

APPRAISAL

The Journal of the Society for Post-Critical Philosophy and Personalist Studies

Vol. 7, No. 4, October 2009

ISSN 1358-3336

Editor: Dr R.T. Allen

20 Ulverscroft Rd, Loughborough, LE11 3PU, England

Tel.: 01509 552743; E-mail: rt.allen@ntlworld.com

www.spcps.org.uk

© SPCPS 2009

CONTENTS

Editorial	2
<i>Wendy Hamblet</i>	
Jacques Rancière: The philosopher and his poor on the shores of democratic politics	3
<i>Fauve Lybaert</i>	
Mental causation and explanatory practice	11
<i>Papers from the 10th International Conference on Persons:</i>	
<i>Ignacio Moya Arriagada</i>	
The primacy of space in Heidegger and Taylor: Towards a unified account of personal identity	17
<i>Gregory de Vleeschouwer</i>	
'Person' seeks 'Man': A very quick immersion in, and evaluation of, the philosophical debate on personal identity since Locke	25
<i>Ivan Welty</i>	
Singularity and personal identity	29
<i>R.T. Allen</i>	
Raymond Tallis and the alleged necessity of a body for personal identity	34
<i>Discussions:</i>	
<i>1. Fauve Lybaert</i>	
A response to R.T. Allen	38
<i>2. Alan Ford</i>	
Responses to Walter Gulick and Phil Mullins	41
<i>3. Klaus Allerbeck</i>	
Remembering Dahrendorf	49
Journals received	52

This issue's new contributors:

Fauve Lybaert is a PhD candidate at the philosophy department of the University of Leuven (Belgium) and Fellow in Philosophy at Harvard University. She currently works on a dissertation on personal identity. She looks at moments at which our referral to ourselves is not tied to any of our specific personality traits. She examines what role should be attributed to the idea of the self that is at play here in an analysis of what personal identity signifies.

Ignacio Moya Arriagada has an M.A. in Philosophy from Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario. He has published a short philosophical novella ('Cinegetica: El arte de la caza'), directed two short-films ('Aniceto' and 'Mareadores') and three micro-films. His current philosophical research is focused on personal identity. In particular, he is interested in the social and political consequences that emerge as a result of our often unarticulated and unexamined assumptions on personal identity and on what constitutes a 'self'.

Gregory de Vleerschouwer studied Commercial Engineering and Philosophy. He wrote his PhD on personal identity at the K.U.Leuven (HIW) and is funded by the F.W.O. Vlaanderen. His advisor is Prof. Arnold Burms. Apart from philosophy, he dedicates his time to prose writing.

Ivan Welty is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Willamette University, Oregon, USA. He received his Ph.D. from Columbia University, New York, USA, with a dissertation on the dispute between Frege and Hilbert over the foundations of geometry. His teaching and research interests include early analytic philosophy and philosophy of language.

EDITORIAL

In this issue Wendy Hamblet introduces the political philosophy of Jacques Rancière, while Fauve Lybaert considers mental causation. Then follow four papers related to aspects of personal identity, some revised and three of them by new contributors, from the 10th International Conference on Persons (Nottingham, August 2009), plus, as *Discussions*, a response given there to one of them, Alan Ford's response to Walter Gulick's and Phil Mullins' articles in the previous issue and Klaus Allerbeck's tribute to the late Lord Darendorf.

The 10th International Conference on Persons proved to be an academic and social success despite a lower attendance than expected, because of the financial cutbacks. The quality of papers and speakers was uniformly high, and include a wide range of topics and approaches. We are pleased that many of them have been made available for publication in *Appraisal*, starting with the five in this issue, and to be followed in March (Vol. 8, No. 1) by 4 on Michael Polanyi, and in October (Vol. 8, No. 2) by six or seven on a variety of topics all related to persons. Other papers from the Conference will appear in our associated journal, *Personalizm/Personalism* (in respectively Polish translation and the original English). The 11th International Conference on Persons will be held in the USA in August, 2011. We shall advertise it as soon as more details are available.

Despite increases in the cost of printing and posting *Appraisal*, subscriptions for Vol. 8, 2010-11, which are now due, have not been increased, and have remained the same since Vol. 3, 2000-1. The SPCPS, which publishes *Appraisal*, and of which all individual subscribers to *Appraisal* are deemed to be members, now has a proper Committee. Not only will the work be spread more widely but more can and will be done. The website will be improved and extended; all matters of SPCPS business and shorter items of interest to members will be transferred to a new Members' Newsletter which will accompany each issue of *Appraisal*, starting with this one; and several projects are being initiated, such as features, in our series of Re-Appraisals, on Max Scheler, Austin Farrer and others, plus a research project with our colleagues in the Romanian Academy of Sciences. We shall also make efforts to increase our readership especially in Britain and among university students. All offers of further help will be warmly welcomed.

JACQUES RANCIÈRE: THE PHILOSOPHER AND HIS POOR ON THE SHORES OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICS

Wendy Hamblet

Abstract

Rancière's penetrating studies of political theory and the realities of democratic polities, from the ancient Athenian through modern formulations, challenge the comfortable definitions of democracy as just and egalitarian societies of free-minded people. Rancière argues for a fresh understanding of the notions of politics and democracy, and for a fresh application of these ideals (as his redefinitions describe them) in modern societies. This paper maps Rancière's proposed route to a new democratic politics, and then closes with reflections and challenges to his seductive counter-politics.

Key Words

Aristotle, axiai, common good, consumerism, democracy, freedom, meritocracy, Plato, Jacques Rancière, statesmanship, tyranny.

Conceive of this sort of thing happening on many ships or on one. Picture a shipmaster in height and strength surpassing all others on the ship, but who is slightly deaf and similarly impaired vision, and whose knowledge of navigation is [equally impaired]. Consider the sailors to be wrangling with one another for control of the helm, each claiming that it is his right to steer though he has never learned the art and cannot point out his teacher or any time when he studied it. . . . they are always clustered about the ship master importuning him and sticking at nothing to induce him to turn over the helm to them. And sometimes if they fail and others get his ear, they put the others to death or cast them out from the ship and then, after binding and stupefying the worthy shipmaster with mandragora or intoxication or otherwise, they take command of the ship, consume its stores, and drinking and feasting, make such a voyage of it as is to be expected from such. (Plato, Rep. 6.488a-c)

Jacques Rancière, French philosopher at the University of Paris-VIII and student of Althusser, is a lover of the ancients and a lover of ideals of democracy, universal political participation, and social egalitarianism. He is also attentive to history and knows well, from the plethora of twentieth century examples, that when ships of state are governed by the wrong sort of men, the vessels become unseaworthy, riddled with fractures and punctures that put all the passengers at risk. Driven by what Rancière deems 'monstrous' ideologies, the

worst ships exceed in shamefulness even Plato's dark prophecies, leaving in their wake death camp, bloody revolution, and mass public execution.

Rancière's penetrating studies of political theory and the realities of democratic polities, from the ancient Athenian through modern formulations, challenge the comfortable definitions of democracy as just and egalitarian societies of free-minded people. Rancière argues for a fresh understanding of the notions of politics and democracy, and for a fresh application of these ideals (as his redefinitions describe them) in modern societies.

The Philosopher and His Poor (Le Philosophe et des pauvres, 1983) opens the problematic of politics and democracy by launching Rancière's critique of the gap between the lofty promises of ancient political theory and the harsh realities of life for the poor in the philosophers' ideal states. *On the Shores of Politics (Aux bords du politique 1992)* introduces Rancière's analogy of political philosophy as the stable shore, harbour from the tumultuous seas of democratic equality. In *Disagreement: Philosophy and Politics (La Mésentente: Politique et philosophie, 1995)*, Rancière exposes the faulty ancient politico-historical grounds of that shore, unsettling the sands of political theory by exposing its shaky foundations—mendacious definitions and empty ideals that conceal the anti-democratic and plutocratic truth about so-called democracies. In *Hatred of Democracy (La haine de la démocratie, 2005)*, Rancière returns to the sands of political theory to challenge the 'haters' of democracy with harbouring a disgust for the poor and a secret desire to throw them overboard and end their troublesome politics.

This paper represents a study of the ancient shores of political theory in Plato and Aristotle, followed by a summary of Rancière's counter-philosophy of democratic politics. Rancière charts afresh the shores of politics, measures the swelling seas at the beachhead, and warns of the perfect storm that awaits our failure to prepare for the oceanic turbulence of democratic politics in the era of globalization. Finally, I will close with some reflections upon, and challenges to, Rancière's seductive counter-philosophy to the hatreds of democracy.

1. *The ancient hatred of democracy*

Hatred of democracy is as old as democracy itself. With the first democratic polity in the ancient polis of Athens, the ancient Greek philosophers, Plato and Aristotle, launch virulent attacks on this political form, arguing from an aristocratic ethos that sees statesmanship as the art of shepherding the citizenry in the direction of the goods of social order and happiness.

Commenting on the spectrum of political forms, Plato and Aristotle agree that democracy is the best of the worst and the worst of the best of polities. Democracy is the best of the worst, because it is composed of mediocre men, who are as incapable of any great harm as they are of any great good, being powerful neither in cunning nor in wealth. Democracy is the worst of the best, because it can do no great good, being governed by great numbers of people less prepared by nature or by nurture in the science of governing. In short, democracy is the best guarantor of citizen freedom and the worst guarantor of citizen excellence.

1.1 Plato

Plato confirms his hatred for democracy in his Seventh Epistle, where he describes in painful detail the tumultuous seas of political life in Athens under that political form:

To be sure in those days too, full of disturbance as they were, there were many things occurring to cause offence [such as the sacrilegious charges and unjust execution of Socrates]. . . . The written law and the customs were being corrupted at an astounding rate [to the result that] I, who had at first been full of eagerness for a public career, as I gazed upon the whirlpool of public life and saw the incessant movement of shifting currents, at last felt dizzy and . . . finally saw clearly that without exception their system of government is bad. Their constitutions are almost beyond redemption except through some miraculous plan accompanied by good luck. (*Seventh Epist.* 325b-326a)

In the *Republic* Book VIII, Plato has Socrates chart the decay of political forms, tracking ‘the four species [of constitutions]. . . observing their defects and the corresponding types of men’ each produces (8.544a). From the meritocratic ‘ideal’ city where the philosopher-king reigns as benevolent shepherd (described in the previous six books of the work), Socrates traces a downward spiral: timocracy, oligarchy, democracy, benevolent tyranny, and malevolent tyranny.

In each case, Thrasymachus’ claim (at 1.344a) is confirmed: what the rulers love is the decisive political force. Because ‘that which men at any time honour they practice, and what is not honoured is neglected’ (551a), what is loved ultimately proves in

each polity to be the downfall of the state, as the powerful come to neglect the law of limit and ‘drink too deeply of that unmixed wine.’

The meritocracy or ‘ideal city,’ designed in Books II through VII, is the best polity because its philosopher rulers are by definition ‘the best’ (*aristoi*), drawn from the superior men (*aristoi*) of the superior class (*aristoi*), schooled with meticulous care in the gymnastics and music that soothe their souls and practised in the art of philosophy. A rigorous lawfulness holds the polity intact, keeping the classes strictly separated, that all may exercise their natural skills and perform their specialised functions, without minding the business of others or suffering interference themselves. A myth recounting citizen souls as moulded from differing ‘metals’ justifies the social stratifications.

Over time, as all things, the best state collapses. It begins when the law of the metals falls into disuse, and the classes begin to mix good seed with inferior. ‘Unseasonable’ marriages and conceiving children ‘out of season’ degrade the nature of the best, and ill nature is quick followed by ill nurture, as the inferior citizens neglect their true muses (‘discussion and philosophy’), leave off their music lessons, and favour only gymnastics and hunting (548bc). With inferior natural dispositions and inferior training and studies, brawn surpasses brain in our lesser men, their soul’s harmony becomes compromised, and their merit disappears. We must note that ‘the best’ are the first to fall: the guardians, former defenders of the common good and custodians of social harmony, turn to amassing private treasures, storing up private wealth in private mansions. Soon, everyone begins doing her own thing, until conflicted interests draw the citizens into wars with each other and their neighbours.

The new city takes up the character of its degraded citizen-soul—‘the more high-spirited and simple-minded type, who are more suited for war than for peace’ (547e–548a). The strongest and most warlike take over the helm and rule by sheer force of arms. But before long, the timocracy too falls. ‘From being lovers of victory and lovers of honour, they become lovers of gain-getting and money, and they commend and admire the rich man and put him in office, but despise the man who is poor’ (551a). Timocracy decays into oligarchy, as individual greed, private consumption, and lawlessness gnaw away at the rigorous code of self-restraint, characteristic of an honour-bound warrior society.

Then, ‘just as an unhealthy body requires but a slight impulse from outside to fall into sickness,’ the oligarchs, diseased in their souls and constantly at

war with each other, lose their grip on the helm of state (551b). The poor, always being many, rise up against the wealthy who oppress and despise them, put to death the leading oligarchs, and drive out the others. Then straightway they grant to everyone, regardless of merit, an equal share in citizenship and public offices, the latter often drawn by lot. Democracy is born.

The new city is dominated by those least educated, untutored in virtue, and undistinguished by valorous deeds or honourable character. Nevertheless, the new polity appears to have potential for great things:

Possibly, this is the most beautiful of polities; as a garment of many colours, embroidered with all kinds of hues, so this, decked and diversified with every type of character, would appear to be the most beautiful. And perhaps many would judge it to be the most beautiful, like boys and women when they see bright coloured things. (*Rep.* 8.557c)

As is the way for all states, the democrats' excessive love proves their downfall. Being formerly repressed, they value nothing more highly than what they formerly lacked—liberty. Their city is 'chock full of liberty and freedoms . . . every man [having] license to do as he likes' (8. 557b). Over time, that love becomes unbridled and liberty collapses into license. The citizens begin to do *only* what they please and civic responsibility wanes. Then license decays into licentiousness. The timeworn laws of decency and propriety are flouted.

Socrates explains the problem. Democracy's very law is the law of freedom from restraint, the law of lawlessness, so in its extreme, democracy knows no limits, and the people grow ever bolder, demanding all freedoms and rejecting all responsibilities, including:

the freedom from all compulsion to hold office in such a city, even if you are qualified, or again, to submit to rule, unless you please, or to make war when the others are at war, or to keep the peace when others do so, unless you desire peace, and again the liberty, in defiance of any law that forbids you, to hold office and sit on juries nonetheless, if it occurs to you to do so. (557e)

Democracy's lively mixture of talent and diversity ought to guarantee a society lively, colourful, and dynamic. But instead it is 'anarchic and motley.' Democrats do not truly value the beautiful differences that characterize their city, or their tastes would become more discriminating, educated and edified by the rich variety of their environment. Rather, reports Socrates, democrats assign equality indiscriminately to equals and unequals alike (558c), and they only 'tolerate' difference. So when tolerance is found to be burdensome, it is quickly jettisoned with other limits and boundaries.

The democrat, too, ultimately 'drinks too deep of [his] unmixed wine,' guzzles liberty too liberally. The 'climax of popular liberty' is that people become too free with each other, saying whatever they like to their neighbours, and chafing at the slightest duty, as burdensome and oppressive.

