are considered to have a sphere-immanent rationality, the *reason of state*. Markets are supposed to follow *instrumental* rationality, the rationality of deducing the most effective means to the goal of profit; states are thought to follow a similar rationality that pursues power rather than profit. However, though both the rationalities of winning profit and power can be described as instrumental, the goal of commerce is intrinsic, as it can be achieved only by commercial exchanges, while the goal of states is not, as it can be attained by various means. States arrogated many special tasks, each pursuing what might be pursued as an intrinsic goal. But none is thus pursued because anyone is pursued as a means for strengthening state power. Power, however, is no intrinsic goal, as it can be reached by different actions. Thus, statesmen were condemned to the position of housewives who are torn between the competing tasks of

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pleasing the husband, caring for the kids and representing an up-to-date family, each serving the extrinsic goal of keeping up the marriage.

Best known among the goals of the state that would be intrinsic if pursued alone is the goal of *justice*. In fact, states developed as institutions claiming to be more capable to enforce justice than competitors, such as religious, economic or kinship associations. Yet today, as another consequence of modern technology that requires global management, justice can be provided only on a global level, unachievable by nation states. This inability is the reason for their shrinking power and a chance for the due pride in being a human to replace the undue pride of competitive nationalism. However, the crisis of the nation state may as well lead to authoritarian regimes that unite their powers to suppress the rest or destroy mankind in their struggle for dominance.

Max Weber recognized that "the state cannot be defined in terms of its (extrinsic, U. St.) ends" but claimed it can be defined by "the absolute… intrinsic end of the preservation (or transformation) of the inner and outer distribution of power."[1] Indeed, the preservation of power keeps the many tasks of a state together. But power, achievable by different activities, is not only an extrinsic goal, but incompatible with the goals proud citizens expect their state to serve, such as their liberty. Weber also considered the state the sphere of the *political*,[2] which we can understand as pursuing the intrinsic goal of well-ordered public affairs.[3] Yet today, states at best can contribute to this goal, because like justice, public affairs require global institutions.

The defenders of the modern state such as Hobbes argued that to provide justice, there must be one and only one institution with the

[1] Weber, *Politics as a Vocation*, in Weber 1958, 77f: "Sociologically, the state cannot be defined in terms of its ends. There is scarcely any task that some political association has not taken in hand, and there is no task that one could say has always been exclusive and peculiar to those associations which are designated as political ones: today the state, or historically, those associations which have been the predecessors of the modern state. Ultimately, one can define the modern state sociologically only in terms of the specific *means* peculiar to it, as to every political association, namely, the use of physical force…" The second quote is from Weber, "Zwischenbetrachtung," *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie* I, 546 and 547, my tr.—Remarkably, Weber distinguished here between intrinsic and extrinsic goals.

[2] In his *Zwischenbetrachtung.*

[3] Habermas 2012, 243–7, critically comments the subjection of the political to the state.

monopoly to use force and decide when force is legitimate, and that the state is this institution. Some states did enforce justice on their territories by developing legislative, judicative and executive powers. Therefore, enforcing justice on their territories is often considered the intrinsic goal of the modern states. However, the powerful European states of Hobbes' time pursued justice only as a goal among others. Other goals were the expansion of the state territory, the provision of economic infrastructure, the protection of commerce and industry. The securing of basic education and health, employment, culture and other things considered worthy of public control have been added. Yet if an institution pursues many goals it cannot pursue any one as an intrinsic goal, and its actions become erratic. Consequently, states and politicians acted erratically, starting wars and other adventures that were easy to recognize as disasters for them.

We may object that also in science and art, scientists and artists pursue different goals, and yet they pursue the intrinsic goals of science and art. True, the goal of art splits up into the different goals of painting and poetry, dance and theatre, music and movies, sculpture and architecture, which again split up into their many genres, which again can split up into more specific subspecies and in the end into the one concrete work an artist tries to produce, each having its own logic and perfection standard. The same applies to the intrinsic goals of science and commerce and the other spheres with sphere-specific intrinsic goals. They too split up into the concrete intrinsic goals of a scientist or merchant. Doesn't this apply to the goals of the states?

The activities we lump together in art, science or commerce share important properties, such as presenting something that does not serve utility, aiming at understanding how nature works or gaining exchange value. State activities lack such homogeneity. There are homogeneous activities, but many of them: activities aiming at justice; at increasing state power; at improving infrastructure, industry, commerce, education or health. Moreover, art, science and commerce develop without a central institution that tried to direct the innumerable intrinsic goals. In contrast, state activities are directed by a central institution. States do split up into ministries and departments that specialize in the different tasks of the states, but these branches are ruled by a center.

It is also true that societies cannot do without coordinating their activities. Hence, don't we need one coordinator that has the ultimate right and power to enforce its decisions? It is Hobbes' argument for state absolutism that for their survival societies need such a coordinator. If we apply this argument to current conditions that require global coordination, we have to accept a single global coordinator with the right and power to overcome any resistance. We would thus accept an absolute power that neither citizens nor other states could resist.[4] Yet as Locke and Rousseau objected, if there is one power not only to coordinate social activities but also to command the forces to impose its decisions, people are worse off than before.[5] Granting the coordinator the monopoly of power creates an absolute power, which, as Lord Acton stated, corrupts absolutely.

In any case, Hobbes' argument is mistaken. States can enforce *justice* only if they rely on a consensus of its citizens on what a just coordination is. If a state enforces its coordination without such consensus, it is a tyranny and no longer enforces *justice*. Without such a consensus a global state is tyrannical; with such a consensus, there is no need to grant the coordinator the monopoly of power. Yet the monopoly of power to enforce its coordination is the mark of the modern state. We can expect a government to be just only if it can rely on a sufficiently wide consensus on justice, and if there is such a consensus, justice enforcement should not be monopolized.

In most societies, there is a sufficiently wide consensus on justice to justify abandoning the state's power monopoly, and considering the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights as expressing the justice views of most nations, there is even a wide global consensus on justice. Now, abandoning the state monopoly of power does not mean that everyone has the right to enforce justice, but that there must be several institutions with limited powers to enforce justice.

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[4] Hobbes, calling the modern state by the name of the biblical monster *Leviathan* was well aware of the dangers of the state. Russell (1932), www.zpub.com/notes/idle.html p. 1, warned: "In view of the fact that the bulk of the public expenditure of most civilized Governments consists in payment for past wars or preparation for future wars, the man who lends his money to a Government is in the same position as the bad men in Shakespeare who hire murderers." This was written when states had not yet shown the degree of evil they seduce into.

[5] See Rousseau's two *Discourses* and Locke's *Second Treatise of Government* §93, comparing the dangers of stateless societies with foxes and pole cats and the dangers of absolutist states with lions and bears.

The concept of the *monopoly of power* or, more explicitly, the "the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force in the enforcement of its (a political institution's, U. St.) orders" is taken from Max Weber.[6] It refers not to *any* use of means of physical force on a territory, but only to the use of means of physical force that the political institution needs to uphold its order against possibly competing institutions, such as religious ones. Also, this monopoly of a qualified use of force can hardly be upheld without injustice. It unites the coordination of social activities with the use of means of coercion that no other power in the same society can resist and in addition bestows legitimacy on the coordinator's decisions. Such monopoly predisposes the coordinator to become unjust because it seduces him into misusing his power.

In the seventeenth century, Locke proposed the division of powers to check the powers of the absolutist state that the crown, following the French model, tried to establish in Britain. Locke's division of powers was never fully put into practice, because in modern parliamentary democracies legislation and executive are too closely connected, and curiously enough, Locke did not insist on subordinating the use of state force to the judicative. Today, his idea of controlling state powers can be realized by the control of the executive by the judicative. To some extent, this is realized in the US by the Supreme Court and in Germany by the *Bundesverfassungsgericht*, the Federal Constitutional Court. Yet even these courts are dependent on the executive, as the executive nominates their judges.

Moreover, they are national institutions and cannot decide on the many global justice issues that wait for decision. These issues need global courts, staffed by judges nominated by judicial rather than executive institutions. They would adjudicate without the authority of an executive, but because of its independence of any government, they would have an authority of its own that makes it difficult for executives not to obey them, and

[6] The description originates in Weber, *Politics as a Vocation*, in Weber 1958, 78: "Today…we have to say that a state is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory," and Weber 1922, §17, p. 29, defining the modern state as a "political" institution "wenn und soweit sein Verwaltungsstab erfolgreich das Monopol legitimen physischen Zwanges für die Durchführung der Ordnungen in Anspruch nimmt," which Parsons in Weber 1978, 54, translates as: "if and insofar as its administrative staff successfully upholds a claim on the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force in the enforcement of its order." Parsons translated "order" rather than "orders" for Weber's plural form "Ordnungen."

it would legitimate those that enforce its sentences. There are already institutions that follow the same idea, the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court (ICC), but the first is staffed by the UN, hence by the governments controlling the UN, the latter chosen from proposals made by the states that contracted the ICC. The non-governmental organization (NGO) of the International Commission of Jurists is a better model, but it lacks sufficient recognition.

In any case, establishing an executive-independent authoritative global court adjudicating on all global issues requires limiting the current rights of sovereignty of the nation states. Therefore, it will be opposed by many states. However, globalization is currently a lopsided development in favor of some corporations and states and in need of international courts. It needs cooperation also in many other issues. Actually, the international cooperation necessitated by globalization has led to the recognition of international institutions regulating affairs formerly regulated by nation states. The affairs, thus regulated, split up into the tasks that nation states have accumulated in addition to their task of justice enforcement, such as health care, education, transport and infrastructure. This development has been called a *disaggregation* of the nation states into autonomous task-oriented offices.[7] Instructively, these tasks can now be pursued as intrinsic goals because they are no longer pursued by an institution that pursues a lot of other tasks. Pursued as intrinsic goals, they can be performed more efficiently.

