APPRAISAL

The Journal of the British Personalist Forum

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Editorial Policy:

P *Appraisal* seeks to develop and promote constructive ways of thinking, from within personalist perspectives, in philosophy and other intellectual disciplines.

P *Appraisal* believes that philosophy should not be a narrow, academic and technical specialism, but should address itself to the general public and to the intellectual and practical issues of the present.

P From time to time *Appraisal* will include *Re-Appraisals*, articles or collections of articles upon 20th C. thinkers whose work deserves to be more widely known.

P *Appraisal* takes a particular, but by no means exclusive, interest in the work of Michael Polanyi.

Format:

P The maximum length of articles is 10,000 words, although longer articles can be split into 2 parts for publication in successive issues.

P All contributions should be in good, clear English, without jargon, and with end-notes and frequent sub-headings (at approx. every 700 wds).

P Please see inside rear cover regarding references to the works of Michael Polanyi.

P **Please ask for the Style Sheet or save or print it from our web site:**
    www.spcps.org.uk (until June 2014) *or* **www.britishpersonalistforum.org.uk (from June 2014).**
    NB All submissions must be composed, or rewritten after acceptance, in accordance with the Style Sheet.

Please send all submissions for Appraisal to the Secretary, and all corresponding regarding membership and subscriptions to the Treasurer.

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The Journal of the British Personalist Forum

Editor: **Dr Simon Smith**

www.spcps.org.uk/www.britishpersonalistforum.org.uk

CONTENTS

Notes on this issue's new contributors:

Dr James Beauregard teaches neuropsychology at Rivier University in Nashua New Hampshire, USA. He is a clinical neuropsychologist who has worked for nearly two decades with individuals experiencing a variety of neurological illnesses including dementia, brain injury and stroke. He has long been interested in the interface between neuroscience and philosophy, particularly in the domain of health-care ethics. He is currently working on a book about neuroethics and has a deep and abiding love of *Star Trek* in all its incarnations, past, present, and future.

Dr Shlomo Cohen is a lecturer in the department of philosophy at Ben-Gurion University in Israel. He holds a PhD in philosophy (*summa cum laude*) as well as an MD from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He specialises in ethics and in bioethics. He has published on such topics as the nature and scope of moral obligation, the anthropological basis of ethics, the ethics of truth-telling, the nature of equality, the ethics of informed consent, and more. He also works as an urgent care physician.

Dr. Sietske Dijkstra has been working as a professor of domestic violence and interagency work at Avans University of Applied Sciences since 2007 till autumn 2014. She has a desk on intimate violence since 1998, www.sietske-dijkstra.com. She finished her dissertation at the University Utrecht in 2000, on how adults, both women and men, give meaning to violence in their childhood, focused on relationships in the family of origin, partners and children. During 2010 until 2012 she was a member of the Samson Committee, investigating child sexual abuse in residential and foster care since 1945 in the Netherlands.

Dr Mouhiba Jamoussi is Associate Professor of English studies at the General Education Department, Modern College of Business and Science, Muscat, The Sultanate of Oman. After a long career at Tunisian universities and two years at Nizwa College of Education, she joined Modern College in 2006. She teaches social and political issues, and her research interests include current protest movements and revolutions in the Arab world. She has a PhD in English Studies from the University of Tunis, Tunisia, an MA in English Studies from the same university and an MA in Social Literature from La Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris III, France.

EDITORIAL

The many remarkable virtues of *Appraisal* and the British Personalist Forum are well-known to the intellectual elite. Great thinkers the wide world over are fully aware, for example, that what you hold in your hand is unquestionably one of your intellectual five, or rather, *seven*-a-day. Nevertheless, I believe that we, here, at the BPF can do more. Indeed, I think we *should* do more, more for the environment: for trees and oily seagulls and endangered species and all stuff like that. Let's start with black rhinos. I'm going to write to the black rhinos on behalf of you, our members, and tell them that we think they're just great. It will give their self-confidence a boost; and if that doesn't get them repopulating Africa, I don't know what will.

Those of you who have lately visited our website —it's what the internet was invented for—will be aware that our first Personalist Workshop, held on the 8th March, was a great success. This was largely down to Richard Allen who did the lion's share of the organising. A report of the day will be posted on the website soon, almost certainly before the next Workshop in March 2015. In the meantime, thanks are very much due to all our participants— contributors and audience—and to the people at the Friends' Meeting House in Oxford who, as always, made us very welcome.

And so, with as little ado as can reasonably be expected, welcome to *Appraisal* Vol. 10 No. 1. Within these covers you will find quite the cornucopia of clever stuff, all purposely chosen to stretch and sate the gentle philosophical mind. Curiously, and quite by accident, the articles in this issue are loosely connected by an interest in polarities unified, dualisms and pluralisms held in tension.

Our first fine offering comes from a contributor who is both well-known and well-loved by all here. Wendy Hamblet is, in fact, one of my favourite writers: her prose is lyrically, poetically philosophical and clear as the crystal which cliché traditionally sings of. (Naturally, such clichés are entirely absent from her work.) Here we have a model of philosophical writing which, if it were the common standard, would ensure our discipline a far higher reputation among the reading public.

In 'Nature and Human Dwelling', Professor Hamblet considers the increasing polarisation of nature and human nature and the subtle interplay between freedom and dependence, 'fragile flesh and noble soul' which characterises it. The question she explores, with the aid of Hans Jonas and Erazim Kohák is whether we can any longer be at home in the wild or would we, perhaps, be wiser to fear the 'not-being' of nature which haunts our being.

Our second article is by a new member of the BPF: James Beauregard. If you have read my posts on the blog, yes, it's that James Beauregard. Much more than a gourmet chef, however, Dr. Beauregard here brings a unique sensibility to bear on Polanyi's General and Specific Authority. His perspective, as will become clear, has been shaped by, on the one hand, a working life dedicated to the theory and practice of science and, on the other, a personal and philosophical life steeped in a tradition of Catholic personalism. This fascinating combination issues in an analysis which, by drawing on Avery Dulles as well as our own dear Tom Buford, nicely extends and amplifies Polanyi's conception of science and its institutions.

This is, in fact, the first of two essays from Dr Beauregard on this subject. The second, which we hope to have next time, will put these ideas into practice. Not only will we see those Polanyi/ Dulles/Buford models in neuroscientific operation, but also Dr. Beauregard, true to his first love, has promised an exciting recipe for cooking and eating our ancestors. If his chicken parmesan is anything to go by, it should be well worth it.

Next up is a distinctively interdisciplinary effort from Mouhiba Jamoussi, a political historian and proud Tunisian. I should say that I know Dr. Jamoussi very well: she was my Head of Department at the Modern College of Business and Science in Oman. During my time there, she became a much treasured personal friend. Thus, I give fair warning: if it's an utterly objective and absolutely unbiased report of her work you're after, then I can only wonder what you're doing reading *Appraisal*. We all know perfectly well that all our descriptions carry a personal co-efficient. (Luckily we have a blind review process to supply the personally configured objectivity we need; as long as I remember not to give the names away.)

Drawing on personal experience to supplement scholarly analysis, Dr. Jamoussi takes us back to Tunisia and the Arab Spring. There, in 2011, at the very springing point of action, as it were, we find the first budding shoots of a new collective Arab identity, one set radically to reconfigure the interplay between religious, political, and social ideals the world over. The roots of this lie in the turmoil of self- and other-perceptions experienced, and ultimately re-appropriated, by the Tunisian people. The ways,

that is, in which they saw themselves, the ways in which they were seen by the West and by their own political masters—all perceptions were dramatically reshaped in the first moments of that revolution. They were reshaped by men and women who set out to reclaim their humanity, their dignity.

In returning to these events, readers will no doubt be reminded of how much things have changed; and how much they haven't. Events in Syria, Egypt, and Tunisia make for depressing news. Dr. Jamoussi, however, remains optimistic, partly due to her keen sense of the difference between 'news' and 'truth' and partly because, as she and I have discussed many times, birth and becoming are neither painless nor instantaneous. Real life is not a Hollywood film in which ninety minutes suffices to establish, once and for always, justice, dignity, and a new identity. These things take time and are, quite obviously, very painful for all concerned. Let us not give up hope.

Like the article which precedes it, and indeed all the best articles in *Appraisal*, 'The Arab Spring: The New Arab Identity' is very much a starting point for a discussion rather than a final analysis. Dr. Jamoussi has laid the historical and socio-political grounds for a more theoretical discussion of collective identity construction. This is a partic- ularly fertile seam and we very much look forward to seeing it develop as Dr. Jamoussi builds upon those grounds, extending her explanation and our understanding of these events.

In our fourth article, Shlomo Cohen brings us back to familiar philosophical ground with his 'Human Being as Existential Paradox'. In this, he explores the 'inner duality' embodied in the transformative dialectics of 'personhood': the dialectic, that is, of self-transcendence wherein the 'self' constructs itself. The modes of being on which Dr. Cohen focuses are Shame, Laughter and Irony, and Play: the vital elements, he tells us, of authentic existence. (Add a bathtub of margaritas and they also make for an authentically incredible weekend.) Anyone who has the even slightest interest in 20th Century Continental thought will, no doubt, find this analysis extremely interesting. Besides Sartre, however, the strongest resonance for me was with that legendary British sitcom, *Steptoe and Son*. If you've seen this

master-class in Buberian 'mismeeting', then you'll already be aware of the ways in which Dr. Cohen's existential modes are played out to extraordinary tragicomic effect. If you haven't, you should.

Incidentally, Dr. Cohen is another new member; *Appraisal* fought off fierce competition from a two-scoop ice-cream dessert to win his subscription. He did not specify what flavours of ice-cream where on offer, however.

Our final is from another new member: Sietske Dijkstra. Her 'Reaching Out for Skilful Performance: the importance of tacit knowing in the handling of domestic violence' is another excellent example of interdisciplinary thinking and, what's more, a practical application of personalism. More specifically, it is an attempt to align knowing with doing in the field of social work. Drawing on Polanyi, Dr. Dijkstra suggests that such an alignment requires a far stronger connection between the tacit knowing, which is embedded in practice, and the formal learning, which often seems to dictate policy development.

There is, in this, a stark and sober warning against over-reliance on hindsight and the 'blame-culture' which inevitably seems to accompany it. A warning, too, against taking at face value the simplistic narratives of politicians and other media types who get involved in social care issues. Of prime concern (for all of us) are the systems and procedures which proliferate in public service, often as a result of increased public and political interest. Most worrying of all, perhaps, are the numerous and wearying ways in which professionals are routinely made to serve those systems rather than the other way round. This is not, one suspects, a humanising process either for professionals or those who need their help.

That, then is our line-up for this issue. Replies and responses to these articles, or any previous ones for that matter, would be very much appreciated: discussion notes from our readers would be a great and very welcome addition to future issues. As always, of course, full articles are welcome too; and papers which take up the issue of collective identity most especially so.

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NATURE AND HUMAN DWELLING

Wendy C. Hamblet

Abstract
Phenomenologists aspire to capture the 'primordial immediacy' of human experience. How is it then that two phenomenologists, Erazim Kohák and Hans Jonas, describe radically different human experiences of the natural world? For Jonas, humans, in desperation for survival, suffer multifold alienation from themselves, other humans and other species. Kohák, on the other hand, sees nature as the very site where human beings can rediscover themselves and find their natural place in the cosmos. This paper attempts to reconcile the two views as aspects of human experience or 'attunements' to world, nurtured by human environments.

Keywords
Alienation, Hans Jonas, Erazim Kohák, love, labour, nature, nurture, personalism, phenomenology, Emmanuel Radl, technological worldview, time, wonder.

In the Zimbabwe of the 1980s, the killing of a chicken meant not only a special meal for the family that day, but delivery of cuts of the unfortunate bird as far as the village children could run them. When one family had, neighbours had too. Since that time, 'market reforms' have devastated that country, water has dried up (thanks to the ecological changes effected by careless industrialised production and mindless consumption practices), colonial compensation funds have defaulted, and sanctions have driven the proud new country into an isolated defiance that has fostered civil and political violence. Where the 'Jewel of Africa' once gleamed, now festers a Hobbesian Hell where everyone wars against everyone.

I don't know what Zimbabweans do today with their chickens, when they occasionally have one for dinner, but I suspect that like countless other simple societies, their communalistic ways of being-in-the-world have been eroded, uprooted, and devastated under the steam-rolling effects of a global capitalism that conflict theorists say creates a new kind of human being—fragmented, isolated, alienated, pitted against each other in fierce competition, and bound only by common greed and mutual resentment.[1] As human values are steadily replaced with the degraded business values of efficiency, productivity, and profit, traditional communalistic, 'naturally-democratic' societies,[2]

which were once the norm across the great mother continent of Africa and in many island settings, are steadily being replaced by cut-throat, individualistic societies of ruthless producers and disciplined consumers—predatory animals stripped of their human modes of being-in-the-world.

Holding onto our humanity under the weight of capitalism's dehumanising inertia will require a focused, mindful dedication to higher values. Many philosophers join environmentalists in coupling human values with care for the environment; they say we can make ourselves whole again by caring for the natural world as nature provides for us.[3]

The metaphor of mutual care is compelling. However, the natural environment is as quickly being 'disappeared' as the indigenous societies that modelled human values. Moreover, a simple view of human 'nature,' claims of 'natural' ways of being human, and a naive view of nature as humankind's caring friend are themselves notions riddled with moral dangers. Is nature really concerned with accommodating human needs? Or is nature not rather morally neutral, indifferent to our needs, and unsympathetic to our suffering? Is it really in our 'nature' as human beings to be at-home in the wild? Is our fear of wild places a 'natural' consequence of good reasoning, or a function of the degraded values that orient our lives today? I will investigate the dark answer to these questions first, with phenomenologist Hans Jonas, then turn to phenomenologist Erazim Kohák for an account of nature's healing properties.

1. On phenomenological method
First a word about phenomenological method: since Edmund Husserl found in Descartes' *Meditations* a 'primordial orientation' for philosophical inquiry, the goal of the phenomenologist has been to begin again to find what has been lost—*prima philosophia*. In the tradition of the finest thinkers of the ages, from Socrates to Husserl, phenomenologists are perennial beginners, tracking the 'primordial immediacy' of the human experience. The method requires a relentless rigour, because first the phenomenologist must identify and set aside what is not easily seen—the truth assumptions that intervene in that naïve experience of phenomena and bend it to a certain logic. The phenomenologist must purposely 'bracket' (to use Husserlian terminology) the interpretative framework that prevents a faithful reading of the bare experience. The phenomenological stance is one of sheer wonder, not of linguistic analysis or

theoretical construction. The phenomenologist aspires to look deeply and record faithfully how humans experience the phenomena of their lives.

2. Hans Jonas and human alienation in nature

To see where human beings go morally astray, many phenomenologists look at the alienated and reductive modes of dwelling that people mindlessly assume as tool-bearers in the 'world of human artefacts'; urban gangs, unsafe city streets, cut-throat merchants, and deceitful politicians—the evidence is everywhere that concrete jungles rarely produce healthy fruit. But for Hans Jonas, German-born Jewish student of Heidegger, humans are not simply 'Being-there' (*Dasein*), 'falling' inauthentically through their lives; they are striving *over against* the natural environment and *in competition with* other beings—human and non-human. Contradiction and alienation from self, other beings, and the natural environment are fundamental aspects of mortal existence, because mortals live under constant threat of extinction, due to the inherent vulnerabilities of the flesh and the limited resources available for survival.

For Jonas, mortal existence is the event of the interplay of Being and Not-Being, where a 'defiant freedom' wrestles out the contradictions of autonomy and dependence, freedom and necessity, fragile flesh and noble soul. Humans are as desperate for survival, as alienated and interdependent, as all the other struggling species along the great chain of being.[4] However, for humans, the contradictions run much deeper, are more fundamental and complex, because, while other beings *live* the conflicted struggle of their mortality, only humans live that struggle in full awareness of its contradictoriness. Humans are aware of the not-being haunting their being.

Moreover, human beings recognise their contradictory relationship with the natural world—their dependence upon it for survival *and* their vulnerability to its perils. Humans exercise their defiant freedom from out of that awareness—alternatively withdrawing into a 'safe interiority' to act *over against* the environing world, and sometimes exiting the safe zone and testing the mutable will of the dark gods of the natural realm, in order to consume the bounty of the great elemental.[5] Humans are aware of the paradox of a freedom that can and yet cannot tear itself away from its being-in-the-world. And they are aware of the Janus face of the mother who nourishes us at our peril. For Jonas, human nature is rooted in an alienated dependence upon the natural world. We are intruders, strangers, and prey outside the safe zones of our tool-world. But we can, through acts of defiant freedom, carve out a place of interiority and

security, which becomes the seat of responsibility, the morality in our mortality.

3. Erazim Kohák and the moral sense of nature

Erazim Kohák is a Yale-educated Czech philosopher. When he looks naively at the human being in its relation with the natural world, what he sees is strikingly different from Jonas' defiant monads. Kohák sees in a return to nature the redemption of a species that has lost its 'natural' way, its moral sense of being. He shows us how to rediscover our humanity and overcome our senses of self-, other-, and nature-alienation by departing the world of human artefacts and getting to know the earth mother on her own terms. Like Henry David Thoreau on Walden Pond, Martin Heidegger in the Black Forest, and Immanuel Kant in the sparse pine forests of Moditten, Kohák upon retirement from Boston College, left behind the city, girded by the high-tension power-lines, and retreated to the rocky fields of New Hampshire to dwell *with* nature and to launch an inquiry into 'the moral sense of nature,' pursuing answers to a question only a retired philosopher would spend his time contemplating: *What does it mean for a human being to live naturally?* Kohák wanted to learn what the wild lands could teach him about the human place in the cosmos.

'It takes the virgin darkness,' he states, 'to teach us the moral sense of the electric light.'[6] To arrive at the 'virgin darkness,' Kohák must first apply the phenomenological method and 'bracket' the things that diffract his vision: he must bracket the technological worldview, starting from the assumption that all scientific inventions are categorically beneficial. He must bracket too the view of nature as a threatening storehouse of resources, waiting to be tamed and harvested. This mechanistic, value-free worldview positions us as the privileged species, with dominion over 'lesser beings' and the dead and meaningless matter that environs us. Our animal best-friends are but 'bundles of instincts' incapable of feeling or thought. The poor and simple peoples of the earth, barely more rational than animals, serve merely for mindless labour and they too are insensitive to pain and loss of life. What do we morally owe to those so distanced along the food chain?

To escape this landscape of conceptual prejudice, Kohák next brackets the tool-system, our world of human artefacts, to see how the modern preoccupation with *techné* has morally reduced our lives. The inventions we created to enhance lives have pushed us off the moral track, blinded us to the vital primordial experience of our kinship with rock and oak and stream and our kinship with each other.

Surrounded by artefacts and constructs, we tend to lose sight, literally as well as metaphorically, of the rhythm of the day and the night, of the phases of the moon and the change of the seasons, of the life of the cosmos and our place therein. The vital order of nature and the moral order of our humanity remain constant, but they grow overlaid with forgetting.[7]

In other words, there is nothing wrong with our artefacts; there is something wrong with us. Blinded by our 'plastic gewgaws,' we have lost sight of the moral sense of what we do, the higher purpose of what we make; we have lost the human meaning in our production and our consumption.[8] Business motives and *raisons d'état* have freed human beings from their consciences, the better to exploit for profit a world of raw materials and communities of cheap labour; the technological worldview was a useful construct, enabling a range of tasks necessary for establishing a global capitalist network, but it has proven devastating for our humanity and our sense of kinship with other beings—human and otherwise.

Without citing the obvious extreme of nuclear weaponry, we can agree that technology presents problems. There is something wrong when we use our medicines to deaden our sensitivity to life, something wrong when solitude is so unbearable that we drown every moment of silence with electronics, something wrong when the lights that banish night from city streets cannot dispel the gloom and hopelessness from the slums that increasingly shadow its borders. Something is very wrong here. Absurd aliens in a meaningless nowhere-land, no wonder we drug ourselves stupid and stamp out the silent moments of reflection. We are bewildered strangers to our kin and aliens on a strange green planet. *Dasein*, resolutely ek-sist-ing (standing out from the tool system reality it has constructed), peers out at its fellow creatures in defiant self-assertion, lonely, arbitrary freedoms defying the absurd orderliness of a world of meaningless scrap.