The most beautiful and free diversity collapses into a common licentiousness, an enslavement to desires and passions which is 'the fiercest extreme of servitude' (564a). Finally, a demagogue rises above the motley crowd, claiming to be the champion of their interests. His seductive words enchant the docile mob and they give him the keys to their city. But this man, tells Socrates, is really a wolf and the moment he is in power, his tyrannical aspect is revealed.

1.2 .Aristotle

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle tells a similar story. Arguing from the teleological principle that a political community arises and endures for the sake of common advantage, Aristotle explains the end of the state as 'the good and honourable life' (*eudaimonia*), and he sees all the trappings of society (family connections, citizen fraternity, religious sacrifices, and the shared amusements that draw men together in friendship) as directed toward that end (*NE* 1281a1). Aristotle's philosophical commitment to the telos of *eudaimonia* distinguishes him from the democrat (for whom the telos of community is freedom) or the oligarch (whose telos is wealth) (*Pol.* 1281a1).

In considering which state best promotes the good and honourable life, Aristotle situates democracy amongst other political forms:

A democracy is a form of government under which the citizens distribute the offices of state among themselves by lot, whereas under oligarchy, there is a property qualification, under aristocracy one of education. . . . Monarchy, as the word implies, is the constitution in which one man has authority over all. There are two forms of monarchy: kingship which is limited by prescribed conditions, and 'tyranny,' which is not limited by anything. (*Rhet.* 1365b33–1366a3)

For Aristotle, excess (*hyperbole*) and deficiency (*elleipsis*) represent the worst faults in all things: all pure goods have the virtue of measure (*to metrion*) and produce harmonious effects. The aristocracy is the only *politeia* that is purely good, its leaders being *aristoi*, 'the best.' (*Rhet.* 1366a1). But, just as the good is fragile and elusive, so aristocracy is vulnerable to the weight of reality, that is, the numbers of less good are always greater than the numbers of good men. Democracy arises in a state when the many citizens rise up and seize control.

Democrats fall short in the art of statesmanship because of a dual fault in their reasoning:

Two principles are characteristic of democracy, the government of the majority and freedom. Men think that which is just is equal; and that equality is the supremacy of the popular will; and that freedom means the doing of what a man likes. (*Pol.* 1310a26–32)

The consequences of the democratic misunderstanding are twofold: first, decision-making falls to the least capable, those of ‘low birth, poverty, and mean employment’ and second, the poor give unmeasured attention to their own (largely material) interests, to the neglect of more vital state interests and the interests of other segments of the society (*Pol.* 1317b40–41).

Aristotle, as Plato, sees the mal-reasoning of the democrats emanating from their degraded understanding of virtue, that is, from their ignoble love. Their misconstrual of unrestrained freedom as a good has severe practical consequences: straightway, upon achieving power, the poor proceed to do what they like—seizing the property of the rich and dividing it among themselves. Dividing property and dividing again ultimately ruins the state, and because justice is never the ruin of those who possess her, we can be sure that the law of confiscation is not just (*Pol.* 1281a19–20). Injustices are bound to fulfil themselves in revolution of the disgruntled wealthy, to be followed closely by tyranny.

Recognising that the ignorant *demos* enjoys the weight of numbers so can at any time rise up and overwhelm the better men at the helm, Aristotle seeks to give them their democracy, but in a benign or ‘best’ form, which will mitigate the shortcomings against which Plato rails. The best democracy is the one which *theoretically* distributes power most broadly among the *demos* (*freedom for participation*) but whose *practical* design discourages the ignorant from actually exercising their right to power (*freedom from political obligation*). The trick is to keep the riffraff out of the public spaces—out of the marketplace (where the pretty products will enflame their desire for things they cannot afford) and out of the assembly (where they will be swayed by the pretty speeches of unscrupulous demagogues).

To serve this end, Aristotle elects as the best democracy the one where the *demos* consists of barely subsistence farmers, who out of pure necessity stay in their fields, leaving the reins of power to those more fit by nature and by education’s nurture. ‘Being poor, they have no leisure and therefore do not attend the assembly and not having

the necessities of life, they are always at work and do not covet the property of others’ (*Pol.* 1318b6).

Aristotle lifts the poor from the sea of their tumultuous desires and ignorant opinions and sets them on the dry land of his political theory, where they may work and eat and sleep in peace, but where, for them, leisure time and surplus goods and political participation is impossible. Ignorant, fickle and troublesome, the poor are relegated to the restricted lives their inferior natures demand. They are to be brought to the good and honourable life by their poverty. Aristotle claims this suit them fine:

Indeed [the *demos*] find their employment pleasanter than the cares of government or office where no great gains can be made out of them, for the many are more desirous of gain than of honour. (P 1318b6–16)

2. Rancière’s hatred of the ancient hatreds

The ancients locate a number of weaknesses in democratic polities—the excess and misuse of freedom, the substitution of base pragmatic values for ideals of excellence and virtue, and the tendency to follow demagogues uncritically into the house of tyranny. Rancière objects throughout his corpus to these (for him) unwarranted criticisms. He attacks the anti-democratic political theories on their faulty grounds, at the level of their founding definitions and faulty logic.

First of all, charges Rancière, there are the mendacious definitions. On the shores of political theory, the polity wherein the poor are grounded in their fields and confined to their labours is falsely labelled a democracy by these disingenuous ‘haters of democracy.’ Secondly there is the claim that when the polity speaks—when it declares war on its neighbours, when it raises the taxes, when it announces a day of festival—the voice of the people is heard. But a ruse too is the deceitful claim that ‘the *demos* is that many that is identical to the whole: the many as one, the part as the whole, the all in all.’ For Rancière, ‘the outrageous claim of the *demos* to be the party of the community’ disguises the plutocratic nature of ‘democratic’ governments. In reality, the people never find their voice; they are never really consulted. Censuses identify what they want and need and chart the direction of state policy. But this is absurd, Rancière objects; the census count is off.

The *demos* is not the whole of the people. The *demos* is simply the poor or ‘the party of those who have no part.’ But the true nature of the *demos* is concealed by a founding ruse established with the first democracy in Athens. The problem of faulty definitions emerges with the first democracy in Athens. The ruse runs this way: the state is

composed of three parts, each with its specific good (*axia*)—the *aristoi* with their *arete* (excellence); the *oligoi* with their wealth (*ploutos*); and every one else, the *demos* (who have nothing, no wealth or honour). After Solon abolished debt slavery, and the *oligoi* could no longer seize the bodies of the poor when they fell into debt, a new concept, a new *axia*, arose and became attributed to the poor. Hereafter the politicians would speak of the freedom (*eleutheria*) of the people.

In no state are all the people gifted with equal benefits. Most polities do not promise equality and they do not aspire to achieve it. Democracy is unique and exalted precisely because it rests on such a promise—the people have their separate talents and functions, but all enjoy equal access to the benefits of the society and the rights of citizenship. This promise rests upon the principle of a precise balance of the goods that each social class enjoys. Just as the carpenters and the cobblers of Socrates' 'simple city' bring their wares to the marketplace and barter and trade with their neighbours until everyone goes home happy with all their needs met, so in the democracy, each class enjoys their separate but equal *axiai*. Each brings a unique contribution to the communal table and takes away a fair share of the 'common good.' For Rancière, the negotiation of this distribution of the common good is precisely the meaning of politics.

However, just as there existed a miscount in the census of the *demos*, mistaking 'part that has no part' as the 'whole of the people,' the impoverished *demos* suffers a miscount in their fair share of the communal harvest. Their freedom is hardly equal to the wealth of the *oligoi* or the honour of the *aristoi*. The menu of the communal feast is misleading. Were it not for the illusive commodity attributed to them—their freedom—their lives would be indistinguishable from the lives of slaves. The *axia* of the people, their freedom, is an empty good. They cannot eat it. They cannot spend it. They cannot trade it for shoes or cabinets. Rancière confirms the injustice:

Politics begins with a major wrong: the gap created by the empty freedom of the people between the arithmetical order ['the useful' order of production and exchange] and the geometrical order ['the just' proportionality of the cosmos].

Rancière highlights a fundamental paradox in the founding political theory that configures Western democratic politics. Without a substantial share in the goods of the society, the poor are but unfettered slaves, and what is named 'democracy' is really plutocracy, governed by those who enjoy real benefits.

Tyranny was the scandal of the ancient world. Political theory sets out with the objective of adjusting the maldistribution typical of tyrannies, allotting to each group what the philosopher believes each most wants. But in plotting the distribution of the *axiai*, the philosopher has hidden assumptions: he assumes he knows what everyone most wants and needs. In failing to recognise this faulty assumption, he assures that the poor will remain eternally poor, eternally ignorant, eternally disenfranchised, excluded from citizenship proper, excluded from the actual benefits of the society, and excluded from the negotiations that might distribute those benefits more broadly. The philosopher assures that the poor will never speak for themselves and name their own deepest loves.

Philosophy launches the democratic ship of state, chaining the poor below deck, so that democracy as a political form (where the poor have political force) and politics as the work of justice (negotiating the distribution of the communal goods) is impossible from the outset. Rancière ungrounds the twofold political-theoretical foundation to expose the faulty count of the crew. The philosophers' miscounts have pulled a great ruse on the people. Aristotle's 'best democracy' has only feigned granting political participation to the many, while rendering it all but impossible that they claim their participatory rights by leaving their fields. The troublesome ship of state has *in theory* safely landed on the stable philosophical shores, but the people are not on board.

However, one might object that in the modern era, people do not suffer from the faults of philosophers' miscounts. Everybody enjoys a vote, so everyone has a part in politics, a say in the distribution of benefits. Rancière's genius resides in his insight into the lingering dark truths of democratic politics. When people do not have enough to eat, and they cannot leave their fields for fear their children will starve, what good, what *axia*, can the poor be said to enjoy, what share in the 'common good,' what part in the political negotiation that decides that distribution? In modern states as in ancient Athens, the poor may enjoy the right to vote for this or that rich elite, but many will not bother, because neither choice will change their reality at the bottom of the social heap.

The poor in every nation suffer now as they have always suffered, but their agonies cannot be seen from the stable shores of politics. However, warns Rancière, the tide is rising. The global masses of peasants and workers can no longer be condemned to their fields by foreign imperialists or indigenous tyrants. Under a globalizing democratic capitalism, founded upon ideals of freedom and equality, the poor can no longer be tortured, executed, or

banished. How will the rich—and the philosophers—keep them out of the marketplace and the assembly?

In *On the Shores of Politics*, Rancière describes the new problem facing the rich elites of every nation (*euporai*, the well-off): they are finding it increasingly difficult to suppress the swelling hordes of global poor (*aporoï*, those having no means) who are crying out for change. Rancière sees modern ‘democracies’ responding to this crisis by fostering a ‘middle term’ (*metron*), a growing middle class of commodity-numbered consumers, which intercedes to end the primary conflict between the *aporoï* and the *euporoï*. A massive middle class ‘sociality’ rises up across the globe, enjoying a new ‘equality of condition’ that ‘ensures pacification of the political emotions.’ The new equality is an equality of material condition in the free exchange of goods, bodies, and candidates.

Commercial competition, sexual permissiveness, world music, and cheap charter flights to the Antipodes quite naturally create individuals smitten with equality and tolerance of difference?

Will the new tripartite social distribution (*euporoï*, *metron*, *aporoï*) resolve the problem of democracy’s faulty grounding, its mendacious definitions, its miscounts and empty *axiai*? Will it bring the troubled flux of democratic politics to the stable shores of politics? Rancière is sceptical:

There is nothing for it; there will always be surplus words, just as there are always fields abutting the ramparts or a mob pressing around the *ecclesia*. The many, in whatever form they appear, will continue to hold sway. No matter how many words are taken away, one can never silence the cries that stir up the crowd.

Despite the tens of thousands who die each day from insufficient shares of the necessities of life, the crowd of impoverished, uneducated rabble at the global city’s gates swells larger each day and rattles louder to be heard, demanding their fair share of the ‘common good,’ their part in the good and honourable life. Plato’s and Aristotle’s (happy) prediction that the poor will remain in their fields and not penetrate the public spaces is growing faultier by the hour. Many of the desperately poor of the world have lost their fields, their forests, and their fishing waters. More people each day join the ranks of the *demos*—‘the part that has no part’—and have nothing more to lose than their degradation. They are making their way to the gates to take over the assembly.

Rancière laments the fact that democracies are not democracies, but plutocracies in disguise, where people are free one day every four years to vote for

this or that millionaire, and where the *euporoï* enjoy the lion’s share of the benefits of the society, and the *aporoï* (literally ‘no way out’) are stuck in the fields and the factories or the bread-lines. The maldistribution of the common wealth, he mourns, is eclipsed by a long-standing and archaic ideology, propagandised by the ancient philosophers as much as by tyrants and kings, a discourse about tripartite natures and functions, and the fit of these natures and functions in whole and functional societies, inclusive in the grander picture and granting benefits to all.

Rancière exposes the mendacity of this archaic tripartite model of holistic community when he recounts the tale of the Menencius Agrippa. Senator Agrippa, gifted Roman orator, delivers the legendary apologia for the ancient paradigm, in his speech on the Aventine Hill, when attempting to restore order during a revolt of the plebes. In this famous speech, Agrippa explains that the tripartite model’s hierarchy of functions (wise leader, warrior caste, and worker *demos*) is grounded in fundamental principles of justice—the equality of every man to his natural talents and functions, and the equality of each function to the others, hence each functionary to the other functionaries. When people gather together to form a community, their natural talents fit neatly together to form a perfect whole. Just as the human body needs a head to think, a heart to love and protect, and a belly to feed the system, so the state needs the various parts that perform their various, but equally important, functions. All working together form a safe, rich, and stable society, the wise ruler (head) overseeing and managing the whole, and the warriors (heart) defending against external threats, and the people, the worker belly, happily consuming the fruits of the society’s prosperity.

The mendacity of the model, for Rancière, mirrors the mendacity of the founding *axiai* of the Athenian democracy. The deceit resides in the senator’s claim that state functions enjoy equality, that heads and hearts are equal to bellies. The analogy suggests that the plebes are vegetative, ignorant, powerless consumers, feeding off their social betters who labour selflessly on their behalf. But the plebes could argue with equal accuracy that the workers of the state are the core of the state body, the arms and the legs and the heart, whose difficult and laborious lives support the extravagant lifestyles of the indolent, consumptive elitist belly.

The problem with Agrippa’s tripartite model is that the logic of the system is flawed. The justice of functional and citizen equality is called upon to defend social hierarchy and economic inequality. The archaic model is no fraternal order of peer

functionaries, no 'simple city' (such as described at *Republic* 2.372a-d) where good-natured workers commune at the end of the day and share out the fruits of their collective labours. It is a rigorous hierarchy that rewards the lion's share of the communal wealth to the powerful few who happen to be born at (or claw their way to) the top of the social ladder, while the impoverished many struggle and starve.

Ironically, explains Rancière, the argument reveals its faulty logic in the very act of Agrippa's *defenso* to the unhappy plebes. Even as he steps abreast the Aventine Hill to explain to his inferiors the functional justice of the system that oppresses them, Agrippa is levelling an appeal to plebian reason, an appeal to the heads that he is claiming these bellies lack. The principle of superiority is undercut and the system's logic collapses, as soon as a superior must explain himself to a social inferior. Agrippa's explanatory appeal, contends Rancière, effectively undermines the political myth he is defending.