The disaggregation of the nation states need not be limited to the global level. It can be applied at the local level as well, leading to institutions of public affairs split into the pursuit of intrinsic goals and combining local and global tasks in glocal public affairs offices according to the principle of subsidiarity.[8] What is left of the modern state after such disaggregation? It would be replaced with the glocal offices that would pursue the different tasks of improving public affairs only as intrinsic goals rather than as means to serve the states.

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[7] Anne-Marie Slaughter, 2005, 254ff. Cp. Hardt and Negri 2004,163f; R. Hall, Th. Biersteker, eds., *The Emergence of Private Authority in Global Governance*, Cambridge: CUP 2002.

[8] The subsidiarity principle is appealed to in the Treaty of the European Union and in Catholic social teaching.

The current globalization of the economies would have been impossible without denationalizing private law. Remarkably, courts succeed in adjudicating conflicts, in particular in business, without states that enforce the courts' decisions.[9] Some NGOs have even become authorities in justice conflicts, just because unlike states they lack weapons, as armed institutions are known to be easily seduced into misusing their means of coercion.[10] Local administrations such as cities prove to be more effective in solving global problems than states,[11] while states fail even in tasks where we can assume their will to cooperate, such as in epidemic control.[12]

However, disaggregation is resisted by powerful states, not least the USA. The history of this state is remarkable for the extent to which it pursued the Lockean task of law enforcement. The concentration on this goal made the USA, until the second half of the last century, less erratic than other states. Understanding that the enforcement of justice is a universal task, it protected the liberty not only of its white citizens (black citizens becoming a concern only recently) but also of people and peoples outside its territory, allowing their immigration and intervening in other states. Many people and peoples wait for such protection, as their states use their powers to mistreat their populations, sometimes even claiming they thus meet their own justice standards, rejecting the idea of universal justice.[13]

People, peoples and civilizations have become so closely intertwined that conflicts between them have become frequent. They cry out for a global policeman and a global judge. The USA has taken on the roles of world policeman and, though less conspicuously, of the world judge, despite intermittent efforts to share this role with other nations.[14] No

[9] Berger 2010; *Globalisierung und Entstaatlichung des Rechts*, vol. 1, ed. Jürgen Schwarze, vol. 2, ed. Reinhard Zimmermann, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2008.

[10] Cp. Toulmin 1990, 197f.

[11] Cp. Benjamin Barber, *If Mayors Ruled the World*, New Haven: Yale UP 2013.

[12] Cp. David Brooks, "Good Bye, Organization Man," *New York Times* 9.16.2014, the Ebola epidemic.

[13] Some Western intellectuals such as Jacques 2009 endorse the claim of the present government of China that China has its own non-universal values that give special rights to the government.

[14] Robert Kagan 2014, Pt. II, reports that F.D. "Roosevelt planned to share global management among the 'Four Policemen'—the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and China."

state, though, can play these roles without misusing its power. The policeman can be played only by global institutions that use force only when ordered by global judicative institutions that are independent of executives.[15] Yet global institutions require transferring sovereignty rights to them. The less powerful states have accepted such transfer; the most powerful have not, even though their administration obviously suffers from their mere size, dooming them to become what the American diplomat George F. Kennan called a "monster" country.[16]

Though nationalism bars the due pride that moves us to global and local institutions, the disaggregation of the nation states toward glocal public affairs offices pursuing their specific intrinsic goals might go on, with a little help from reason and the due pride of it. It shows that the substitution of nation states by more efficient and just political institutions, altogether pursuing the intrinsic goal of improving public affairs, is no unviable utopia.

[15] Scahill 2013 demonstrates the moral dangers of the US role of the world policeman.

[16] Kennan 1993, 143, 149.

25

Data Processing and Privacy

The crucial factor that puts both current economies and nation states in crises is the modern technology that busts their reasons of existence; the profit condition for investments and the protection of national interests. Despite stubborn resistance to the abolition of the profit condition and national sovereignties, a way to a state more adequate to both modern technologies and human abilities seems to be marked out: the restoration of the intrinsic goals of production and the disaggregation of the states into glocal offices pursuing the various intrinsic goals of public affairs. Data processing, in contrast, seems to head to a new form of totalitarian manipulation that is hardly stoppable, although there is an alternative. One of the reasons for its dark victories is that we find in it an attack on our privacy in the first place rather than on our liberty.

When Edward Snowden had NSA files published that show the extent of surveillance by NSA and computer firms, the worldwide protests were a right response, yet for the wrong reason. They protested against

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the invasion of *privacy* but it is our *liberty* that is attacked.[1] When smartphones and notebooks are "places where clicking on an objectionable article can get your entire extended family thrown in prison, or worse,"[2] liberty is the issue. Why then is privacy appealed to?

Because in the first place we feel that our privacy is invaded. Certainly it is invaded, but privacy is rightly distinguished from liberty because its invasion is different from attacks on liberty; not necessarily less dangerous in the end, but less alarming. The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* declares in article 12:

> No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honor and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 12 does not give examples for interference with privacy, but we can be sure that its authors thought of presenting people to the public in their dependence on our animal needs in which we do not want to be exposed, for reasons explicated earlier in Chap. 17. Such exposition is a violation of a human right, but a less alarming and immediate one as an attack on liberty.

The Oxford English Dictionary explains privacy as "The state or condition of being alone, undisturbed, or free from public attention, as a matter of choice or right; seclusion; freedom from interference or intrusion." Though this explanation declares privacy to be a kind of freedom, the freedom it declares it to be is one that cannot be taken very seriously. For the freedom from intrusion can be only limited; I have a right to be left alone only if I am not a criminal or if I might not commit or not be suspected to commit a crime. But who in our days might not be thus suspected?

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[1] Thus, Scahill 2013 pillories US misuses of data processing for killing people judged to be enemies, but the misuses are violations of liberty rather than privacy. Former Bush CIA director Michael Hayden remarked: "We needed a court order to eavesdrop on (Awlaki), but we didn't need a court order to kill him. Isn't that something?" (Scahill 2013, 504).

[2] Glenn Greenwald after Anwar Awlaki's assassination under the Obama administration, in Scahill 2013, 504.

The *OED* explanation is influenced by the lawyer and later Associate Justice at the Supreme Court Louis Brandeis. In a famous paper of 1890, written together with his colleague and friend Samuel D. Warren, Brandeis described privacy as the "right to be let alone."[3] So when current lawyers protest against invasions of privacy, most often they appeal to this right to be left alone. Yet thus they fail to protest against the more threatening attack.

Paul Baran, one of the first to recognize the dangers of computer technology, described in 1967 the properties that made it possible to develop the Internet. He pointed to the easiness of "data concentration" and its misuse, rejected "laissez-faire" and proposed state intervention to "offer maximum protection to the preservation of the rights of privacy of information."[4] Yet he did not ask what in privacy is so important that it needs maximum protection. Like Brandeis and most of the later alerters against the dangers of data processing, Baran treated privacy as an end in itself.

This is surprising. Since the 1960s, *transparency* was considered a condition of democracy and accountability, while privacy, the opposite of transparency, was under attack in philosophy. Thus, Wittgenstein argued that sensations are not private in the sense that only I can strictly know my sensations.[5] The popularity of Wittgenstein's argument indicates that privacy has become suspect. Yet most lawyers do not bother *why* they want privacy protected. Politicians and journalists warn that sexual intimacy is in danger. Referring to the use of radio frequency identification (RFID) fastened imperceptibly in a garment, California State Senator Debra Brown asked the rhetorical question "How would you like it if, for instance, one day you realized your underwear was reporting on your

[3] Brandeis and Warren 1890/91, 193–220. Onn et al. 2005 similarly define the right to privacy as "our right to keep a domain around us, which includes all those things that are part of us, such as our body, home, property, thoughts, feelings, secrets and identity. The right to privacy gives us the ability to choose which parts in this domain can be accessed by others, and to control the extent, manner and timing of the use of those parts we choose to disclose."

[4] Paul Baran, "The Future Computer Utility," *National Affairs* 8, Summer 1967, 75–87, 83 and 85. He rejected laissez-faire only in the original manuscript, accessible at www.therandmemorandum.com/p3466.pdf p. 9.

[5] Cp. Wittgenstein 1953, I §§ 243–271 (on which I happen to have written my PhD thesis). Cp. Chap. 19.

whereabouts?"[6] In a similar vein, *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd remarked that "Big Brother technology" is a "complete anti-aphrodisiac."[7] Such arguments have their point but they confirm the false idea that data processing is not an attack on liberty, the very core of human rights.