So Kohák proceeds to bracket our works of technology, set aside our tools for the moment, not to abolish them altogether but to escape their blinding allure, the better to see their forgotten meaning. This is not a simple rejection of technology, however. Kohák is clear:

> I have lived close to the soil for too long not to realise that such a 'natural' life can also be brutish, worn down by drudgery and scarred by cruelty. I am aware that techné too can be an authentically human mode of being in the world, capable of setting humans free to be nature's kin, not her slaves or masters. A life wholly absorbed in need and its satisfaction, be it on the level of conspicuous consumption or of marginal survival, falls short of realising the innermost human possibility of cherishing beauty, knowing the truth,

doing the good, worshipping the holy.[9]

But tools must be bracketed temporarily because the meaning of a lamp is not easily distinguished in a well-lit, heated study with walls full of books and Chopin cheerily playing. Kohák takes us back to a 'participatory technology' that lets the human meaning of our actions stand out.[10]

The world of human artefacts today may have realised Karl Marx's nightmarish vision of alienated everything, but Kohák shows how a simple act, kindling a fire, creating light in the darkness, lets the place of the human agent in the cosmos stand out in unobscured clarity: the fire we lovingly craft with our hands illuminates the truth about human agency: that love gives meaning to labour and labour makes love actual.[11] In a world of fevered production and mindless consumption, the intermediate layer of technology masks the living bond between labour and love, severs the loving thread that connects humans to the world, and makes us forget what we are doing, why we do it, and the higher purposes which grant our mundane labours eternal meaning and value.[12]

In a forest or a field far from the power-lines, between the embers and the stars, the distinctive mode in which humans dwell stands out in its own unique sense; we can distinguish both how we act out our role in the cosmic drama and how we present our meaning to other beings in the economy of the whole. Kohák is convinced that humans cannot live at peace with themselves if they are not at peace with nature, a peace evidenced in the shift from seeing the towering mast pine in terms its value in board feet to its value in timeless beauty.

> So, too, the beauty of the trillium or the goodness of a moral act which changed nothing and yet for all eternity stands out in its nobility . . . Humans are beings capable of perceiving all that. They are capable of perceiving the creation not only in the order of time [the order of production and consumption] but in the order of eternity, lifting up its [mundane] moments out of time's passage and into eternity in the eternal validity of [the] truth, goodness, and beauty of their joy and sorrow.[13]

In other words, it is the caring that makes our acts and our existence matter.

To see what the anonymous machinery of our tool-world has caused us to forget—the moral significance of nature and the moral sense of our humanity—Kohák cites Czech biologist-turned-philosopher, Emmanuel Radl, who, in 1942, in the terminal year of a prolonged illness, published his testament *Utr z filosophie*, a personalist vision of the world as cosmos with humans as its care agents, its stewards. Humans are conduits of the moral law

that orders the heavens, the law that instinctively guides the plant, the insect, and the animal. But in humans, the law is moral, not vital, and its operation is not automatic, not instinctive. In this holistic vision, humans are the privileged species only in the sense that they have a choice: to obey the moral law of the cosmos that beats in their breast or to defy it and go their own, isolated, alienated way. But whatever choice we make, there is a right way and a wrong way to live *humanly* and the distinction is not arbitrary.

Radl explains our mission in terms of a theory of time. The notion of 'right time' is clear in the order of nature—the right time for sowing, the right time for harvesting, for rain, for winds, for the restful slumber of winter, a time to be born, to rejoice, to mourn, and finally a right time to die. The rightness or wrongness of life events is eternal, even though their moments are fleeting. Humans realise their truth as stewards by caring for the earth and its creatures, preserving life and protecting against untimely deaths, thereby edifying the moments of their shared mortality in acts that are forever good and beautiful.

The problem is that time is an ideal construct in the mental life of technological beings; they see their lives as an infinite line of uniform, numbered moments, for securing wants and needs. After the retreat of the gods from oak and stream, the notion of right, beautiful, and good anything became unintelligible. Humans became stuck in intertemporal mode, barrelling horizontally through their days in meaningless acquisition, but missing life's magical moments, opportunities to connect vertically and realise their cosmic calling, opportunities to appreciate and create ethereal, eternal things—beauty, goodness, truth, sacredness — things that are good in themselves but not useful, not profitable, not justifiable beyond themselves. Modern lives are devoid of the vertical reference of a guiding purpose, a greater good. Disconnected from the eternal, our lives are barren, spiritually dead, ignoble, inhuman.

As the destructive species we have proven ourselves to be, we are unworthy of the gift of our being; our presence on this planet is too costly. And yet, concludes Kohák we do exist and to exist is to instantiate goodness. We can restore our humanity by choosing differently: choosing to fulfil the cosmic calling that resonates in our own hearts and throughout the starry heavens: bring eternal validity into the mundane moments of the everyday, though acts of caring connection that are forever good and beautiful. The connection with the eternal can always be reclaimed by gratuitous acts of kindness, caring for needy others and caring for the natural world, doing something noble and beautiful with our labours and our days.

3. The question of 'truth'

Phenomenologists seek to faithfully report the common *human* experience of the phenomena that frame our lives. So we might well ask how two phenomenologists find in the human experience such radically opposed truths. I could 'psychologise' my philosophers to account for their philosophical differences. Such explanations have epistemological value.

Jonas (1903-1993) lived almost the full length of the twentieth century. He witnessed the First World War as a young teen and came of serious philosophical age as Hitler marched across Europe. His academic career was interrupted for decades by exile and combat. He fought in the front lines against the Nazi forces and he later joined other Holocaust survivors as a soldier in the Israeli army, fighting in the newborn homeland's War of Independence. Perhaps a life so saturated with strife cannot shake off its conceptual blinders, its tragic sense of life. Damaged people see the world through darker lenses. The contradictions of mortal existence he describes in his phenomenology were glaringly manifest in his own life: Jonas was a soldier philosopher—the warrior who acted, with defiant freedom, to protect persecuted peoples and the homeland; and the philosopher who appreciated the paradox of deploying violence in the interest of justice. Jonas struggled to understand the contradictions of a species that could include both his beloved old mother and the guards at Auschwitz who murdered her. Given his life experiences, Jonas' philosophy is actually quite generous, because he allows that defiant freedom *universally* plagues the species and provides the very ground of the 'safe interiority' that opens people to responsibility. For him, there are no angels and demons, no innocent good guys and crazed genocidicaires, only morally frail scaredy-cats, desperate to survive.

Kohák on the other hand, was born in 1933 in Prague, and his family emigrated when the communists took over in 1948, when he was only eleven. He studied and then taught philosophy and theology at Yale and then Boston College, until 1989 when he returned to Czechoslovakia, where he still teaches at Charles University. This is not to say that Kohák's life was easy while Jonas' life was hard. Kohák would unlikely have retreated to nature if his life in the city had been merely simple and pleasant. Suffering is often the occasion of wonder and wonder the midwife of philosophy, and all phenomenologists are perennial wonderers.

Nonetheless, Jonas surely witnessed atrocities that Kohák could barely imagine, and found things in human 'nature' that demanded explanation but offered no easy cures.

Which phenomenology is more accurate as a faithful study of the human experience? Which phenomenologist is telling the 'truth'? Both are right—and incomplete. Humans can act with defiant freedom to find a firm footing in a world they experience as threatening and hostile, *and* they can find themselves at home in the world, befriend others, and enjoy their natural surroundings. People are no more 'naturally' fearful and violent than they are 'naturally' moral. Fear and violence and compassion are, I offer, 'attunements' to the world, orchestrated throughout our lives and especially in our earliest days, months, and years: by mothers who struggle desperately to feed and shelter their babies; by fathers who see nobility in battle and arm their sons for war; by preachers stirring up armies of crazed believers eager for Armageddon; and by crafty politicians and greedy businessmen, fighting the losing battle to silence and imprison the proliferating poor rebelling at the city gates and demanding their share of the common wealth. Fear and aggression are not lodged in human nature; they are born of want and greed, and they flourish in societies ignorant of the first law of the playground—that sharing is good and hoarding obscene. Late capitalism puts us out of time with our cosmic calling, out of tune with our creaturely kin.

The problems are enormous, but Kohák's answer to them is right: we can adjust our 'attunement' by retreating to quiet places to reflect on life's higher meanings. Standing in the forest on a still night, Kohák learned that nature is both beautiful and terrifying, but that we can carve out a place of belonging and feel at home in the world. The forest taught him that solitude brings gratitude, while tool props blind us to the utter contingency that links the beings of this world, the fragility of all life. The beaver and the woodchuck taught Kohák that mechanical things are soulless, while animals are soulful; that it is an obscenity and a sacrilege to *have* more than one can *love*; that the only legitimate possessing is the belonging that binds us to the land in mutual care-giving. He learned from the stark, cold January moon that a man alone is a waste of good firewood, and that there is room enough for us all on this big blue rock, hurdling through space, if only we learn to live as simpler peoples did: taking only what we need today and maybe putting by a little for tomorrow, but not forgetting to send the children running with giblets for the neighbours. Kohák assures us that we technological beings can come to learn the truths of the forest, because we have essential belonging in the natural order of things. We too are an indispensable and precious fragment of the full, green, living stillness of a summer afternoon.[14]

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Notes:

1. Otomar Bartos and Paul Wehr, *Using Conflict Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 38-49.
2. See Cheikh Anta Diop, *Civilization or Barbarism: An Authentic Anthropology*, Yaa-Lengi Meema Ngemi, trans. (Brooklyn, NY: Lawrence Hill Books, 1991).
3. Bill Plotkin, *Nature and the Human Soul* (Novato, CA: New World Library, 2008).
4. Hans Jonas, *Mortality and Morality* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1996),59-61.
5. That most creatures live in justified fear and ruthless self-assertion is a mundane fact: most species, including our own, live by killing the others. It really is a jungle out there. See George C. Williams, *Adaptation and Natural Selection* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1966). Williams tells that 10% of the 30 million living species on the planet are parasites. That is why he, one of the godfathers of evolutionary biology, calls Mother Nature 'a wicked old witch'.
6. Ibid., xiii.
7. Idem.
8. Ibid., xi; Plato, *Rep*. 8.557c.
9. Ibid., x.
10. Ibid., 25.
11. Idem.
12. Ibid., 25-26.
13. Ibid., 83.
14. Ibid., 60.

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SCIENCE AND AUTHORITY:

POLANYI'S GENERAL AND SPECIFIC AUTHORITY IN CURRENT SCIENCE

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Abstract

Michael Polanyi wrote perceptively about the nature and process of science and of scientific institutions. His concepts of General and Specific authority continue to be useful, but, given the complexities of contemporary science and its development over the past half-century, these concepts may not fully capture the scientific enterprise and those who practice it. Polanyi's insights and the structure of his concept of authority can serve as a guide to develop a richer and more complete vision of science, scientists, scientific authority and the role of science in contemporary society.

Keywords

Analogy; apprenticeship; authority; belief; Thomas O. Buford; Church; Avery Dulles; institutions; models; personalism, Michael Polanyi; science; trust.

1. Introduction: Polanyi, authority and science

Michael Polanyi wrote extensively on the scientific enterprise, education and apprenticeship in the sciences. An important aspect of his thinking was the nature and activity of authority within scientific tradition. In attempting to capture the nature of scientific authority he had recourse to analogies taken from law and religion for his concepts of General and Specific Authority. This essay seeks to examine those concepts in light of contemporary resources to develop a contemporary appreciation of the nature and role of authority in science.

   Polanyi was a Hungarian Jew who was baptised as a Roman Catholic in 1919. He lived and worked in England where he came into frequent contact with Protestant tradition, and he drew on these religious traditions when writing about science.[1] In practice, he did not continue to identify himself exclusively with Catholic tradition, but is reported to have attended Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist church services; it was from the Protestant tradition that he drew his analogy for the exercise of authority in science.[2] In a 1968 letter in which he commented on the use of religious imagery for him and understanding science, he wrote:

> I was guided by a conviction that the Pauline scheme of redemption is the paradigm of the process of scientific discovery. It demands us to undertake a task for which our explicit faculties are clearly insufficient, trusting that our labours will be granted success by

powers over which we have no command.[3]

With regard to the 'Pauline scheme' Polanyi recognises Christianity's understanding of the fallen human condition, which, transformed and assisted by grace, can achieve that which is beyond our own limited abilities.[4]

   The extent to which Polanyi was committed to a specific religious community or to faith in general is sometimes debated. Did he become a Christian, initially at least, for matters of convenience during the rise of Fascism, or did he have a real, deep faith commitment? His commitment to the Catholic Church in particular appears both limited and ambiguous, and Mark Mitchell notes that Polanyi, born and raised in a Jewish family, had made explicit mention of the Catholic Church in his native Hungary vis-à-vis treatment of the Jews, the church's actions during the Inquisition, and the church's mixed relationship with science and scientific discovery.[5] On the intellectual plane, Christianity clearly provided Polanyi with resources for considering the nature and practice of science.

   In describing the nature of the scientific authority, Polanyi identified two contrasting types, General and Specific Authority, and through this contrast sought to clarify the manner in which authority is exercised in scientific tradition and practice. In each case, he drew on religious analogy to clarify his concepts. In describing General Authority Polanyi drew on the analogies of law and Protestant Christianity, and contrasted these with his concept of Specific Authority, exemplified by the structure and activity of the Catholic Church. His concepts of General and Specific authority can be organised around the question, 'Where does sovereignty reside?'

> Polanyi sees in the realm of law and legal practice (particularly practice) a deep consonance with how scientific tradition operates. He describes judges as deriving from past judicial practices the principles of law and applying these creatively in the light of their conscience to ever new situations; and see how in doing so they revise in many particulars the very practice from which they derived their principles.[6]

The individual practitioner of the law is likened to a Protestant Christian for whom

> the Bible serves as a creative tradition to be upheld and reinterpreted in new situations in light of his

conscience. While the Bible is held by him to mediate to the individual the revelation which it records, belief in this revelation is held to acquire the full value of faith only when it is affirmed by the individual's conscience. Conscience can then be used even to oppose the authority of the Bible where the Bible is found spiritually weak.[7]

General Authority is a model in which sovereignty is decentralised and present in every practitioner of science; there is no central, specific, concrete human institution acting as the ultimate source and arbiter of scientific orthodoxy; rather it is the ideal of science expressed in the empirical scientific method. In this regard,

> Sovereignty over the world of science is vested in no particular ruler or governing body, but is divided into numerous fragments, each of which is wielded by one single scientist. Every time a scientist makes a decision in which he ultimately relies on his own conscience or personal beliefs, he shapes the substance of science or the order of scientific life as one of its sovereign rulers. The powers thus exercised may sharply affect the interests of his fellow scientists. There is no need for a paramount supreme power to arbitrate in the last resort between all these individual decisions. There are divisions among scientists, sometimes sharp and passionate, but both contestants remain agreed that scientific opinion will ultimately decide right; and they are satisfied to appeal to it as their ultimate arbiter. Scientists recognise that, inasmuch as each scientist is following the ideals of science according to his own conscience, the resultant decisions of scientific opinion are rightful.[8]

General Authority is thus decentralised, and acts as an arbiter in the practice of science. Science moves forward through the work of individual scientists embracing and having faith in the ideal of science, acting according to their conscience, trusting and believing that the ideals of science residing in individual practitioners of science will act as a reliable guide to the truth or falsity of new scientific claims.

Polanyi constructs a polarity in which Specific Authority stands in sharp contrast to General Authority. Sovereignty in Specific Authority is centralised, which makes it unsuitable for scientific practice. It emanates from a single source and is described as normative for all who are subject to it. Polanyi's image for this type of authority is the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. Having described sovereignty in Protestant Christianity as residing ultimately in the individual's conscience, he describes a Catholic Church

> which denies to the believers conscience the right to interpret the Christian dogma and reserves the final decision in such matters to his confessor. Here is here

the profound difference between two types of authority; one laying down general presuppositions, the other imposing conclusions.[9]

Regarding the nature of sovereignty in Specific Authority, Polanyi makes reference to the medieval church:

> the authority of certain texts which it imposed remained fixed over long periods of time and their interpretation was laid down in systems of theology and philosophy, gradually developing over more than a millennium from St. Paul to Aquinas. A good Catholic was not required to change his convictions and reverse his beliefs at frequent intervals, in deference to the secret decisions of a handful of high officials.[10]

Contemporary readers of Polanyi's work might ask three questions:

1. Is a stark polarity the most useful tool in understanding scientific authority?
2. Since sound conclusions follow from true premises, were Polanyi's analogies accurately formulated (i.e. law on the one hand, and Christianity in its Protestant and Catholic manifestations on the other)?
3. Are Polanyi's concepts of authority useful in the analysis of contemporary scientific culture, tradition and practice?

My response to the first and second questions is no, but my response to the third question is a qualified yes. This may at first appear a contradiction: if polarities have limited utility and Polanyi's analogies were inadequate, how can his concepts be of continued use? I would present the matter in this way: science has developed in leaps and bounds since Polanyi wrote at the mid-twentieth century. Scientific enterprises operate worldwide and the rate of scientific discovery, publication, and the dissemination of scientific knowledge among scientists and to the wider public have accelerated dramatically since Polanyi's time through varied media including television and the Internet. Through the Internet, for example, one scientist or scientific group whose members are operating in different locations can communicate instantaneously with other scientists anywhere in the world, and scientific knowledge can be more quickly disseminated for international review by the scientific community through publication in electronic journals; it has become increasingly common to find scientific journal articles of multiple authorship from different continents. Given the situation, the decentralisation of science has expanded while the ideal of science has remained constant. Polanyi's description of the institution of science as an ideal that is embraced and practised by individual scientists remains useful.

At the same time, we have become more wary of absolute polarities in academic inquiry as well as in other domains of life including the political and the religious. What may once have been understood as disconnected polar opposites are often found to be intimately related. For example, Polanyi rightly recognises the personal and emotional context of facts, and that a fact-value dichotomy fails to capture the rich realities of human knowing. In the religious domain, it has long been known that the embracing of one side of a polarity to the exclusion of the other typically leads down a theological, spiritual and ecclesiastical garden path. In the early church, those who embraced one extreme and reject the other were frequently labelled heretics, and the development of doctrine over centuries involved a balancing of initially perceived opposites. Nature *or* grace? Grace operating within the natural structure of the human person is recognised in orthodox Christianity as a normal road to salvation. Jesus human *or* divine? The Christian community in the centuries after Jesus came to recognise him as both, a process that spurred the development of thinking about Persons. Protestant *or* Catholic? The polarity of the early Reformation has failed to hold; both traditions are grounded in faith in Christ, expressed in Scripture and lived in a communal tradition. Fruitful inter-religious dialogue in recent decades has recognised the common ground of both traditions. Faith *or* reason? The most profound thinkers in the Christian tradition have seen these not as polarities, but as complementary activities in the search for truth, two ways of knowing that cannot ultimately be in disagreement.

I would like to suggest that through an examination of two recent resources Polanyi's concept of authority can be retained but modified, deepened and expanded in a manner which more fully captures the nature of science and its practice in contemporary society. Polanyi himself can serve as the guide in this process. When he wrote about the institution of science, he employed the religious images noted above in developing an understanding of how scientific tradition is created, maintained and perpetuated, as well as the manner in which science operates in terms of the presuppositions of science, adherence to the empirical method, the roles of faith, trust and belief, and the central role of apprenticeship in passing on scientific tradition. I suggest that the use of analogies in Polanyi remains useful, and that they can be both appropriately modified and deepened through the consideration of the philosophical work of Thomas O. Buford and the ecclesiastical theological work of Avery Dulles. What follows is an examination of these resources

and then an attempt to place them in dialogue with Polanyi's conceptions of authority as exercised in science.