3. Rancière's New Democratic Politics

The ship of state analogy images the way that every party of interest (philosopher, oligarch, demos) understands their political plight: those best equipped to rule (by the knowledge of forms, by the technique of enterprise, by the collective voice of the people) are prevented or limited in their effectiveness (measured as natural justice, by market economics, or as the abstract 'happiness' of the people) by the interference of those who are unfit for participation in politics (useless dreamers, lovers of profit, ignorant masses).

If politics is the work of a community of citizens as they negotiate their unique path to their share of the common good, as Rancière argues it is, then none of these polities (monarchy/dictatorship, oligarchy, or democracy) can rightly be named political forms. Politics for Rancière is something that people must do, not a political form they rule or suffer. Rancière's main concern seems to be the plutocratic reality of democratic politics. His urgency mounts as he notes the rising tide of an unhappy and disgruntled global poor, under the globalizing effects of an unjust economics.

Rancière recommends starting over, abandoning the quaking and crumbling shores of faulty political theory and wading back into the troubled seas of democratic difference. This necessitates a new politics, a democracy corrected. 'Governed by the judicious use of its own ungovernability,' democratic politics must 'lead the community harmoniously through discord itself, through the impossibility of the people being equal to themselves.' Rancière describes the tenor of the new politics:

Politics is not a function of the fact that it is useful to assemble, nor of the fact that assemblies are held for the sake of the good management of common business. It is a function of the fact that a wrong exists, an injustice that needs to be addressed.

It is not a matter of equalising people and goods, says Rancière, but equalising *axiai*. The wrong that needs to be addressed cannot be assimilated to a juridical wrong, nor is it the wrong of the order of war or debt. 'Somewhere between legal adjudication and infinite indebtedness, between law and religion, political grievance bespeaks an irreconcilability which remains addressable' nonetheless.

Rancière counsels on the matter of redress: expose the existing wrongs and identify the 'lacks' that must be remedied. 'This may be a lack of resources to be shared or a lack of rules for the prevention of conflict.' The process for exposing the wrongs, negotiating the redistribution of *axiai*, and carving out the new regulations takes a radically democratic form in Rancière's reformulation of politics, reaching down to the forgotten demos—the part that has no part.' One hundred per cent of populations must be polled daily to hear from them their needs. Then grievances are addressed through radically democratic dialogue—round table discussions in place of parliamentary benches.

The process will be messy and raucous, Rancière admits. Surplus interlocutors will arise, noisy crowds will mill in the streets, and spontaneous actors will take the floor. The new politics has nothing in common with the liberal compromise among conflicting interests of class parties, nor is it the abstract voice of a common popular will, determined by random polls and censuses. It is the true politics of the demos, the voice of the whole of the people.

4. Concluding remarks and concerns

Rancière is concerned to lure the demos from the fields of eternal labour and political exclusion, and the global middle class from the marketplace of consumer indifference. We will all meet in the assembly to redraft our polities and redress the grievances of the forgotten impoverished, before the dam of global grievances breaks out in bloody revolution. His aim is a worthy one. Rancière's siren song lures us to the shores of a new politics but is his democratic model sound? Does he give a fair hearing to the ancient concerns or does he simply hate the haters, dismissing their valid concerns *ad hominem* as 'haters' of an ideal he holds sacred?

Like Plato's ideal city, this new political form is a good model for good men to hold in their minds as they navigate the dark and stormy seas of global politics. But at seven billion people, the reality of universal dialogue is as unattainable as Plato's model

(admitted ideal only, at the close of Book IX of the *Republic*). Authentic democracy is unattainable, but the more important question is whether it *ought* to be realised. A more serious hearkening to the concerns of the ancients could help us to think about this crucial question.

The ancients charge that the ignorant masses misuse their beloved *axia* of freedom, taking *freedom from* as *freedom to*, and resenting any limits to their desires. The ancients charge too that the poor substitute base pragmatic values for ideals of excellence and virtue. And finally, the ancients worry that the masses are easily swayed by pretty things and seductive words, so they fall prey to silver-tongued tyrants. Rancière has not answered these charges. He has not shown the ancients' fears to be misplaced. Indeed, the new politics he describes does away with the checks and balances modern nations have put in place to ensure against just such consequences.

Perhaps the fickleness, ignobility, and ignorance of the many is exaggerated by the ancients. After all, the simplest and poorest human societies were traditionally the most gentle, communal, and naturally democratic. The superiority of the powerful organised polis over the kinship-based, simple ethnos is another mendacious myth for which we can thank the ancients. The simple people's 'ignorance' is often nothing more hazardous than ignorance of the oppressive and controlling habits of the powerful, habits better left unlearned.

On the other hand, by Rancière's own testimony, someone is ultimately raised up on the waves of every turbulent political sea. Someone will be tossed into the ship of state and welcomed to the helm. He may sing with the melody of sirens and flatter the people's ears. If all hands are on deck, the many can lift up any siren and welcome him to the helm. Strangers may be gods or monsters, as the seafaring Greeks knew well.

Every genocide testifies to the ease with which the common people are swayed by the seductive rhetoric of a demagogue. Every genocide evidences that common people are quite comfortable with injustice, cruelty and murder, if these serve their base interests. Had the masses rejected any of the

brutalities of the last century, they simply could not have taken place. It takes a tyrant to devise a plan for world domination. It takes a people, a demos, to carry it out.

This suggests the necessity of good leaders, people of merit who are instructed in virtue. I would recommend to Rancière that the problem of politics is not so much how to get to a functioning democracy, but how to get to a meritocracy of skilled and principled leaders. To bring people to the good and honourable life is no simple task. It takes, as Plato and Aristotle contend, 'superior' human beings in places of office, to labour selflessly and carve out superior laws at national and international levels. These exemplary leaders need not be from some certain class, schooled in some certain discipline, or experienced in some certain arena of thought or labour.

The problem is now, as it has always been in every free and democratic society: how to identify the leader of merit who does not have contempt for those who do not. Thus, our exemplary leader will need to prove her merit before the nation and the international council of nations can trust her at the helm. The result is by definition a meritocracy, but that term already assumes a whole spectrum of questions have been answered which have not. Rancière's plan leaves to chance who will rise on the burgeoning seas and make their way to power, but too much is at stake in every state to leave the good and honourable life to chance.

Dept of University Studies,
North Carolina A&T State University,
Greensboro, NC
wchamblet@yahoo.com

Bibliography:

- Jacques Rancière, *The Philosopher and His Poor*, John Drury, trans. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1983).
On the Shores of Politics, Liz Heron, trans. (New York: Verso, 1995).
Disagreement: Philosophy and Politics, Julie Rose, trans. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).
Hatred of Democracy, Steve Corcoran, trans. (New York: Verso, 2006).

MENTAL CAUSATION AND EXPLANATORY PRACTICE

Fauve Lybaert

Abstract

Most philosophers endorse the viewpoint that a mental event can cause a physical movement, as well as another mental event. Yet, the ontology to which they adhere prevents them from conceiving this mental causation. Jaegwon Kim solves this problem by defining mental causation so that it does not conflict with the current ontology. Tyler Burge reverses this strategy: he thinks an investigation of the problem of mental causation should start with an analysis of explanatory practice, rather than with an elaboration upon the current ontology. The aim of this paper is to contrast and evaluate these strategies.

Keywords

Burge Tyler, epiphenomenalism, explanatory practice, Kim Jaegwon, mental causation, psychiatry

1. The problem of mental causation

A central issue in the philosophy of mind is the problem of mental causation. Everyday explanatory practice demonstrates how we commonly assume that mental causation is possible. When my friends ask me why I am running to the basement, I might answer that I thought it was an ideal evening to enjoy a glass of wine and therefore decided to go and get a bottle. I then explain the physical movement of my legs by referring to a previous thought and suggest that my thought caused my running. When my mother asks me why I am nervous, I could answer that I just came to realise how much work I have and how little I have done until now, and that this made me think that I had been too lazy and hence made me a bit angry with myself. I then explain my current comportment by referring to how one of my beliefs caused another.

Few philosophers have contested that mental causation is indeed a real fact. Most philosophers endorse the viewpoint that a mental state or event can cause a physical movement, as well as another mental event or state. Further, they recognise the importance of mental causation: our knowledge and agency depend on it. Human knowledge presupposes that beliefs can incite other beliefs, and human agency requires that our desires can lead to a particular comportment. So the first concern philosophers of mind have with regard to the phenomenon of mental causation is not whether this is a real given – there is considerable consensus about that –, but rather how this fact is possible.

Previous research has established that this is not an easy question to answer. To date no final answer has been found. It is the ontology whereto philosophers of mind adhere that makes the ‘how’ of mental causation into a question. The most famous illustration hereof is to be found in Descartes’ *Passions de l’âme*. As an advocate of substance dualism Descartes contends that mind and body are distinct substances. He defines the body as that what the mind is not, viz. extensive. The question that arises is then how these two entirely distinct and differing substances can affect each other and interact. In *Passions de l’âme* Descartes means to solve this problem by putting forward the hypothesis of the existence of a pineal gland that forms the mediator between mind and body. Currently his substance dualism is considered as implausible as his suggested ‘solution’. Yet the problem of the interaction between mind and body has not disappeared.

Today another ontology leaves philosophers of mind puzzled about how to conceive of this interaction. Several ontological claims seem to be incompatible. I will first sketch two claims and will subsequently say something about their tension.

(1A) Belief in current science causes these philosophers to hold firm that physics is causally closed. This means that all (physical) events in the world that have a cause can get a complete causal explanation in physical terms: one can explain these events by solely referring to physical laws and prior physical events and states that caused them.

(1B) The observation of human behaviour and interaction leads these philosophers to accept a property dualism. The difference between an intentional behaviour and a spasm, as well as the fact that we see a clear difference between human beings and robots, demonstrate that mental properties cannot be reduced to physical properties: we have desires and intentions that cannot be reduced to mechanical processes.

(2) The conflict between these two claims arises when one insists that the reality of the mental properties of claim B requests that these mental properties have real causal power. This means that these mental properties *qua* mental properties (and not by being physical properties) should be able to affect other properties. Claim A makes it difficult to conceive of this possibility. At least if we also advocate the principle of no over-determination or

causal exclusion. Following this principle no caused event in the world can ever be caused by more than one sufficient chain of causal effects. Consequently, if each event is causally explained by prior physical events and laws, there seems no space left to attribute real causal power to instances of mental properties.

This tension between the belief in the truth of explanatory practice and the belief in the truth of the prevailing ontology highlights the need for a further investigation with regard to this matter. Different strategies are possible. One is to concentrate on the reality of ontology and to investigate how mental properties and mental causation must be thought in order for this ontology to be able to account for them. Another is to commence with our explanatory practice and let this practice indicate how we could think about mental causation. This last move might expand our conception of (mental) causation and prevent it from being completely predetermined by the way physicists generally tend to think about it.

In this article I want to look at an illustration of each of these strategies and thus find out what (some of) their advantages and disadvantages are. Jaegwon Kim follows the first strategy, while Tyler Burge propagates the second. I will evaluate Tyler Burge's 'Mind-Body Causation and Explanatory Practice' (1993) and its postscript (2006) in the light of Jaegwon Kim's *Mind in a Physical World* (1998).

2. Jaegwon Kim

In *Mind in a Physical World* Jaegwon Kim depicts the current ontology as materialistic (chapter 1); with as its main characteristics the above mentioned causal closure of physics and property dualism, as well as the supervenience thesis and the interpretation functionalists gave it. The supervenience thesis is designed to express that the presence of mental properties always implies the presence of some physical properties, without revealing where this co-variation comes from. Kim defines (strong) supervenience as follows:

mental properties *supervene* on physical properties, in that necessarily, for any mental property M, if anything has M at time t, there exists a physical base (or subvenient) property P such that it has P at t, and necessarily anything that has P at a time has M at that time. (Kim 1998: 9)

Physicalist functionalists interpret this co-variation as a dependency relation of M on P. In Kim's words:

Functionalism takes mental properties and kinds as functional properties, properties specified in terms of their roles as causal intermediaries between sensory inputs and behavioural outputs, and the physicalist form of functionalism takes physical properties as the

only potential occupants, or 'realises', of these causal roles. (Kim 1998: 19)

After sketching the axes of the prevailing physicalist ontology Kim demonstrates how this leads to various problems of mental causation (chapter 2). He mentions:

(1) the problem of anomalous mental properties: how is mental causation possible if 'mental causation requires mental events to instantiate laws, but mental anomalism says there are no laws about mental events' (Kim 1998: 33);

(2) the problem of extrinsic mental properties: how can we take seriously 'the view that only 'syntactic' properties of mental states, not their 'semantic' (or 'content' or 'representational') properties, can be causally relevant – in particular, to behaviour causation' –, when this implies 'that the mentality of an important class of mental states, like beliefs and desires' has no causal force? (Kim 1998: 35);

(3) the problem introduced above with regard to causal exclusion: given the principle of no over-determination, 'the physical cause (...) [that all events in the world seem to have] threatens to exclude, and pre-empt, the mental cause' (Kim 1998: 37, my adding between brackets).

Kim's essay mainly deals with this last problem. It is the only problem essentially tied to the physicalist ontology.

Kim argues that we cannot avoid this problem by simply stating that human agency presupposes mental causation and that we refer to mental causation in explanatory practice: the question is not whether there is mental causation, but how it can take place, given the prevailing ontology (chapter 3).

He concludes by suggesting a way to solve the causal exclusion (or over-determination) problem of mental causation (chapter 4): if we conceive mental properties as functional concepts and consider their realises to be physical properties, then we can let these concepts fulfil an epistemic need we have, and yet avoid over-determination. According to Kim mental properties serve an epistemic need because they refer to certain properties that are of interest to us. Pain, for example, refers to a physical and mental state a person is in (C-fibres are firing and the person feels unpleasant) and to the consequences this may have (it is likely that a person in pain will long for an aspirin and scream 'ouch'). But these properties do not cause over-determination, since

all the causal/explanatory work done by an instance of M [M being a mental property] that occurs in virtue of the instantiation of realer P1 [Pns being physical realises] is done by P1, and similarly for other instances of M and their realises. (Kim 1998: 110, my bracketing)

3. Tyler Burge

Tyler Burge criticises this approach to the problem of mental causation in his 'Mind-Body Causation and Explanatory Practice' (1993) and its postscript (2006). He contends that analysing explanatory practice is a better way to come to terms with the problem of mental causation than looking for a way to accommodate different ontological claims is, and accordingly proposes to reverse the research strategy Kim is following. Burge extensively elaborates the two main advantages of this reversal of strategy.

(1) Explanatory practice demonstrates how the epiphenomenalism that many philosophers of mind want to parry can never be a serious option in the first place, and that epiphenomenalism can be no more than a touchstone of theories of mental causation: when theories lead to epiphenomenalism, something is wrong with them. An epiphenomenalist defends that even though mental properties are irreducible to physical properties, they are mere epiphenomena of the latter. Physical events and states do all the causal work in the causing of other events, leaving no causal work for mental events and states. Burge gives several counter arguments for this 'observation'. I only mention a few.

He reasons that epiphenomenalism cannot be a real risk, since it would be absurd to say that only properties specified in the physical sciences are relevant for determining the causal powers of a mental event like the thought 'it is raining'. He further argues that whoever conceives of an over-determination between mental and physical causes misleadingly fuses different levels of causal interaction.