In 1987 German law professor Spiros Simitis described how data processing is used to control individuals by offering them attractive choices. It's the *benefit* of data processing that is seducing: it tells us what we need and want, better than *we* can know. Data analysts can use their knowledge about what attracts us to show us seductive options that actually are not in our interest. As Simitis says about data use in health care:

> The patient is seen and treated as the sum of constantly increasing, strictly formalized, and carefully recorded data that can, at any moment, be combined and compared according to criteria fixed by insurers…Information processing is increasingly used to enforce standards of behavior. Information processing is developing, therefore, into an essential element of long-term strategies of manipulation intended to mold and adjust individual conduct.[8]

Simitis puts his finger on the crucial point: data processing manipulates us and thus robs us of our autonomy or self-determination, the origin and end of our liberty. Unless the patients have a voice in writing the questionnaires and in processing the data, data processing pursues the "aim of controlling and adjusting individual behavior." It disenfranchises the subjects and promotes "a maximum of adjustment."[9] Yet Brandeis' conception of privacy as the undifferentiated right to be let alone, as well as the seemingly liberal view of the Jacobin Saint-Just that "The liberty of

[6] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radio-frequency_identification#cite_note-103

[7] Maureen Dowd, "From Love Nests to Desire Surveillance," *New York Times* Nov. 2, 2103. Dowd reviewed a staging of Pinter's *Betrayal* of 1978 that aroused her interest because it is about a triangle that anticipated the triangle between "two top lieutenants of Rupert Murdoch," male and female, the latter Murdoch's wife.

[8] Simitis 1987, 712 and 710. I'm using the term *data processing* equivalent to *information processing*.

[9] Ibid. 714, 726, 723.

the people is its private life," protect the liberty of the data collectors no less than the liberty of the patients.[10]

Simitis rejects this conception.[11] This is exactly what we should expect of anyone proud of their reason and free will. As Evgeny Morozov underscored:

> Simitis's most crucial insight is that privacy can both support and undermine democracy…As Simitis said: "Far from being considered a constitutive element of a democratic society, privacy appears as a tolerated contradiction, the implications of which must be continuously reconsidered.'"[12]

So Simitis and Morozov hit the mark: privacy should be protected only if liberty is in danger.

Morozov also argued that for "linking the future of privacy with the future of democracy,"[13] we must "Think of privacy in ethical terms."[14] This is misleading, as data collectors think in moral terms too, often intending the best for those they manipulate. What is required is to oppose the morality of *moral autonomy* to the morality of *benevolent administration*.

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[10] Also collecting only so-called *meta-data*: "who you call, when you call, how long you talk," that "does not include the actual content of the communications" and therefore is said to be a negligible threat to privacy, can be lethal. As David Cole reports, "General Michael Hayden, former director of the NSA and the CIA" declared, "We kill people based on metadata" (*New York Review of Books* Blog of May 10, 2014). Lawyers Edward J. Bloustein, "Privacy as an Aspect of Human Dignity: An Answer to Dean Prosser," 39 N.Y.U. L. R. 1964, and Robert Post, "The Social Foundations of Privacy: Community and Self in the Common Law Tort," 77 *Cal. Law. R.*, 1989, did ask the right questions. Both argued that "a violation of privacy is a violation of the self," as Sheldon W. Halpern, "The Traffic of Souls: Privacy Interests and the Intelligent Vehicle-Highway Systems," 11 *Santa Clara Computer and High Technology Law Journal*, 1995, 45–73, 57, described them.

[11] Ibid. 730f: "The more… that privacy is equated with a deliberate and legally protected seclusion of the individual, the more the right to be let alone develops into an impediment to the transparency necessary for a democratic decisionmaking process. As long as the data required to understand and evaluate the political and economic processes are withheld, suppressed or falsified, participation remains a pure fiction. Hence, publicity, not secrecy, has been the outstanding feature of all efforts to secure participation in all aspects of decisionmaking."

[12] Morozov 2013, in the section headed *Too little privacy can endanger democracy* (he implies that too much privacy endangers democracy even more). Morozov is a critic of the high expectations on the politically liberating effect of the Internet, hopes enthusiastically expressed in the Arab spring of 2012.

[13] Ibid., in the last section.

[14] Ibid., in the second but last section headed by these words.

Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein follow the morality of benevolent administration in their proposal of "libertarian paternalism" for data collection that allows administrators to "nudge" us into directions we wouldn't go unless nudged.[15] True, as long as we know that and how we are nudged, our autonomy is not in danger. Moreover, Thaler and Sunstein think of a long-term organization of technology, which is meritorious enough. Yet their plea for paternalism, even if a libertarian one, does not make clear enough that it is liberty rather than privacy that is at issue.

Social psychologist Shoshana Zuboff points to special dangers:

> Karl Polanyi…saw that the market economies of the 19th and 20th centuries depended upon three astonishing mental inventions. He called them "fictions." The first was that human life can be subordinated to market dynamics and be reborn as "labor." Second, nature can be subordinated and reborn as "real estate." Third, that purchasing power can be reborn as "money"…A fourth fictional commodity is emerging as a dominant characteristic of market dynamics in the 21st century. "Reality" is…reborn as "behavior." This includes…actual behavior and data about behavior.[16]

Reality is reduced to behavior because reality is reduced to the data that can be siphoned off, processed and used for control. Whatever cannot be siphoned as processable data is considered unreal. Modern technology, Zuboff shows, provides not only artificial limbs that can function better than the natural ones, but also artificial sense organs easier to use but that distort reality. When she goes on proposing to stop commercial interests by our interest in autonomy, she hits home. But she underrates the real benefits of data collection that would benefit everyone only if it was autonomously organized but that seduce nevertheless majorities.[17]

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[15] Thaler and Sunstein 2008, 4ff, 252. Morozov (see note below) seems to reject nudging unconditionally.

[16] Zuboff 2014. She also says: "Privacy hasn't been eroded. It's been expropriated…Instead of many people having some privacy rights…Google, the NSA, and others in the new zone have accumulated privacy rights…They assert a right to privacy with respect to their surveillance tactics and then exercise their choice to keep those tactics secret."

[17] Zuboff 2014: "the issues have shifted from monopolies of products or services to monopolies of rights: rights to privacy and rights to reality. These new forms of power, poorly understood except

Actually, administrations around the globe need data processing to manage their tasks, just as ordinary individuals need the data processing of search engines to manage their affairs. If data processing becomes a public concern and controllable by every user, it can support autonomy. What is more, control of data processing by those whose data are processed makes it necessary for individuals to take interest in and get informed about conditions in other action spheres. Thus, isolated individuals can become citizens again.

Yet to become publicly controllable, it's not enough to check administrators by market or legal measures. Google directors Eric Schmidt and Jared Cohen propose to "make the right public and private investments, (f)or example, software using peer-to-peer algorithms"; thus "it's possible to end repressive Internet censorship within a decade."[18] But users can never match the energies and opportunities of the administrators that use data processing. Experts and lay people, Schmidt and Cohen suggest, are peers. This is cheap flattery.

Still, also the computer expert and musician Jaron Lanier recommends market measures against the misuse of data processing.[19] This is amazing because he points out that computational technology has "accomplished mind reading, of a sort," which is "based on statistics alone," the statistics of data collected by internet firms.[20] Reading our mind but remaining unknown to us, the firms have the means to determine our will, turning us, as Lanier drastically says, into *zombies*. It is this *zombie menace*, which is a menace to autonomy, the origin and end of liberty also for

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by their own practitioners, threaten the sovereignty of the democratic social contract. We are powerful too. Our demands for self-determination are not easily extinguished. We made Google, perhaps by loving it too much. We can unmake it, if we must."

[18] Schmidt and Cohen 2014. Schmidt is executive chairman of Google, Cohen director of Google Ideas.

[19] In 2014, Lanier was awarded the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade.

[20] Lanier 2013, sec. IV: "Companies such as Google and Facebook sell nothing but computation designed to improve the efficacy of what we still call 'advertising,'…(this term has) come to mean directly tweaking what information people are exposed to conveniently. Similarly, modern elections rely on large-scale computation to find persuadable voters and motivate them to turn out." Cp. Alice E. Marewick, "How Your Data Are Being Deeply Mined," *New York Review of Books* Jan. 9, 2014, on Obama's 2012 election campaign recruiting "most brilliant young experts" to deliver "microtargeted demographics" and predict "exactly how much money they would get back from each fund-raising e-mail."

Lanier, that we must protect us against. In his diagnosis he agrees with Simitis and Morozov, but not in their therapy. In addition to software using peer-to-peer algorithms he proposes to "pay for it," for any data collected.[21] This proposal was preceded by Lawrence Lessig,[22] praised by the *New York Times* business columnist Joe Nocera[23] and criticized by Morozov.[24] Yet the big Internet firms can afford to pay and the simple users are willing to sell their data, the more so as often they do profit from data analysis.

Legal restrictions do not suffice either. The history of the NSA[25] documents how the craving for power evades legal restrictions. Such evasion

[21] Lanier 2013, sec. VIII: "In a world of paid information … a person might tweak the price of her information up or down and thereby find a suitable shade of gray. All it would take is the adjustment of a single number, a price… Put a price on information, and the people can decide how much spying the government can afford simply by setting the tax rate." Yet ibid. he also commented: "The problem with privacy regulations is that they are unlikely to be followed," adding: "Nevertheless, perhaps some new regulations and oversight could do some good."

[22] L. Lessig, *Code*: *And Other Laws of Cyberspace*, New York: Basic Books 1999, Chap. 10, pointed to by Morozov.

[23] Joe Nocera, "Will Digital Networks Ruin Us?" *New York Times* Jan. 6, 2014.

[24] Morozov 2013, penultimate sec. Morozov 2015 emphasizes the potential benefits of data collection and insists that "the only way to curb that power" of data collecting firms "is to take the data completely out of the market realm, so that no company can own them…Companies wanting to use them would have to pay some kind of licensing fee, and only be able to access attributes of the information, not the entirety of it," adding: "When it's owned by citizens, it doesn't necessarily have to be run by the state…citizens can own their own data but not sell them, to enable a more communal planning of their lives…If current economic, social and political trends continue, we could conceivably end up with data-driven automation for the poor—so that all their time can be spent working—while the rich enjoy cultivating their senses, learning languages, getting to know art, studying."