2. Images and institutions: Are Polanyi's descriptions accurate?

Did Polanyi get his religious images right? In his descriptions of General and Specific Authority in *Science Faith and Society*, he organises his understanding of authority by way of analogy, touching on the ideals of science, the conscience of individual scientific practitioners committed to these ideals, and the practice of science itself. Where does sovereignty reside? He describes the Protestant tradition as giving an ultimate role to individual conscience. For a Protestant,

> the Bible serves as a creative tradition to be upheld and reinterpreted in new situations in the light of his conscience. While the Bible is held by him to mediate to the individual the revelation which it records, belief in this revelation is held to acquire the full value of faith only when it is affirmed by the individual's conscience. Conscience can then be used even to oppose the authority of the Bible where the Bible is found spiritually weak.[11]

For Polanyi, Protestant theology is formed by 'the consensus of independent individuals, rooted in a common tradition.'[12]

This vision of the ultimate power of conscience with regard to authority is contrasted sharply by Polanyi in his description of the Catholic Church, were sovereignty is seen to reside in a small number of individuals in a highly centralised institution (the hierarchy of the church). Catholicism, he asserts,

> denies to the believers conscience the right to interpret the Christian dogma and reserves the final decision in such matters to his confessor. There is here the profound difference between the two types of authority; one laying down general presuppositions, the other imposing conclusions. We may call the first a General, the latter a Specific Authority.[13]

Authority and its exercise are markedly differently for Polanyi in these two Christian traditions. He describes General (Protestant) authority as leaving 'the decisions for interpreting traditional rules in the hands of numerous independent individuals, while the latter centralises such decisions at headquarters.' Further commenting on Catholic/Specific Authority, he writes,

> A Specific Authority on the other hand makes all important reinterpretations and innovations by pronouncements from the centre. The centre alone is thought to have authentic contacts with the fundamental sources from which the existing tradition springs and can be renewed. Specific Authority demands therefore not only devotion to the tenets of

a tradition but subordination of everyone's ultimate judgment to discretionary decision by an official centre.[14]

Polanyi's description of Protestant tradition may have been closer to the mark, though it may still underestimate the power of a central authority to direct practice and belief. While there is no worldwide oversight/authority for the Protestant churches mirroring the government of the Catholic Church, each of the different denominations does have a governing structure, whose role is to regulate the life of its members and to pass on the tradition.

Regarding Roman Catholic tradition, Polanyi missed the mark. His vision of utter centralisation in a circumscribed hierarchy leaves out so much as to border on caricature. First, he names only the human organisation of churches, structures that mirror other governing structures in human society. Like Protestantism, Catholic tradition is Judeo-Christian, extending back through the Hebrew Scriptures and necessarily allowing room for authoritative sources outside the human command structure (popes, bishops, etc.) envisioned as a rigid hierarchy imposing conclusions. In doing so, Polanyi fails to recognise the central source of authority in Christian tradition: the presence of the Holy Spirit in the community called together by God, hovering over the waters in the first verse of Genesis, and present as tongues of flame at the first Pentecost (Acts 2: 1-47). Nor does he acknowledge the most powerful source of extra-official authority in the Hebrew scriptures: the prophets, much of whose role was to criticise injustice and the abuses of power by Israel's political and religious leaders. In the long centuries of Christianity, the saints were constant sources of extra-hierarchical authority. Bernard of Clairvaux and Catherine of Sienna, for example, never hesitated to tell popes what to do. Central and South Americans, including Oscar Romero and liberation theologians, changed the relationship between the hierarchical church and the governments of many states in the region. Their influence has been felt since Pope Francis was elected in 2013.

Change in Catholic tradition more typically came from the margins to the centre, rather than radiating outward. The substantial changes in the Church's self understanding that too place at the Second Vatican Council had their roots no in the Popes and the Curia, but in the liturgical renewal of the Benedictine Abbeys of Germany and the writings of French and German theologians, many silenced prior to the Council, but whose work was ultimately impressed on the whole church through the Council's activities.[15] Polanyi's Specific Authority, short on nuance, fails to recognise different levels of authority

within Catholic tradition as well; infallible statements (only two between 1870 and the writing of this essay), non-infallible authoritative statements (papal encyclicals and documents of the various Vatican congregations), and the authority of theologians in their teaching and writing, and finally, the wider *sensus fidei*, the authority that exists within the entire community.

Polanyi runs into trouble on his notions of conscience as well. He describes church doctrine ('dogma' in his terms) as being centrally imposed on the conscience of the believer, an activity that takes place in every day life in the relationship between an individual Catholic and his or her confessor. This vision of command and obedience bears little resemblance, if any, to actual Catholic practice. The Sacrament of Reconciliation, which includes but is not reducible to confessors and confession, is not a matter of dogma but of what the name of the sacrament suggests, return (Buber's *Umkehr*) and reconciliation with God and the community. Viewing a confessor primarily as a judge handing down grace and right ways of thinking and acting is again more caricature of reality grounded in love, healing and forgiveness. Lastly, Polanyi so minimises the role of conscience to a sort of blind obedience in the confessional that it does not accurately reflect the reality. It has been the long teaching of the Catholic Church that an individual's ultimate obligation is to form conscience well and then to follow it, even when it disagrees with official church teaching.[16] Both Protestant and Catholic traditions embrace multiple sources of authority, both visible and invisible.

In the end, Polanyi's notion of Specific authority fails to convince. It is worthwhile asking if Specific Authority as Polanyi describes it has ever been successfully exercised, or only attempted. The USSR no longer exists, and history suggests that attempts at Specific Authority fail. Conclusions are not successfully imposed from the centre; the common result is the creation of dissidents, martyrs and revolutions.

The concept of 'Institution' is important to Polanyi and he meets with more success as he describe science as an institution held together by adherence to the empirical method of research and verification, and as an institution that passes on the values and practices of science in the three stages of education: primary/secondary education, university, and apprenticeship to a master that involves teaching, emulation trust and faith.[17] These institutions provide scientific formation which is a passing on of both knowledge both explicit and tacit, and an education that involves submission to authority that challenges

authority at the same time. For Polanyi, the unconscious acquisition of the presuppositions of science is as important as the knowledge base of any particular scientific discipline.[18]

Institutions are complex realities, since Polanyi's time further reflection and investigation into the nature, purpose and operation of institutions has provided a more complex vision that can serve to deepen understanding of science. It is to a reflection on institutions in the work of the Personalist philosopher Thomas O. Buford that we will now turn.

3. *Thomas O. Buford:* Trust, Our Second Nature

American Personalist philosopher Thomas O. Buford has written on several occasions about the nature of institutions from a Personalist perspective. In doing so he distinguishes between Primary and Secondary institutions and emphasises that the role of trust is essential to the social fabric of these institutions, through which they endure over time.[19] In his work he elucidates several concepts that are useful in considering the nature of institutions in general and the institution of science in particular. In order to situate institutions, he has drawn on anthropological sources, distinguishing *habitat* as a physical/geographic/climate features of an area in which a group of people reside, *culture* as the artefacts and worldview of a social group, and *environment* as persons in their habitat and cultural setting.[20] Institutions exist and operate in this environment, where they are both found and made:

> institutions are relatively permanent social relations, sanctioned by norms, that satisfy a social desire, need, and/or purpose and are situated among the ecosystem, or normative beliefs, and ourselves.[21]

Buford refers to institutions as providing the stable context in which human consciousness develops in a triadic relation of I-Thou-It, with the third component might be 'a thing, event, cause, or norm.' Institutions are found within this triadic relation, where, Buford further asserts, 'all knowledge occurs within the Triad and rests on some form of trust: *fides, fiducia* and *fidelitas* (believing, trust, loyalty).'[22]

Buford further distinguishes both human nature and institutions as existing in primary and secondary forms, building on our own first and second natures. He describes our first nature as our 'natural endowment,' that is, all aspects of person we are born with and that will develop and be shaped by our natural environment.[23] Our second nature occurs in the I-Thou-It context and 'is the form of social actions of persons in triadic relations' that develops over time and in the context of our social existence.

Second nature 'is the form of social actions of persons in triadic relations.' The social fabric of our life in community lies on trust and is stabilised by institutions.[24]

Institutions may also be described in two senses, primary and secondary. Primary institutions are the 'stable, enduring, norm-governed social pattern potentials of the triad undergirded by physical laws.'[25] Buford identifies seven primary institutions, in society: 'economic, educational, political, reproductive, religious, regulative, and communicative.'[26] Primary institutions exist within social relations, in the I-Thou-It Triad, but are not reducible to it. They are enduring interrelations, extending beyond the life of individuals, transmissible from generation to generation and provide an undergirding source of stability for society.

While Primary Institutions exist in this social/interactional context and are concretised in Secondary Institutions, which he describes as specific, historical, physical manifestations of Primary Institutions that meet specific social needs. In this context, education in terms of its ideals and beliefs and metaphors would considered a primary institution, while a specific university would be its secondary institutional expression.[27]

Buford also describes the family as a stabilising social institution encompassing multiple primary and secondary institutions:

> As a primary institution, this stabiliser controls reproduction, provides a socially approved expression of sex drive or need, provides for the protection and care of children, informally transmits the culture, and ascribes statuses. In its secondary form it appears in various patterns from monogamy to polygamy. Also, authority could vary from patriarchal, to matriarchal, to equalitarian.[28]

Buford's distinction between primary and secondary institutions are useful in conceptualising science. Science as a primary institution encompasses the ideals of science, the embracing of the empirical/scientific method, authoritative scientific tradition, and the goals of science. These serve as the basis for the worldwide scientific community. Science as a secondary institution would include concrete institutions in which science is practised and in which the primary institution of science is manifested, such as universities and a variety of independent research laboratories. In the context of these secondary institutions apprenticeship is a process by which the primary institution of science is inculcated in the learner.

4. *Avery Dulles:* Models of the Church
Avery Dulles, S.J. (1918-2008) was an American

systematic theologian raised as a Presbyterian, who subsequently entered the Roman Catholic Church and then the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). One of his most important works was *Models of the Church* (originally published in 1974, revised in 1987 and in 2001). Dissatisfied with a fragmented institutional model of church he demonstrated was operative in the minds of many (both within the church and beyond it), he articulated five additional models to provide a more comprehensive view of what the church is and how it operates. He asserts that all of these models exist to greater or lesser extent in all Christian churches. The structure of his work lends itself to an examination of authority as it is exercised in the different models, and can serve as a method for examining authority and its activities in science.

Dulles eschews any disjunct, either-or polarities of traditional comparative ecclesiology, such as Protestant vs. Catholic, prophetic vs. priestly, vertical vs. horizontal, institution vs. event, which focus on the similarities and differences of different denominations.[29] He argues that no one model of church can completely describe the church and its activity. He specifically rejects an Institutional model as primary or normative for understanding the Christian community. What follows is a brief description of Dulles' conceptual scheme including his choice of the word 'model' and the main points of each, which will then serve as a means of examining the uses of authority in science.

Dulles begins with a discussion of the nature and purpose of analogy, and his choice of the word 'model,' over such terms as analogy, aspect, metaphor, symbol, mindset, paradigm and dimension. His choice of 'model' is grounded in his

> conviction that the Church, like other theological realities, is a mystery. Mysteries are realities of which we cannot speak directly. If we wish to talk about them at all we must draw on analogies afforded by our experience of the world. These analogies provide models. By attending to the analogies and utilising them as models, we can directly grow in our understanding of the Church.[30]

A critical factor in his choice of the word 'model' is that in contrast with such terms as aspect, models cannot be integrated into a single concept. To comprehend a complex reality, he argues, multiple models must remain simultaneously in play.[31] At the same time, models should not be multiplied unnecessarily; rather, one should utilise the minimum number of models that capture as much of the nature of the Church as possible.[32] This process of holding multiple models in mind helps the individual and the community gets beyond 'the limitations of their own particular outlook, and to enter into fruitful conversations with others having a fundamentally different mentality.'[33] Lastly, pertinent to Polanyi's descriptions of authority, Dulles notes that many people identify the Catholic Church with a narrow Institutional model, consistent with Polanyi's concept of Specific Authority. Dulles takes a consistently critical stance against using institution as a primary or dominant model of the church.[34] In rejecting a narrow institutionalism focused on the small group of individuals seen as a central authority he writes,

> In the popular mind, the Catholic Church is identified with what I describe as the institutional model of the Church. Catholics, therefore, are commonly thought to be committed to the thesis that the Church is most aptly conceived as a single, unified 'perfect society.'

He takes a

> deliberately critical stance toward those ecclesiologies that are primarily or exclusively institutional. A model of the church as institution cannot eliminated because the result would fail to adequately describe the church in its human aspect; rather, he advocates that it be expressed in a balanced way, 'valid within limits. The Church of Christ does not exist in this world without an organisation or structure that analogously resembles the organisation of other human societies. Thus I include the institutional as one of the necessary elements of a balanced ecclesiology.[35]

Dulles would, no doubt, take issue with Polanyi's description of Specific Authority, while at the same time recognising the necessity have some measure of human institutional structure and any large community. After a brief description of Dulles' models, I will suggest that four of them are quite useful in conceptualising scientific authority than the polarity of General and Specific, and that an integration of these models with Buford's Primary and Secondary institutions yields a balanced appraisal of the nature, purpose and workings of authority in science.

Dulles identifies six distinct models of the Church: Institution, Mystical Communion, Sacrament, Herald, Servant, and Disciple. As an organising principle he posits three questions to ask of each model,

(1) What are the *bonds* that unify the Church/define membership?

(2) Who are the *beneficiaries* in each model?

(3) What is the *goal or mission* of each model?

He concludes his discussion of each model with an examination of the various strengths and weaknesses each model presents.[36]

Institution: The church has existed in some institutional form from its beginnings early in the 1st century AD. Scripture places Peter in a special position vis-à-vis the other apostles and the structures guiding the early church are seen in the

Acts of the Apostles, and the letters of St. Paul. The institutional model of the church which Dulles describes has been operative at least from the time of the medieval church, and was solidified at the Council of Trent in the 1500s, where, for example, a regular programme of seminary education for priests was established. The bonds of union between members in the Institution include the profession of approved doctrines, participation in the sacramental life of the church and submission to legitimate authority. Characteristic of this vision is that all tests of membership must be visible, for example, public and communal recitation of the Nicene Creed, participation in specific sacraments, and living/acting in a manner consistent with church teaching. Thus, the bonds of union are initiated with the sacrament of baptism, and deepened in the sacraments of the Eucharist and Confirmation. The beneficiaries of the institutional model are the church's own members. The goal or purpose of the church within this model is eternal life through membership in the institution and participation in the sacraments. This is also manifested in a strong focus on missionary activity to bring people, where they can receive its benefits.[37]

The Institutional model has several strengths, including the capacity to provide stability through times of crisis (persecutions, reformations, scientific and political revolutions, etc.) and a strong sense of corporate identity. Dulles identifies weaknesses of this model in the words used by Bishop Emile de Smedt at the beginning of the Second Vatican Council: clericalism, juridicism and triumphalism.[38] In this model there is a sharp distinction between clergy and laity, the latter making up the overwhelming majority of the church's membership, which can easily be reduced to a passive role, juridicism that turns Scripture into law, and a triumphalism that sees salvation as available only within the church. There is also a constant risk of institutional*ism*, which shies away from dialogue, sees the hierarchy as the sole source of authority, an authority that flows in one direction, outward from the centre. Dulles sees this not as an accurate description of the institutional model of the church, but as an aberration.

Mystical Communion: The dominant images in this model were expressed in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, the church as the Body of Christ and as People of God. This model moves beyond the visible aspects of church human/institutional organisation to see the bond of union as the grace given by the Holy Spirit. The beneficiaries in this model are again the members of the church, though in this case they receive benefits both visible and invisible in the workings of the Spirit. The mission of the church is to lead persons to communion with God. The strengths of this model for Dulles are that it has a stronger foundation in Scripture and has been present in the Christian churches from the beginning, with roots running deep in the Hebrew Scriptures as well. These were the dominant images in the Council's document on the church, *Lumen Gentium*, which retained some aspects of the institutional model but did not prioritise them.

Sacrament: A sacrament in this model is understood as a sign that makes present what it signifies. Thus, one can speak of the seven sacraments, and also of the church itself as a sacrament of God's presence in the world. The bonds of union within the community are the social and visible signs of grace present in believers. The beneficiaries are those who live out their faith in the sacramental practices of the tradition and the model's mission is 'to purify and intensify men's response to the grace of Christ.' The strengths of the Sacramental model include its ability to unify the two previous models (Institution and Mystical Communion) bringing them together into a broader theatre for the workings of grace. Limitations of this model include limited evidence in Scripture, and an inward focus that may not give him give a strong sense of call to service to the world.[39]

Herald: The Herald model of church is the one that Dulles suggests is strongest within Protestant Christian tradition. Its primary bond of unity is faith seen as a response to the gospel manifesting itself as proclamation. This model broadens the beneficiaries to include all who hear the word of God and put their faith in Jesus. Straightforwardly, the church's mission in this model is to proclaim the word of God. This model also necessarily places strong emphasis on missionary activity.[40] The model's strengths include a solid foundation in Scripture including the prophetic tradition of the Hebrew Scriptures. It also gives members a clear sense of identity and mission. The limitations of this model are that it can focus too strongly on one aspect of Christian revelation to the detriment of others (for example word to the detriment of action).[41]

Servant: The servant model sees the bond unifying members of the community as a sense of universal relationship among members who join in Christian service to the world. The beneficiaries in this model are all those served by the church, whether they are members of the church or not. The Servant model has as its mission to be of service to all people in all places and in all times. The model's strengths include an increased consciousness beyond the limits of the church, encompassing the whole world and its needs, a strong sense both of service and of social justice,

and a diminished risk of clericalism, juridicism and the arrogance of triumphalism. This model also shifts notions of the church from categories of authority and power to categories of love and service.

Dulles lists the limitations of this model is its limited representation in the Bible, and the potential lack of focus on other bonds of unity (for example the sacramental).

Disciple: This is the most recent model that Dulles articulated (not present in his first edition). For the disciple, the bonds of union include worship and service. The beneficiaries are also broadly construed as everyone who is served by a disciple of Christ. The mission within this model follows the image of the first apostles, to carry on Christ's work in the world, a mission extending beyond preaching the word to combating poverty, a healing mission of compassion and care for the sick and the dying, and of giving assistance to all those in need.[43] The strength of this model include a deeper consonance with personal experience in the call to imitate Christ in one's personal life. Limitations include the potential for Christians to set themselves apart from, and potentially over, others, as potentially making excessive demands on church members that they may not be able to meet, and a lack of focus on fundamental unifying factors in the community.[44]

The task, then, for one who would develop a comprehensive understanding of the church, as grounded in mystery, with both visible and invisible aspects, is to approach the church with multiple models simultaneously in operation. This process guards effectively against elevating any one model above the others, or worse, to the exclusion of others, and guards against any narrow forms of an exclusive and triumphal institutionalism. It also creates the context for developing a deeper understanding of what it means to be an individual member of that community, and what activity within that community entails.

Here, then, are two recent resources, one from philosophy and one from theology, that can be of use in understanding contemporary science and scientific authority. The final section of this essay is an examination of how an integration of these resources, Buford's reflection on the nature of institutions and Dulles' models might serve to enrich Michael Polanyi's conceptions of authority in scientific tradition, and its necessary correlate, the nature, extent and purposes of scientific practice. Science will be examined as both a Primary and Secondary institution providing the *context* for scientific activity, and four of Dulles eccclesistical models will be suggested as useful *models of authority*, analogies that point to the manner in which authority is exercised in science: Institution, Disciple, Herald and Servant.

5. Institutions, models, and authority
5.1. Primary institutions

Authority in the world of contemporary science is exercised dynamically in multifaceted ways. This final section examines presence and nature of authority in the institutions of science generally and then considers four models of authority that analogously suggest how this authority is exercised by scientists in practice.

Science can be viewed as both a primary and a secondary institution(s). Buford's institutional vision offers four criteria for detecting the presence of an institution:

1. the existence of relatively permanent *social relations* that are
2. *sanctioned by norms*, and that
3. satisfy a *social desire, need and/or purpose*, which are
4. situated *among the ecosystem or normative beliefs and ourselves* (the I-Thou-It triad).[45]

In addition, following Buford's description of the family as an institution, there appear to be multiple primary institutions contained with in the world of science, including educational, economic, political, regulative and communicative.[46] In this light, the primary institution of science can be described as

1. an ongoing set of social relations that range from individual to corporate, crossing national and cultural boundaries, that are
2. sanctioned by norms both scientific and ethical, from individual institutional norms, through international ethical documents,
3. which satisfy multiple human needs/desires including the values such as the search for truth and the improvement of the human condition, (manifested in concrete situations such as genetic research in agriculture and in medical research for treatment and cure of diseases),
4. and are situated in a triad of I-Thou-It relations that include our beliefs about the nature of the world, of knowledge and of ethical behaviour, explicit and implicit beliefs about science, manifested in varied patterns of social relations, educational and political structures.