Burge suggests that there is a realm of reasons and a realm of causes which function in different ways. This holds some plausibility, for as Burge (1993: 103) further describes, we are able to explain our actions in terms of reasons despite our ignorance of the underlying neurological processes. And it can, as Burge (1993: 107) mentions, indeed seem a bit incredible that 'there are always physical events – identifiable with the mental events and specifiable in the natural sciences – whose identity will, under all possible counterfactual circumstances, vary exactly when the mental events vary' – even when we may, as Davidson argues, subsume our causal history under these physical events. One would think that the content and causal effects of my thought are also determined by its meaningful context in some extra way that is not registered by physical events.

However, in spite of what Burge may have hoped, this mere distinction between a realm of reasons and a realm of natural causes does not resolve the

problem of mental causation. On the contrary, it sidesteps and aggravates it. It sidesteps it because it does not explain how mental events and states can have causal efficacy and help establishing other events: it does not say anything about how mental events incite other mental events, nor about how my desire to go to the kitchen can make me move my legs. It aggravates the problem of mental causation because a radical separation between these two realms makes it even harder to conceive how the mental and the physical can interact.

In this regard Kim's approach seems more valuable. He states:

For the only way in which I believe that we can understand the idea of causal explanation presupposes the idea that the event invoked in causal explanation is in reality a cause of the phenomenon to be explained. (Kim 1998: 64)

Thus even when we consider ourselves to be in the realm of reasons and want to justify our actions to one another, we assume that the causes to which we appeal can be real causes (in a physical world). With this idea in the back of his mind, Kim poses the problem of mental causation in all its clarity and urgency. Yet, Burge seems to be right in noticing that Kim's way of conceiving the problem is predetermined by his understanding of physics. This leads me to the second advantage that Burge sees in putting explanatory practice (rather than ontology) first in the analysis of mental causation.

(2) When we first accept the claims of the prevailing ontology and only consequently think about how mental causation might still be possible, our concept of mental causation will be partial. Descartes is here to blame with his inheritance-view of causality. He claims that there can never be anything 'in the effect that was not previously present either in a similar or a higher form in the cause', and thereby allows physics to determine how all causality must function. According to Burge, the idea contemporary philosophers have of the way mental causation should function if it were to take place, is still predetermined by their (not necessarily correct and up to date) idea of current physics. Following Burge the mere 'demanding that there be an account of mechanism in mind-body causation is tantamount to demanding a physical model for understanding such causation.' (Burge 1993: 114) And one typically assumes that mental events are 'instantiations or tokens of physical event-kinds.' (Burge 1993: 97) Burge disputes such a view and says 'it would be perverse to think that (...) mental events must interfere with or alter, or fill some gap in, the chain of physiological events (...)' (Burge 1993: 115-116) Once again he contends that the neurological and

belief-desire explanation of a man's running 'answer two very different types of inquiry.' (Burge 1993: 116)

As interesting as Burge's remark on the partiality of philosophers of mind is, so disappointing is his conclusion about the two different types of inquiry. Burge seems to foresee this when he writes in his postscript (Burge 2006: 363): 'I attempt no satisfying account of the mind-body problem. My primary interest lies in articulating dissatisfaction with the particular approach.' However, this seems not to be enough of an excuse for someone who is advocating that an analysis of explanatory practice can teach us something new about mental causation. The problem I see with Burge's articles is that they do not mention which new view on mental causation explanatory practice has to offer apart from the negative statement that mental causation should not necessarily be thought as analogous to causation in physics. Moreover, a few points in Burge's articles also seem to hinder a new view on mental causation that explanatory practice might give us. I think about two points in particular.

(A) At a certain stage Burge says: 'If those neural processes are going on, the body's movements, and hence what we count as behaviour, will depend on the properties of those processes.' (Burge 1993: 98) In saying this Burge is not expressing his own opinion; he only wants to sketch the background from which the problem of mental causation usually arises: if neural causes are already causing our movements or behaviour, then there seems no space left for mental states or events to do so. But even if Burge is not expressing his own view here, this does not make his equation of movements with behaviour unproblematic. I do not want to blame Burge for not knowing the distinction between mere movement and behaviour, but I do believe that the fact that he does not mention it makes him miss a chance to demonstrate how explanatory practice can alter our view on mental causation. The previous quote makes it seem as if the event of an arm rising through a spasm can be identical with the event of an arm rising through the desire to hold a cap. This is counter-intuitive, as would be the statement that the event of an arm raised by a robot can be identified with the event of an arm deliberately raised by a human being as long as both arms draw the same figure in space. It seems unlikely that the difference between these three arm movements should be explained by neurological processes, since we perceive the differences between these movements, without perceiving the underlying physical processes. This phenomenon supports the idea that we might come to understand how mental causation works by

searching for the reason(s) why we perceive these movements differently. Of course one could object that these reasons will teach us something about our perception and the realm of reasons solely and nothing about how mental causation actually works or the realm of real causes. I would reply that they teach us something about what human action and mental causation are, and that knowing this is a precondition for getting to know how they come about, as well as it is a first indication for how human action and mental causation might originate.

(B) An even more incomprehensible move of Burge is his emphasis on the distinction between the realm of reasons and the realm of physical causes: an explanation that refers to reasons would answer a different inquiry than an explanation that refers to physical causes does. I think that explanatory practice could demonstrate how these realms are intertwined and that Burge's emphasis on the distinction between these two realms not only hinders it to do so, but also means that Burge himself advocates the base structure of the mechanism for which he was blaming the philosophers of mind; that is, he thinks of mental and physical properties as two distinct kinds of properties. The only difference is that he seems to be suggesting that these properties do not interact with one another, whereas the philosophers of mind he is arguing with try to account for how they do. This would be a strange conclusion for someone who defends that explanatory practice demonstrates how mental causation is a reality and epiphenomenalism is an illusion. But how does explanatory practice show us that the realm of reasons and the realm of physical causes are intertwined? I offer two suggestions.

(i) Commencing with the former observation of the clear difference between three different arm movements, one could ask oneself what kind of consciousness is needed for a movement to be an instantiation of human comportment. This might bring mental events or reasons closer to physical events or natural causes, since it shows that most of the time it is not necessary to have an explicit desire for a meaningful and deliberate movement to take place. I move my legs, scratch where it itches, frown, and reach for a glass of water without first explicitly thinking why I would want to do so. This does not mean that no form of consciousness or self-consciousness is involved here. Consciousness and self-consciousness are required to differentiate these instantiations of human comportment from a spasm or a purely mechanical process. But the fact that this consciousness is not very explicit or discursive makes it plausible that its role is not confined to the realm of reasons, but needs to be

understood by neurologists as well. Thus, the so-called realms of reasons and natural causes are brought closer by an observation made by explanatory practice.

(ii) The problem of mental causation is a sub problem of the mind-body problem and deals with the questions of how mental states and events cause other mental states and events, and how mental states and events cause physical states and events. I suspect that the interest for *mental* causation does not only stem from the fact that a causally closed physics makes physical causation unproblematic and mental causation problematic, but also finds its origin in our assumption that the content of desires, intentions and thoughts in general comes from the mental and not from the physical. I think this assumption is wrong. The content of thoughts can arise from the physical which is the case in deliriums. Here a chemical affects a neuro-physiological process, and thus makes visions arise. But something similar might happen more often than we think: the moods we are in (and may to some degree be caused by some physical processes) are (partly) responsible for the specific content of our thoughts. I believe this is an important observation because it may function as another sign that the distinction between the mental and the physical, and the distinction between the realm of reasons and the realm of natural causes that philosophers of mind often try to make is somewhat artificial, and that mental causation is not a process that should happen between some specifically mental and some specifically physical processes, since the so-called mental and physical are intertwined from the start.

(C) I admit that these suggestions stay on the surface and require further elaboration. It is one thing to say that the mental and the physical are always already intertwined and that mental causation should therefore not be conceived as if some distinct mental state and event were causing some distinct physical (or mental) state and event, but yet another to explain how the causal efficacy of this entanglement of the mental and the physical, reasons and natural causes, actually works. Still I believe it is possible to draw at least one practical conclusion from my suggestions. This is that a close study of the work psychiatrists do could teach us something about how 'mental' causation works. Whereas neurologists mainly investigate physical processes and phenomenologists are looking for the essence of categorical acts (i.e. how our acts of thinking are factually structured) without investigating their possible physical causes or subvenient events, psychiatrists are constantly attentive for the interweaving of physical processes and the structure

and content of thoughts, and for the manner in which this interweaving is causally efficacious. Looking at the way they work with this interweaving might give us a theory about its functioning.

4. Conclusion

The aim of this paper is to oppose and evaluate two different strategies that are used to deal with the problem of mental causation.

It appears that most philosophers of mind recognise that mental causation is a reality. For them epiphenomenalism is never a real option, but at the most a touchstone for the different theories on the mind-body problem. The question with which philosophers are struggling is how mental causation comes about.

The first section describes Jaegwon Kim's attempt to demonstrate the reality of the problem of mental causation. He shows how a certain combination of ontological claims leaves the impression that mental causation is inconceivable. Kim tries to solve this problem by defining mental causation and the so-called causally efficacious mental events in such a way that they do not conflict with the current ontology.

The second section shows that Tyler Burge reverses this strategy: he thinks an investigation of the problem of mental causation should start with an analysis of explanatory practice, rather than with an elaboration upon the current ontology. The advantage of Burge's approach is that it illuminates the partiality of current ontology and thus shows why its concept of, for example, mental causation is too biased and narrow. But Burge's approach also seems to be characterised by a weakness. In putting the explanatory practice first, Burge gives the impression that he is merely side-stepping the problem of mental causation: he solely emphasises that mental causation must be real, but does not elaborate upon its functioning.

In a third move I try to indicate how explanatory practice does not have to be blind to metaphysics, but might inform it instead: it could, for instance, demonstrate how the so-called mental and physical properties cannot be neatly distinguished, but are always already intertwined, and thus alter our vision of mental causation and incite a new approach. I suggest that a close look at how psychiatrists work could help us with this approach. However, further research should be done to investigate this.

Dept of Philosophy
University of Leuven
Belgium
fauve.lybaert@hiw.kuleuven.be

Bibliography

- Burge, Tyler (1993) 'Mind-body causation and explanatory practice'. In: Heil, J. and Mele, A. ed. *Mental Causation*. Oxford, Clarendon Press, pp. 75-95.
- Burge, Tyler (2006) 'Postscript to 'Mind-body causation and explanatory practice''. In: Burge, T. *Foundations of Mind*. Oxford, Clarendon Press, pp. 363-382.
- Descartes, René (1996) *Les passions de l'âme*. Paris, Flammarion.
- Descartes, René (1996) *Oeuvres de Descartes VII. Meditationes de prima philosophia*. Paris, Vrin.
- Horgan, Terence (1989) *Mental Causation. Philosophical Perspectives*, Vol. 3, pp. 47-76.
- Kim, Jaegwon (1998) *Mind in a Physical World. An essay on the mind-body problem and mental causation*. Cambridge, MA, MIT Press.
-

THE PRIMACY OF SPACE IN HEIDEGGER AND TAYLOR: TOWARDS A UNIFIED ACCOUNT OF PERSONAL IDENTITY

Ignacio Moya Arriagada

Abstract:

My aim is to explore how the question of personhood is tied to the notion of space—both physical and moral space. In particular, I argue against the Cartesian view of the disengaged/disembodied self and in favour of Charles Taylor's and Martin Heidegger's view of the engaged and embedded self. I contend that space, as the transcendental condition for the possibility of human agency, is the place where questions of identity are possible and where answers, if any, are to be found. Thus, personal identity and space are inexorably tied and dependent on one another.

Keywords:

Background, cogito, dwelling, disengaged, engaged, fourfold, framework, Martin Heidegger, Mitda-sein, personal identity, self, space, standing, Charles Taylor

1. Introduction

In this paper I do not propose a definition of personal identity. Rather, I explore the transcendental conditions that are required for the question of personal identity to emerge as a meaningful one. I contend that a more complete answer to the question of personal identity must answer not only *who* we are but *what* kind of beings we are. And if we want to know *who* and *what* we are, then we need to look, at least initially, into the space where we *stand* and that we move in. I argue that because Charles Taylor and Martin Heidegger are two philosophers that give the notion of space a prominent role, it will follow that they are in the best position to articulate what it means to be a being that lives on this earth and that attempts to forge an identity for itself. For them the question of personal identity cannot be answered by mere introspection. I argue that there is a fundamental ontological agreement between Heidegger and Taylor. This agreement lies in that, for both philosophers, the question of human identity cannot be answered by mere introspection. The identity of the self is not discoverable by looking inward—as Descartes would have us do. If we want to know *what* and *who* we are, then we need to look, at least initially, outside of us into the space (or more specifically, the *spaces*) where we *stand* and that we move in and occupy.

Heidegger argues that space is where our *facticity* is actualised. That is to say, space is where we exist. Taylor argues that space—both physical and moral

space ('moral' understood in the broad sense so as to include all cognition) is where we make sense of and give meaning to our lives. Consequently, while the *Heideggerian* space primarily refers to a physical *factual* space, the *Taylorite* space—while also referring to the physical space—incorporates the moral, cultural, cognitive and social space that we live *in*. As a result, Taylor's conception of space is broader and more comprehensive. Keeping this in mind, I will show how we can reconcile and complement these two views of space in such a way that, taken together, they can provide for a fuller, richer and more inclusive view of human existence and personal identity. In this way, by unifying the *Heideggerian* factual space and the *Taylorite* moral space we can learn to appreciate space as a continuum that allows us to simultaneously answer the questions of *what* we are and *who* we are.

2. Heidegger

The existential analysis that Heidegger proposes, aims to answer (at least initially) what it means to *be* a being that questions its own being while being-in-the-world. In other words, it aims to answer the *whatness* of human existence by providing a phenomenological and ontological account of our existence. Here, I use the word 'what' with certain apprehension. For Heidegger, as beings that are there *in* the world and that question our own being, we are not objects; we are not a 'what'. We are prior to the object/subject distinction; what we are is *in* the world, as an integral part of it and this is what constitutes our *facticity*. As long as we keep this clarification in mind at all times, we can continue to refer to our *whatness* as way of differentiating Heidegger's discussion of space from that of Taylor's.

For Heidegger space can be approached in two ways: first, in its relation to locations and second, in its relation to human beings. In order to grasp the character of *space* in relation to locations, Heidegger takes us to the root of the word. In German, the word *Raum* means 'a place cleared or freed for settlement and lodging. A space is something that has been made room for, something that is cleared and free, namely within a boundary' (Heidegger *Poetry, Language, Thought* 152). The idea here is that space is *created* by the drawing of a boundary. Heidegger is telling us, counter-intuitively, that boundaries create space not by enclosing a place but

by making *room for* and *clearing* that place. In other words, boundaries are not a limiting force, they are a creative force. In effect, 'a boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognised, the boundary is that from which something *begins its presencing*' (152). What Heidegger is telling us here is that spaces come to being with the creation of locations. And locations are created by *building* (151), insofar as building makes possible the drawing of boundaries that then become the horizons from which those spaces emerge and arise.