[25] James Bamford, "They Know Much More Than You Think," *The New York Review of Books* July 12, 2013: "In 1975, when the NSA posed merely a "fraction of the threat to privacy it poses today." US Senator Frank Church of Idaho, "the first outsider to peer into the dark recesses of the NSA," succeeded in instituting a watching committee chaired by him." Whistleblower protection offices were instituted, such as the Defense Intelligence Community Whistleblower Program (DICWP) that trust that individuals working for intelligence agencies are courageous enough to make misuse of state powers public (cp. Wikipedia articles on Church Committee and on DICWP.) Yet the most important recent whistleblower, Edward Snowden, has simply been denied the status of a whistleblower and charged with espionage. On the insufficiency of privacy legislation in the US, cp. Kenneth Roth, "The NSA's Global Threat to Free Speech," *New York R. of B.* 11.18.2013; David Cole, "Three Leakers and What to Do About Them," *New York Rev. of B.* Feb. 6, 2014. On Richard Cheney's and Donald Rumsfeld's opposition to the Church Committee, see Scahill 2013, 10. On the motive of the NSA, cp. Glenn Greenwald, who sights and publishes the NSA files copied by Edward Snowden, *Frankfurter Allgemeine* Apr. 13, 2014: "It's power. The more you know about the people you govern, the more power you have got over them. You can predict what others will do;

is possible because the illegal acts can seem too beneficial for society as to reject them.[26] Norbert Wiener, founder of cybernetics, warned already in 1950 that "those who suffer from a power complex find the mechanization of man a simple way to realize their ambitions."[27] To counter this seduction the processed must participate, on an equal footing with the administrators, in the administrations that use data processing. Only thus can the benefits of data collection and of intelligence technology in general be saved without making us zombies of a few big Internet firms, having lost our autonomy rather than our privacy.

understand what they do, even stop it." (my transl.) On the damage done by secrecy cp. the physicist Freeman Dyson, *New York Rev. of Books*, 3/5/2015: "A radical reform of the secrecy system is long overdue. Real secrets should be rigorously protected, as they are in the existing system. The rest should be thrown open, accepting the risk that some of them will be dangerous… Fewer secrets will mean fewer clearances and fewer spies inside the security fences. Outside the security fences, a more open society means more public awareness and more participation of citizens in deciding questions of war and peace… Secrecy in the making of important decisions is the greater evil, and spies are comparatively harmless. Spies may cause us to lose a battle, but secrecy protecting political decisions from scrutiny may cause us to lose a war."

[26] Note that NSA probably is a less powerful data collector than Acxiom. Cp. *New York Times* 22/16/2012.

[27] From Doug Hill, "The Eccentric Genius," *The Atlantic* 6/11/14. Lem 1973 pointed to cybernetics' double character of being *beneficial and menacing*, projecting societies run by computers superior to humans in will and intelligence.

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Data Processing in Novels

Data processing threatens autonomy, but it shares the ambivalence of all technology between constructiveness and destructivity. It is the ambivalence of human will of which technology is an objectified social form. Such ambivalence inspires the kind of general reflection on man that can be presented in novels. No wonder then that computer technology and data processing have become subjects of best-selling novels in countries where data processing is most advanced and most threatening, in the USA and China. Let's have a look at two prominent novels on data processing in these two countries, Dave Eggers' *The Circle* and Hu Fayun's novel on SARS mentioned earlier.[1] Though not explicitly discussing pride, they do show the crucial role of proper pride as an antagonist to the administrative utility that propels data processing.

In *The Circle* Eggers pictures an eponymous Google-like firm's use of data processing. He tells the story of Mae, a lower middle-class girl who, with a little help from her upper-class friend Annie, becomes an employee at *The Circle*. Mae makes it to the top by propagating the three slogans

[1] Chapter 14.

U. Steinvorth, *Pride and Authenticity*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-34117-0_26

of the firm, *sharing is caring*, *secrets are lies*, and *privacy is theft*.[2] These slogans sum up the attractions of data processing that Simitis has pointed to. They herald an alleged second Enlightenment that by committing to total transparency will abolish crime, corruption and inequality, and, by sharing what is considered shareable, will provide universal health and happiness. The slogans also appeal to authenticity, as authenticity is considered to despise secrets and privacy.

By her development, Mae demonstrates that the enlightenment program leads to the dissolution of her self in the anonymous Internet community. After becoming "transparent," observable by everyone through cameras that stop broadcasting only when she is in the toilet, Mae becomes addicted to getting *we love you Mae* votes. The girl that in the beginning loves kayaking for the sake of kayaking, regardless of whether anyone knows, comes to head the global Internet community in chasing after a former boyfriend to whom she wants to prove how beneficial the global Internet community is. Starting her career with dreams she cannot think of telling anyone, in the end she thinks of how to make the dreams of her sleeping father shareable. Rather than helping the rest of the processed to actively participate in data processing, she acts out the administrator's dream of an administration that serves what the administrators consider human happiness.

However, her development is not just the effect of seductive false ideas. Unlike her upper-class friend Annie, Mae *wants* to believe in the slogans of the firm because she craves recognition and financial security. The firm provides them. Mentally and financially dependent on the powerful, she abandons her critical powers. She even sides with the more powerful party when she learns that the man she loves is the third leader of her firm who tries to stop its triumphal march through governments and markets and needs her help. She lacks the pride that a more secure economic background or class consciousness provides.

Critics of the novel remarked that it has "the flavor of a comic book," and that "the character development was incomplete."[3] Indeed, the heroes of the novel look like caricatures; they are "infantile," as another critic

[2] Eggers 2013, 297–303.

[3] Ellen Ullman, *New York Times* Nov. 1, 2013; Kelly Konrad, *Chicago Now*, Jan. 11, 2014.

said[4]; like kids, they lack the due pride of their powers or show the greed of a shark that one of the directors indulges in admiring. Nonetheless, Mae is successfully shown to strive for authenticity and to fail because, for lack of due pride, she loses her self. The novel does demonstrate the dangers of what Lanier called the *zombie menace* and what is necessary to escape it; it shows how near we are to a totalitarian society and how economic dependence and precariousness move more and more people the way Mae goes.

Hu Fayun's novel shows the Internet as both a pillar of citizens' participation in decision making and a tool of administrators to control citizens. The heroine, Ru Yan, is upper class (no, Mao did not abolish class society), becomes an Internet star like Mae, but is not seduced into dissolving her self in a group self. She weathers the shitstorm that hits her when she reports on an incident that the authorities try to cover up, the outbreak of the disease of SARS that spread from China around the globe. Her self-assurance, dignity and due pride strike the party bigwigs who, lacking the family background that provides poise, admire her. A party leader proposes to her, but though she agrees, she preserves her autonomy. Like the Mae of the lone kayaking, Ru Yan does what she does for its own sake. Because they feel it, the Internet community considers her authentic and makes her a star, documenting the attraction of autonomy and authenticity. What Mae demonstrates as necessary to keep autonomy by failing it, Ru demonstrates by having it: authenticity and due pride.

Both novels confirm Simitis' thesis that to counter the dangers of computer technologies it is necessary for the users to participate in the decisions of data-processing administrators. Presenting a positive heroine, Hu Fayun makes explicit that the use of data processing, if citizens participate in it on an equal footing with the administrators, can promote democracy and develop human abilities. Simitis appeals to political republicanism as the way to counter the zombie menace; Hu appeals to authenticity, an ideal that harks back to ancient China and seems to be the same as the Stoic and the Renaissance ideal. If the Internet users were

[4] Robert P. Harrison, "The Children of Silicon Valley," *New York Review of Books Blog* July 17, 2014: "Reading this book makes one wonder whether Silicon Valley could ever inspire a good novel. It can inspire good comedy…portrayals of the most infantile and socially dysfunctional aspects of the tech start-up culture."

authentic, rather than aiming at winning in the system of *guanxi*, they could stop the Party's manipulations. Yet Hu's presentation of a positive heroine doesn't suit the Western taste. So he will not much impress a Western public.

Nonetheless, Hu shows, more than Eggers, that much as data processing and more generally the computer technology can stop the use of our powers it also can spur it. Both of them demonstrate that the privacy that is appealed to in protests against unchecked data processing is the autonomy of individuals.

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Competitors in Metaphysics

Despite their benefits, basic income, glocal public affairs offices and even the idea that data processing endangers liberty rather than privacy are supported only by minorities. Such innovations conform to due pride but not to the way majorities presently respond to facts and make sense of them. Modern technologies allow everyone to do things for their own sake, but the emotional response to this prospect is not to crow over the gains but to cry over the loss of the innocence of not having to choose among technological possibilities. In a kind of agoraphobia we flee from the width of our options into an administered cave life. We expect governments to give everyone an employment rather than insisting on a society without labor; we favor patriotism rather than burying nations, and yield to administrators, trusting in their benevolent nudges.

And yet due pride, though thus demonstrated to be lacking, is a historical force. It appears in the attraction of authenticity, even though authenticity is Rousseauistically misunderstood. It also appears in the attraction of terrorism, for terrorism appeals to authenticity, promising meaning in life. To find meaning in life has become difficult since profit and power have become the only socially incentivized intrinsic goal. People who

U. Steinvorth, *Pride and Authenticity*,
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grew up in conditions of prevailing destruction see little opportunity for the pursuit of intrinsic goals unless the goal is again destructive.

The attraction of authenticity also appears in the attraction of the global society as the great opportunity to find a job that allows making more sense of life than the conditions of the home country, perhaps even to do something fitting one's individual talents. However, authenticity is only one of several ways to make sense of life that today vie for followers in particular among the potential citizens of a global society, and rather a weak one. The global economic and political global players try to control the battle for shaping the minds, but their influence is limited.