To understand scientific authority in its primary institutional manifestation, it is helpful to consider both the explicit beliefs and values of science, most prominently the use of the empirical scientific method as the gold standard for research, knowledge generation and evaluation of scientific results, and also the tacit presuppositions present in the scientific

community and inculcated in learners participating in scientific education at all three of Polanyi's levels (primary/secondary, university, apprenticeship). Polanyi rightly points out that no listing of tacit knowledge in science could be complete; this did not deter him, and should not deter us from attempting to articulate these beliefs as they exist in science today. Tacit knowledge in contemporary science can be considered three traditional aspects, with some inevitable overlapping:

Metaphysical

1. reality exists independently from us
2. reality also includes us;
3. reality is physical/material and thus measurable
4. correlates may include materialism and causal determinism
5. truth exists and can be discovered
6. truth can be distinguished from falsity
7. truth has a provisional nature, always open to new data, revision, and development
8. empirical scientific method is the best way to discover truth
9. empirical science will ultimately attain a complete/final description of reality

Epistemological

1. reality is knowable by us
2. humans possess the requisite tools/abilities to comprehend reality via the empirical method,
3. including
4. intellectual tools
5. artefacts (scientific equipment)

Ethical

1. the good exists and ought to be sought;
2. scientific knowledge is a good that ought to be sought (a) for its own sake (basic/pure research) and (b) for the common good (applied research and practice);
3. truth exists and ought to be sought;
4. the search for truth requires freedom (both personal and academic);[47]
5. scientists have moral obligations to other scientists and to the wider human community to (a) embrace the primary and secondary institutions of science as reliable guides to scientific knowledge (b) share their knowledge with others through appropriate media, including scientific publications, conferences and attempts to bring scientific knowledge to the wider public
6. scientists have an obligation to practice science ethically in keeping with institutional codes of conduct (Institutional Review Boards, codes of ethical conduct for scientific research);
7. scientists have a duty to form the next generation of scientists via (a) academic institutions and (b) apprenticeship;
8. scientific education entails both (a) the transmission of knowledge (the facts and methods of science and (b) personal formation (tacit knowledge of science).

The explicit and implicit beliefs of science are many and they also pervade the contemporary world that has accepted many of its beliefs, practices and discoveries. Scientific education is an integral part of education in all modern technological societies.

Critical to the survival of the primary institution of science is the fact that it is not reducible to any historical moment or I-Thou-It triad; institutions transcend historical moments and the triads, and can be transmitted to subsequent generations. Buford also identifies trust as a fundamental aspect of the I-Thou-It triad, without which institutions in any form could not exist. Trust forms a basis for the stability and endurance of any institution, and is the warp and woof of our social existence.[48]

5.2 Secondary institutions

Secondary Institutions are the concrete manifestations of Primary Institutions in time and place. For science this includes all the physical institutional settings in which science is practised or taught: primary and secondary schools, universities and independent research laboratories and government laboratories. Scientific authority is exercised in Secondary Institutions of science where the primary institutional values of science are put into daily practice. This includes the research of science, scientific publications and conferences, scientific education and the awarding of academic degrees, the practice of health care, the granting of research funding, and the status conferred by academic standing (tenure, various levels of professorships), and various scientific prises that confer status on the recipients (for example, the Nobel prize in physics or medicine).[49] Regulatory authority also operates in the secondary institutional context, through codes research and clinical ethics and regulatory documents of science departments, governments, and international bodies.

Paradigmatically, the interaction of the Primary and Secondary Institutions of science meet in Polanyi's description of the scientific apprenticeship. In this nexus the beliefs, practices and identities of science are taught and modelled through the relationship of master and apprentice, and passed down through generations. It is here that the apprentice learns both the facts of science and the art of scientific practice.

Scientific institutions are both made and found. To study science is to enter into its primary and secondary institutions as found, and to submit with

trust and faith to the authority of those institutions and its practitioners. Without this process every student of science would need to start from scratch rather learning and building on the sound conclusions of previous practitioners grounded in the scientific method that have stood the tests of replication and acceptance by the scientific community. At the same time, as Polanyi has noted, to embrace authority and tradition also entails imposing one's own views on them, and reacting in some measure against them:

> Indeed, whenever I submit to a current consensus, I inevitably modify its teaching; for I submit to what I myself think it teaches and by joining the consensus on these terms I affect its content. On the other hand, even the sharpest dissent still operates by partial submission to an existing consensus; for the revolutionary must speak in terms that people can understand.[50]

Science, then, is an institution, both Primary and Secondary, and both found and made by its members.

Polanyi's model of General authority can serve as a jumping off point for examining tow the work of individual practitioners within these institutions. This practice involves an ongoing dynamic multi-focal and multi-layered interaction between individual scientists, the Primary Institution of science, the various secondary institutions in which scientists work, teach, discover and present findings, and respond to the various regulatory authorities of science (departmental regulations, larger institutional regulations, governmental regulations regarding research practice and funding, and international regulatory codes created in response to grievous human rights violations, ethical codes that impact the practice of science in all countries.[51]

Scientists, then, are authorities, accept authority and exercise authority within this complex matrix of relations that involves multiple centres of authority (individual scientists) and multi-layered institutional authorities.

6. Models of authority

The previous sections have examined science in more abstract terms of content and structure. Science lives in its Primary and Secondary Institutions, is practised, regulated and passed on to subsequent generations. A consideration now of four models of authority can flesh out how this occurs.

Avery Dulles has presented six models of the church, (Institution, Mystical Communion, Sacrament, Herald, Servant, Disciple) that serve as means to examine identity, membership and practice (who are the members, what are the benefits and what is the goal/mission?). I suggest four of these

models are useful in describing the exercise of scientific authority in contemporary science and society: Institution, Disciple, Herald and Servant. As will be seen shortly, the first two look primarily inward, the last outward.

Institution:

Science is a human institution manifested in Buford's Primary and Secondary categories. An institutional model of scientific authority points out the structures by which science practised, governed and perpetuated. The members in this model are all scientists, the beneficiaries are the practitioners of science who are supported and guided by its institutions, and the mission of this model is the preservation and work of science worldwide. Institutional authority in science is multifaceted and multi-layered, including individual practitioners of science who embrace the scientific method and the values of science and who interact dynamically and also in the multi-layered secondary institutions of science; departments of science, colleges and universities, scientific professional organisations, national and international regulation of science and it is through these various institutions that the scientific community preserves the best science of the past, fosters the practice of science in the present and passes science on to the future.

Disciple:

This model of authority is essential to the ongoing existence of science and is most explicitly exercised in the master-apprentice relationship described by Polanyi. The members are all those who are taught science, as well as its teachers, the beneficiaries are the students who become scientists and the mission of this model is to train the next generations of scientists as they imbibe both the explicit and implicit knowledge of science. In this model students of science place their trust in the institutions of science and in their teachers/mentors in a dynamic process that both accepts and challenges the authority of science. The models of Institution and Disciple interact intimately in the process through which the disciple becomes a master and is recognised as such by the scientific community and the wider human community; the granting of academic degrees, letters of recommendation, faculty appointments and salaries. The moral nature of science is on display here through the values inculcated in the student and in the proper exercise of power by the master in passing on reliable knowledge, serving as a mentor and respecting the personal and professional boundaries students need to attain their goals.

Herald:

Authority in science is exercised outwardly to other scientists and institutions and to the wider society

through the various institutions through which science is communicated: Professional forums and publications, the media (newspaper, television, radio and the various outlets on internet. Through these media scientists communicate their most important findings in a practical way that can be embraced by the wider human community (e.g. significant research findings, the release of new pharmaceutical agents etc.). The members are the scientific community, but in an outward looking mode, the beneficiaries are the entire human community, and the mission of the widest possible dissemination of scientific knowledge.

Servant:

This last and most outward looking model of authority transforms the knowledge of science (basic/pure research) into practical applications and brings those applications to those in need. The members are again the whole scientific community, the beneficiaries are the human community and the goal is the bringing of the practical applications of science to all who can benefit from it. It is here that the moral aspects of science are most visible in issues of justice, distribution resources and care for the sick and the poor. The authority of service is most clearly expressed in the practice of medicine in its efforts to treat, cure and eliminate diseases worldwide through the development of medicines and vaccines (e.g. antibiotics and the polio vaccine). The exercise of authority here happens at the level of the individual practitioner and also at various institutional levels through medical and scientific organisations (e.g. Doctors Without Borders, UNICEF, etc.). The outward looking Herald/Servant models (with the other two models undergirding them) are explicit, for example, in both medical and educational efforts to treat and reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS on the African continent. Such efforts are directed at individuals, but also at governments and societal beliefs.

7. Conclusion

Polarities no longer serve us well, and the General/Specific structure of Polanyi's vision of science does not hold. Specific Authority may be attempted, but is doomed to failure in light of the power of human freedom. His concept of General Authority, expanded to reflect the complexities of contemporary science can still serve as a means to examine, understand and influence scientific practice as a dynamic interaction of multiple centres of authority interacting with multiple levels of institutional authority to preserve, promote and transmit the findings of science. Our understanding of science can be deepened through an examination of the institutions of science at the Primary and Secondary multiple levels. Lastly, an analogical approach to the various types of authority in science exercised through different but complementary models operating simultaneously can serve to deepen our understanding of authority in science, the nature of science itself and, perhaps, open new avenues for science to benefit the human community.

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1. Mitchell, Mark, *Michael Polanyi: The Art of Knowing*. (Wilmington, DE: IS Books, 2006), 118.

2. Scott, WT and M.X. Moleski. *Michael Polanyi: Scientist and Philosopher.* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2005), 289.

3. Polanyi to Doan, June 3, (1968), Scott and Moleski, Michael Polanyi, 290.

4. Ibid., 288. Polanyi here appears to be referencing such passages from St. Paul as 'So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weakness, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong., 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 (New Revised Standard Version).

5. Mitchell, Polanyi, 121.

6. SFS, 56.

7. SFS, 56.

8. SFS, 63.

9. SFS, 57

10. LL, 133. It is important to note here that the quote here

cited is chosen to flesh out Polanyi's view of the centralised authority of Catholicism. It is taken from a contrast between the Church and modern totalitarian governments where Polanyi, criticising the totalitarian claim to the whole person, notes that the Church recognised other sources of authority in medieval culture, among them political authority and merchant guilds.

11. SFS, 56.
12. SFS, 57.
13. SFS, 57.
14. SFS, 59.
15. McBrien, Richard, *Catholicism* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1994), 50.
16. The Church has long taught that conscience is a capacity of the human person that is to be formed and brought to maturity. So central is the role and power of conscience to the Catholic moral tradition, that the church has long taught that a person's ultimate responsibility is to follow their conscience, even when it deviates from official church teaching: 'A human being must always obey the certain judgement of his conscience'. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1800.
17. SFS, 43.
18. PK, 53.
19. Buford, Thomas O. *Trust, Our Second Nature: Crisis, Reconciliation and the Personal* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2009).
20. Drawing from Melville J, Herskovitz' work Cultural Anthropology (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1960), at page 95.
21. Buford, Thomas, 'Primary Institutions', *Personalist Forum*, 15, 2, (Fall 2003), 208. Buford's notion of institutions as both found and made is consonant with Polanyi's description of authority as a tradition to which a scientist submits, and whose submission simultaneously modifying it. See PK, 208.
22. Buford, Thomas, 'Primary Institutions', *Personalist Forum*, 15, 2, (Fall 2003), 211.
23. Buford, *Thomas O. Trust, Our Second Nature: Crisis, Reconciliation and the Personal*. (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2009), 3.
24. Buford, *Trust*, See the section 'Our Second Nature," esp. at xiii and ix.
25. Buford, *Trust*, 77.
26. Buford, *Trust*, 78.
27. Buford, *Trust*, 78.
28. Buford, *Trust,* 104.
29. Dulles, Avery, *Models of the Church* (Expanded Edition) (New York: Image Books/Doubleday, 2002), 1. Dulles' first edition was published in 1978; he subsequently added a model, 'Disciple" which was included later editions.
30. Dulles, *Models*, 2.

31. Dulles, *Models*, 2.
32. Dulles, *Models*, 3.
33. Dulles, *Models*, 5.
34. Dulles, *Models*, Introduction, 2.
35. Dulles, *Models*, Introduction, 2.
36. Dulles, *Models*, 33 ff.
37. Dulles, *Models*, 33-34.
38. Dulles, *Models*, 37.
39. Dulles, *Models*, 65.
40. Dulles, *Models*, 69-76.
41. Dulles, *Models*, Chapter 5, the discussion of strengths and limitations beginning at page 76.
42. Dulles, *Models*, 81-90.
43. Dulles, *Models*, 212.
44. Dulles, *Models*, 213-217.
45. Buford, 'Primary Institutions', *Personalist Forum*, 15, 2, (Fall 2003), 208.
46. Buford, *Trust*, 78. I have not included the religious and the reproductive in a consideration of the primary institution of science; the argument can be made that these are operative in the secondary institution and in the broader society touching on the science of reproductive technologies and various ethical/religious reflections about these.
47. Polanyi conceptualises some of these issues in his discussion of fairness and tolerance, noting that 'A community which effectively practice free discussion is therefore dedicated to the fourfold proposition (1) that there is such a thing as truth; (2) that all members love it; (3) that they feel obliged and (4) are in fact capable of pursing it. SFS, 71.
48. Buford, *Trust*, viii, and at page 103: 'Without trust, no triad. Furthermore, stability is rooted in the triad, and of course in the solidarity of trust. The implications are clear; no triad no nexus, no nexus no patterns, no patterns no institutions, either primary and secondary."
49. PK, 217.
50. PK, 208.
51. Examples include the Nuremberg Code (1947) and its requirement of informed consent to research, the *National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioural Research* (1979, known as *The Belmont Report*), and the ICH *Harmonised Tripartite Guideline* – GCP (1996), the *European Union Clinical Trials Directive* (2001), and the *International Ethical Guidelines for Biomedical Research Involving Human Subjects* (World Health Organisation, 2002)

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THE ARAB SPRING: THE NEW ARAB IDENTITY

Mouhiba Jamoussi

Abstract

In the early days of 2011, Tunisians marched against their dictator, expressing their outrage and determined to oust his regime. But while they were calling for change, they were being changed by their very revolutionary experience. My interest is precisely in this new identity, which developed during and after the revolution—the way Tunisians perceived themselves and were perceived by others throughout the early revolutionary times. I will also touch upon a similar evolution in the other parts of the Arab world. My paper is based on my own experience as a Tunisian and on interaction with my fellow-citizens, as well as on primary and secondary sources.

1. Introduction

On the seventeenth of December 2010, a young Tunisian, Mohamed Bouazizi, set himself ablaze in protest against poverty and humiliation. By doing so, he triggered a movement that would spread like fire throughout Tunisia and beyond. Within few weeks, on the fourteenth of January 2011, the Tunisian dictator fled the country and the Tunisian Revolution was seemingly over. In fact, the Tunisian Revolution signalled the beginning of a much wider movement spreading throughout the Arab World from Morocco to Oman. The Tunisian Revolution started what would soon be called the 'Arab Spring'[1]—protest movements in one Arab country after another, escalating into revolutions in some of them, toppling or destabilising more than one dictator. This wave of protest reached Europe, went on to the United States, to Asia and back to Africa, igniting movements as different, or so it seemed, as *Ignados*, Occupy Wall Street, and the anti-Putin protests—different expressions of one *global* movement.

The change that Tunisians and other Arabs went through during and right after the Arab revolutions was evident in the way they perceived themselves and were perceived by the other. This change preceded any other cultural, socio-economic, or political change. It is precisely this identity change, extraordinary yet fragile, which was most noticeable in Tunisia and in the rest of the Arab World. The Arab Spring signalled the end of fear and the determination to be free, and consequently the right to be proud. Arab leading figures such as opposition party leaders and human rights activists, as well as less prominent people, all spoke of *izza* and *karama*—grandeur and dignity—before any talk of socio-economic solutions or political reforms.

This paper is concerned with the identity change in Tunisia during its early revolutionary period. It also touches upon similar changes which accompanied the other Arab revolutions and uprisings, and replaced earlier perceptions of the self and of the other in the Arab world. Fully developed comparisons with the later period of the Tunisian Revolution, with other Arab Spring revolutions and protest movements, or with other revolutions, would no doubt be quite interesting. Nevertheless, such comparisons are clearly beyond the scope of this paper which aims to capture and analyse a particularly significant moment in Tunisian, Arab, and world history. My paper is partly based on my own experience as a Tunisian and interaction with other Tunisians. I have also relied on various primary and secondary sources to complement my research.

2. The Tunisian Revolution: 'Dignity, freedom, social justice'

The very nature of the Tunisian Revolution partly if not mainly explains the consequent surge of a new identity in Tunisia and elsewhere in the Arab world. The Tunisian Revolution came as a surprise to its own people, let alone to others, and its outcome was even more surprising. I left Tunisia on the thirty first of December 2010 and never thought that within two weeks, my country would rid itself of a more than two-decade old, well-grounded, dictatorship. Before the French Foreign Minister Michele Alliot-Marie was forced to resign over her tight links with Ben Ali and his regime, she told French Parliamentarians that France, like other countries, could not foresee such events: 'Let's face it, we were all of us—politicians, diplomats, researchers, journalists—taken by surprise by the jasmine revolution' ('Tunisian crisis'). A year later, when Marwan Bishara interviewed Tunisia's new president, Moncef Marzouki, on Al Jazeera English, describing him as 'the most unlikely president [previously] invisible to the rest of the world,' the new president explained that he too was very surprised: 'I didn't think... I would see a day where Tunisia would be free and independent and this is why I am so proud and so happy and so relieved' ('Tunisia: A revolutionary').

The Tunisian Revolution was internationally acclaimed as peaceful and remarkably successful. As mentioned above, it was even called the 'Jasmine Revolution' in reference to the small white jasmine, an emblematic flower in Tunisia.[2] The Tunisian army was applauded inside and outside the country for the role it played when it refused to fire at its own people. Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of Qatar, congratulated Tunisia for providing a 'humanitarian example,' and the Tunisian army for being 'loyal to its people [and] guardian of its institutions' ('Tunisia: A revolutionary'). Tunisians faced Ben Ali's regime on their own[3] and left no time for Ben Ali's Western friends to come to his rescue.[4] They consequently called their revolution quite appropriately *Thawrat Al Karama* ('Revolution for Dignity'), in view of the very nature of this revolution and of its aspirations. The expression *Al Karama* has been used ever since as a symbol of the fight for fundamental rights.

The Tunisian Revolution drew citizens from all walks of life, in larger and larger numbers. Following Bouazizi's self immolation, similar youngsters—poor, unemployed, and desperate— gathered to shout their anger, and were soon joined by others from all social strata including the better-off lawyers, academicians, doctors, and businessmen. It was led by young men and women joined by older members of society, those who belonged to the 'Facebook generation' walking together with those who never used internet. It started in an underprivileged region, and extended to similar parts of the country, deprived from the very basics of life—decent living conditions, proper health services or educational institutions. It then spread like fire to the rest of the country, including the most privileged areas—with palaces, top clinics and renowned educational centres. Those who participated in the Revolution were saying 'No' to humiliation, and asking for dignity that meant a different thing to each one but meant a lot to all. On January 14, 2011, my son called me from Tunis and let me listen to thousands of people who had gathered outside the Ministry of the Interior shouting '*Dégage*'. He said all Tunisians were there: family, friends and colleagues were there; men as well as women; those who were young but also those much older; those who looked poor and those obviously rich. The revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, Lisa Anderson explains, 'shared a common call for personal dignity and responsive government' (Anderson).

'*Dégage*', Tunisians shouted in one voice, calling on Ben Ali to get out, shaking their hands and showing the way out to the reigning families and the ruling party (RCD) at their service—a people in unison against dictatorship. Wide and deep divisions had previously existed between Tunisians, between the urban centres in the northeast of Tunisia and the mainly rural southwestern part, between the rich and the poor, between the young and older members of society, and especially between supporters of the regime and those who opposed it or simply refused to support it.

3. From Disunity to Unanimity

Traditionally, most investment had gone to the more touristic and to urban centres in the north-east of Tunisia, while the south and the west of the country remained economically the least advanced. During the Ben Ali era, the less privileged parts of the country were totally ignored. The result was poorer infra-structure, lower-quality services, extremely low incomes, and high unemployment allowed to rise higher. Alcinda Honwana explains how the neo-liberal economic policies of the Ben Ali era widened regional economic disparities and deepened a pattern of uneven development, which further marginalised these areas, leaving them with very high unemployment rates, and poverty rates four times higher than in Tunisia as a whole (Honwana).

Young men and women from these areas often looked for job opportunities in the more privileged parts of Tunisia, and whenever possible, young men tried to make it all the way to Europe as *harrakas*—illegal immigrants paying their risky trip with all the money the family could collect, and sometimes drowning before ever reaching the European shores. The song *Jay Mil Rif Lil Asima* tells the full story of families in the 'interior' (western and southern parts of Tunisia) making sacrifices to educate their children, and of young people's expectations, gradual disillusionment and despair (Balti). These *Manatek Al Thil* regions in the shade, in the dark) gradually became *Manatek Al Thol* (regions of humiliation and indignity) practically invisible except when they rebel, as in the Gafsa Mining Basin in 2008, but always failing to gain nationwide support.