On the relation between human beings and space, Heidegger tells us that this relation is inherent in our character as dwellers (155). As dwellers, we build and create the locations that draw boundaries that give rise to spaces but we can only do so because as dwellers *we are already* spatial beings. A good way to understand this is by considering the following example: we can only build a house of stone, because there are first stones *in the world*. We gather the stones, we arrange the stones and we create the house from the stones but this is only possible because the stones are *there*; we do not create stones in order to build houses of stone. However, insofar as the stones already exist *outside* of us, the analogy fails to capture the authentic relation between humans and space. In our relation with space, space is not outside of us—even though by creating locations we *make room for* and *create* space (similar to how we *create* a house of stone). Indeed, we do not make space ex-nihilo; we can only make room for space because space is already there and we are always already in it. As a consequence, space should not be understood as *something* that stands in front of us and which we consequently walk into and find ourselves immersed in. But neither is space to be understood as something internal that we project onto the world. In effect, space 'is not something that faces man. It is neither an external object nor an inner experience. It is not that there are men, and over and above them *space*' (154). The point here is that space is so essentially interwoven into the essence of what it means to be a human being that separating it from us and turning it into an object is a purely *rational* exercise.

Yoko Arisaka points out that 'unlike Kant, who defines space as an *a priori* feature of our *mind*, Heidegger attributes it [space] to our active being and our practical involvements in the world. Heidegger goes on to investigate our ordinary spatial activities *without* imposing the subject-object framework and the associated language' (Arisaka 'On Heidegger' 3). In effect, the practice of *objectifying* space (as 'something' internal *or*

external) is only possible because we ourselves are already spatial beings. This is why Heidegger can say that 'when I say 'a man', and in saying this word think of a being who exists in a human manner—that is, who dwells—then by the name 'man' I already name the stay within the fourfold among things' (Heidegger *Poetry, Language, Thought* 154). In other words, Heidegger reminds us that we do not simply exist *in* space but that when we think of ourselves we *already* think of ourselves as spatial beings living *in* the world (or what he calls the *fourfold*). This is why we can say that space is a transcendental condition for our existence—it is part of 'what' we are. In effect, when we think 'human' we think *world* and we think *space* even before we think about the other features that make us human (for example thought, language, emotions, etc.). As we just saw in the quote above, this transcendental spatial condition is brought out by Heidegger in his concepts of *dwelling* and *fourfold*. That is to say, we are always already dwellers within the fourfold. What exactly, then, does Heidegger want to show when he says that we are *dwellers* and why does he refer to the world as a *fourfold*?

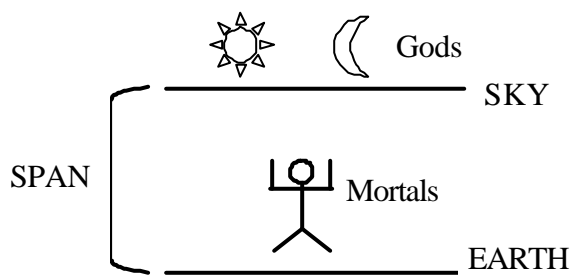
3. *Dwelling and the Fourfold*

First, we need to look at the concept of *dwelling*. Today, we tend to understand the word dwelling as an *inhabiting*. By dwelling we mean, for example, *occupying* a house or a building. This understanding of the word has traditionally pointed to 'one form of human behaviour alongside many others' (212). In other words, we tend to view dwelling as something that we do just like we do many other things in our daily lives—like drinking a cup of coffee or walking to the store. But these activities are done *in addition* to existing; drinking coffee is not a condition of our existence. Rather, drinking coffee is only possible *because* we exist.

Heidegger wants us to look at dwelling in a different way; he wants to say that dwelling *is* a condition of our existence. In order to do this, he takes us to the root of the word in order to see what it points to. He tells us that the German word *Bauen* means *to build* and that originally, it comes from the Old German and Old English word *buon* which means *to dwell*. Furthermore, the word *bin* such as it is used in the phrase *ich bin* (I am) also has its origin in *buon*—dwelling. Put in other words, *I am* and *building* both trace their roots to dwelling (145). Thus, if—as Heidegger argues—language is what reveals the true nature of our relations to the world, then because building *is* dwelling and dwellers *is* what we are (as the German phrase *ich bin* tells us) it follows that, as dwellers, we are also essentially *builders*.

Yet, in what way are we all builders? Again, the modern use of the word ‘building’ does little to capture the essence of building. While today building usually refers to the act of physically making something, of constructing, Heidegger tells us that building is more than that. It is more than assembling, more than just erecting structures. In effect, properly understood, building refers to all ‘works made by man’s hands and through his arrangements’ (215). In the broad sense, then, building refers to all forms of care and cultivating. This means that serving a cup of coffee, writing a note, cultivating farmland, growing tomatoes, having an idea and/or constructing a five-story building are all forms of *building*. Thus, if we understand building in this way, then any activity we do is always a building and also always a dwelling insofar as—originally—building and dwelling were the same thing.

As the dwellers that we are, the world appears to us as a *fourfold*. This is to say that the world we are *in* (where we dwell) is apprehended by us as being constituted by four elements. These four elements are grasped by us as a unity, as a ‘*primal oneness*’ (147) that grounds us as the *earthly*, mortal beings we are. These four elements are: (1) the *earth* where we live as (2) *mortals* beneath the (3) *sky* where the (4) *gods* stay (147). These four elements provide us with a complete picture of ourselves as mortals that dwell and build on the earth below the mysteries of the sky. The following graphic provides an illustration of the fourfold:



This being *in* the fourfold is an inescapable condition of our lives¹. Consequently, ‘even when mortals turn ‘inward’, taking stock of themselves, they do not leave behind their belonging to the fourfold’ (155) for when we introspect, we introspect while being *in* the world. We can never step outside of it. In this way, then, Heidegger aims to strike at the heart of the Cartesian *cogito*. By arguing that we never, not even when we retreat into the *cogito*, abandon our place *in* space *in* the fourfold, he shows that our condition as spatial beings is inescapable, fundamental, foundational and more primary than the *cogito*. In other words, there is a *cogito* insofar as we are spatial beings, as we are dwellers. The space in this fourfold (what

Heidegger calls the *span*) is thus essential to our realising that we are mortals that dwell on this earth.

Crucial to the argument against the disengaged, isolated and solipsistic *cogito* is the idea of an actively engaged and connected self in a world always shared with *others*. As the graphic illustration of the fourfold may suggest, there is the danger of viewing our being-in-the-world as an individual affair. The dweller is, it might seem, a single isolated atomistic dweller. Heidegger foresaw this potential misunderstanding which is why he explicitly argued that our dwelling, our *being-in-the-world* is in fact never an individual, solipsistic affair. This is an important point to consider because by arguing for a dwelling in a *shared world*, Heidegger provides much of the ground that Taylor then uses to build his own arguments against disengaged reason.

4. *Mitda-sein*

The idea of a *shared world* is expressed in the concept of *Mitda-sein*. *Mitda-sein* is to be understood as an existential condition that points to our co-existence with *others*, as a *being-with* others (Heidegger *Being and Time* 113). Special care must be taken with the word ‘others’. While the idea of the ‘other’ suggests the idea of ‘somebody else’, of a being that is outside and separated from the self, Heidegger wants to explicitly caution against this understanding. This is why he says that the idea of the *other* ‘does not mean everybody else but me—those from whom the I distinguishes itself. They are, rather, those from whom one mostly does *not* distinguish oneself, those among whom one is, too’ (111). The argument here is that there does not, at least initially, exist a self and then alongside, foreign and distinct *other* selves. The existential condition of *Mitda-sein* is not apprehended through mere aggregation of selves; it is not an arithmetic operation. On the contrary, Heidegger wants to tell us that as a dweller and as a being that is always already *in* the world, what follows is that the *other* is also a dweller and as such, the *other* is not initially distinguished from the self. As such we are all beings that share the existential condition of being-in-the world. In this way, *Mitda-sein* (being-with others) is the existential condition that points to our sharing, our *being-there-too* with them in the world (111,112).

As evidenced by Descartes, the idea of a disengaged and *closeted cogito* inevitably leads to radical scepticism about the existence of the external world and of the *others* that appear in the world. Certainty about the self (the *cogito*) does not necessarily lead to certainty about the external world because there is a presupposed distance between the

two. And this distance needs to be bridged in order to obtain certainty about the external world. By contrast, the idea of *Mitda-sein* inserts the self back in a shared and common world where certainty about the self and the world necessarily leads to a certainty about the existence of the others. There is thus no need to bridge the gap between the self and the world. This is because on the one hand, the *others* are constituents of the world in the same way that the self is. And on the other hand, because our condition of being-in-the-world presupposes no gap between the self and the *external* world it follows that our experience of the world (and of the others we encounter *in* the world) is always at the root of our existence. Consequently, only by denying the self can the external world be denied. By the same token, if we assert the self then the world is also necessarily asserted.

This is the exact same idea that Merleau-Ponty² pointed out when, criticising Cartesian rationalism, he said that it 'would be contradictory to assert that the world is constituted by me and that, out of this constitutive operation, I can grasp no more than the outline' of the world (Merleau-Ponty *Phenomenology of Perception* 437). Rational explanations and justification for the existence of the world arise as something fundamentally necessary only with the view of a subject (the self) that is removed from its object (the world). Such removal requires and begs for an objective *study* of the world because the world is encountered as *foreign* and *alien*. But, as we have seen thus far, Heidegger argues that our being-in-the-world is prior to any subject/object distinction, it is prior to any idea about our removal from the world. As such, the subject/object distinction is not a fundamental or existential distinction. It is a distinction that is only possible insofar as we are first *in* the world.

Essential to Heidegger's argument of a world always already inhabited by dwellers, is the idea of encountering 'objects' in the world. Here, by 'objects', we refer to all the products of human intervention. In effect, we refer to *building* in the broad sense of dwelling as already explored in the previous pages. When we encounter these 'objects' in the world, we do not *just* encounter a thing objectively present in the world, *just* sitting there waiting for us to objectify it or explain it. When we encounter an object we also encounter *others*. This is because the objects that we encounter in the world fundamentally point to the presence of others. The reason for this is that before an encountered object can be studied in order to discover its usefulness or purpose, the very existence of that object reveals to

us that it owes its presence in the world to other people. Heidegger tells us that, for example,

the field (...) along which we walk 'outside' shows itself as belonging to such and such a person who keeps it in good order, the book which we bought at such and such a place, given by such and such a person, and so on. The boat anchored at the shore refers in its being-in-itself to an acquaintance who undertakes his voyages with it, but as a 'boat strange to us,' it also points to others. The others who are 'encountered' in the context of useful things in the surrounding world at hand are not somehow added on in thought to an initially merely objective present thing, but these 'things' are encountered from the world in which they are at hand for the others (Heidegger *Being and Time* 111).

Consider the example that Heidegger gives us of the boat that we see on the shore. While the boat is undeniably an object that has a use and a purpose, *that* purpose (be it fishing or pleasure) is only graspable insofar as the boat first points us to the existence of an *other*. This is because it is that *other* that uses the boat, gives the boat a purpose and that has left the boat *there* on the shore for us to subsequently encounter as an *object* or as a 'thing'. Thus, initially and primordially, the encountered boat tells us that there is an *other*. And only after the idea of the other is made possible by the presence of the boat can we proceed to objectify the boat as a *thing* that is used for a purpose by that *other*. This shows that when we encounter the boat in the world we do not simply *add* on the idea of another other person to the boat *after* we perceive the boat. The boat as a boat and can only *be* a boat insofar as the idea of the *other* is already contained within the idea of the boat itself.

Mitda-sein, is thus not to be understood as relation that is established between a 'me' and a 'not me' (an *other*). This is a negative account, it is an account that separates and establishes a distance between the self and the others. It is an account that reduces the others to an aggregate of subjects, of 'numerals' (118). The danger with such a reduction is that it puts a distance between the self and the *other* and by putting this distance between the self and the *other* it also puts a distance between the self and the world. This invariably leads to disengagement and to disembodied views of the self which is precisely what Heidegger wants to avoid. Yet, even if such a reduction was desirable on some analytical account, that reduction would only be possible insofar as that *other* is essentially and firstly encountered together with and at the same time as the rest of the world (118). As dwellers that are always already in the world, the *other* is also always already encountered in the world and in this way the

other is a constituent of the world. Recall that for Heidegger all subject/object distinctions are not fundamental existential distinctions. They are only *a posteriori* distinctions. *Mitda-sein* thus sets much of the groundwork for the idea of engaged and embedded agency that is central to the later works of Taylor.

5. Taylor

Taylor agrees with Heidegger in that all the questions that arise about ourselves and our place in the world are only answerable insofar as we are beings already embedded *in* the world. In other words, it is not that there is the world outside and then, in addition, there is us enclosed *inside* ourselves and standing outside of the world. This necessary embedment and engagement with the world is what makes it impossible for us to abstract ourselves from it. As a consequence of this, the world and our engagement in it constitute the *inescapable background* that makes all our thoughts and judgements possible. Everything we say about the world is always done from the *background* of the world.

This means that all of our moral and philosophical questions are necessarily always answered against this background and horizon—or what Taylor also calls *framework*. Our dependence on this framework is so great that to do without it is ‘utterly impossible for us’ (Taylor *Sources* 27). Taylor argues that although we could imagine a life-form without frameworks, imagining it would be ‘tantamount to stepping outside what we would recognise as integral, that is undamaged human personhood’ (27). To imagine human life outside and separate from the world would require us to rethink our understanding of what it means to be a human person. In effect, we would no longer be talking about a human life-form, we would no longer be talking about *dwellers*. We would be talking about a distinct life-form, about some abstract entity that exists outside of the world and looks *into it*, or as Heidegger said, *faces it* (perhaps an entity like the Cartesian *cogito*).

Much in the same direction that Heidegger pointed us to, Taylor wants to say that, as engaged agents, the physical space we occupy plays a central role in giving moral and *spiritual* direction to our lives. So essential is our physical being-in-the-world to our sense of humanity that ‘we couldn’t conceive of a human life form where one day people came to reflect that, since they were spatial beings, they ought after all to develop a sense of up and down, right and left and find landmarks which would enable to get around reflections which might be disputed by others (...) we can’t distance ourselves from the

issue of spatial orientation or fail to stumble on it’ (31). In other words, we can’t conceive of ourselves as *first* existing and *then* realising that there is a space we have to make sense of. The sense of spatial direction is something we have in virtue of our existence as embodied agents (Taylor *Arguments* 68).

The importance of space is such that certain moral intuitions that operate in our background translate into concrete physical manifestations. For example, one moral intuition that operates from our background is that of human dignity. The specific content of what dignity entails need not be made explicit for us to show how it impacts and conditions our spatial attitudes. Indeed, we may feel worthy of dignity and respect or we may feel unworthy. Whatever the case may be, what does follow is that we will either move in the world as if demanding respect or we will move as if we did not deserve it. The idea of dignity is constantly at work in our background—without our being consciously aware of it at all time—and in so doing it determines how we *move* in the world. According to Taylor:

The very way we walk, move, gesture, speak is shaped from the earliest moments by our awareness that we appear before others, that we stand in public space, and that this space is potentially one of respect or contempt, of pride or shame. Our style of movement expresses how we see ourselves as enjoying respect or lacking it, as commanding it or failing to do so. Some people flit through public space as though avoiding it, others rush through as though hoping to sidestep the issue of how they appear in it by the very serious purpose with which they transit through it; others again saunter through with assurance, savouring their moment within it; still others swagger, confident of how their presence marks it: think of the carefully leisurely way the policeman gets out of his car, having stopped you for speeding, and the slow, swaying walk over as he comes to demand your licence (Taylor *Sources* 15).