The most important global player, the USA, has been most consciously aware of this battle. Its academia has diligently reflected on the forces that are shaping the global society. It is providing ideas that determine the perception of the present age. Francis Fukuyama, more than twenty years ago, pointed to the reality of a global civilization, driven by an industrial production in need of global institutions. Samuel Huntington, analyzing the competition in shaping the global society, warned against its becoming a clash of civilizations, which he distinguished by their religion in the first place. Joseph Nye pointed to what he called *soft power* as crucial in forming the global society, the power to make people want to do what you want them to do, in distinction from the sticks and carrots of military threat and economic attraction. Despite these efforts, the shaping of the minds for the global society is not in control by any of the competing powers. Globalization is a process pushed on in the first place by corporations to access resources and extend markets. Most corporations propagate the intrinsic goal of commerce. States such as the USA propagate ideas of freedom and democracy; China seems not yet to have found out the soft power to propagate; fundamentalist movements such as militant Islam propagate the Sharia.

The battle is between metaphysical ideas, as it is about how to make sense of life, and this is the topic of metaphysics. Understanding its importance does not imply that *pace* Marx not the economy but metaphysics is the basis of society; for the way how to make sense of life is again determined by the economy and other factors. But it means that if you control metaphysics, you control most of the actions of individuals and societies, much as this lever is in turn controlled by other factors.

Yet it is difficult to control metaphysics, just because so many factors are relevant for it, and none of the current global players can control the lever of metaphysics.

We can distinguish four competitors in metaphysics. To be brief, I call them self-enjoyment, kitsch, power and authenticity. Though to last, authenticity needs practices to be properly proud of, for which there are too few opportunities today, I claim it is superior to any other way to make sense of life and therefore has a chance to prevail.

We may doubt that metaphysics, ways of how to make sense of life, have the importance I assume. True, there are contemporary authors such as Knausgaard for whom the question of meaning is basic for life; life is a quest for meaning without which life is not worth living. The same attitude has been expressed in the writings of Kierkegaard, and in another way in the famous words of Solomon: "I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind."[1] These words say there is no meaning, but they imply we need meaning. Yet do *ordinary* humans worry about the meaning of their life? Don't they rather follow their vital urges, their drives for self-preservation and reproduction, their craving for recognition, their joy of exerting their capabilities?

Most people most often, I guess, follow their vital urges, though most people sometimes do ask what all their efforts are good for. Anyway, *individuals*, perhaps, can live without an explicit answer to the question what the meaning of their life is; *societies* cannot. As the German philosopher Jacob Taubes said, "People live their life and always did, but the elite need coherencies."[2] That is, the question of why have kids if life is pointless is felt by everyone once life conditions look desperate, and they do look desperate often enough. If they see no answer, people may go on living but will stop reproducing. Yet the division of labor that societies live on includes an assignment of the task of answering what we live for to individuals who look more competent, and the laypeople rely on them as much as the non-bakers rely on the bread of the bakers. Societies have survived as far as they had experts or institutions to provide answers.

[1] *Ecclesiastes* 1:14.

[2] Taubes 2003 (1993), 119.

The most important of such institutions have been religions. Religion, like metaphysics, claims to answer the question of meaning; but it grounds its answers on revelation or another fundament exempted from rational critique, while rational metaphysics bases its answers on arguments, such as the experience that doing things for their own sake satisfies us most deeply. In their content, religious answers are not necessarily different from rational metaphysical ones, just as by their content, authoritarian moralities are not necessarily different from autonomous moralities. Practices religions recommend can be compatible with doing things for their own sake that rational metaphysics (judging by my ideas) will recommend, because doing things for God can be understood as doing things for their own sake, rather than for the extrinsic goal of a heavenly reward after life.

Indeed, for Meister Eckhart, as we have seen, true religion is living without why, which means doing things for their own sake.[3] The same idea is expressed by Johann Sebastian Bach when he wrote under his religious compositions the words *Soli Dei Gloria*, *For the glory of God only*, implying he composed not in some interest but only by standards immanent in his composition; for its own sake.[4] God, in this devotion, is the sum of constructive intrinsic goals. Therefore, authenticity can look like a religious orientation not really of this world, if compared to the competing metaphysics of self-enjoyment, kitsch and power. These competitors look like mundane attitudes more firmly rooted in life. However, all of them, as they suggest how to find meaning, are comparable to religions, authenticity having more affinity to monotheism, as it recognizes only the one goal of doing things for their own sake, while self-enjoyment, kitsch and power recognize as goals whatever allows people to indulge in kitsch, power or self-satisfaction.

The metaphysics of self-enjoyment, kitsch and power are strong, as they are rooted in the economic and political structure of current societies. Yet this strength is also their weakness, as current technologies are too dynamic to allow the structures of current societies to last. In contrast,

[3] Cp. above Chap. 7 and Connolly 2014.

[4] John Butt, "Bach's Metaphysics of Music," in Butt ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Bach*, Cambridge UP 1997, 52f.

authenticity fits both our self and modern technologies, as these require the creativity that results from the pursuit of intrinsic goals. We should not forget this point because the metaphysics of power, or of winning, seems nearly predestined to become dominant.

Self-enjoyment has today become closely connected to, and intensely determined by, advertisement, show business, movies, video games and similar ways to arouse the attention of the masses. Corporations, states, religious institutions and other kinds of association use the methods of mass media to shape the minds. The institutions send out different contents, but its form is the same, and it's the form that here determines the message. The methods to attract mass attention work without argument or reflection on a subconscious level. They shape emotions and moods and, through them, the self and what we accept as the meaning of life. They present us with melodies and cadences, with gazes and gaits, smiles, tears and shrugs, styles of dressing and undressing, ways to eat and drink, to smoke and spit, and even, in the videos of the terrorist group ISIS, with ways to kill. Such stimuli model our emotions. They are immediately understood, often subliminally, in all civilizations. They nudge us to what to love and hate, what to be proud and ashamed of, what to attend to and what to neglect. They send a message not to our intellect but our guts: that we'll overcome all difficulties, solve all problems, can always be happy and cheerful, if we are like the icons presented. The message lacks argument or narration. It slips away from our intellect.

The scenes presented by the methods of arousing mass attention include effort of will, initiative and creativity, but actions are done to *succeed*, in love or money, power or fame. It is the success rather than the action that is enjoyed. So here is an affinity to the metaphysics of power or winning that puts the meaning of life in winning or chasing after power. Yet what we are nudged to living and dying for is not indulgence in power, but self-enjoyment in consumption, not of commodities only but any kind of extrinsic goal. Even if we are too poor or powerless to attain the advertised good or success, we take getting it, regardless of the means, as a goal worth suffering for. Even death loses its sting in the prospect of drinking a cool beer, wearing elegant clothes, driving a proud car, owning a prestigious residence or triumphing over a hated enemy. These are the goals we are stimulated to pursue, whether it is we or our offspring who'll enjoy them.

The psychological way of urging our self to self-enjoyment in consumption is supplemented by a way we might call social. Umberto Eco has described it:

> A firm produces polo shirts with an alligator on them and it advertises them (a traditional phenomenon). A generation begins to wear the polo shirts. Each consumer of the polo shirt advertises…just as every owner of a Toyota is an advertiser, unpaid and paying, of the Toyota line…A TV broadcast, to be faithful to reality, shows some young people wearing the alligator polo shirt.[5]

How can we willingly move around with logos of firms that make us, who pay them, their unpaid advertisers? Not the firms but social conditions conspired to achieve this. Humans are gregarious animals that associate with people they feel close to. When blood ties were most important, they associated with their kin in tribes, celebrating tribal religions. When ideas became important, they associated around world religions and philosophical schools, as did the Pythagoreans and Stoics. When people were proud of their work, they associated in guilds and unions. What could better prove the central role of consumption than our moving around with firm logos?

If we use the term *religion* in the sense of referring to a web of practices and ideas that provides individuals with a meaning of life, then the psychological and social ways of shaping our emotions and the actions following the emotions function as a religion with its own evangel. The actions provide a sense of meaningfulness of what we are doing, just because they are not reflected but done in a way that seems spontaneous, natural and therefore adequate to our nature, not least because we see so many other people around us acting the same way. Similarly, the evangel is not reflected, not even grasped intellectually, but just for this reason effective. Its message is: *Only self-enjoyment counts*. *Enjoy yourself*! As this evangel is promulgated on the level of the subconscious it leaves no place for dogmas and preachers and follows its own logic that allows signs defined to mean A to mean their contrary. Mass events such as election campaign shows, church congresses or the Olympic Games may tell us we should live for the state or God or humanity, but such *contents*

[5] Eco 1998, 148f.

melt down in the *form* of the message that speaks to our sensuality and leaves no place for contents.

Yet though the evangel of self-enjoyment in consumption perfectly fits current social conditions, it suffers from at least two insuperable deficiencies. *First*, as it claims the meaning in life is self-enjoyment, it restricts meaning to what counts in the short span of an individual's life and, perhaps, the life of her children and grandchildren. It cages life in the limits of mortality. None of the organizations that compete for shaping the global society and use the methods of arousing mass attention wants to confine life to mortality. In their official programs they often draw on the language and symbols of official religions. So do, most conspicuously, militant Islamists. Yet their attraction does not spring from their official religious messages but from their propaganda, which does not differ in style from ads and show business. Their attraction, like that of Coca-Cola or Toyota, is determined by the sensuality it addresses, a part of our being for which only our desires and their satisfaction in this world exist. Radical Islamists may tell their suicidal assassins that they will be rewarded in the beyond, but it is not such promise that makes people assassins. It is a wrathful mood that to some extent is a response to the misery and exclusion people experience, but has been shaped and confirmed by the entirely mundane method of shaping emotions and the self in videos and mass events that instigates enacting dreams of omnipotence, ruthless destruction and enslaving women.[6] Here again appears the affinity of the goal of self-enjoyment in consumption to that of power, but the basic message is the promise to find meaning by self-enjoyment.