This time, regions less likely to revolt in the past were ready to give full support to the uprising in the rebellious parts of the country. The global economic crisis in the previous years had not spared any region, and rates of unemployment and poverty had escalated to high levels, affecting a growing number of individuals and their families. In 2008, in a country where 60% of the people were under the age of 30, a third of young people were unemployed, the highest rate in the Maghreb ('Tunisia: Inequality'). During the Habib Bourguiba era, preceding Ben Ali's rule, practically all graduates expected to find a job soon after they graduated. Under Ben Ali, the period

between graduation and employment got unacceptably longer, then gradually the link between the two ceased to exist.

For graduates who spent years studying within quite a demanding educational system, and for parents who gave their children full support (financial, educational, psychological, etc.) and made sacrifices throughout the educational period, graduate unemployment was simply unacceptable. All families had one or more unemployed graduates, according to *Le Monde* journalist Florence Beaugé, and it was there, she believes, that 'general resentment' of the people against Ben Ali started ('Tunisia: Inequality'). All those hit by graduate unemployment were devastated: poorer families counting on a graduate son or daughter to lift them out of poverty, as well as better-off families which did not expect their children to join the long queues of the unemployed after years of costly studies in Tunisia and abroad.

What undoubtedly further angered Tunisians was that even under better economic conditions, the country's wealth ended up in the hands of a few—more and more often the Ben Alis and the Trabelsis, the President's own family and in-laws. They had a grip over all major businesses—manufacturing, banking, communication technology, transportation, etc. Complaints about uneven distribution of wealth referred less often to regional economic disparities or class differences as had been the case before, but rather to wealth accumulated by the Ben Alis, the Trabelsis, and their entourage, at the expense of the rest of the population. It became practically impossible for Tunisian or foreign investors to operate without a *piston*[5] from these mafia families—one who would support a project and grab most of the benefits, or make sure the project would never materialise. State corruption was not a secret revealed by Wikileaks, but a notorious feature of the regime, some sort of *piovra,* an octopus gripping the whole nation and plundering the country.

The extent and diversity of the wealth of the ruling families was no longer a secret. A US embassy cable leaked through Wikileaks and published by the *Guardian* before the Revolution gave an idea of their extravagant and excessive way of life ('US embassy'). Ben Ali's son-in-law, Mohamed Sakher El Materi, still in his twenties, had a shipping cruise line; concessions for Audi, Volkswagen, Porsche, and Renault; a pharmaceutical manufacturing firm; several real estate companies; etc. (Honwana). These '*mafiosi*' imported luxury cars and yachts and bought assets abroad. Much of their wealth was deposited in foreign bank accounts and very little

was re-invested in the country. As for the presidential couple, they had to leave behind when they fled formidable treasures that could fill not one but many Ali Baba's caves, and a fortune much larger outside the country (Byrne).

The regime became increasingly authoritarian to keep growing anger under control. It relied on disregard for human rights, suppression of liberties, and oppression and repression. It claimed to be democratic, to allow free elections, freedom of expression and of religious belief, but none of this was true (Cavatorta). There was consequently growing fear of what might happen to each one individually and to the country as a whole.

Of all the victims of the Ben Ali regime, the young were probably the worst affected, but also those most aware of how corrupt and repressive the regime was. Indeed, the young were those likely to remain unemployed, without the support of a *piston* or a corrupt official. They were therefore quite conscious of the extent of bribery and corruption at all levels. They were those likely to experience police brutality and repression more than others—as students with dim perspectives, long-term unemployed graduates, under-employed low-paid workers, or human-rights activists. Volker Perthes refers to the young as 'a generation which feels that it had been cheated of its chance to take its economic, social and political place in society' (Perthes).

At the same time, the young were the best equipped to face a government not concerned with people's pressing demands. Through social networking, they exchanged anecdotes that ridiculed the 'elite,' as well as facts, dismissed by government as unfounded rumours, but later confirmed by Wikileaks. Not surprisingly then, the young led the early protest movements in December 2010, and played a central role in defeating Ben Ali's regime.

4. New Tunisian Collective Identity

As explained above, Ben Ali's dictatorial rule exploited and disempowered Tunisians in various ways regardless of who they were. Consequently, similar feelings of resentment and anger developed among a growing number of Tunisians, and gradually reduced former regional, class, or ideological divisions. 'This youth-led movement,' Honwana writes, 'was embraced by a large constituency, which transcended regional distinctions and included unionists, lawyers, journalists, and teachers (Honwana). The Tunisian Revolution revealed a united people, men and women holding the Tunisian flag, asking in one voice 'Ben Ali *Dégage.*'[6] Protesters met throughout the country, and

interacted through social media, informing, inspiring, and supporting one another. Some were injured, lost a friend or a relative, but each felt the support of all. This collective effort assembled and empowered people, and created a new collective identity.

The new collective identity brought individuals into one group no matter how 'distant' they were—all alienated by the Ben Ali regime, and now wanting to rid the country from his dictatorship. The Al Jazeera TV programme *Empire* explains how individuals can turn into a collective force:

> Revolutions require individual moments of bravery, when people are inspired by an act of supreme defiance... the collective determination to stand together takes on momentum. It is then that the unthinkable becomes possible. 'Tunisia: A revolutionary'.

Indeed, defiance replaced fear and people confronted police brutality, water cannons, and live bullets, defenceless but empowered by common determination. Pride replaced earlier humiliation, and on January 14, the day Ben Ali fled the country, the lawyer and civil rights activist Abdennaceur Aouini summed up what most Tunisians felt. His famous spontaneous public outcry on the main Avenue in the capital Tunis still under curfew sounded like a message to the whole nation:

> ... the Tunisian people is great... long live the free great Tunisia... Ben Ali the criminal has run away fearing the Tunisian people... Ben Ali the crook, Ben Ali the dog…. Don't be afraid, be proud, don't fear anyone, we are free now.... The Tunisian people will not die... Glory to martyrs… the great Tunisian people has offered us freedom.... Long live great Tunisia… we are celebrating freedom now.... *Hommage*[7]

During the following months, Tunisians somehow 'ceased to be' rural or urban, young or old, male or female: they became simply Tunisians. They spoke of what they called *'our* blessed, glorious revolution' which was to give them what they were asking for: '*Karama, Horria, Adala Ijtimaia*' ('Dignity, freedom and social justice'). What is fascinating is that Tunisians in rural areas, traditionally neglected together with their regions, and considered as less refined and less bright by urban citizens, could now see themselves as those who ignited the revolutionary fire that later spread to other areas. Brave they saw themselves, and other Tunisians agreed: their contribution turned them into heroes and unchallenged first-class citizens. Pride was noticeable in rural post-revolutionary discourse, and in the more frequent use of the typical rural 'g' by rural people, especially by educated rural women who in the past were less likely to use it.

The young, too, gained a higher status thanks to their leading role in the Revolution, and their organising skills through social media. The Tunisian Revolution, also called the 'Facebook Revolution' in homage to the young, revealed young people's communication skills, and their political awareness, rather unsuspected by older generations. The young were thought to be 'wasting time' chatting on Facebook and 'playing' with mobiles, unconcerned with politics. The Tunisian Revolution and the following events turned them into leaders, capable of destabilising an old leadership less knowledgeable of modern digital tools. Volker Perthes writes about the change undergone by this generation and how the Tunisian Revolution and the revolts which followed turned them into a 'political generation, which sees itself as a player in the political events, and is seen as such by others' (Perthes).

> Tunisians were applauded for their courage and determination throughout the world—by politicians, the media, academicians and others. Tunisia was congratulated for starting a new chapter in Arab history when Egypt followed suit, then Libya, then the whole Arab world. On Al Jazeera TV programme 'Hiwar Maftouh' ('Open Debate'), dedicated to the Tunisian Revolution, Ghassan Ben Jeddou spoke of the importance of the Tunisian Revolution in Arab history: 'Tunisia the Green... Tunisia the Free... [Tunisians] rebelled without revenge, buried fear and despair without burying those who killed and robbed... gave birth to a new Arab history' ('Hiwar Maftouh)'.

Marwan Bishara started *Al Jazeera English* programme *Empire* with a similar welcome:

> Hello and welcome to Empire. From the birthplace of the Arab revolutions - from Tunisia - a country of 10 million people that helped transform the entire Arab world of 300 million people. For long they've asked what is wrong with the Arabs? Well today, we're asking what has gone right in Tunisia and the rest of the Arab world? ('Tunisia: A revolutionary').

5. New Arab Pride

Before the Arab Spring, the Arab world had become the 'sick man of the world,' if I may borrow a 19th century expression. 'The Arabs have agreed not to agree' is what was often said about the Arabs. As for Arabism, it was considered by most analysts as a 'spent force' (Phillips). I remember several occasions when I was told by non-Arabs that Arabic was a dead language or that Arabic(s), spoken by different Arab countries, were entirely different languages. Needless to explain how wrong and shocking these ideas are. Then came the Arab Spring which was certainly not an 'awakening': the Arabs were not fast asleep, but just silenced by oppressive regimes.

The Arab Spring proved that Arabs had more in common than a 'dead' language. Throughout the Arab Spring, interaction between Arabs permeated frontiers through social networking. The 'Arab street' gave full support to each revolution, and Arab neighbours gave a warm welcome to Arab refugees crossing their borders. Arabs congratulated one another throughout the Arab world. Omani colleagues came to congratulate me for our victorious revolution, and so did Egyptians, Yemenis, Syrians and other Arabs I met in Oman. Arab salesmen jokingly refused to be paid, saying Tunisians had done enough for the Arabs. In turn, I congratulated all Arabs I met who were having their own revolution, uprising or simple protest movement. On most occasions I was moved to tears, which surprised me in the first place. Was this the birth of new Arabism or Arabism allowed to come to the surface? This question requires research and thinking in its own right. What is certain is that Arab collective identity is not a thing of the past, dead and buried as affirmed by those who least understand the Arab world. The Arab Spring seems to have created or re-created what Christopher Phillips refers to in his article 'Arabism after the Arab Spring' as a 'wider, supra-national Arab community' (Philips).

These early signs of spontaneous solidarity and support among Arabs throughout the Arab world were soon confirmed by a post Arab Spring survey conducted by the Arab Centre for Research & Policy Studies in Doha. The Centre interviewed 16,173 citizens in 12 Arab countries, from North Africa to the Middle-East.[8] This survey clearly showed that Arabs belonged to a 'unitary Arab nation.' Most respondents said they supported the Egyptian and the Tunisian revolutions, and believed the Arab revolutions were due to corruption, dictatorship, and the lack of justice and equality. On questions related to Arab identity, the results were 'overwhelmingly in unison' with 71% believing that Arabs had a 'shared collective identity' (17% disagreed) (Kanj).

The 'collective identity hypothesis' was confirmed, with four fifths (81%) of respondents recognising the same common challenges facing the Arab world, and two thirds (67%) believing that intra-Arab co-operation was not satisfactory. The vast majority (84%) thought that the problem of Palestine was a 'shared cause for all Arabs, not just for the Palestinians,' and the same percentage was opposed to their countries' diplomatic recognition of Israel which 73% of respondents believed to be, together with the US, a major threat to regional security (only 5% felt the same about Iran). The Doha polls, taken as a whole, confirmed that the conflict with Israel was indeed a 'collective Arab issue.'[9] The polls also showed that the Arab Spring 'finally flung the clad of fear and intimidation' and revealed a huge gap between Arab people's views and those of their leaders, mainly over issues such as justice or outside threats (Kanj).

This survey refutes beyond any doubt the claim that the Arab world is an exception, some sort of odd region out—submissive to its dictators and obedient to foreign powers. Before the Arab Spring, one of the main narratives about the Arab world (by politicians, media, and academicians) was that the Arab world had a problem with freedom and democracy, that it was immune to democratic values, i.e., to the very concept of democracy. Articles such as 'Explaining the democracy deficit in the Arab world,' treat this region as an exception and attempt to answer 'the natural question as to why has the Arab world experienced such a deficit' (El Badawi). It was systematically suggested that the Arabs would need a long time and great efforts to understand these 'western' concepts.

But what has the West done to help the Arab world become more democratic? Did the colonising powers teach their colonies lessons in democracy? Has the West endeavoured to do so in more recent times, or rather kept notorious Arab dictators as precious allies, i.e., puppets in their hands? How concerned has the West been with Arab countries' total disregard for human rights or political rights, so long as these countries continue to abide by western rules? These questions, and the answers to these questions, might seem irrelevant but they are not.[10] A month before the Tunisian revolution, an American Professor lecturing on democracy at the Omani Monday Club claimed that Arabs needed 'lessons in democracy.' I suggested then that Arab rulers certainly did, but not the people, not the 'Arab street.' Today, few would suggest that democracy is an alien notion in the Arab world. Tunisians, followed by other Arabs, faced live bullets and accepted to pay a heavy price for freedom and democracy.

6. The Arab World at the Heart of World History
The Arab Spring has also finally placed the Arab world where it deserves to be—at the centre of events, at the heart of world history in formation. Indeed, the Arab world is a region so important in cultural world history—Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, etc. It is so rich in oil and so wealthy—Libya, the Gulf countries, etc. Yet the Arab world has been perceived either as a tourist attraction, or a place for excellent job opportunities and a lucrative market for luxury goods. What role has this strategic part of the world played? What influence has it had in international relations? Practically none, except as a

region under Western influence willing to toe the line, or risk sanctions if not an outright invasion. The Arab Spring has placed the region under the spotlights, this time showing Arabs as major *actors* making history.

As for Islam, the religion of the majority in the Arab world, the Arab Spring may prove it has been wrongly targeted as the one religion incompatible with the modern world. It is often claimed that fundamentalism is specific to Islam. Yet, Muslims who want to apply *chariaa* are not much different from Christians who refuse the legalisation of contraception, or Jews who campaign for a return to polygamy. As for human rights, women's rights, as well as political freedom and democracy, Islam represents no obstacle to such values. It is, if anything, a precursor for important matters such as women's ownership rights or education for both sexes. Besides, through concepts such as *ijtihed* and *shura*, Islam encourages critical thinking and democratic rule, and flourishes whenever and wherever it refuses to become obsolete, out of time and space. Polygamy in Islam is just tolerated, and even discouraged, and so Tunisia made it illegal more than half a century ago (1956). Slavery was abolished in Tunisia in 1848, long before very 'advanced' Western countries did. Tunisian women got the right to vote, to divorce, and other rights long before some European countries (*Code*).[11] The likely political outcome in Tunisia is democratic rule, with a moderate Islamist party sharing power with other parties. Such an outcome would no doubt help dispel the view that, of all world religions, Islam is the 'odd man out.'

Finally, the Arab Spring played a still bigger role when inspiring protest movements at the heart of Europe, inside the United States, and elsewhere.[12] Tunisians rebelled against their dictator, other Arabs rebelled against theirs, and a 'world movement' was waged against a giant 'dictator'—the exploitative and unfair neo-liberal system. The Arab Spring is comparable to major protest movements which in the past swept through whole regions and sometimes the whole world. A comparative study with such movements would be worth undertaking and would no doubt prove quite interesting. The Arab Spring could be compared for instance to the post-World War II liberation movements which freed one colony after another. It can therefore be considered as a second-wave, new-generation, liberation from the grip of a 'colonisation' no less vicious and destructive. What we can say for the moment is that the Arab Spring, though comparable to earlier movements, is quite unique in Tunisian, Arab, and World History, and that it will continue to affect our world for very long years to come.

7. Conclusion

Ben Ali was a dictator who behaved like a 'coloniser,' an outsider who plundered Tunisia and placed its wealth in foreign banks or turned it into assets for him and his entourage. He could hardly be thanked for anything, except for unwillingly, unwittingly, uniting a whole country, and a whole people against him. Throughout the public outcry against Ben Ali and his gang, Tunisians rid themselves from fear and quickly developed a strong feeling of dignity and pride. The young and the former marginal (the rural, the poor, the unemployed, etc.) reiterated with pride that *they* started the revolution. They tried to make sure they remained at the heart of events. Tunisians in general, formerly disparagingly judged as 'Europeans,' 'French-speakers,' 'outside' the Arab World, became proud to have initiated the Arab Spring and thus proven that Arabism is not a dead force but alive and kicking. Some Tunisians were proud to belong to a moderate Islam, which could be a reference for future legislation, upholding human rights, women's rights, etc. Others wanted Islam (or any other religion anywhere) to belong to the private sphere, to be an individual's concern, not to be used or misused to oppress others. But the common view was that Islam and democracy could coexist in a future Moslem democratic Tunisia. Tunisians were also proud to have initiated a 'world movement' which stood against an unjust and corrupt neo-liberal system and tried to re-define democracy. Finally, Tunisians were hoping they could build a future Tunisia based on democratic rule, and on respect of human rights, an ideal which, once achieved, could be a source of pride for Tunisians and an inspiration for the Arab world and beyond.

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Notes

1. Sometimes called the Arab Awakening which is historically and politically incorrect since the Arabs have been fully awake—before, during, and after their revolutions.
2. Some non-Tunisian politicians and commentators used the jasmine as a symbol for the Tunisian Revolution especially during the early revolutionary period.
3. Unlike for instance the Libyan Revolution which would have political or/and military support from the UN, the Arab League and NATO.
4. France remained a key supporter of Ben Ali and his regime until the very end. The French Foreign Minister offered to share the expertise of French security forces with the Tunisian authorities to help them suppress the Revolution but time was too short for France to intervene.
5. A *piston* is a good contact who can help you get a job, a service, etc. Members of these families had enough influence in high places, by the sheer fact that they belonged to these families. They could then be the best pistons having the power to help people get services, and being paid or getting services in return.
6. Other revolutionary slogans included 'Ashaab yourid iskata nidham' ('Down with the regime'); 'Kobz we me, we Ben Ali Le' ('Bread and Water, but not Ben Ali'); 'Attashghil istihkak ya isabat issorrek' ('Employment is a right, you band of crooks').
7. Tunisian women who took this video are heard praising Aouini for his courage, and blessing martyrs of the Revolution. They are also heard sobbing during the sequence, and singing the Tunisian *wiririin* sign of victory at the end. Practically all my friends, relatives, and Tunisians I have talked to, say they were moved to tears (some say they sobbed) when they watched this video on Al Jazeera Channel or/and later on YouTube. I have cried every time I have watched it. The original text is in Arabic (my own translation).
8. Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, and Yemen.
9. Rather than an issue that concerned Palestinians and few anti-West Arabs, as often claimed by the American/Israeli Think Tanks.
10. For instance when Western powers invaded Iraq to topple a dictator in the name of democracy, they left behind no democratic institutions but a country on its knees.
11. For details, see *The Tunisian Code of Personal Status* (Majallat Al-Ahw Al Al-Shakhsiy Ah), 13 August 1956.
12. 'Ignados', 'Occupy Wall Street', and other occupy and anti-government movements throughout the world.

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HUMAN BEING AS EXISTENTIAL PARADOX

Shlomo Cohen

Abstract

Dualistic (or 'pluralistic') theories of human being usually start with accounts of the constitutive elements and only secondarily set out to explain how they combine together. In contradistinction to that analytic approach, existentialist discussions have characterised human being most deeply by an awareness of self-estrangement or of internal schism. The primary focus shifts to the phenomenology of human being, and from that perspective the comprising elements intrinsically and paradoxically refer to their opposites. While this is a very abstract scheme, in this paper I show that it can be identified in well-known historical conceptions of human being. Human being has been identified as *Homo pudens* (shame), *Homo ridens* (laughter), *Homo ironicus*, and *Homo ludens* (play). Interpreting writings of Sartre, Bergson, Kierkegaard, and Huizinga, I expose the ways in which all those conceptions exemplify the existential paradoxicality of humanity.

Various attributes have been considered as foundational to our humanity. Free will, language, knowledge of right from wrong, and—maybe most prominently—rational nature are examples of central elements that recur in discussions of and around that subject. While rational nature is clearly key to humanity, this paper focuses on our opposite distinguishing character—that of inner paradox. The paradox I am alluding to is of duality within unity, i.e. of two different natures that exist within one single *phenomenon*. Experiences of such type highlight *internal* schism as a fundamental feature of human being.

The ontological schemes we commonly employ in the analytic understanding of human being present a dichotomy between dualism (or 'pluralism') and monism (reductionism). This, however, leaves out a no-less significant position. While any dualistic account of human nature (e.g. mind-body; reason-passion) recognises a gap within our being, such accounts first identify the separate elements, and only secondarily try to account for their unity. In this paper I want to add certain insights to the discussion of the reverse point of view: not a theoretical analysis of duality and then an account of

how it can be reconciled within one person, but the recognition of an a priori duality-within-unity. The phenomenological approach makes it possible to see the primacy of the existential tension over its ontological constituents.