In effect, if we were not spatial beings necessarily embedded *in* the world, how would we manifest our sense of dignity to others? Admittedly, it is possible to come up with thought experiments to illustrate how dignity—and other moral intuitions—could be expressed in the absence of a physical body occupying a physical world, but that is not the fundamental point. The point is that such thought experiments require us to rethink our understanding of what a human being *is*. We would be talking about a *different* kind of being altogether. We would no longer be talking about dwellers inhabiting the fourfold. Rather, we would be talking about disembodied spirits or minds; we would be talking about the Cartesian *cogito*. In effect, we would be essentially *reformulating* our identities.

Furthermore, even if such reformulations have their merits, it is still the case that, as Heidegger pointed out, such reformulations are only possible insofar as we are always already embedded *in* the world. In this way, the primacy of space emerges as the transcendental condition for the possibility of our identities—even for the possibility of disembodied identities.

The importance of the frameworks that emerge from our background is not just about how they condition us as spatial beings. Frameworks do more than give us a spatial context. In addition to this context, they also provide ‘the background, explicit or implicit, for our moral judgements, intuitions or reactions’ (26). Frameworks give us a sense of psychological orientation as well. Taylor wants to say that behind all our questions and behind all of our attempts to give our selves an identity and our lives meaning, there lies a set of unarticulated assumptions. And these assumptions are what provide the necessary background that makes meaningful discussion possible.

What, then, is the actual content of our frameworks? What is included *in* them, what are those unarticulated assumptions that allow us to make sense of the world? Although Taylor tells us that ‘the framework with which we act and judge doesn’t need to be articulated theoretically’ (20), it turns out that even if we wanted fully to articulate our background, we would be unable to do so. The reason for this is not that this is just a difficult thing to do. Nor is it an epistemic problem. Taylor argues that it is actually incoherent fully to articulate our background. In other words, we cannot bring the background to the foreground (via description and/or articulation) because once we do so it ceases to be a background (Taylor *Arguments* 69). And if—as Heidegger and Taylor have told us—we are essentially engaged beings that cannot make sense of our lives by stepping outside of the world, then whenever we articulate our background we always do so *from* another background; this is to say that we always talk about our world while being *in* the world. Anything we say can only be understood if what we say is said within a context. What would it be like to say something about the world while standing outside of it? Does that possibility even make sense? It does not seem coherent for us to step outside of our world in order to talk about a world—*our* world—that we are always already *in*. Where would we be standing if not *in* space, *in* our world? This is why Taylor tells us that ‘bringing [the background] to articulation still [and always] supposes a background’ (69).

This is why the framework is so essential for our lives. Not ‘to have a framework is to fall into a life which is spiritually senseless’ (18). The key idea here is that without frameworks our human lives would lack sense, direction and meaning. With no framework, it follows that questions on morality, meaning and personal identity would be questions issued in a sort of void and we would be unable to know where to even start looking for answers. This is why such essential and fundamental questions about personal identity are always dependent on the presence of a *background* from which we can draw out the meaning of the questions themselves. The mere possibility of *asking* and finding an answer to the question of personal identity presupposes that we exist within a determined context. Existing within that context is what makes it possible for us to ask and answer the question in a meaningful way. As a consequence, if I am to explore questions that relate to my personal identity and if I seek to define myself in any way, then that is only possible by first ‘defining where I speak from’ not just in the physical space but ‘in the family tree, in social space, in the geography of social statuses and functions’ (Taylor *Sources* 35). In other words, to answer *who* I am I must first know *where* I stand—where I stand in history *and* in physical space. Who are my ancestors and how do I stand in relation to them? Where do I currently live and how do I stand, feel and relate to my current place of residency? We do not need to know all the answers to these questions. What matters is that we are at *some* level aware of these social, historical and moral relations—even if it is only to deny them.

Consequently, no matter what we articulate, say, believe and/or want to argue for (for example, if we want to argue for a disengaged *cogito*) it is still the case that we can only do so from a situation (or as Taylor would say, from a *background*). I can only assess a situation and evaluate it from my vantage point, from my *standing*. Only then can I articulate a position. And no matter how much we want to deny, negate or objectify our situation and our standing, we can only do so from another *situation*, from another standing. This is why Taylor argued for backgrounds as being *inescapable*.

The relation between physical space and moral space is a mutually dependent one. As a consequence, whatever happens in one space has effects on the other space. This is why we can say that, for example, disorientation in physical space can also lead to disorientation in the moral space and vice-versa. Indeed, ‘an identity crisis [is] an acute form of disorientation (...) which can also be seen as a radical uncertainty of where [we] stand’ (27). In

cases of acute identity crisis, then, it is often the case that not only are we unable to answer *who* we are but we are often unable to answer *where* we are (for example, we would ask things like, *where* am I? *What* place is this?). Taylor gives us the example of a person with ‘narcissistic personality disorder’ (28). He says that such a person, aside from being disoriented in the psychological space, is often also disoriented in the physical space, *in* the world (28).

There are signs that the link with spatial orientation lies very deep in the human psyche. In some very extreme cases of what are described as ‘narcissistic personality disorders’, which take the form of a radical uncertainty about oneself and about what is of value to one, patients show signs of spatial disorientation as well at moments of acute crisis. This disorientation and uncertainty about where one stands as a person seems to spill over into a loss of grip on one’s stance in physical space’ (28).

This relation between moral and physical space is thus essential. As the example of the person with ‘narcissistic personality disorder’ highlights, physical space and moral space are closely intertwined. In fact, this relation is such that any attempt to separate the two in order to consider one of them in isolation can, at best, provide a limited understanding of what it means to be an engaged human being. A complete and full picture of embedded agency requires that we consider both the moral and the physical space as the constituents of identity. Furthermore, it is not enough to consider both spaces as being *just* equal but separate spheres. On the contrary, both spaces are not *just* equal; they are intertwined in such a way that they leak into one another. Moral space manifests itself in the physical space and physical space makes our morals concrete.

6. The unity of space and personal identity

We have seen how Heidegger and Taylor help us achieve a more complete understanding of what it means to be a human being. Recall that for these philosophers we require horizons that allow space to emerge and they said that we always stand *in* that space, in a *situation*. Given that they acknowledge that, as human beings, we are essentially engaged and embedded *in* the world, we can appreciate why the very idea of space would be so essential to them. Yet, while Heidegger’s and Taylor’s understanding of the importance of space is fundamentally the same, they both differed in the specific role they gave to space. This is the *whatness* and *whoness* distinction that I drew at the start of this paper. The main argument throughout this paper has been to twofold. I showed how for Taylor the question of personal identity—the *who* I am—can only be

answered insofar as there is a moral framework in our background.

I also showed that Heidegger did not purport to answer the question of personal identity—the *who* I am. His concern was more primordial than this. He wanted to find out what makes us the kind of beings we are. He wanted to know what kind of being asks about his own being while being embedded *in* the world. And through an analytic of what it means to exist in the world, an answer to our *whatness* becomes possible (we are dwellers).

I have argued throughout this paper that if we are to attempt a more complete and thorough answer to our identity, then considering our *whoness* and *whatness* together offers the best opportunity. In this regard I contended that if I am to be a person with a personal identity, then my identity is possible only insofar as I understand that I am primordially a being that exists in *space*. Ultimately, questions of personal identity (*who* we are) can only be answered by looking at our orientations in a moral *and* physical space. These two spaces constitute the transcendental and often unarticulated background that underlies and conditions all of our talk about what it means to be a human being.

The very question of personal identity is a question that in itself already presupposes a context that makes the question intelligible. You understand the question and you know where possible answers may come from. In effect, as Taylor said, ‘to be able to answer for oneself is to know where one stands, what one *wants* to answer’ (29). As a consequence, without this often unarticulated background, no question would be possible, let alone an answer. Whenever we are asked who we are, we first look at *where* we stand *in* physical and moral space.

Ignacio Moya Arriagada, M.A.
Chile. ignaciomoyaa@gmail.com

Bibliography

- Arisaka, Yoko. ‘On Heidegger’s Theory of Space: A Critique of Dreyfus.’ *Inquiry* 38:4 (1995): 53-65
- Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time* trans. Joan Stambaugh, New York; SUNY, 1996
- Poetry, Language, Thought* trans. Albert Hofstadter. New York: Perennial Classics, 2001
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Phenomenology of Perception* trans. Colin Smith, New York: Routledge Classics, 2002
- Taylor, Charles. *Sources of the Self, The Making of the Modern Identity*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989
- Philosophical Arguments*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995

Notes

1. It is essential that we grasp man’s place as being *on* earth and *beneath* the sky (in the *fourfold*). This being

beneath the sky is important because the strange, the unknown and the mysterious have always come to us not from the earth, but from the above, from the sky. This is the way it has been since time immemorial. Since humans have roamed the earth, the sky has been the source of the divine and of the gods. We have always looked to the stars, the sun and the moon for *images* of the unknown, the mystical and the divine. By looking up towards the unknown, we humans have created a kind of dichotomy. This is because while the alien is above, beyond our power and our grasp, on this earth we have the world at our grasp and we have the power to *build*. Here, we roam, we dwell, we express care, concern, we cultivate and we build. Here, we live and die; here we have the power to do all of this and to make a home for ourselves. There in the sky, by contrast, we are powerless; it is an alien world where the unknown resides. Thus, there inevitably arises a separation, a distance between the earth and the sky.

This distance, this dimension that exists between earth and sky, is what Heidegger calls the *span*. We humans live in this span, between the earth and the sky—more specifically, *on* the earth and beneath the sky. Furthermore, we know that we are on this earth precisely by looking *up to* the sky towards the unknown. And this act of directing our gaze *up to* the sky towards the unknown is what allows us to take heed of the span we find ourselves immersed in, the span that is essential to our existence.

Heidegger goes on to argue that this span, this *in between*, is only made intelligible to us by poetry. Based on the poetry of Friedrich Hölderlin, he argues that poetry makes the span intelligible by *measuring* it. Thus, what the poet measures is the dimension that exists between the earth and the sky. This is why we can say that poetry is, essentially, measure taking (Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought* 219). In order to fully understand what measuring means, we need to rid ourselves of the traditional way of thinking about measuring. Heidegger is not talking about measuring a distance; he is not talking about units, numbers or lengths. Measuring here is not a grasping or a scientific gauging. In effect, quantifying the span is but a specific activity that in and of itself is only made possible by a prior dwelling. Consequently, as opposed to scientific measuring, in poetic measuring, 'man first receives the measure for the breadth of his being' (219). In other words, poetic measuring tells us that we exist here on earth as mortals; poetic measuring tells us *where we stand*. The poet measures the *in between* of the earth and the sky and by so doing points to our fundamental nature as mortal dwellers *on* this earth. This is why our dwelling is essentially a poetic dwelling.

If poetic measuring is not about quantification, then how does the poet measure the span? How does the poet reveal to us our nature as dwellers? While we look up towards the unknown sky, the poet is the one that measures that observable span by bringing the unknown *as* the unknown down to earth for us to

observe. In other words, the poet looks to the skies, to the above and he sees the dreams, the fantasies, the emotions and the divine elements that inhabit the skies. The poet sees this and he brings them down for us, he brings the mysterious down to earth and shows it to us *as* the mysterious. Heidegger tells us that the poetic images are 'imaginings that are visible inclusions of the alien in the sight of the familiar' (223). This means that the poet does not unravel the mystery; he does not reveal the true nature of dreams, the mysterious or being. Rather, the poet presents the mysterious to us *as* the mysterious, as that which we can never know. In this way, by bringing the mysterious down to us from above, poetry is the primordial and authentic way of measuring the distance between earth and sky. Further, by bringing the mysterious down to us, poets remind us of our place here on earth and of our own mortality as beings that inhabit and dwell on this earth beneath the sky. Measuring, then, is a way of reminding us of our true nature as mortals. And by telling us about our true measure as mortals, poetry is what allows, what makes possible all other building. Poetry is, the 'primal form of building (...) the original admission of dwelling' (225).

2. Maurice Merleau-Ponty was particularly strong in pointing out that the Cartesian cogito—as a disengaged and foundational cogito—can lead to incoherencies. Specifically, a disengaged cogito that is in isolation from the world cannot, as it turns out, doubt the external world. Recall that for Descartes, the world of the senses was deceitful and certainty was only found *in* the self, *in* the cogito. Merleau-Ponty, however, pointed out that it 'would be contradictory to assert that the world is constituted by me and that, out of this constitutive operation, I can grasp no more than the outline' (Merleau-Ponty, 437). This means that if, as Descartes argued, the cogito is the foundational and indubitable source of the self, then insofar as I cannot doubt the self (the thinking self) then I should not be able to doubt what the self perceives (because the self is the source of said perceptions, the source of the 'thinking', of the 'world'). Furthermore, the *cogito* should be in a position to perceive more than just 'outlines' of things. This line of reasoning is meant to show that as beings that are always *in* the world, we cannot make coherent sense of the world by retreating into the disengaged and disembodied self. In effect, *we cannot even doubt it (the world)*. The Cartesian idea of disengaged reason, then, leads to inconsistency. The main point of Merleau-Ponty's critique, however, is not to deny that the self *thinks*. The self does think. Rather, the main point is that the self can think only insofar as it thinks *in* the world. In effect, 'the primary truth is indeed 'I think', but only (...) while belonging to the world' (474). Thus, Merleau-Ponty's critique of the Cartesian cogito is undoubtedly one of the primary philosophical sources that pave the way for the engaged and embedded self that Taylor argues for with particular force in his discussions of the self.

‘PERSON’ SEEKS ‘MAN’

A VERY QUICK IMMERSION IN, AND EVALUATION OF, THE PHILOSOPHICAL DEBATE ON PERSONAL IDENTITY SINCE LOCKE

Gregory De Vleeschouwer

Abstract

Traditionally, the question of how a person can be a unity throughout his life was answered by referring to the objective realm: the Cartesian soul guaranteed our personal unity. For Locke, the real question of personal identity was: how can I know that I am the same person throughout my life? That was not answerable only by ‘a person’, a ‘consciousness’ or the first-person perspective. I am the same ‘person’, as long as I have the same consciousness. Locke’s account sometimes seems to suggest that the person is totally autonomous. Inspired by these suggestions, people like Hume and eventually Parfit followed these very same lines of thought. These accounts entangle themselves in a version of Butler’s circularity-objection, and ‘person’ can never stand on its own but is always tied and interwoven, not with the objective realm, but with the third-person perspective or what Locke calls ‘man’. Finally I will give two reasons why Locke thought it was important to disconnect ‘person’ and ‘man’.

Key Words

Personal Identity, self-consciousness, Locke, Hume, Parfit, body

1. Locke’s ‘person’

For the classical tradition, the question of what unifies a person throughout his life—the question of personal identity (‘PI’) was easily answered by referring to the soul or thinking substance. A person was considered to *be* his immaterial substance, so that the criterion for PI became: *X is the same person as Y, if and only if X and Y are the same thinking substances.*

The weakness of such a criterion is the following: the person himself has no direct acquaintance with his soul. He can only deduce its existence in an indirect way—inferring it from its qualities, such as thinking. The problem with this, is that if I am not able to have any personal acquaintance with my soul, I am also not in a position to know whether or not I am still the same thinking substance, and thus also not in a position to judge whether I am still the same person. I cannot rule out the possibility that my thinking substance has been unnoticeably replaced by another one. This means that in the classical tradition, my remaining the same person rested on a

metaphysical supposition, and was only to be known from an objective or godlike viewpoint.