However, once this evangel is felt to confine to living as if we were mortal, it provokes resistance that leads to opposition against organizations that cannot pretend to be religious, and to conflicts in organizations that do pretend. The mortality that self-enjoyment tells us to resign to is a perspective most humans shrink back from, not in terror but disbelief that we really are mortal.[7] We can easily agree that this life is the only

[6] Cp. Anonymous 2015: "Nothing since the triumph of the Vandals in Roman North Africa has seemed so sudden, incomprehensible, and difficult to reverse as the rise of ISIS."

[7] Epicurus 1926, 124f, argued that death does not "concern either the living or the dead, since for the former it is not, and the latter are no more." Yet the coming end of their possibilities does concern the living.

one we have. But that nothing counts but self-enjoyment before we die, without any tie to something that survives, offends our pride of having an intellect that tells us we ought to be immortal, because we understand what it means to be definitely dead. No wonder earlier societies believed in the potential immortality of their tribes; no wonder that when individuals could no longer take comfort in tribal immortality, they believed in a life after their death. Such belief is vain but rightly presumes that humans deserve immortality. There is no evidence of our immortality, hence reason requires us to live this life as the only one we have. Yet due pride's intolerance of mortality requires us to live this one life as if it was immortal rather than living it as something that will end and can be used for nothing more than self-enjoyment.

The *second* great deficiency of self-enjoyment is that it cannot even stand a sober comparison of what ads and shows promise with what we really get. For most contemporaries, life is far from enjoyable. For them, restriction to this world means losing an idea that makes their misery bearable.

Still, although the evangel of self-enjoyment has contributed to its opposition by fundamentalist religions that preach our immortality, it has not dissolved. A reason may be that it slips away from the critique by reason. Another reason probably is that it is reinforced by and mixing with the indulgence in power and in kitsch, which is also an unplanned effect of modern life conditions. And kitsch is powerful, as critics agree, not least because it also mixes with the metaphysics of power.

28

Kitsch, Tragedy and Power

Kitsch, such as trashy literature, mawkish music and cutesy objects, is an old phenomenon. It is generally considered to have acquired a new quality when the "cheap artistic stuff" that the German nouveaux riches started buying in the mid-nineteenth century got the name of *kitsch*,[1] and both the name and what it stands for spread to all civilizations. There is agreement that kitsch has become a necessary element of contemporary economies, as it helps keep up the selling without which the value of investments cannot be realized. Adorno and other members of the Frankfurt School have argued capitalism needs kitsch,[2] but also the *New York Times* columnist David Brooks, neither Marxist nor anti-capitalist, trendily referring to the *real contradiction of capitalism*, declares:

> The real contradiction of capitalism is that it arouses enormous ambition, but it doesn't help you define where you should focus it. It doesn't define an end to which you should devote your life…Capitalism…breeds people who are vaguely aware that they are not living the spiritually richest life,

[1] According to Calinescu, 234, in the 1860s by Munich art dealers and artists.

[2] Cp. the chapter on culture industry in Horkheimer and Adorno 1944.

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> who are ill-equipped to know how they might do so, who don't have the time to do so, and who, when they go off to find fulfillment, end up devoting themselves to scattershot causes and light religions.[3]

Devotion to scattershot causes and light religions is the very property of an attitude originally appearing in responses to art objects, but meanwhile appearing in the responses to whatever can be responded to. Brooks' observation fits in with the claim of the philosopher Tomas Kulka:

> Kitsch has become an integral part of our modern culture, and it is flourishing now more than ever before. You find it everywhere. It welcomes you to the restaurant, greets you in the bank, and smiles at you from advertising billboards, as well as from the walls of your dentist's waiting room. The phenomenal success of *Dallas* and *Dynasty* seems already to have vindicated Milan Kundera's prophetic dictum that the "brotherhood of men on earth will be possible only on the base of kitsch."[4]

Kitsch, I claim, has spread and is a more serious competitor to authenticity than self-enjoyment, because it is an alternative to the tragic worldview and can connect to a metaphysics held by both the Enlightenment and Christianity that, in the end, this world is the best of all possible ones.

At the same time, kitsch is held in contempt. How can it nonetheless spread? A reason is that it makes life more agreeable. Kitsch presents reality most *attractively*, not necessarily most *sweetly*. There is not only sweet but also sour kitsch. As Karsten Harries remarked,

> how easy is it to wax lyrical over despair, to wallow in it, to enjoy it. What, as Kierkegaard points out, is more enjoyable than despair? The popularity of decline, anguish, nothingness, absurdity, and death illustrates this. This, too, is Kitsch, sour Kitsch.[5]

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[3] David Brooks, "The Ambition Explosion," *New York Times* Nov. 27, 2014.

[4] Kulka 1996, 16. The quote is from Kundera 1984, 251. Cp. Jacques Sternberg, *Kitsch*, London: Academy Ed. 1972: "If Martians were to take a cool look at the world they might well re-name it Kitsch"; from Kulka 1996, 17.

[5] Harries 1968, 82.

Yet how does kitsch manage to make us wallow even in unpleasant emotions? The novelist Milan Kundera has this answer:

> Kitsch causes two tears to flow in quick succession. The first tear says: How nice to see children running on the grass! The second tear says: How nice to be moved, together with all mankind, by children running on the grass! It is the second tear that makes kitsch kitsch.[6]

The first tear, or as we may add, a first smile, laugh or admiring *wow*, is caused by objects; such as children running on the grass. How many first tears we may shed, it won't turn an object into kitsch. Cute kids are never kitschy, as little as glorious sunsets are; only their representations can be. Kitsch is not in the eye of the beholder, but in an emotion about an emotion. Kitsch is indulged in because we can wallow in an emotion, but when we do, we focus on the emotion rather than the reason or object of the emotion. Kitsch is *sentimental* because it makes us enjoy *sentiments* rather than attending to the reason of the sentiment.[7]

As the joys of kitsch depend on second tears we must distinguish between kitsch and poor art. Garden goblins are often taken for paradigms of kitsch objects, yet they can just enthrall us.[8] We may judge them to be great without indulging in emotions about being enthralled by them. Thus we enjoy them as art, though our judgment may be poor, missing the adequate criteria. On the other hand, we may be perfect in judging art and yet also indulge in kitsch.

Yet the line between the pleasure we take in kitsch and the pleasure we take in art is floating. Children enjoy a Donald Duck comic as a work of art, screaming with first laughs about Donald's blunders. Gradually they come to enjoy their first laughs in second laughs, in particular when they feel their first laughs are approved. Movies (such as Laurel and Hardy films) cause emotions that at first refer to the story but gradually become emotions about our emotions that we enjoy because we have enjoyed them and want to enjoy them again. Hit songs hit us when we first hear

[6] Milan Kundera 1984, 251; from Kulka 27.

[7] In German, indulging in an emotion is called *rührselig*, meaning *happy to be moved*, and is taken as proof of kitsch.

[8] In this respect the defenders of kitsch are right. Cp. as a defender Solomon 1991.

them but after some time can become triggers for emotions we indulge in. Kitsch enjoyment presupposes we already know or believe we know the emotions we indulge in; therefore it is stereotypical.

What in the wallowing in an *unpleasant* emotion makes it pleasant? Sometimes we enjoy unpleasant feelings for moral reasons. I can feel pain for the death of a relative and be content with such suffering, thinking that this is as it ought to be. But then I don't indulge in the feeling; I only state it. Or if I do indulge, I am sentimental in the very way of indulging in kitsch. In such sentimentality I enjoy feeling myself; the sentiment may be painful but as it agitates *me*; I like it because I enjoy feeling my self, or rather my subject, the passive side of the person whose active side alone should be called self. Feeling my subject can be a joy, as it tells me I'm more than a mere object. It refers me to a power by which I might even resist pain, although I don't use it when I'm sentimental.

Because it agitates the subject, kitsch can stimulate the discovery of one's self. Hence, we should be cautious in condemning it. Kitsch is despicable because it misrepresents reality as being more attractive than it is, but maybe it seems so only because we use reality and value standards no longer adequate for current societies? To clarify this suspicion, let us compare kitsch and tragedy.

A tragedy, too, agitates our subject, presents something unpleasant, the suffering of the tragic hero, and yet makes us enjoy the suffering it presents. Nonetheless, a tragedy is considered superior to kitsch. Why? Aristotle, to explain why tragedies can make us enjoy suffering, even the suffering of a hero, argued that the *feelings* a tragedy causes *purify* the watcher by the power to shake.[9] Kitsch objects too cause feelings that shake, yet they are not considered purifying. So what's the difference?

The difference is that unlike kitsch a tragedy gives us something to *think* about. However else tragedies work on us, they want us to think about their stories. What we think is that the hero's suffering is unjust; we even think he suffers *because* he is virtuous. This thought could make us despair (as indeed Aristotle says it does). But *pace* Aristotle it doesn't because we infer that what *we* suffer in *our* life may be unjust too, and that we too may suffer *because* we are virtuous.

[9] Aristotle, *Poetics* 1449b.