The inner paradoxical structure of humanity is a well-known theme among the leading existentialist thinkers. Mere reminders will suffice here. In Nietzsche, it is most paradigmatically expressed in the famous exhortation 'Become who you are!' In Heidegger this paradox becomes the ontological structure of humanity as that of Dasein, who is always outside itself, whose very structure is that of transcendence. In Sartre, this fundamental idea is conveyed in the aphoristic claim that the human reality is 'constituted as a being which is what it is not, and which is not what it is' (Sartre, 1958, p. 63).

Here I would like to present phenomenological explications of well-known traditional characterisations of humankind, and show how they all fit the general scheme of a unified experience of opposites. Shame, laughter and irony, and play have all not only received philosophical treatment but were also presented as *defining* characteristics of human beings. I will offer concise accounts of these phenomena and explain their significance for the possibility of authentic existence—hence their importance for our very humanity. All those accounts will demonstrate the feature of inescapable inner existential schism or paradox as a fundamental structure of human being.

1.

The most famous myth of origin, the biblical story in *Genesis*, presents shame as the first true human reaction. The moment of shame in the lost paradise, we learn, is simultaneously the introduction of higher human consciousness, of self-reflection. Indeed, the sense of shame was often recognised as the distinctive mark of human (self-) consciousness. Thus, for example, Hegel (1975, sec. 24) writes that 'the sense of shame bears evidence to the separation of man from his natural and sensuous life. The beasts never get so far as this separation, and they feel no shame.' Charles Darwin, from a markedly different conceptual world, makes a similar claim about what distinguishes man from beast when he refers to blushing as the most distinctively human of all expressions (Darwin, 1965, p. 309). The stronger claim in this regard is that shame is not just a

paradigm of the uniquely human, but a *sine qua non*, and that the utterly shameless has lost his human face. Shame is thus defining of humanity: humankind is *Homo pudens*. In this light we can readily understand why 'shame…is often praised as the bedrock foundation of civilisation' (Yovel, 2003, p. 1299).

How are we to understand this foundational role that shame consciousness is claimed to have for human identity? In addition to the role of the sense of shame in ethics (and in contrast to some modern accounts that see shame as no more than a conformist reaction to social disapproval), shame also has deep existential importance as a guardian of our sense of being human. Indeed, shaming practices have often been intended to exert a dehumanising effect. Jean-Paul Sartre articulated what is arguably the most basic characterisation of shame. For Sartre (1958), shame is an ontological reaction to 'the look of the Other.' The most basic nature of shame involves the position of *being seen*, which is much more than the trivial experience we all recognise: it is the fundamental experience where the individual does not engage and transcend the world but is rather engaged and transcended. In that experience, the *subject* assumes the character of an *object*. 'I can be ashamed only as my freedom escapes me in order to become a *given* object' (1958, p. 261). This objectification engenders shame because its meaning is the loss of independence and control of one's actions: 'With the other's look…I am no longer master of the situation' (p. 265). 'It is in this sense that we can consider ourselves as 'slaves' in so far as we appear to the Other' (p. 267). Since, however, 'I recognise that I *am* as the Other sees me' (p. 222), shame's basic meaning becomes one's personal awareness of loss of agency and sovereignty.

Shame, fundamentally, is the consciousness of an 'original fall' (p. 288) from subjecthood to objecthood. The sense of shame, as the motivation to avoid shame, is both the awareness of an internal existential gap and the primal motivation to solve it in the direction of enhancing humanity (as opposed to 'falling'). This refers to the attempt to transform one's state of objecthood back to being a subject, which in effect means regaining agency and authorship. For example, when one suffers from a shameful compulsive addiction, he will be able to prevent shame by overcoming his weakness of will and regaining agency and control over his life. Hence, the sense of shame that struggles against the constant threat of 'the fall' of humanity, i.e. of dehumanisation, is one of the fundamental phenomenological manifestations of freedom. As the

basic experience of a 'fall,' shame expresses intrinsically the duality-within-unity of humanity: 'Thus the Me-as-object-for-myself is a Me which is *not* Me,' Sartre writes (p. 273). Being me and not-me simultaneously is the inescapable existential paradox of self-alienation that shame embodies. That paradoxicality is the very logical structure of shame, due to the necessary reflexivity in 'being ashamed of oneself' (even if it is evoked vis-à-vis others), and the fact that the reflexivity is directed not at any particular attribute of the subject but at his self as such. The constant threat of the 'original fall' inherent in the paradoxical structure of the 'me-who-is-not-me' that shame manifests is *constitutive* of our humanity—had we not had such awareness of threat, we could not possess an awareness of dignity (in overcoming the threat) and we would not be human. We do not first have an idea of humanity (whence?) and then become aware that it is threatened. The precise opposite is the case: the primary existential awareness of the fall—in the phenomenological ontology of shame—constitutes our idea of a higher mode of existing.

The sense of shame expresses freedom in yet another way, however. 'Every profound spirit needs a mask,' Nietzsche famously claimed. The mask is meant to prevent the shame of exposure. Specifically, its function is to defend the individual against 'the constantly false, namely *shallow*, interpretation of every word, every step, every sign of life he gives' (Nietzsche, 1966, sec. 40). The shame of 'being turned into an object,' Nietzsche reminds us, is not just in humiliating physical acts (as when one is exposed motionless at the pillory); it is encountered also where one feels that she is no longer author of her life, that her own interpretation of it is swamped by the interpretations of others. In this context, the sense of shame is the protector of individual authenticity (and therefore the object of Nietzsche's praise). Giving one's life meaning is the individual's responsibility. When this is prevented, one's freedom is severely compromised. The sense of shame employs its masks in a never ending effort to prevent this from happening and to salvage one's humanity. The dynamic here too is from *within* the existential tension: the meaning of the shame reaction, of the intuitive recognition of a 'fall,' is the paradoxical overlapping of subjecthood and objecthood—shame is an *experience* of recognising myself as other. If not for the everyday recognition of that experience, its idea would have been rejected on grounds of meaninglessness. The idea of shame requires *logically* an inner paradox: when ashamed of myself, I simultaneously see an alien and recognise that alien as me. Or else there could not

be a shame experience, which unifies the me-as-subject and the me-as-object *in one phenomenon*.

The above analysis clarifies why the sense of shame is a source of the notions of dignity and self-respect. It is not surprising therefore that shame should feature among the basic characterisations of human being. Moreover, shamelessness, or the lack of a sense of shame, has frequently been considered the lowest point humankind can deteriorate to. Having no disposition to feeling shame is inhuman. We are thus justified in designating the human being as *Homo pudens*—an inherently paradoxical creature.

2.

Aristotle and others since have identified the human being as the animal *ridens*—the animal distinguished by laughter. Laughter *per se* is a physiological behaviour and is only an object of interest for the philosopher to the extent that it is the mark of the comic or humorous. To the question of what it is which defines humour essentially various answers have been provided. The most popular is the theory which locates the source of humour in the perception of incongruity (Morreal, 1987, p. 6). It has been rightly claimed, however, that incongruity alone is not a sufficient condition for humour (even if we assume that it is necessary). An important addition to the incongruity condition can be found if we connect it to the human factor. Henri Bergson exposed a new dimension of the designation 'animal *ridens*' when he noted that the human is not only the 'animal which laughs,' but no less importantly 'the animal which is laughed at' (Bergson, 1956, p. 62). We only laugh at what is human, says Bergson. If we find an animal funny, it would be secondary to detecting a human element in it (e.g. its inquisitive look) but in a strange or twisted (i.e. incongruous) way. Another example: although an incongruity of colours is not funny in itself (just unaesthetic), it could become funny if it were the mismatching colours of someone's outfit. The human factor makes the difference.

A yet deeper connection between the human element and the incongruity theory of humour is when the incongruity refers directly to the human condition. Here we come close to Bergson's main account of the comic. The structure of everything comic, according to Bergson, is the representation of human subjects as objects, or as he puts it, of 'something mechanical encrusted upon the living' (1956, p. 92). The comic is 'any incident…that calls our attention to the physical in a person when it is the moral side that is concerned' (p. 93). As is the case with shame, we thus understand laughter as a

reaction to the main existential—and possibly ontological—split within the person: the split between subjecthood and objecthood. According to this interpretation, comic situations, like those of shame, express a perceived loss of agency. This can happen through loss of self-control or through apparent loss of authorship over one's life, as in situations where the meaning of our actions is somehow undermined. Examples of the first type are when we laugh at clumsiness or in the rather crass kind of laughter at someone who slips over a banana skin. An example of the second type would be the orator who sneezes at the pathos-laden peak of his sermon—a sneeze which diverts attention from the meaning of his words to his biological functions (and thus seemingly divests it of meaning). More generally, the dissolution of the unique meaning of each individual life effected by humour can be found in Bergson's insight that the heroes of comedy are types rather than individuals. This ties comedy directly to the definition of inauthenticity. Bergson recognises the centrality of this existential moment of the comic in his view that the comedy of character is the loftiest manifestation of the comic. To the extent that the comic, sometimes in subtle ways, transforms the *élan vital* into the inertness of objecthood, it involves the existential idea of the 'fall,' as well as the notions of agency and meaning, which we have encountered in shame. There could not be shame unless we saw the object, paradoxically, as its other, as the manifestation of a subject; similarly, the mechanical, which in itself is comically inert, can only engender laughter when it unexpectedly pops up as the paradoxical manifestation of the meaningful. The incongruity gives rise to the humorous. These profound existential aspects of laughter explain why the human being alone is the animal that laughs and that is laughed at. They therefore justify its designation as *Homo ridens*.

While I do not wish to defend Bergson's presumption to a comprehensive account of the comic, I do think it captures an essential existential aspect of it. The above dynamics of humour expose their full existential meaning, however, when they become reflexive, so that the human structure of paradoxical inner duality, of an inner existential cleavage-within-unity, unfolds in all its acuteness. This account leads us to the moment when humour turns into self-irony; indeed, recognition of 'the human comedy' leads naturally to irony. In irony we encounter the important capacity for authentic self-detachment. As Søren Kierkegaard saw (1971, p. 273), this is a central element in the phenomenology of freedom.

Irony is often analysed from an epistemic

perspective: it is the ability to express truths in paradoxical manner; it uses objective language in order to overcome it, etc. However, its existential aspects are by no means secondary in importance: the paradoxical capacity for self-detachment enables a radical evaluation of personal values. As with the mask of shame, ironic concealment is not lying (it does not wish to be believed, but understood—thus *exposing* its internal paradox). Rather, the overcoming of objective language is an attempt to make room for authentic personal meaning. Kierkegaard (1971, p. 338) writes, 'As philosophers claim that no true philosophy is possible without doubt, so by the same token one may claim that no authentic human life is possible without irony.' As declared at the outset, this paper looks into certain non-rational phenomena that help define our humanity. The humorous and more specifically the ironic attitude toward our existential duality have great significance. On the one hand, the consciousness of an internal existential split is the engine of the personal search for meaning. On the other, as Thomas Nagel (1979) observes, it is detached irony which enables us to cope with the unbearable consciousness of the absurd that this very split engenders. There is thus a deep sense in which the human being is indeed *Homo ironicus*. This designation of the human too is a powerful existential expression of the theme of this investigation: the paradoxical phenomenon of self-referential internal schism.

3.

My succinct discussion of the play attitude will be based on Johan Huizinga's (1955) classic interpretation of human being as *Homo ludens* and will attempt to highlight its existential structure and significance.

Despite play's light semblance, Huizinga announces that 'culture arises in the form of play' (1955, p. 46), and goes as far as asserting that 'in the absence of the play-spirit civilisation is impossible' (p. 101). We can readily infer that the play spirit is among those central attributes that define humanity. Indeed, 'the category 'play' [is] one of the most fundamental in life' (p. 28), and is irreducible to anything more basic.

As with anything fundamental and irreducible, play is impossible to define, yet we can characterise it in ways pertinent to our discussion. 'If we call the active principle that makes up the essence of play, 'instinct', we explain nothing; if we call it 'mind' or 'will' we say too much' (p. 1). Play is thus very different from reason—our other independent, dynamic faculty. 'We play and we know that we play, so we must be more than merely rational

beings, for play is irrational,' argues Huizinga (p. 4). This irrational behavioural disposition is a pervasive, mirthful mode of being, marked by creating its circumscribed, rule-based realm of activity, distinct from material 'reality.' One of the significant features of this activity is that 'through this playing…society expresses its interpretation of life and the world' (p. 46). As we saw before, such interpretative activity is crucial for human agency and freedom. Through this agency, play has an enormous potential for creativity (in a sense, it is creativity itself) and in its higher manifestations is expressed in practically every field of culture.

The distinctly human nature of play that I want to emphasise involves—as with shame, laughter and irony—a transcendence that nevertheless remains inherently tied to an opposing immanent aspect of being, and hence creates that distinctively human paradox: internal cleavage as a unified phenomenon. The 'material' side of our existence is preoccupied with the satisfaction of wants and interests; it is not just instinctual, it can often be governed by strategic rationality. Play, in contrast, is a goal unto itself, which 'stands outside the immediate satisfaction of wants and appetites' (p. 9). To that extent play 'is free, is in fact freedom' (p. 8). The freedom that play brings to our life is perceived as 'a *stepping out of* common reality into a higher order' (p. 13). Culture, when 'played,' gives the appearance of a 'higher, ideal mode of life' (p. 192); it even 'merges quite naturally with that of holiness' (p. 25). By giving rise to culture, play elevates us above material reality. It belongs with what constitutes the basic, proto-ethical intuition of the 'sanctity' of persons. Ideally, when people play they assume a new identity ascribed by the role played. 'The disguised or masked individual 'plays' another part, another being. He *is* another being' (p. 13). *At the same time*, however, the player must still be aware of living in 'reality,' or else play would cease to be play and deteriorate into something frightening indeed. In a well-known sense, even total play must remain '*merely* play'—thus maintaining an intrinsic reference to its opposite. This creates the—by now familiar—structure of an existential inner cleavage: the structure of oneness within duality. 'The identity, the essential oneness of the two goes far deeper than the correspondence between a substance and its symbolic image. It is a mystic unity' (p. 25). Instead of invoking mysticism (a form of intellectual surrender), in our discussion of shame we described this paradoxical structure of human dialectic duality as a phenomenology of the 'me-which-is-not-me.' We rediscover a parallel dynamic in the phenomenology of play.

4.

Aristotle looked for the characteristic function of humans and, after rapidly dismissing 'life' and 'perception', found it in rational activity (Aristotle, 2000, 1097b-1098a). In this, Aristotle is but a seminal figure in a long and respectable tradition of philosophical anthropology. Here I stressed another aspect of human distinctness. The attitudes we reviewed all express the desire for the 'elevation' of humans, expressing in different ways the dimensions of agency, interpretation and meaning, respect, creativity, and freedom; at the same time they are all experiences and behaviours that include in them an essential reference to their dialectic opposite. (There are many other interesting parallelisms between them. For example: laughter, like shame, is assumed to have a socially corrective function; play and shame often share a preoccupation with honour; irony shares the character of playfulness but also shame's interest in concealment, etc. These subjects merit further in-depth examination.)

Any philosophical view of the human will point to an internal schism once a distinctively 'elevated' side, e.g. rational agency, is contrasted with the strictly 'material' sides of our being. (Think, for example, of such classic dichotomies as in Plato's *Phaedrus*, in St. Paul's mind versus flesh (*Romans*, Ch. 7), or in Kant's noumenon versus phenomenal self.) Rational behaviour, however, does not, in and of itself, point to its opposite. Yet this is precisely the special character of the phenomena described here. From different angles, the existential experiences I studied focus on *internal* schism—on the paradox of duality-within-unity—as a *primary* characteristic of humanity. Self-estrangement comes out as a starting point of philosophical anthropology. David Cooper suggests the necessity of this approach when he writes, 'Perhaps any sense given to the notion of a self must be derived from prior understanding of concepts like self- estrangement.' He explains that 'the way to understand Pierre's self-estrangement is not by converting it into the idiom of his estrangement from a self and then pondering the nature of this self. Rather, we should convert references to a self into talk about self-estrangement and the like, and ponder what this talk amounts to' (Cooper, 1999, p.100). I have attempted to show how Cooper's pondering can in fact be retraced to classical substantive conceptions of the human being. Fleshing out Cooper's stated program calls for a phenomenological analysis of the various modes of internal schism, via elucidating the internal structures of relevant paradigmatic human behaviours. No doubt, other dispositions and existential attitudes participate in constituting what we recognise as basic human nature. Here I wanted to establish this with respect to classical conceptions of *Homo pudens, Homo ridens, Homo ironicus, and Homo ludens*.

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REACHING OUT FOR SKILFUL PERFORMANCE:
THE IMPORTANCE OF TACIT KNOWING IN THE HANDLING OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Sietske Dijkstra

Abstract

This article aims to contribute to skilful performance by reflecting on the importance of tacit knowing for practitioners who handle domestic violence in the field. Polanyi's insights on tacit knowing, skills and learning are applied to domestic violence cases and to reflections on approaches and developments in the field in which tacit knowing is embodied and expressed. Furthermore, it relates to the work that practitioners engage in directly with clients, to Sennett's sociological themes on craftsmanship and good work, on front-line work in child protection the handling of domestic violence, and on learning from complex, sometimes fatal, cases. This leads to the conclusion that formal and informal knowing and intense learning need to be intertwined in a balanced way.

Keywords

domestic violence, tacit knowing, good work, social professionals, learning of and from complex cases, skilful performance

1. Introduction: social professionals and domestic violence[1]

In their daily work social professionals are often guided by experience and practice-based knowledge. Skilled professionals express their craftsmanship in refined approaches—usually relying upon or assuming more than they actually put into words. Social professionals who specialise in domestic violence have a difficult job to do. They need a mix of different, sometimes seemingly contradictory competences: they must be open-minded, unbiased and alert, firm yet co-operative, considerate yet strict. In their professional attitude they need to balance trust with probing and critical questions. Professionals need to be highly skilled in dealing with difficult cases: open-minded, flexible and receptive as well as decisive and accurate who have to act in a crisis need to think fast with an and to be constantly alert. At the same time, they must be able to think slowly and analytically with an in depth mind about the case in question as well as reflect on it and other cases (Kahneman, 2011).

In our study *Hidden Treasures* we did not provide a definition of a good professional[2] or good work beforehand, as we wanted to leave space for the conceptualisation of good work and the required qualities. In this article I define good work as being the skilful performance shown by experienced practitioners in their daily activities: good work which can to some extent be shown and learned, although it might not always have an extensive vocabulary. Doing and knowing are closely related and mutually reinforce the good work of these practitioners. As Polanyi explains (1958), committed practitioners learn in an apprenticeship from experienced colleagues and from clients and make sense of experience as a skilful act. The quality of the work in the handling of domestic violence is crucially important. Good work is essential because it can reduce risks, break destructive patterns of violence, create safety and even save lives. Failures and avoidance behaviour can prove costly for individuals and society alike and discredit professional practice (Dijkstra, 2008; Cooper, 2005; Dijkstra, 2005). With hindsight, the inevitability of fatal cases may seem clear. At the time, however, the course of events is far less predictable. Most cases are incomplete, fragmented and complicated puzzles rather than well-ordered self-explanatory configurations.

Professionals in the field of child abuse and partner violence have to deal with complex, sometimes dangerous situations. More often than not, they have to make decisions on child protection or partner violence in critical situations under pressure of time and with a high caseload (Munro, 2002). Information may be limited during a crisis or comprehension might be lacking. Despite the best efforts by professionals, positive outcomes are never guaranteed. Uncertainty and urgency are characteristics of street-level and front-line work in the field of domestic violence and child protection. Elementary resources and highly trained experienced staff are usually in short supply (Lipsky, 1980; Schon, 1983; Munro, 2002, Dijkstra, 2013). Worldwide, the efforts to deal with domestic violence in shelter agencies are entwined with this uncertainty, inequality, marginalisation and lack of resources. Domestic violence cannot be easily erased and it has inter-generational consequences: those involved usually face multiple and often chronic problems relating to income, housing, parenting, education and work. The urgency of serious and fundamental problems in the intimate lives of people and families underlines the need for

new approaches and good, sustainable work. One way forward is to focus on the immediate and direct experience of good work that is rooted in tacit knowing and combine it with more formal learning.