It is against this background that we have to read Locke’s twenty-seventh chapter of the second book *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*—‘On Identity and Diversity’. For Locke, the question of PI should be answerable by the person himself, by what he has direct acquaintance with, and should not rest on a supposition. By saying this, Locke does not deny the soul’s existence; for an answer on the question of PI, he considers the soul simply irrelevant. For Locke, the only thing relevant to PI, is my own first-person perspective—instead of the objective viewpoint of the eternal truths.

This first-person perspective is what Locke calls ‘consciousness’. Consciousness is for Locke what sticks to all my thoughts and perceptions, and what makes me say and think that these thoughts and perceptions are *mine*.

Consciousness [...] is inseparable from thinking, and as it seems to me essential to it: It being impossible for any one to perceive, without *perceiving*, that he does perceive. When we see, hear, smell, taste, feel, meditate, or will any thing, we know that we do so. Thus it is always as to our present Sensations and Perceptions: And by this every one is to himself, that which he calls *self*.

The term ‘consciousness’ brings with it the concepts ‘self’ and ‘person’. Because consciousness sticks to all my deeds and feelings, it connects me also to my past: my deeds and feelings of the past were also *my* feelings: they were accompanied by the same consciousness as the one I have now. Because of this *sameness of consciousness*, I experience myself as one and the same ‘person’ through time.

It is important to realise that Locke grants the term ‘person’ a completely autonomous status: ‘person’ is for Locke totally independent of the objective realm. If I can identify myself with an action of my past—this means: if I now have the same consciousness as at the time that I committed that action—then that is for Locke enough to say that the person of that action and I, are the same person, even if, from an objective point of view, I and that ‘earlier person’ do not have the same soul. If I ‘experience’ myself—via my consciousness—as

connected to the deeds of, for example, Socrates, then, for Locke, I am the same person as Socrates—with the question whether Socrates and I share the same soul being irrelevant. For Locke, I am the only one, apart from God, who has access to my consciousness.

But if the term 'person' is no longer tied to the objective realm, does that mean that it has no restrictions at all, and is *totally* autonomous?

2. The standard interpretation of Locke's PI-account

In the early eighteenth century, in England, (just after Locke's death), Locke's chapter on PI raised a fierce controversy. Many intellectuals (such as Bishop Stillingfleet, Reid and Butler) complained that by detaching 'person' from the objective realm, personal identity no longer would remain a *real* identity, but would become just a manner of speaking, comparable to denominating a river the same river, while knowing that the water particles are always numerically different. If 'person' were just a matter of consciousness, then PI seemed to become a purely subjective matter: I would just be the 'person' I would experience myself to be, and that would be subject to continuous change.

Other intellectuals, on the other hand, found the theory of Locke all the more attractive for that: phenomenologically speaking, it seemed right to claim that a person was subject to change, and the claim that there would exist a so called *real* identity—only to be known from a godlike point of view—seemed indeed redundant: why should my identity already be *a priori* established? As a consequence, Locke's defenders—the *Lockeans*, as they were called—considered the belief in a soul to be illusory. In saying this, they went further than Locke himself. Locke merely stated that we cannot have direct acquaintance with our soul, and thus we cannot have real knowledge of it (for example, Locke thought it impossible to know whether our soul is material or immaterial). The Lockeans however immediately denied the soul's existence. For the Lockeans, the real question of PI thus slightly altered: if the soul is an illusion, they asked themselves, how then to explain that everyone gets into the grip of it? There is no real, objective identity, but still we feel a strange propensity to believe in that identity: why is that so?

Hume's answer to this question became famous—the outlines of which are still followed today by the so-called *neoLockeans* (with among them Derek Parfit). Hume's model can be sketched very briefly as follows. The mind is considered to be a stream full of thoughts, desires, memories, etc. There is no real identity in this wild stream: just as in

a real stream, the thoughts, memories, desires, etc.—the metaphorical water particles—always make way for new ones. But there always remains some kind of resemblance: a lot of the things I can remember today, I will also be able to remember tomorrow, and also my desires will probably have a similar character, and so on. The mind, when it takes itself as an object, will thus get impressions of itself that show, at different moments, a lot of resemblances. Because of that, we tend to believe that our mind is characterized by a deeper unity—a soul or immaterial substance, a real bond that connects all the contents of our stream. Because such a soul does not really exist—we cannot have any introspective proof of it, as Hume famously stated—this belief is an illusion.

I shall now show that the Humean model (and with it, every Neo-Lockean model that is based on it) is unsound: it recalls itself. In its simplest form, the problem can be put like this: there are different levels in Hume's account. There is the level of the stream and its conscious contents, and there is a second level, whose function is to evaluate whether the first level, at different moments, shows some similarities. But the second (highest-order) level can only do that, when it has a certain permanence. For without this permanence, the judging authority of the second level would only be able to evaluate the first-level, mental content at one particular moment—the moment of its own existence—instead of comparing and searching for similarities over a longer span of time. So, to state that the stream shows some similarities over a span of time, one has to introduce a permanent self. But the reason that such a self is introduced, is precisely to deny the existence of such a permanent self.

This ambiguity can be revealed very easily in Hume's text itself, for Hume writes: 'I never catch myself without a perception.' So, to point out that there is no real self, also Hume is in need of a self. Or as Bradley ever put it: 'Mr Bain collects that the mind is a collection. Has he ever thought who collects Mr Bain?'

I shall now show that it is a misconception to think that this Humean model should be seen as a heritage of Locke, when instead it only gives an interpretation of Locke. On top of that I will argue this interpretation is unsound. I will show that there can be given another, more viable interpretation to Locke's text than the Humean one.

Of crucial importance is Locke's term 'consciousness'. If there was one thing both adversaries and proponents of Locke (after his death) agreed on, it was how to understand Locke's

term 'consciousness'—only, the Lockeans were in favour of an account that made use of such a term, and the adversaries against. The way in which both sides understood 'consciousness' was Cartesian, taking the term to be a synonym for thinking itself—its mental content. This interpretation has important consequences, because it automatically calls for a Humean kind of model. If consciousness means the content of our thinking, and if it is the same consciousness that makes us call ourselves the same person, then it seems logical to think that it is because of the similarities among our mental contents that we call ourselves the same person. In this way, Locke's *sameness of consciousness* shifts almost unnoticeably toward *similarity of mental contents*. And this, in its turn, calls for a higher-order model, such as Hume's: if you are looking for similarity, you need a higher-order authority that 'scans' the different mental contents at different times.

A vital consequence of such a higher-order model is that the unity projected upon the first-order stream of consciousness, is extrinsic. The unity is not *really* there: the different mental contents on the first level are never *really* connected with one another, they remain atomic. It is, so to speak, only 'afterwards', that, via this higher-order authority, a unity is imposed upon it. But in this way, the 'unity' can indeed be nothing else than an illusion.

It is important to see that Locke probably meant something totally different with his term 'consciousness'. For Locke, consciousness probably had nothing to do with the *content* of my thinking: it is not thought itself, but what accompanies all my thoughts, and what is responsible for the fact that I consider these thoughts to be *mine*. The *sameness* to which Locke refers, is not a *similarity* between my mental contents at different times, but a *sameness* of the consciousness that accompanies these mental contents—whether similar contents or not. For Locke, consciousness has no content in itself: it is formal. To illustrate this with the river analogy—which was often used in the historical debate: for Locke, the 'river of PI' is called the same river, not because the ever changing 'mental particles' show at different moments a likewise outlook, but because *the bed* of the river—'consciousness'—remains the same.

3. Locke's 'man'

When Hume states that PI in his model is illusory, he is only too right: for Hume, the stream is not a *stream*, but only a multiplicity of thoughts, desires, feelings, etc. With this mental, atomic conception of consciousness, Hume has already done away with the 'streamness' of the stream. This 'streamness',

or real unity of our consciousness, is to be found in our body. For Hume and other Lockeans, our consciousness is restricted to the mental content of our brain, while the rest of our body is seen as secondary: the body only has to make sure that the brain is able to function properly. It is therefore deemed to be fully exchangeable: instead of that one particular body, my body could have been any body.

During the last decades, many protests have been raised against such an instrumentalistic view on the body, and new approaches have made it clear that the picture of a 'pure', mental consciousness on the one hand, and a body on the other hand of which consciousness could make use, does not do justice to the sophistication of our human, biological existence. Our consciousness is always embodied. Consciousness does not have to search for a unity, or call for a higher-order authority to project such a unity upon itself: with the body, it already possesses that (intrinsic) unity.

But even by taking that into account, we still have not yet solved our problem. It may be the case that consciousness possesses an intrinsic unity, but the question is: how does it become conscious of that unity? For that, it seems, it would also be in need of a permanent, 'judging' authority. And where would such an authority come from?

In his PI-chapter, Locke writes about the body in two ways. First, he considers the body to be a part of my 'person' or 'self'. Secondly, Locke explains that other people, thanks to my body, are able to identify me as the same 'human being' or 'man'—seen from an external perspective, Locke uses the term 'human being' or 'man', and not 'person'. My body changes continually—it grows etc.—but because the changes of my body normally align with what could be expected of a growing and developing human body, my body remains identifiable as the body of one and the same human being.

Our problem can be solved if we combine this external, intersubjective 'man'-approach with the internal 'person'-approach: with the intersubjective order, we have found a 'judging' authority—instead of having to postulate it!—that is able to 'recognize' the intrinsic unity of my body—a body that the others recognize as the body of one and the same 'man'. The emergence of my first-person perspective (my 'consciousness') is parasitic on that. My consciousness can only evolve as the inner viewpoint of an identity, that others see from the outside as the identity of a 'human being', pursuable as the trajectory of a body—*my* body. 'Person' does not come without 'man': the first-person perspective can only emerge as an interwovenness with a

third-person (or intersubjective) perspective. 'Person' can never be totally autonomous: while it is true that it should not be reduced to the objective order (as was the case in the classical tradition), 'person' definitely calls for the intersubjectivity of 'man'.

It might be remarked that the unity or identity in our solution is a unity that also comes from 'outside'. But that would be an imprecise reformulation of what I have defended. The unity itself is not imposed, it already was at its place: also without the others pursuing it, the body forms a unity. What comes from outside, is only the *idea* of that unity (the 'consciousness' of it)—and not the unity itself. That is also what makes this solution formal: 'consciousness' only implies that it is possible for others to pursue my body as the body of one and the same human being. Nothing about the contents of my thoughts is implied in it. Another consequence of the fact that the *idea* of the intrinsic unity comes from outside, is that we always feel a certain alienation towards our own body: in a certain sense, it seems even absurd to think that I 'fall together' with just this one body. It is this 'feeling of absurdity' that has given rise to the (illusory) belief in souls or immaterial substances, for with a soul, one's identity seems independent of arbitrary and contingent things as a body, the place where one is born, etc.

I am very well aware of the fact that the solution I have put forward at the end, asks for further elaboration. I have done this elsewhere, relying mainly on the work of Strawson. Due to lack of space, I also did not specify how much of what I have defended, is likely to correspond with Locke's

own views. To finish, I shall just outline the main reason why Locke disconnected 'person' from 'man'. That he did so, is clear from his PI-chapter: he not only gave 'person' and 'man' a different, and separate treatment, he also gave such examples as the prince and the cobbler, in which the consciousness of a prince is transferred to the body of a cobbler. For Locke, the cobbler remains the same 'man', but not the same 'person': 'inside' the body of the cobbler, so to say, is located now the prince-'person'. Although in normal situations, 'person' and 'man' were seen by Locke as intertwined, it is clear from this and other examples, that Locke in his pi-chapter seemed to have developed a special interest for border cases in which this intertwining could no longer be sustained. The main reason he did so—it seems to me—, is because he was the first one to point out the significance of the first-person perspective. He wanted to contrast it as clearly as possible with the classical tradition, and therefore he thought it necessary to detach it from everything else—not only from the objective perspective, but even from the intersubjective point of view. He wanted to present it in its most radical and autonomous form. Whether Locke really believed that a 'consciousness' could exist on its own, or whether he just used the extreme examples and thought-experiments for didactic purposes, is unfortunately a question that can only be answered by Locke's 'person' himself.

SINGULARITY AND PERSONAL IDENTITY

Ivan Welty

Abstract

People, like paintings and unlike poems, are singular, in the sense that they do not admit of multiple simultaneous instances. Is the singularity of persons contingent, perhaps subject to future technical innovation? A celebrated argument concerning forgery in the arts suggests, on adaptation to the case of persons, that multiplicity is ruled out for persons. In this paper I mount that argument and consider a few implications, including implications for some standard problems about personal identity.

Keywords:

Persons, personal identity, singularity.

1. Introduction

It is an interesting fact that there cannot be a forgery of a known poem, while of course there can be forgeries of known paintings. Take, as examples, Vermeer's *The Milkmaid* and Bishop's 'The Armadillo'. If I copy Vermeer's painting and say, while pointing at it, 'This is Vermeer's painting', what I say is false. But if I copy Bishop's poem and say, while pointing at it, 'This is Bishop's poem', what I say is true. A copy of Bishop's poem is not a reproduction in lieu of the original. It is the original, whole and complete.

Now consider people and their genotypes. If I clone a person, I produce another instance of her genotype. But I do not produce another instance of the person: if I did then presumably identical twins would be the same person, while of course they are not. Indeed reproducing a known person can be every bit the crime that reproducing a known painting is. So far, then, it seems that genotypes are like poems and persons are like paintings. Let us investigate this analogy further, beginning with a closer look at painting.

2. Painting

Call something *singular* if in principle there can be at most one instance of it at a time, *plural* if in principle there can be more than one instance of it at a time. It will be convenient to have a word for that aspect of a thing that is specified as plural or singular: call it the thing's *multiplicity*. Poems are plural (also, let us say, poetry), while paintings are singular (painting, too). An art that admits of forgery is singular; an art to which the concept of forgery has no application is plural. Now this difference in point of multiplicity calls for philosophical explanation. According to Nelson Goodman, in his

book *Languages of Art*, the difference boils down to the fact that poems are notated while paintings are not.

There is no doubt but that poems are notated. Equally obvious is that paintings are *not* notated. The same does not go for all the visual arts, however, as digital photographs *are* notated (they are, after all, sequences of bits, whether realised as pixels on a monitor or as pits and lands in a compact disc). In contrast to these clear-cut cases are analogue photographs, castings, and prints: on the one hand they are unnotated, like paintings, on the other hand they seem to admit of various instances, like poems. As Goodman shows, however, they are actually singular: each casting, impression, and print is singular, as is the mould, plate, or negative from which it is produced. Indeed, *series* of castings, impressions, and prints are singular, too, in the sense that they can be extended only on the authority of the artist. Casts from the same old, like impressions from the same plate and prints from the same negative, may thus be compared to a series of paintings produced in a uniform way (say, Ad Reinhardt's Black Paintings).

Goodman's fundamental observation, as concerns the possibility of forgery in an art, is that the criterion of identity for notated works is 'sameness of spelling': same spelling, same work. The font in which a poem is written is accidental, but the sequence of characters that spell it out is constitutive. Indeed the instances of a poem are not bound by *any* resemblance beyond sameness of spelling, since e.g. inscriptions of different poems resemble each other more closely than do an inscription and a recitation of the same poem. As long as there is no restriction in principle on repeated spellings of the same thing, as it seems there could not be without impinging on the very idea of a notation, the simple fact that the criterion of identity for notated works is sameness of spelling implies that those works are plural. By contrast the fail-safe criterion of identity for paintings is the same as for physical particulars more widely, that is, spatio-temporal continuity.