These thoughts relieve us. We are relieved from the age-old belief that misery is the punishment for sins. We know this belief from the Old Testament's story of Job.[10] Job's wife and friends accuse him of secret sins to explain his misery, which in fact God, in a bet with the devil, imposed on him to test his virtue. Recognizing the injustice of the suffering presented in a tragic story, we are confirmed in our rightness. We indulge in the misery of the tragic hero, but not in a *sentiment* about our pity but in *thinking* that virtue entails misery. That virtue entails misery is a reason for unending complaint, but its presentation in public satisfies us as a public recognition of true virtue, including our virtue. The tragedy, and Job's story, cry out to heaven what *must* be cried out to relieve us from the false reproach that we are guilty of our suffering. Therefore, a tragedy needs a community that the injustice of our suffering is cried out to and that by its applause confirms our innocence.

In contrast, kitsch objects don't allow for judgments, let alone judgments on virtue. Kitsch makes us enjoy pain not because we find in the pain a proof of our virtue but because it agitates our subject so we can enjoy being a subject, the more so if there are other people who feel similarly agitated. Like tragedies, kitsch requires a community that confirms the individual, but the kitsch community confirms the individuals' emotion rather than their judgment. In contrast, art's agitation arises from focusing on the object it presents rather than on the emotions it stirs up. Sophocles' *Antigone* made the Athenians cry for a whole week. This proves not that the Athenians wallowed in second tears but that the play made them consider what it wanted them to consider.

To explain why we enjoy tragedies, Aristotle, by his recourse to an emotional catharsis rather than to our judgment, had to distort what makes up a tragedy.[11] He claimed the tragic hero must not be perfectly virtuous; there must be a weakness in him, a *hamartia*; for if he were perfect his suffering would be too unjust to bear. But the very kernel of a tragedy is that the *perfectly* virtuous, those without a *hamartia*, suffer for their virtue. Nor is there necessarily a conflict between incompatible values such as the value of the family and that of the state that the tragic

[10] Job 1: 6—12: 9.

[11] Aristotle, *Poetics* 1453a.

hero is suffering from and destroyed by, as Hegel claimed. The conflict a tragedy must present is between virtue and vice, with vice defeating virtue because the hero remains virtuous.[12] Yet Aristotle is right on the importance of a *catharsis*, a kind of purification in tragedies. Tragedies cause the purification from the responsibility for unjust suffering, and as the emotions they cause lead to the judgment of one's innocence and virtue, the purification ends in strengthening the self, hence our active side.

However, tragedies imply the tragic worldview that the virtuous is bound to suffer, while the worldview of kitsch is that everything is wonderful. Yet isn't the tragic worldview wrong and kitsch right? Do not Aristotle, Augustine and modern Enlightenment agree that vice does not defeat virtue but virtue vice; that though there is innocent suffering, most often we suffer because like Adam and Eve we made a mistake; that today modern technology combined with virtue enables us to minimize suffering; that deploring virtue's defeat by vice in tragedies is just another case of man's inclination to blame others for his own faults, and that in the end ours is the best of all possible worlds?

We may add to this Enlightenment argument a postmodern argument. Reality, postmodernism claims, once thought of as man-independent, has become man-dependent; so the tragic worldview, presuming a man-independent reality that crushes the hero, is obsolete. Obsolete, too, is the preference of art over kitsch for the reason that art makes us judge reality while kitsch distorts it. This preference too presumes a man-independent reality. What was considered contortion in fact presents us with our power to *create* reality. While the Enlightenment argument attacks only the traditional high ranking of the tragedy, postmodernism inverts the ranking.

The postmodern argument can be rejected by pointing to the effects of kitsch. From our pleasure in kitsch at feeling our subject we can infer that kitsch will be loved the more the less sure we are of our subject. Insecurity about our subjectivity makes us look at other people to confirm that we are a subject. Therefore, as Kundera says, kitsch moves us "together with all mankind." Modern kitsch requires a kitsch community; it is certainly

[12] In particular in his interpretation of the *Antigone*; Hegel 1969ff Bd. 15 (*Aesthetics*), 449; 17 (*Religion*), 133.

not necessarily all mankind but must be numerous enough to confirm us in our sentiments. In any case, dependence on a kitsch community disables the friend of kitsch from autonomy and authenticity.

Postmodernists can argue that recourse to cognitive powers is obsolete, but they can hardly deny the incompatibility of kitsch with autonomy and authenticity. If they reject the ideals of autonomy and authenticity, they abandon the standards left to them to judge on the world rather than submitting to it. In fact, the spread of kitsch goes along with the spread of nationalism and other forms of identification with communities, such as religious fanaticism and fan club mentality. The individual subject that kitsch agitates dissolves in the collective subject of a kitsch community.

Not all kitsch needs a community to be enjoyed; only *modern* kitsch does. Only modern kitsch has to satisfy the desire for passionate agitation without which we'd feel emotionally numb. For there is little opportunity today to be passionate in activities, as the pursuit of intrinsic goals is restricted to the chase for profit. Yet indulgence in kitsch is only agitation, not *activity*. Indulgence in kitsch prevents *doing* something, hence doing what we really need to have a meaningful life, *doing* things with passion rather than fantasizing them. Kitsch is opium for the modern. It disconnects from the reason of the passion. If the passion is about a humiliation, we can wallow in our passion only if we enjoy our agitation and forget about the humiliation. Kitsch not only blinds us to facts by presenting them as more pleasant than they are, but also numbs us, crippling the cognition that emotions provide.[13]

As to the Enlightenment devaluation of the tragic worldview, this devaluation is only conditional. The Enlightenment does claim that this world is the best of all possible ones, but it claims it is the best only *in the end*, while in the kitsch view everything is wonderful *now*. The Enlightenment presupposes that the world is miserable unless humans follow their duties. It conditions the praise of the world on morality. While the tragic worldview expresses the pride of the suffering not intimidated by the idea that suffering is punishment for immorality, the Enlightenment view expresses the pride of the metaphysician who insists

[13] Cp. above Chap. 2.

both that the suffering of the virtuous is absurd and that there must be sense in the absurdity. This insistence turns into kitsch when the suffering is hushed up. But the Enlightenment did not hush up unjust suffering.

So again we may wonder why another competitor to authenticity is yet powerful. The answer is that kitsch implies not only the sentiment that everything is wonderful now but also indulgence in power, in the merely imagined power of oneself and the real power of the powerful that kitsch invites to participate and indulge in, even if we suffer from the powerful. The first and more obvious attraction of kitsch is the attraction of emotions about emotions, of being agitated and feeling one's subject; of getting a proof that despite the many factual constraints, the constraints of objects in modern life, we still are subjects. Such proof feels the stronger the more we are moved, as Kundera said, "together with all mankind." This dependence on a kitsch community leads to forms of collectivism such as nationalism, fascism, and religious fanaticism, and in this collectivism we identify with the power of movements, political and economic institutions, and their leaders.

Indulgence in the use of this power, often enough a power that humiliates those indulging in its use, is gratifying and seems to make sense of life. Its satisfaction explains the continuing attraction of kitsch, but it is independent of kitsch. As psychologists confirm, to win is a success humans are particularly eager to attain, as "losing evokes a feeling of failure and shame."[14] The mentality to win at any price spreads with the cultivation of sport as a place to live out the desire to enjoy power, most often again in the form of an identification with a club whose decisions the fans can influence as little as the religious or nationalist fanatics can influence the decisions of their leaders.

Indulgence in power becomes particularly attractive to people threatened by extinction. Today even majorities are thus threatened, because they can be replaced with machines. Even the least sign of their participation in the power of the powerful can be enough to make them fanatic adherents of power. As the young can expect stable employment only in ruthless firms like *The Circle* described by Eggers, in work for military and security tasks, and other work useful for the new centers of production

[14] www.psychologytoday.com/blog/pride-and-joy/201209/winning-and-losing

and destruction, many of them will be content to get a job satisfying the most primitive needs making kitsch superfluous.

Here is how a worker in one of the spreading security firms, Halliburton, sees it:

> It is no exaggeration that I live a higher lifestyle here on a basis in Iraq than (I would) in the United States. We have free laundry, apartmentlike housing with unlimited, free A/C and electricity, hot water, various American fast-food outlets, lounges, free Internet, coffee shops, and a large PX (that sells thousands of CDs, DVDs, vacuum cleaners, junk food, steaks, etc., etc.,—like a Wal-Mart). Oh yes, and at lunch and dinner they serve Baskin Robbins ice cream out of huge tubs, and once a week we get steaks and lobster. There is a lot more I am leaving out: karaoke night, all kinds of sports teams…Yet just a few hundred meters outside the fence, little kids are begging for anything: food, bottled water…The reality is very, very, very shocking. We are truly a pampered and spoiled culture.[15]

As long as there is no employment-independent security of life that a basic income would provide, a job with Halliburton will be as attractive as a honey-smeared fly bottle for flies. To other youth, the jihad will be preferable for what they consider ideological reasons, but such differences are secondary to the similarities of their lives. The future is likely to become so authoritarian that kitsch and self-enjoyment in consumption become obsolete, not to mention authenticity.

What is left to make sense of life, and what in fact is offered by the powerful, is indulgence in power and participation in the efforts of winning, not attaining an intrinsic goal, but winning for the sake of winning. This is an extrinsic goal, as it can be attained in various ways.

[15] Chatterjee 2009, 11. The brackets are Chatterjee's. A/C is air conditioning.