1.1 Structure

This article[3] is made up of three sections. The next section (Conceptualising) addresses the importance of tacit knowing, explaining how it is built up through experience, a passionate desire to know and the intention to create good work. This particular quality will be illustrated by a *dharma* lesson by Zen master *Shunryu Suzuki*. Then I elaborate on Polanyi's development of the concept of work informed by the tacit dimension, referring particularly to his theory on perception, combining outside and inside perspectives into new pathways and even making new discoveries, particularly his chapter on Skills in his book *Personal Knowledge* (PK). In more detail I discuss the important and interactive role the body plays in expressing immediate experience through gestures, facial expressions, physical posture and attitude.

The second section is more empirically grounded. Based on the study of *Hidden Treasures* (Dijkstra & Van Dartel, 2011), it consists of a literature study and in-depth interviews with 25 lead practitioners and three clients about their learning experiences involving domestic violence. The research material is considered as a case study of tacit knowing and good work within a context of domestic violence (Dijkstra, 2012). I will show the pressure to which good work is subjected by applying some thoughts on front-line work to the theme of domestic violence, based on Lipsky's (1980) 'street-level' bureaucracy, Schön's ideas on reflective practitioners, thoughts on the logic of economics and bureaucracy, and Sennett's ideas on craftsmanship (2008) and working together (2012),. These more theoretical insights will be used to examine the hands-on approach to domestic violence more closely and linked to our analysis of excerpts from interviews.

In the third section I look at these practices from a more distant perspective and from different sides, drawing upon the experience of clients and social professionals who work with clients and their families on the one hand, and giving a more theoretical perspective on perception and good work in neo-liberal settings with the dominant logics of economics and management on the other—which can put pressure on the daily work with families. This paves the way for guidelines for practice-based work and learning and a plea to learn and discover more from experience and mix the tacit with more formal and research-based knowledge by using the characteristics of context, professional behaviour and interaction (Tops, 2013) as a frame for skilful performance.

2. Conceptualizing

2.1 'Bird is here'

Soto Zen master Shunryu Suzuki was in his fifties when he left Japan in 1959 and founded a flourishing school of Zen practice in San Francisco. He became well-known for his book *Zen Mind, Beginners' Mind*, which has become a classic. His heartfelt and mild discourses, or *dharma* lessons, were highly appreciated. I apply his *dharma* teaching on Sound and Noise, branches of the *Sandokai*, to the work on domestic violence. Sound, according Suzuki, emerges as more real and comes from practice, Noise is more objective and bothersome. Through this theme and the example of the bird Suzuki shows the importance of bringing together the objective and the subjective, thereby creating space for letting in reality in such a way that we can be enlightened by the bird. We can say 'The bird is there' in many ways. *Suzuki* says:

> You may say the bird is singing there - over there. But we think, you know, bird, when we hear the bird, bird is 'me', you know, already. I—actually I am not listening to bird. Bird is here, you know, in my mind already, and I am singing with the bird. Peep, peep, peep.[4]

The song of the bird may be a disturbing noise or a sound. If we take the bird and make it into a part of ourselves, we can say we are the bird, we have become the bird. Experience, including professional experience, is similarly immediate and direct.

2.2 Tacit knowing and indwelling

The principle highlighted by Suzuki can be compared with Polanyi's concept of *indwelling*. To express knowing, we need to take the fullness of the direct experience into ourselves, make it our own and make it unique. Polanyi (1966; 1969) developed a theory on awareness or perception comprising of two different and mutually exclusive ways of seeing—the focal and the subsidiary—which we apply one at the time. The focal refers to the hammer hitting the nail; the subsidiary refers to the feel of the shaft of the hammer in the palm of my hand. Through indwelling they lead in combination to active comprehension and skilful knowing and doing. This can draw out a new and joint quality not previously present. Integration of this kind creates a pathway for learning, discovery and continuous investment in values.

Following on from the Polanyian line of thought, tacit knowing is an embedded experience, rooted in practice, usually hidden, sometimes unconscious or emerging as self-evident, almost without words. It is

also an embodied, intimate and reflexive expression of experience in which thinking, doing and being are intertwined. It is the result of a joint meaning which opens new horizons as it combines the external and detached view with the internal, or personal, experience. The outside view goes hand in hand with the inside knowing. Polanyi (1966), upon making the enigmatic and somewhat cryptic statement that 'we can know more than we can tell', was the first scientist to point to the crucial role of the tacit in all knowing. According to Polanyi (1966), all explicit and articulate knowing in science is based on 'indefinable powers of thought'.

Polanyi (1958) states in *Personal Knowledge* (PK) that all knowledge thus described is personal knowledge. Understanding implies personal participation, which is not subjective but claims universal validity. In this process, clues and tools are crucially important for establishing contact with a hidden reality and the unknown (PK, vii/viii). When applied to the ways in which professionals handle domestic violence it denotes the magic, the joy, and the invigorating power of experience and good work. Sennett (2012) describes good work as the feeling and pleasure that professionals derive from wanting to do the job well, whatever the effort or the cost.

If we are to be open to new experience, and if we want this to be a lived experience, we need to actualise it mindfully, with our full attention again and again through integration and re-integration. Then it becomes a vivid and adventurous pursuit which creates new tools for better learning and understanding. To create links and bridge gaps we need to be keen to develop helpful ways or (practice-based) tools. A group discussion, leading questions, a short film or a drawing with keywords can serve as a tool which helps to clarify, visualise and summarise complexity. In 2012, during a master class of nine months on the handling of domestic violence, we experimented with a mind map, using it as a tool to visualise what was needed to create good, more sustainable practice. A flower, complete with stalk and roots, was drawn to help professionals see the depth and consistency of the learning. They were invited to integrate the innovation of the flower with the nourishment carried by the stalk which is rooted in the tacit of the soil, in order to make change sustainable (Dijkstra & Verhoeven, 2013, presented at the conference that concluded the master class.5 Polanyi explains in his essay on Skills (PK) that tools can create and destroy meaning:

> If we discredit the usefulness of a tool, its meaning as a tool is gone. All particulars become meaningless if we lose sight of the pattern which they jointly constitute. (PK 57)

Without re-integration, knowledge can become frozen, separated from its (tacit) roots and lose the nourishment of the lived experience.

The importance of tacit knowing, highlighted in Polanyi's enigmatic statement that '*We can know more than we can tell*' (TD 4)*,* is an allusion to the mystery that there are often no words or refined languages to articulate or explain the acquisition of in-depth and rooted knowing. How do we explain to another how to ride a bicycle? How do we explain how to recognise a face? How do we know how to approach a client in a helpful manner?

> All knowledge is *either tacit* or *rooted in tacit knowledge*. A *wholly* explicit knowledge is unthinkable (KB, 144).

Polanyi discovered that if the two significant principles of awareness or perception, the focal and the subsidiary, work together they can be viewed in terms of parts and a whole, where the whole refers to meaning.6 Polanyi (1958) remarks in his chapter on Skills in PK:

> When focusing on a whole we are subsidiarily aware of its parts, while there is no difference in the intensity of the two kind of awareness. (PK 57).

The meaning creates a pathway for learning, discovery and transfer. Polanyi identifies three types of learning in PK: trick learning, sign learning and latent learning. Trick learning is an addition to knowing: it is motoric, heuristic and leads to invention and skilful actions; sign learning operates within the existing framework, relying on routines, perception and observation; latent learning focuses on understanding and interpretation and is used for solving routine problems. An innovation, once achieved, is irreversible. The operation of a fixed framework of knowledge is reversible. The latent learning of skilled workers may be particularly important in this area. Polanyi states that latent learning:

> reduces exploration to a minimum and shifts the task altogether to the subsequent process of inference. Learning then becomes an act of insight, preceded by a period of quiet deliberation (PK 74).

A pause, Polanyi states, can also take the form of puzzled contemplation which, in a case of domestic violence, can manifest itself as a compelling confrontation where answers or pathways to answers are vitally important and may even be a matter of life and death (Van der Pas, 2011; Dijkstra, 2005).

Subsidiary awareness of comparable cases, conjoined with subsidiary awareness of what is unique in one case and the goals we seek, may be integrated into thoughtful explicit actions and

recommendations that constitute indwelt feelings of accomplished good work. Or, as Schön puts it: skilled practitioners see the familiar in a new case as the unique and the unfamiliar; in other words they build on the familiar from the example as an opportunity for learning more about the unfamiliar (1983, 138).

2.3 The tacit and the body

As the tacit is embodied, there is a strong non-verbal side to its expression. Social work professionals learn how to use their body to practise and convey their profession.[7] Accordingly, the quality of professional behaviour is also enacted in non-verbal ways—through, for example, gestures, posture, facial expressions, body language, eye contact or movements. Professionals can make skilled use of the body for the benefit of the interaction. Police officers for instance instil a sense of safety, teachers create an atmosphere of learning in a group, waiters can make you feel at home and social work professionals create trustworthiness and understanding and enhance feelings of self-esteem. Sennett (2012) in his study on co-operation draws attention to the feelings of accomplishment and pleasure in the rhythm of the movements of professionals.

Sometimes bodily involvement is needed to acquire knowledge of certain phenomena; take, for example, the specific practice-based and dynamic knowledge the grouters had in the case of the destroyed dam (Schmidt, 1993). Another example can be found in the process of learning to read and write: you can feel the letters, draw them, see them, use movements of the fingers to learn their shape. The letters form a word, the words form a sentence, the sentences form a text which can be compared with other texts.

The body and its sensations are important messengers and warning systems in the handling of domestic and partner violence. What do you experience if you feel safe or unsafe? What is transferred or counter-transferred? Where in the body can arousal or fear be felt? Is your heart beating faster, are you sweating, feeling cold, are your ears ringing, do you feel a pain rising in your neck or a knot in your stomach? These physical signals can be important indicators of danger and can even prevent violence by freeing up space and awareness for another option and creating, for instance, a time-out. The body as a vehicle of expression and meaning can also be used in therapy with couples. My Dutch colleague and therapist Justine van Lawick (2012) uses body sculpting as a means of expressing the relational dynamics that unfold during partner violence. Furthermore, drama, theatre scenes and dialogical work can help to unveil what is going on and expose circumstances that can lead to potentially devastating effects.

3. Theoretically situated and empirically grounded

3.1 Good work under pressure

Recently, Sennett (2012) stated in *Together* that three major trends—acceleration, deskilling and growing uncertainty in flexible work—are putting enormous pressure on good work and co-operation in western society. He pleads for new efforts in the craft of co-operation where dialogue, empathy and a subjunctive voice are crucial. Skilful performance needs regular practice, it is related to exercise and apprenticeship. Further slow questions on vulnerability and long-term consequences are therefore required to create time, space and depth to reflect upon key issues and commitment to the ethics of craftsmanship (Kunneman, 2012). We need to create stories and reflect on their meaning because they help us to engage and to expand our world (Hummel, 1991). However, in our work we all too easily drift away from and miss the essence of the matter we are dealing with. In complex situations, nobody can claim ownership of the one true solution. We need to learn together if we are able to progress. There might be a hierarchy of knowing, but a monopoly can spell danger. As Schmidt concluded from her careful analysis of what went wrong between the understanding of professionals when the dam collapsed:

> Because of our different perspectives and limited abilities, we need each other. In working together we enrich our view of the world and increase the possibilities of solving problems. (1993, 530)

When work values move to the background and institutional logic moves to the foreground, we are at risk of backing away from key issues instead of meeting them. These different and confronting logics can be particularly harmful in complex and sensitive work, such as the handling of domestic violence. A collusion between avoidance and defeated workers may be a spin-off from organising work in systems. This undermining effect can be compared to what Sennett (2012) describes as withdrawal at work coming to the surface in the *unco-operative self* and the isolation resulting from deep acting, pretending to work together. Interagency work to handle difficult cases of partner violence and/or child abuse can be a danger in itself if it leads to fragmentation and circuitous processes that discourage and demotivate clients and professionals alike (Cooper, 2005; Dijkstra, 2005). Isolation of knowing can do untold harm to complex cases. One

condition for the preparedness to work together, however, is a degree of equality between the collaborating partners.

Lipsky (1980) goes even further in his analysis when he shows how street-level workers from the field logic experience chronic constraints on resources as their requests far exceed the limited budgets and confront institutional logic. This rekindles memories of a frightening experience I had as a youngster in Forum Romanum when feral cats started fighting over my sandwich. There simply was not enough to go around. (See Table 1: *Values and logics in work*)

3.2 Examples from Hidden Treasures

How can these more theoretical thoughts be linked to the way skilful professionals act in domestic violence cases and the value that clients attach to the help? The six examples below come from in-depth interviews with four lead professionals who participated in our *Hidden Treasures* study on skilled work on domestic violence. Two interviewees work in shelters, one in practice-based research in education and one with the police (one male and three females). There are also short quotations from two clients (one female, one male).

3.2.1 New logics on bureaucracy and power

A director of the biggest shelter group in the Netherlands with more than thirty years of work experience believes that the opportunities for pioneering and innovation are diminishing. She is concerned about the professional autonomy and creativity that is required to do good work in addressing the needs of the clients.

> It is good that society and the politicians are recognising domestic violence. The police are taking it seriously, unlike twenty years ago. But interest has resulted in a spread of too many different agencies and all sorts of questions are being raised about task allocation and power sharing. The scope for new ideas, for pioneering, is dwindling. Mounting bureaucracy and tighter guidelines are inhibiting movement, also for professional workers in the field. It's all pinned down, fixed, predefined (Dijkstra & Van Dartel, 2011, 39/40).

3.2.2 Fragmented services

The abused male interviewee considered it paradoxical that the youth care and child protection services monitored his children but overlooked his needs as a person, an ex-partner and parent, failing to reach out to him and provide support and assistance.

> After my ex was arrested, the professionals from youth care told me that the children would not be removed. They were in no immediate danger anymore. They did not think about me being violated by my

ex-wife. Then, and still now, I needed good support and assistance but have not received that either. I felt neither seen nor heard (Dijkstra & Van Dartel, 2011, 96)

3.2.3 Reflection and action intertwined

Learning organisations are dynamic. New insights lead to new or revised approaches and methods. These insights are generated by experiments, systemic exchange and reflection. It is not only relevant to know what works but also to get a deeper and clearer understanding of how it works and who works. Schön, (1983) with his reflection in and on action, made this theme central in his work, offering an approach to epistemology of practice, based on a close examination of what reflective practitioners do. Science can help in the search, but it cannot have the final say. Professionals have to learn from each other within and across organisations and from their clients and actions. In the words of another lead professional in shelter work: *We need to go from thinking to doing*. And one could add, the other way around, from 'doing to thinking' (reflecting).

> Professionals may well have knowledge, but you still can't say whether they apply it in what they do, that they actually use it. And because they use that knowledge, they enhance or enrich it. It all has to develop and that happens when you start working with knowledge and linking it to your own experience. Then it becomes a better instrument for your actions. (Dijkstra & Van Dartel, 2011, 106)

3.2.4 Inspiring good work

A female interviewee used her reflections on the healing skills and attitude of a therapist as a role model for her own work as a social work professional in building relationships that really count.

> She was really there for me, gave me attention and confronted me if necessary. Her deep humanity was expressed in her whole attitude … Because I fully trusted her, I was able to dive in at the deep end. (Dijkstra & Van Dartel, 61-62)

This account is a powerful example of what Meek (2011), in her book, *Loving to Know,* describes as an 'interpersonal epistemology': knowing is always interpersonal and on-going, we are transformed through meeting others.

3.2.5 New interventions need to be practice-based

The restraining order was incorporated in Dutch law in 2010. Under a restraining order an abuser is removed from the house by the police for a period of at least ten days (maximum 28) while an intervention team works with the family members, who remain behind. Social case work is involved and the probation services work meanwhile with the abuser.

The idea to start using the restraining order in a group of cases where violence had supposedly just started proved misguided. It emerged that the violence was often far more serious than had been first thought, had been going on for longer and was intertwined with problems relating to income, housing, alcohol and unemployment.

> We all thought it was about that one slap or one incident of violence but we read in 'restraining order online' about the horrendous things that happened. (Dijkstra & Van Dartel, 2011, 139)

The new intervention had a deep impact on several levels: on the couples and families and on interagency co-operation in terms of the critical time intervention, making use of the right momentum (Dijkstra, 2011), and creating a new opening. Professionals became aware that the intervention based on the restraining order had ushered in a powerful change in the way they were dealing with, above all, partner violence. The fact that the professionals shared a common goal encouraged progress and created new opportunities and insights: for example, new communities of practice were able to do more than they did before the law-based intervention started.

> When you know there's a lot more going on, you undertake completely different interventions. We can do a lot more than we did at first and to do justice to the clients at long last (Dijkstra & Van Dartel, 2011, 140).

But the intervention based on the restraining order also caused problems by challenging the vulnerable infrastructure and placing too much of a strain on the available capacity. Less attention was paid to domestic violence. The creation of a scientifically approved risk-assessment instrument proved another stumbling block. It took so much time and effort to fill in the form that there was almost no possibility left in the system to carry out the restraining order procedure. In addition, the new intervention involved so many professionals and so many disciplines that actual implementation was impeded by measurement and evaluation. Handling cases had become difficult and stressful. One Dutch expert said that the instrument tested as successful, but implementation was almost killed off. The need for simplicity of doing was overruled by the complexity of thinking. An imbalance had been created in the triangle of doing, thinking and being. What could public administration have meant here, or had that also caused the trouble, wanting to deliver good work? The need to account for the intervention became dominant and encroached on the time and qualities required for making contact with families and learning from cases and the good practice of colleagues.

> Various specialists started intervening, also internally with the police, and we just let that happen. I let it happen too, so I'm not pointing the finger at anyone. These people did their level best to make sure that the restraining order was properly applied. And you need these people because they work out the preconditions. Eventually there were so many of them that it became almost unworkable and that was in an organisation that's got plenty of other things to do (Dijkstra & Van Dartel, 2011, 140).

3.2.6 Theory and practice

As described above, the different and sometimes contradictory logics derived from theoretical resources and our study are related to the specific characteristics of theoretical and academic work on the one hand and skilled practice, professional performance and the way we learn on the other. Theory is more abstract, deductive, generalised and based on reason, while practice is embodied, active, inductive and specific in context and details. (See Table 2: *Characteristics of theory and practice*.)

4. The relevance: analysis and synthesis

4.1 Land markers in domestic violence

A helicopter view of *Hidden Treasures* would show that the domestic violence case study is experiential, hands-on, and takes a bottom-up perspective. The study reasons from the more ideal field logic but encounters constraints along the way in the form of fragmentation, an emphasis on short-term wins and superficial knowing aimed at control. (See Table 3: *Basic differences between ideal practice and constraints*.)

4.2 Mind and mend the gaps

Gaps are sometimes created, but as shown by the analysis of the dam disaster they can, unfortunately, simply exist (Schmidt, 1993). The gap that is often assumed to exist between theory and practice in fact consists of several tensions at different levels with different functions and meanings, as illustrated in the list below. The tensions in theory-practice, between agencies, clients and professionals and within cases fit into seven different categories: hierarchy, abstraction, competition, fragmentation, expectations and different logics. (See Table 4: *Seven gaps and their respective category*)

4.3 Guidelines for practice-based social work

These persistent gaps cannot be easily closed. However, by promoting practical experience through, for example internships and apprenticeship in the field, we can take a stand to mind the tensions and mend the gaps from the perspective of the practitioners and their daily interaction.

It may be inferred from the above analysis that the clients and their families should be the focus of attention in cases of domestic violence. This, in turn, implies that the professional perspective on lived experience in practice needs to be at the forefront of our actions and attitudes and constantly in the back of our minds. The nine practice-based guidelines stimulate double and three-loop learning, focusing on insights and principles:

1. Strengthen daily practice in the handling of domestic violence by starting in the workplace with a bottom-up perspective and by closing the gap with institutional logic and other policy, theory and clients.
2. Create space for experiential work, lived experience and inductive adventures and take that as a counterbalance for being locked in a top-down system or bureaucratic logic.
3. Cherish vivid experience as this activates and invites the tacit and is in dialogue with refined perception. Do not be mistaken: experience is immediate and not the same as talking about or reflecting on experience.
4. Create case-based narratives and tell and use stories to create engagement and powerful knowing from the inside out, mixing them with good work in the outside world.
5. Validate the typical practice of professionals and promote hands-on as a necessary condition.
6. Always define the concept of quality and link this definition to the primary process. Feel the pain of the practice - the helplessness, the lack of skills, experience and resources, the avoidance, the dark side of co-operation, the transference and counter-transference, the work pressure - so that you are not swept along by general ideas or judgements.
7. Confront managers with concrete examples from everyday practice and make them allies in the good work and ambassadors for connecting the work in their network.
8. It is easy to criticise practice. If you formulate policy and judge cases, you should clarify your direct and indirect connections to the practitioners and the work floor.
9. Be aware of the balance in the triangle of doing, thinking and being. Use your senses, your brains, and actions. In the words of an activist interviewee and director for shelter work: Feelings have taught us to make use of the intellect. The opposite is also true: the intellect knows that feelings cannot be separated from the case in hand.

5. Conclusions and discussion

The effects of social work are being increasingly debated and more cutbacks are expected. The neo-liberal economics of counting, cutting and effectiveness is the dominant logic nowadays. The emphasis on counting, cutting and bureaucracy can easily generate disregard for the wealth of knowledge rooted in experience, professional and otherwise, and for the development of new insights based on the direct contact made by social professionals in crisis situations every day. Underestimating the value and meaning of these social work practices—also in the field of domestic violence—can lead to greater inequality, exclusion, unnecessary circulation of money and the fragmentation of needs in which the whole becomes lost. Paradoxically, if you do for families what is needed, criteria are very complex and resources are often lacking. This invites avoidance and looking away, reminiscent of the day I ran from the feral cats.

Constraints that invite the expression of tacit knowing can be found in managerism and are characterised by control and strict ideas on blueprints and protocols which create a tension between the role played by public administration and the discretionary way we can deal with difficult cases. This can develop into a real battle on rigour and relevance, as Schön (1983) puts it. Schön even speaks of a split into two opposite management camps, each with an exclusive vision of the nature of professional knowledge. The split may be inferred from the fact that they ignore each other. One vision advocates control through the art of managing, hence avoiding uncertainty, instability and uniqueness; the other depends on everyday practice, spontaneous interaction and the exercise of an intuitive and skilled performance (240/241). For work to be meaningful, it has to be informed by experience, hands-on, interdisciplinary action and a bottom-up view, as well as a feeling for what is missing (the gaps, the unknown) and an understanding of the whole and the general issues (Schmidt, 1993). In order to understand, acknowledge and express the values of our good work and the ethics of craftsmanship (Kunneman, 2012) we need to return in professional practice to the learning power derived from indwelling and apprenticeship (Polanyi, 1958), learning from cases, and to stress the importance and reflective strength of meaningful narratives and stories through which we expand our world (Hummel, 1991). We are able, through direct experience, to build commitment for communities of learning and communities of practice, which include diversity, co-creation and dialogue. Then, ideal

practice can be a point on the horizon, expressed in the everyday drive for good work, seeing and searching for a contextual and holistic understanding of complex cases as well as their significant details. Tops (2013) analyses the front-line work of intervention and repression carried out by a municipal team of crisis workers within three alternative frameworks: sensitivity to the context (danger, crisis, overall situation) professional behaviour (quick, alert, skilful) and interaction (dialogue, team, lead professional).

When it comes to handling cases of domestic violence or crisis situations we need a slow, analytic and a quick decisive mind at one and the same time (Kahneman, 2011). Cost-cutting may seem beneficial in the short term, but it can destroy meaningful good work and undermine the existing infrastructure. This counter-productive trend must be turned around. Besides analysis we need synthesis to deal with urgent and complex issues and cases. Our society is begging for integration to help us deal with complexity in a human way. More attention needs to be paid to who works and how they work. We need more serving and shared leadership in which the pain of and responsibility for good practice are represented. We need to accord a more substantial role to practitioners and craftsmanship and cherish the enrichment of the tacit, acknowledging its significant and fundamental importance. In order to connect skilfully with a diversity of complex cases we have to tell stories and use the power of learning from cases and case studies. A balance in the three sides of the triangle of doing, thinking and being will help us to create communities of learning and communities of practice. Good work should be closely linked to the lived experience, with the intellect and skilled performance as tools. We need to be aware though that experience does not necessarily lead to skilled work. A rigid routine may be the result. We can remind ourselves of the *koan* of Suzuki's bird challenging us to shift our awareness. When it comes to handling difficult cases such as domestic violence cases social professionals need combined thought processes and a mix of skills that enables them to respond to the urgency, as well as constant training in thinking twice. In the practice-based words of Schmidt (1993): *They must constantly be alert to the back-talk of the specific situation* (526). In asking reflective, detailed and contextualised questions based on the experience of indwelt whole and fragmented cases (Van der Laan, 1995; Van der Pas, 2011) we sometimes unlock painful and hidden treasures. We can learn more than we can tell, expand and engage the world in creating significant stories (Hummel, 1991),

co-create true relationships and sustainable communities of reflective practice and dialogue. We build trust and are inspired by the drive for good work. Then, we start to reach out for skilful performance, embedding tacit knowing, paying close attention to the meaning of the whole and the significant parts.

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Notes:

1. I wish to thank Wil Verhoeven for our inspiring conversation on the subject and my co-researcher Nicole van Dartel, Professor Walter Gulick and Professor Wally Mead for their encouraging comments on an earlier draft.
   NB The tables are placed at the end of this article.

2. The study started in 2008 when the director of a shelter stated that she was convinced that the professionals were doing good work in the shelter with the women and children. The problem was that they felt unable to describe the written work specifically and communicate it beyond their team in the outside world. When asked directly about good work professionals tended to become shy and withdrawn. It was easier to invite them to think of the work of a colleague they really admired or appreciated and to explain briefly why they were impressed. This was followed later by group discussions in teams of practitioners and interviews with skilled and experienced practitioners.

3. This article was initially prepared as a paper for the PATNET conference in San Francisco in May 2013, based on the theme of Utopia and Public Administration. Utopia, is the title of a book written by Thomas More. It means 'no place' and is situated on a remote island. The book describes the vision and practices of a society on this distant non-existing island.

4. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v= pHNyCAJXUXE

5. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v= NLKi8VO_cBw.

6. Polanyi explains in PK that there are two kinds of wholes and two kinds of meaning: 1. A whole in which one thing means another thing (for instance a pattern); 2. A whole which means something in itself. He refers to these wholes as denotative (or representative) and existential (58).

7. This interesting subject will be explored in greater depth in a paper still to be written from the perspectives of those who suffer physical and mental violation. For example, Merleau-Ponty claims that the (expressive) body is the primary site of knowing the world and cannot be disentangled from consciousness; the body is a permanent condition of experience.

Table 1: *Values and logics in work*		
Work Values	**Field Values**	**Institutional Logic**
Slow questions	Experience: adventure, learning and renewal	Laws, codes and protocols: justification
Good Work	Indwelling	Registration
Seeing the whole and attentive to details	Articulating within a societal context	Pressure on quick wins and short-term results
Supervision and reflection in teams	Integrating and re-integrating	Production
Professional identity	Humanity and successfully closed cases	Effectiveness

Table 2: *Characteristics of theory and practice*	
Theory	**Practice**
Knowing by reasoning	Knowing by doing and reflecting
Intellect and distant/outside	Embodied and active
Deductive and top-down	Inductive, realistic and bottom-up
Learning is abstract (theoretical)	Learning from cases
Analysis (different parts)	Integration (synthesis; the whole)
General	Specific in context (details)

Table 3: *Basic differences between ideal practice and constraints*	
Ideal	**Constraints**
Good work	Fragment
Striving for quality and understanding	Superficial and controlling
Constant innovation	Repeated failures
Embedded experience	Splitting, knowing without experience
Nourishing	Demotivating
Hands-on and bottom-up; inspiration of craftsmen on shop floor	Hands-off and top-down; dominance of management and policy
Integrating the tacit dimension	Cutting off or ignoring the tacit dimension
Adding meaning and value	Destroying meaning and value
Long-term investment	Short-term wins and quick results
Client-centred	Procedure- and task-centred

Table 4: *Seven gaps and their respective category*	
Gaps	**Category**
Theory-Practice	Hierarchy
Practice-Theory	Abstraction
Between Agencies	Competition
Within Cases	Fragmentation
Clients-System(s)	Expectations
Professionals-Clients	Different logics-Prejudice
Between logics or goals	Different logics-values and goals

BOOK REVIEW

Darkening Scandinavia: Four Postmodern Pagan Essays
Francisc-Norbert Örmény
Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013. Hk ISBN-13: 978-1-4438-5291-3; ISBN-10 1-978-1-4438-5291-3. £39.99.

When I was but a stripling, I was a Goth. Shoe-gazing was my *modus miseriarium*; my streaking-stripes of Kohákl I wore with sullen pride. *The Cure, The Fields of the Nephilim, The Sisters of Mercy*, and *The Jesus and Mary Chain* supplied the soundtrack to those grey departed days. That being so, I confess that, when first confronted by Francisc- Norbert Örmény's book, *Darkening Scandinavia*, I was a bit suspicious. Was that a whiff of designer-darkness I detected, the Gauloises-smoked pretentious scent of my own youth? As it happens, no (though at least one of his chapter titles is thoroughly overcooked) which just goes to show the dangers of judging others by your own standards. Things, as Örmény rather deftly indicates, have changed. I claim no great expertise in, for example, Norwegian Black-metal or Swedish Goth-metal, of course. Still, you know what they say: you can take the boy out of the mosh pit but you can't take the mosh pit out of the boy.

Readers unfamiliar with neo-pagan and neo-Viking (I kid you not) thematics need not despair. (Although despair is an important motif in Black-, Death-, and Goth-metal.) This roaring and rather poetic collection of essays isn't all about Metal bands. What's more interesting, perhaps, is that they aren't all philosophy either, at least not in the traditional sense. Instead, Örmény has adopted a distinctively interdisciplinary approach to a series of texts or cultural artefacts, which might not otherwise come to the attention of philosophers. In so doing, he has woven a rich and complex dialogue between philosophy—in existential and phenomenological modes—psychology, and the texts themselves. The meta-texts and subtexts that emerge in this dialogue do more than explore their chosen musical (yes, musical), cinematic, and literary subjects; they participate in them, extending metaphors and mythopoesis in the projection of a very different philosophical anthropology.

Readers should also note that Örmény's project is an explicitly postmodern one. He has, we are told, initiated the 'ritual killing of the authors'—his authors—thereby freeing his readers 'from any predetermination in which the authorial intention might have placed them.'[1] One suspects that, if those author's would not actually welcome such a prospect, they might at least appreciate it. Snuffed out, their sacrifice is the reader's gain. Once the bodies are cleared away, we are 'unknotted' from the matrix of interpretations which inevitably frame any text. In other words, *our* author offers a fresh encounter with a set of unknown texts. Unbound, we are free to follow him and make connections which might not otherwise be recognised. (The neo-pagan setting for all this notwithstanding, it is difficult to avoid the, more or less, Christian epistemology lurking at the back of it: real knowledge begins with ignorance; innocence can set us free.)

An important move on behalf of readers new to these musical, literary, and cinematic landscapes—genuinely described by this book as 'Nordic soulscapes'[2]– this places our author under a great responsibility. He is duty-bound to find the right connections, authentic insights; and he must pay with the poet's silver dollar, not the philosopher's base coin.

The results, however, are somewhat mixed. It is not, in all honesty, always entirely clear just what Örmény is getting at. This, for several reasons. For one, he is, frankly, just not doing *that* sort of analysis; Cartesian clarity is not his stock in trade; it is too literal, language on its deathbed. For another, his grid of reference is wide and well-populated; he draws on an sumptuously broad collection of thoughts and thinkers and it is sometimes difficult to keep track. The narrative, moreover, moves at quite a pace; ideas come thick and fast. Reader be warned: a little light stretching, both before and after, is advisable.

The central themes are clear enough; or, I should say, reflections and refractions on a single multifaceted theme stand out. That theme is the Void, more properly, Darkness 'written with a capital D'[3] (given the typography, I, for one, had no doubts on that score).

Rooted in Democritus (also with a capital D), this D-Darkness is a dynamic and creative presence in Örmény's own work as well as that of his subjects. (This does not, of course, mean that it isn't stuffed with lurking philosophical and psychological monstrosities, which lie in wait for the unwary traveller.) This space, into which consciousness may extend itself, throws back clear echoes of that lacuna into and over which narrative selves project themselves, aspirationally, as upwardly—or downwardly—oriented 'selves'. Echoes, too, of the seventy-thousand fathoms of creative insecurity over

which some must choose to live and work. The myths and metaphors through which this psychodynamic works itself out range widely. Reflections on the Black-metal scream as authentic and, in some sense, primal response to the sublime allow Örmény to extend the creative inflections of death as both 'radical manifestation'[4] of the 'real' and the absolutely incommunicable: the point, that is, where language abandons us and we are faced with either silence or the scream. Perhaps both. Along side this, we find Heideggerian tensions between 'personal' and 'natural' suns, whereby the former may well be 'capable of outshining and giving meaning to' the latter. Here, then, projections and the 'natural' enter into dynamic interplay. As we might expect, however, that interplay is anything but playful. The picture of nature, which emerges particularly in the second and third essays, is one of a hostile and unforgiving force. This is a world out of which the 'self'—more specifically, a man—must carve himself, unhome and even, perhaps, orphan himself in the search for an identity.

Such conflicts are further extended in myths of masculinity and violence which appear to represent a 'more real' projection of human becoming. One hesitates to reject this dimension of Örmény's work too quickly, not least because there is evidently something in it. Historically speaking, my half of the species has been quite committed to just those projections. Nevertheless, and I may be doing Örmény a disservice here, it is hard not to suspect that there may something deliberately controversial about his energetic rejection of the Feminist Canon. Whether or not that is the case, there is something not entirely convincing in his analysis of the fantasy Viking film, *Valhalla Rising*. (A Viking film with nary a hint of Tony Curtis? Unbelievable.) This discussion serves primarily to emphasise the *un*reality of masculine ideas about violence.

There is a sense, that is, in which men live in a world of idealised or fantasy violence. Whatever the costumes, boys play at—in the parlance of my childhood—Cowboys and Indians. It's all smallpox-infected blankets and genocidal massacres; then everyone gets up and goes home for their tea (guess who's doing the cooking). Why else would our species be so quick to indulge in murder on the industrial scale? Contrariwise, Örmény seems unaware that, while men live and (pretend to) grow up in a world of idealised violence, the world of women contains the real thing. Hints at the warmth and comfort of a woman's womb-centred world (with barely a nod to 'the pain of giving birth, of delivering something [sic] into the world')[5] seem achingly romantic. No room here, in this 'masculine

aesthetic' where men are driven by hate and the need to 'fight and kill within some highly barbaric contest;' no room for the realities of motherhood wherein, accompanied by the sound of grinding pelvic bones, a woman's body is torn to flinders: physically and metaphysically, psychically, soulfully, psychologically; rent by the delivering of, not some*thing* but some*one*. Birth is barely the beginning, Kirsteva reminds us: '[i]t is not a question of giving birth in pain but of giving birth to pain.'[6] '[T]he pain of becoming yourself'[7] is one thing, but we cannot, I think, ignore the pain of becoming and being the other (or even an Other).

As exciting as this neo-Viking adventure undoubtedly is, the new masculine aesthetic which Örmény draws from it, is not, as indicated, very convincing. And when he wonders what the 'feminist critique [would] say about *Valhalla Rising*—a voracious cinematic impetus from where the idea itself of womanhood is completely erased,'[8] one cannot help thinking that the answer would be 'What, again?' In all seriousness, what Örmény has missed here is that, when there are 'only men and their gods, men and their demons,' the dialectics of this 'single vector of becoming' are fatally compromised. Such reflections as our gods provide cannot be simply symmetrical if they are to open the lacuna over which the "self" must cross in becoming what it is not. The image is just too literal; so close a correspondence between "self" and "other" as we find in it leaves the project unable to generate the vital dissonance which fuels the journey. Recall the gods of ancient Greece, in all their jealousy and venality; how like a man (as Hamlet might have said in a cynical hour). Neo-pagan this may be; but there is more than a hint of Divine Ipseity here.

There is, it must be said, one other stand-out problem with this book: a writing-style so dense, over-complicated, and over-worked that it cannot help but run against the grain of Örmény's poetic and mythopoetic aims. Among other infelicities, almost every sentence is jam-packed with additional clauses, each of which is itself stuffed to bursting with yet more. I am certain that this is a sign of our author's excitement: he is revelling in the ideas and connections which he has found and he, himself, is almost bursting with the desire to share them. All of them. All at once. This is, to some degree, profoundly refreshing in a philosophical writer and, for the first few pages, quite an exciting ride. Yet the relentless stacking of clauses within clauses within clauses buries many of the richer and more illuminating insights that might otherwise be on offer. The effort of exhuming them soon becomes exhausting for the reader and, what's worse,

tiresome. Örmény is so keen to tell us everything, to make every last connection, signal every possible allusion, that he leaves nothing for the reader to do except stand back and let him get on with it.

As already noted, *Darkening Scandinavia* pursues a postmodern programmatic in getting rid of The Author. Where Örmény's subjects are concerned, he broadly succeeds in doing this. Unfortunately, he does so by standing in front of them and making such a lot of noise that the reader is really only aware of one voice. It seems that, while *our* author may not need *The* Author, he doesn't appear to need *the* reader either.

In fact, his style and the effects of it are entirely in-keeping with the worst aspects of postmodernism. In perpetuating that old saw, the intentional fallacy, postmodernists always forget one vital thing: texts—literary, cinematic, musical, or what have you—are communicative acts. *Acts*, that is, not natural events or processes. The logic of action requires (does not necessitate, mind you, just requires) a minimum of two inter-agents for every act. Intentionality, that is, is what makes it possible to make sense of any communicative act *as a communicative act.* Without the author-agent to intend some concrete meaning, communication is shut down and the reader is shoved out. The text becomes a soliloquy without an audience. And one is left wondering what the point is, if not of the text, then of one's own presence before it. (Actually, the bigger curiosity is why those writers who deny the author any place in the text-communication bother to put their names on their books; it's hardly a sign of commitment.)

This, of course, raises serious questions about Örmény's methodology. Can one, after all, interpret or psychologise a text except under the assumption that it is the extension of some psychology? It also raises questions about his intended audience. The style would, I suspect, be profoundly off-putting to non-academic readers, who may well be keenly interested in the subject matter. But will the subject matter appeal to academic readers, who may be willing to put the effort into untangling the text? I'm not so sure.

Sad to say, this apparent lack of interest in the reader is compounded—and extended—by the disappointingly poor presentation of the book. We all know how difficult it is to weed out all the typos from our writing, but there are simply far too many here to pass unnoticed. These include several which appear within quotations and even one instance of the word 'Nietzschean' being misspelled. That may, of course, explain the need to state, in writing, that Darkness was intentionally 'written with a capital D'.

All of which is a great shame. The neo-pagan transliterations through which Örmény seeks to guide us make for a genuinely exciting journey through strange psychological and metaphysical landscapes. It is, moreover, a journey undertaken with great enthusiasm and energy; both sadly lacking from so much philosophical discourse. In this, and in his practical-poetical approach, he joins a happy few who strive to free themselves for the constraints of academic writing in the hopes of producing something honest, human, creative. His poetical and mythopoetical instincts are, I am sure, on target. But if he is really to succeed in luring us into the Northern Darkness, he needs to show more restraint, more control. He needs, in short, to make room for his readers to enter into dialogue with him, with the landscapes and 'soulscapes' he seeks to reveal. Do so, and he might well tempt us to leave the light for a while.

And just in case you were wondering, that's 'dialogue' written with a lower case 'd'.

Simon Smith

Notes

1. This and next, Adriana Teodorescu, 'Preface: Redeemed Reader and Applied Philosophy in Francisc-Örmény's *Darkening Scandinavia*', *Darkening Scandinavia*, vii.
2. Francisc-Norbert Örmény, *Darkening Scandinavia*, back cover.
3. Örmény, back cover.
4. This and next, Örmény, 1.
5. This and next, Örmény, 38.
6. Quoted in Anne-Marie Smith's *Julia Kristeva: Speaking the Unspeakable* (London: Pluto Press, 1998), 31.
7. Örmény, 38.
8. This and next, Örmény, 37.

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CF = *The Contempt of Freedom* (London, Watts, 1940; reprinted New York, Arno Press, 1975)
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SFS = *Science, Faith and Society* (London, OUP, 1946; 2nd ed. U. of Chicago Press, 1964)
SOM = *The Study of Man* (London, Routledge; Chicago, University of Chicago Press; 1959)
TD = *The Tacit Dimension* (London, Routledge; New York, Doubleday; 1966; reprinted
     Gloucester, Mass., Peter Smith, 1983)
Also:
SEP = *Society, Economics and Philosophy: Selected articles by Michael Polanyi*,
   ed. R.T. Allen (New Brunswick, NJ, Transaction Publishers, 1997).