29

Prospects, Bleak and Less Bleak

We have found a trend to authoritarianism in data processing and kitsch communities, and we have to take into account that the crises in the nation states and the economy can be solved in favor of authoritarian regimes rather than in favor of a global society with independent glocal public services and a basic income for everyone. Modern technology condemns masses of people to being economically superfluous. The failures of the states have led to new wars that offer the stagnating economies investment opportunities and jobs, but they are about keeping and extending the power of the powerful rather than opportunities for using human constructive abilities. Data analysis gives an edge to firms and states that make the most ruthless use of it in nudging populations and blackmailing non-conforming decision makers, as Eggers' novel demonstrates.

How then can there be hope that authenticity will ever become the prevalent value? We must not look only at the lower classes that most social critics have considered the revolutionary subject. The lower classes are too much exposed to the pressures of survival. Resistance comes not from Mae but from upper class individuals such as Ru Yan, Annie and the third owner of The Circle. The better off are exposed to the seductions of

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the power they are born into, but also to the attractions of intrinsic goals. Autonomy and authenticity are ideas of the privileged.

Instructively, Marx and Engels, pondering the expected proletarian revolution, didn't forget they were bourgeois and that "Just as…at an earlier period, a section of the nobility went over to the bourgeoisie, so now a portion of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat, and in particular, a portion of the bourgeois ideologists."[1] They implied that "bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole" have to lead the movement. In fact, successful revolutions have come from intellectuals and other privileged individuals and groups, often using proletarians and peasants as pawns to get power.

The revolution we need today is the replacement of extrinsic with intrinsic goals. It requires, in addition to institutions such as basic income, individual initiatives to respect and protect the own choices of people and peoples. We find such initiatives among individuals not much privileged but not deprived either. A baker, adventurer and survival expert, Rüdiger Nehberg, became a human rights activist who protected the Yanomami Indians in Brazil and, fighting the genital mutilation of girls in Muslim countries, got important Muslim heads to condemn the mutilation as devil's work.

Nehberg is one example for many other similar activists. May we dismiss their actions as inauthentic grabbing of public attention? Details in the biography of the activists often forbid such dismissal. That they draw attention is part of the professionalism that they add to their passionate fight for justice. Another example of authenticity is the German founder of a successful drugstore chain Götz Werner, whose intimate knowledge of the economy led him to advocate basic income.[2] He unites passion for justice and a productive economy with the professionalism of a business man.

Werner also exemplifies the spreading interest in pursuing intrinsic goals in the professions. Such pursuit has become a social factor. Like Zhuangzi's butcher, farmers, engineers, journalists, show masters, teachers,

[1] Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Chap. 1, Internet ed. Marxists.org p. 11.

[2] G. Werner, Adrienne Goehler: *1000 € für jeden. Freiheit, Gleichheit, Grundeinkommen*, Berlin: Econ 2010.

nurses, doctors and intelligence agents (such as Edward Snowden) take pride again in pursuing their intrinsic goals and despise the pursuit of profit or power.

There are examples of authenticity among contemporary scholars and intellectuals too. To mention only a few, there are the linguist Noam Chomsky who does not tire of accusing US governments of their open and secret crimes; the economist and Nobel Prize Laureate Amartya Sen who proposes measuring the quality of an economy by measuring the development of the capabilities of the citizens rather than by the gross national product; and the novelist and semiotician Umberto Eco who fought fiercely against Silvio Berlusconi's reenacting authoritarianism.

Eco also described a new interest in reality that may give hope for authenticity:

> Somebody speaks, the huge audience is unbelievably crammed in, seated on the floor, packed into the adjacent rooms … they allow the speaker to go on for an hour, for two, three hours, they participate in the debate for another two hours, and they never want to go home … clearly they come partly for the collective occasion, or in other words … *to be together*.[3]

Eco is too modest when he says the audiences come partly *to be together*. They want to be together to learn together from someone considered to be independent rather than a functionary of the system; someone who is both passionate and professional. This interest is obvious enough to be followed by producers of big TV shows, once paradigms of kitsch. They need antidotes against boredom and find them in confrontation with reality. Therefore,

> Professor of linguistics and political campaigner Noam Chomsky has been confirmed as the new judge on TV talent show The X Factor. "…we needed someone who could fill the intellectual void," said programme creator Simon Cowell, "Professor Chomsky is perfect and the audience just loves him."—In his first outing as judge, Chomsky quickly made his mark. "Your act is part of a propaganda state promoting a culture-ideology of comforting illusion," he told one hopeful young girl, before adding,

[3] Eco, 1998, 153.

> "I'm saying yes."—Chomsky then set about a teenage boy band, describing them as "yet another example of pre-packaged ideological oppression whose lyrics systematically fail to demonstrate even a basic understanding of what happened to East Timor in 1975," he paused for effect, "But, I'm giving you a second chance …You're through to the next round."—Not satisfied with attacking the acts, Professor Chomsky then turned his critique on The X Factor audience. "You are all complicit in a hegemonic construct designed primarily to keep you from questioning what is really going on in the world," he told them, "You must learn to think critically and reject the pernicious cult of celebrity." It was at this point that the audience went wild, whooping, cheering and chanting his name. "We love you Chomsky!" they screamed…[4]

The joy of Chomsky's audience is not self-enjoyment but a joy of discovering new ways to reality and of shaking off the passivity that kitsch leads to. Cowell, the show producer, has understood the need to admit social reality to shows. After his success with Chomsky he is said to be going to invite "many more public intellectuals to become X Factor judges including Amartya Sen, Umberto Eco and Sinitta"—that is, except Sinitta, not only public intellectuals, but also people known as experts about social reality.[5] Resort to them proves an interest in uniting passion and professionalism. Resort to them shows that the spell of kitsch and kitsch communities is in danger.

The evidence of growing attraction of authenticity is weak compared to the evidence of growing decay and folly, but it is strong enough to justify hope and even a bit of pride. It is evidence too that the intellectuals and other non-deprived people interested in authenticity must not look at proletarians or Third World countries for progress but just at themselves. At ourselves.

[4] News Biscuit Sept. 2013; www.newsbiscuit.com/2013/08/30/noam-chomsky-to-become-new-x-factor-judge/

[5] News Biscuit Sept. 2013.

Instead of a Conclusion

I started my exploration of pride without program and method, trusting the subject would lead me to what is worth exploring. We found a dimension of humanity, forgotten for a long time and in need of recovering actions and attitudes motivated by pride and authenticity. They shaped the Renaissance and put Europe at the head of civilizations. We found what I claim is the authentic way of life. In its light our current way of life looks sad and despicable, but the proper pride, the pride we know we owe to our natural gifts, might motivate us to head for the authentic way of life.

Hermeneutics was originally the name of the theory of interpreting the Holy Scriptures. Later, its meaning widened to understanding history and other important things that can be understood and misunderstood. As it presents proper pride as the right way to respond to life, this book surprises me by proving to be an exercise in hermeneutics and not so dissimilar from work in hermeneutic philosophy that this author, coming from the analytic tradition, feels rather alien to. The hermeneutic philosopher Gianni Vattimo explained *hermeneutics* as "a theory that tries to grasp the sense of the change of (the concept of) Being that has come about as a consequence of the scientific-technological

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rationalization of our world."[1] This sounds odd to rationalist analytic ears. But it certainly implies that (1) there is a scientific-technological rationalization of our world, (2) it needs an interpretation for us to respond to it the right way, and (3) to find the right way we need to grasp what that rationalization has changed in the "Being." Now substitute "the facts that make us what we are" for "Being," and Vattimo's sentence no longer sounds that odd.

In fact, I imply that the facts that make us what we are, the determinants of our subject and self, are on the one hand our natural gifts and on the other historical facts, in particular modern technology that allows authenticity for everyone and a commercialized economy that keeps to the increase of exchange value as a condition for investment, impeding authenticity. To use hermeneutic-Heideggerian terminology, "Being" challenges us to seize the opportunity to adapt the world to our authentic self that requires doing things for their own sake the way the Renaissance understood it, rather than bearing our being adapted to conditions that suppress our self.

I started from pride, as this was what struck me. Its exploration led me to the various issues of history and morality, the self and the challenges of present technology and globalization and their meaning. This "travel over a wide field of thought criss-cross in every direction," to requote Wittgenstein, is a result of the interdependence of the meaning of things. The meaning of a particular phenomenon such as pride cannot be understood without considering the meaning of the sum of all things nor without taking account of our own time and its challenges.

"Where, in me, was … pride?" I quoted Houellebecq at the beginning of this book. His narrator says that thinking of pride and of obligations arising from our special position in the universe is what entertains "posh Catholics, those who were more or less aristocrats, and, frequently, Jesuits. Innocents."[2] Poshness is not required nor encouraged by exploring pride, but a kind of innocence is required: the belief that we can get rid of the layers of hatred, bitterness and prejudice that deform our minds. The

[1] Vattimo 1997; my tr. from the German translation of the Italian original.

[2] Houellebecq 2006, 56.

innocence that Houellebecq's narrator mocks, yet Houellebecq admires,[3] is the very quality Montaigne aimed at when he tried "to set aside pretense and attitudinizing, self-aggrandizement or ostentatious self-reproach, and to provide an unvarnished picture of his experience of life, and attitudes of mind."[4] It is the authenticity that other Renaissance protagonists showed when with "impartial delight" they did their work "for its own sake,"[5] with "a special sense of honor," not easily distinguished "from the passion for fame" and yet "essentially different."[6]

[3] Judging by the content of the whole of the novel and that of his next novel *The Map and the Territory*.

[4] Toulmin 1990, 37.

[5] Burckhardt 2004, 79.

[6] Burckhardt 2004, 334.

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