Can a plural art lack notation? Yes: musical practice admitted repeat performances before the introduction of notation, as did poetry; more recently, a notation has been introduced for dance. So it would have been more correct to write, above, that *notatable* works are plural. It is a stickier question whether all plural works are notatable – a question that, unfortunately, I must now leave aside.

Must singular arts lack notation? Goodman argues that they must. I shall now detail Goodman's argument, formulating it, as he does, in terms of painting. In a nutshell, the argument is that no notation for painting could satisfy two conditions that would be necessary in such a notation: first, the notation must class instances into artworks independently of the history of their production; and second, the notation must define artworks in accordance with the antecedent practice of painting. After explaining these conditions I shall make a fuller statement of Goodman's argument, and then proceed to discuss persons.

3. Goodman's Argument

No accurate copy of a painting can count as the work itself, while an accurate copy of a poem does. But what is a copy, if not an object whose history of production is different, in a characteristic way, from that of the object copied? Indeed the difference between painting and poetry is precisely that two inscriptions can be of the same poem despite their different histories of production, while history of production is a criterion of identity for paintings. If there is to be a notation for painting, such that same spelling implies same work, it must of necessity abstract from history of production.

The second condition is no less essential, since introducing a notation is trivial if we allow departures from our antecedent grouping of instances into works. Goodman gives a nice illustration of this: we are free to stipulate that the animals in a certain zoo constitute a species, but only on pain of redefining the word 'species'. Likewise introducing a notation that classes, as instances of the same painting, Vermeer's *The Milkmaid* with someone else's handiwork amounts to redefining the word 'painting'. As Goodman puts it, this sort of departure from established practice 'disenables the only authority competent to issue the needed license'.

Those, then, are the two conditions that a notation for painting must satisfy. It must group instances into works independently of their history of production, and it must be 'real', as Goodman puts it, in the sense of according with antecedent practice. The rub is that any notation for painting that abstracts from history of production ipso facto rejects the antecedent practice.

It is important to note that the complexity of paintings plays no part in Goodman's argument. That is, Goodman does not argue that painting cannot be notated because paintings – qua physical objects – are so complex that 'spelling them out' would be unfeasible. A painting is, of course, hugely complex. But as a physical phenomenon, so is the inscription of a poem. What Goodman argues is that notation distinguishes constitutive from accidental properties,

while the antecedent practice of painting permits no such distinction. In this sense, every property of a painting is constitutive ('Please do not touch the painting').

Goodman takes it for granted that paintings are singular: after all, antecedent practice ('the only authority') so dictates. This is surely unobjectionable. For one thing, his aim, in the passages I have been summarising, is to explain the difference between painting (sculpture, etc.) and poetry (music, etc.) in point of multiplicity; this problem can hardly be posed unless we already know that paintings are singular and poems are plural. But there is, I think, a still deeper justification for Goodman's procedure.

Consider whether it might be possible to discover that we have been wrong about paintings, that is, whether they might turn out – on empirical investigation, say – to be plural after all. As Goodman notes, the line between constitutive and accidental properties can be drawn *arbitrarily*: we might be persuaded to speak of a 'species' that is instantiated everywhere in a certain zoo, but no prior grouping of creatures could *authorise* such a manner of speaking. The same would be true in the case of a 'plural painting'. That is, we might be persuaded by empirical data to introduce a notation for painting, but this would be no mere regimentation. It would be a revolution, with new lines of authority drawn. To suppose that the new order might have been *the* order all along – or, that the true order at present is yet to be laid bare – is to indulge in a metaphysical conspiracy theory.

4. Two Puzzles

The foregoing discussion suggests two much-discussed metaphysical puzzles, which it will be worthwhile, I think, to treat from a Goodmanian perspective.

If, as Goodman suggests, all of the properties of a painting are constitutive, is not the precise inventory and configuration of a painting's atoms constitutive? If so, the loss of one atom would seem to constitute the replacement of the original painting by another altogether, which is absurd.

It is no solution to this puzzle to deny that paintings change. Likewise it is a fool's errand to hunt for some 'fine line between change and destruction'. A better reply has it that certain changes of properties might *themselves* be constitutive. Goodman supplies interesting grounds for this reply: to put briefly, the constitutiveness of a painting's properties derives from the painting's singularity, not the other way around.

Let us think of paintings as (artifactual) kinds. A painting, considered as a kind, is uniquely exemplified. Characterising the singularity of

paintings in this way is suggestive: it is not that a painting happens to have just the right properties, but that whatever properties are exemplified by the painting are ipso facto the right ones. It is because *The Milkmaid* has such-and-such properties that those properties are constitutive for it.

Now this solution immediately gives rise to another puzzle: If whatever properties a painting has are constitutive, how can the painting be destroyed? After all, whatever properties it has, constitute the work.

Before addressing this puzzle, let me block a possible misconception. In a sense it is true that a painting cannot be destroyed, namely, in the sense in which to destroy it would violate the law of conservation of energy. But of course this hardly touches the puzzle. The question is why we do not call ashes and heat a painting, even as we allow that energy is conserved in the painting's burning. If a painting's properties are constitutive, ashes and heat should be the painting itself, not its remains. That is the puzzle.

To begin to solve this puzzle on Goodman's lines, let us think a bit about the interesting practice of art restoration. I have said that all of a painting's properties are constitutive – yet an art restorer deliberately *changes* them. What could possibly authorise this? What could the restorer possibly take as her standard? The painting itself, naturally.

Suppose, for example, that an art restorer has determined that one of the billows of the Milkmaid's red skirt should be brighter than it is now, and about as bright as the blue of her apron. What might be her justification? There are countless possibilities: chemical analysis of the paint; close study of a contemporaneous reproduction; reports of the painting's appearance in earlier times; and so forth. What these and other possible justifications have in common is that they are rooted, ultimately, in the painting itself: it is the painting, or what may be reasonably inferred to have been the painting, that serves as the standard for what the painting should be. Not even the artist's intent can overrule the work here (that is, as long as we may speak of the work as an accomplished fact). Indeed, while proximity to execution by the artist might be favoured, any moment in a painting's history can yield up its 'time-slice' as a standard.

Let us call the particular time-slice that serves as a standard for a painting's restoration, together with the particular respects in which it serves as a standard, the *painting-as-standard*. Ashes and heat fail to qualify as the painting, because the painting-as-standard excludes that. We may say that the artwork itself rejects ashes and heat.

Needless to add, we can imagine an artwork that does admit of instantiation by ashes and heat, a sort of kinetic sculpture that early in life looks like an ordinary painting and later is transformed by burning.

The point is that admitting ashes and heat as an instantiation of *The Milkmaid* does violence to the antecedent practice, over and above whatever violence has been done to the painting.

This concludes my discussion of Goodman. We turn, now, to persons.

5. Persons

A person's genetic code can be regarded as a kind of notation, a notation for her genotype. To ask whether cloning duplicates persons is to ask whether the notation for genotypes can serve, in addition, as a notation for persons. Obviously the answer is 'no'. But with Goodman's argument in hand, we can say a bit more.

Genomics, regarded as a possible notation for persons, does satisfy one of Goodman's conditions: it classes instantiations independently of history of production (in this case, biography). But it fails to conform to antecedent practice since, for example, genomics classes together identical twins, while as I noted earlier identical twins are not the same person. Now not only is there no notation for persons, but by Goodman's reasoning there also *could not* be one: simply put, the antecedent practice rules that out. A notation for persons would be, in fact, a notation for something else that had taken their place.

Goodman's line of thought yields even more interesting results, I think, when we consider the analogues in the domain of persons of the two puzzles just discussed.

Take the first puzzle. There is no notation for persons, hence no way to cull constitutive from accidental properties. It follows that all of the properties of a person are constitutive. From this, in turn, it would seem to follow that the slightest change in a person constitutes her replacement by another person altogether. This is absurd.

The solution here is the same as in the previous case. Like paintings, persons-as-kinds are uniquely exemplified: it is not that a person copies herself more or less faithfully from moment to moment, or otherwise attains more or less completely to the properties that are constitutive for her; it is rather that, moment to moment, a person uniquely exemplifies what it is to be her.

Now just as before, this solution gives rise to a second puzzle: If whatever properties a person has are constitutive, how can a person be destroyed? After all, whatever properties she has, those are the properties that she uniquely exemplifies.

Here again our previous reasoning applies. To deny that Houdini's corpse is Houdini the person is, among other things, to deny that a certain object meets a certain standard, where this standard is a time-slice of Houdini the person, projected in a

certain way. This gives the appearance of circularity – as if one had said, ‘To know whether something is Houdini, take Houdini and see what he has to say on the matter’ – but the circularity is only apparent. We are not giving a general prescription for determining whether any given thing is Houdini the person, we are observing that the question whether this or that is Houdini gets answered, in part, with reference to the members of a class of settled instances. This reference class is Goodman’s ‘antecedent practice’, or anyway part of it.

I should emphasise that my discussion to this point does not, by a long shot, exhaust the logic of personhood, and that important disanalogies with painting lie just around the bend. For example, unlike paintings, persons are agents. This means that while a person stands to herself, in certain respects, like a painting-as-standard stands to the painting-as-object, in other respects she stands to herself as the *painter* stands to her painting. There are many such disanalogies, of course, which for all their interest I must now pass over.

6. Identity

How does the foregoing discussion bear on the problem of personal identity? In several ways, I think, of which I can now only mention a few.

First, discussions of personal identity frequently involve puzzle cases. If the argument I have mounted with respect to persons is sound, the details of those cases will matter in ways that might not have been suspected. For example, some puzzles of personal identity have been offered that involve the transporter from *Star Trek*. If my argument is sound, it is going to matter how this machine actually works. According to the *Star Trek Encyclopaedia*, the transporter ‘encodes’ a person’s ‘atomic blueprint’, then beams it to some place where the person is reconstructed to plan. By the previous argument this is impossible, since people cannot be encoded, that is, notated. Likewise splitting persons by instantiating their encoding twice, or fusing them by ‘crossing’ encodings, is impossible.

The argument against the possibility of notating persons does not, of course, rule out *non*-encoding transporters – for example, bicycles. The challenge facing *Star Trek* engineers would be to transmit people without encoding them along the way.

So much for *Star Trek*. More interesting, I think, is how the analysis of personhood just sketched bears on the long-standing question of personal identity – that is, the analysis of judgments of the form ‘So-and-so is Houdini’. That analysis involved reference to a class of settled Houdini-instances. Actual classes of that sort do not include the bizarre puzzle cases that philosophers sometimes think up, but the

analysis just given can shed light on those cases nevertheless.

Recall, for instance, a case imagined by Lock (I shall dress it up slightly, along lines familiar from the recent literature). A person wakes up in London to discover that his body, the bedroom he is in, the cobbler’s shop downstairs, and the people who claim to be his family and friends, are all strange to him, while the royal family, Buckingham Palace, and so on, are familiar. Indeed the memories this person has seem to be none other than Prince Andrew’s: he remembers, as though they had been his, the prince’s governess, the prince’s rooms at the Naval College, and so on. Still, the person’s body is undeniably the cobbler’s. To simplify, let us suppose that Prince Andrew’s lifeless body was discovered earlier that same morning in Buckingham Palace. Is the person in the cobbler’s bed Prince Andrew?

Locke and others have thought that he is. But not everyone agrees, and it is easy to see why. Substantially the same scenario can be described by saying that the cobbler awoke with a strange, indeed uncanny, mental disturbance. He went to sleep remembering his apprenticeship, his marriage, the day he injured himself with an awl, but he awoke – the cobbler awoke – remembering, instead of all that, the details of another man’s life as though they were the details of his own.

Now by the previous argument, whatever happened it cannot have involved the coding and downloading of Prince Andrew (the person) into the cobbler’s body. So let us suppose that both persons spent the night in fMRI machines, and that review of the record shows that the cobbler’s nervous system underwent a radical, seemingly instantaneous change of structure and activity, at the same moment that Prince Andrew’s brain went still. The record yields nothing in the way of a physical explanation. There was no downloading evident. What should we say happened?

The analysis just given does not afford an unequivocal answer, but it does provide for a first-pass diagnosis. The puzzle is generated by imagining a person who tantalises two reference classes: from one class we draw, as our standard, a young prince being tutored by his governess; from the other class, a young cobbler scarring himself with an awl. Both standards seem to apply – the person in the bed remembers the governess’ lessons, and also bears the scar left by the awl – but neither standard applies completely, since the prince was never so scarred, and the cobbler was never so tutored. Surely it would have been little consolation to Prince Andrew to know that his most intimate memories would soon be safe with a cobbler across town, or to the cobbler

to know that his body would awake as usual the next morning.

The case of the prince and the cobbler highlights another feature of the logic of personhood, a feature whose characterisation is quite straightforward given a Goodman-style framework: reference classes for people are disjoint. Two reference classes claim the person in the cobbler's bed, *but not both can have him*. It follows, incidentally, that the person in the cobbler's bed is in no better position to decide who he is than we are. It is true that he behaves in important respects like the prince, and that he remembers things that, as we should ordinarily say, 'only the prince would know'. But it would be question-begging to take this fact as decisive without further argument.

Finally, as a further example of what can be gained by a Goodman-style analysis, consider another horrific scenario from the literature. The hemispheres of a living person's brain are removed from her body, and each is transplanted into its own, new body. Call the person who goes into this operation Mary. Mary's body is destroyed in the course of the operation. Does she survive? Which of the resulting people is she? We may suppose, for the sake of argument, that they both inherit Mary's character and memories. One possible answer – considered by Derek Parfit – is that they are both proper parts of Mary. Parfit rejects this answer. I believe that he does so correctly: if Mary survives as a creature with two persons as proper parts, she in fact does not survive; for she is no longer a person, and nothing other than a person could be Mary. What makes me so sure of this? Consultation with the antecedent practice.

7. Conclusion

Persons, like paintings, are singular. By Goodman's argument, if paintings are singular, they cannot be

notated. By the same argument, if persons are singular, they cannot be notated. We have it that persons are singular on the authority of our antecedent practice (similarly for paintings). Precisely *how* our practice delivers this is a deep question, for it goes beyond being merely true *of that practice*: after all, some universal truths about persons are contingent, while this one as to their multiplicity is not. Nevertheless, so we have it.

Goodman's argument is interesting not only for the conclusions it yields across diverse domains, but for the conceptual analyses it affords. As I have tried to show, standard puzzles of personal identity become clearer when we consider them within Goodman's framework. For instance, philosophers have sometimes urged that judgments as to whether this person is the same as that turn on this or that particular criterion. If, however, we look beyond the particular criterion to the antecedent practice from which it is drawn, we find that the criterion is simply one of many possible, among which there has never been any conflict. To imagine that there is conflict is precisely to imagine something other than a person. Conceptual innovations do occur in the face of new experience, but they are not, then, determined by the old conceptual structure (else they wouldn't be genuine innovations). These insights are not new, but as I hope to have showed, Goodman gives us a new and interesting approach to them.

Ivan Welty
Willamette University
900 State St.
Salem, OR 97214
USA

RAYMOND TALLIS AND THE ALLEGED NECESSITY OF A BODY FOR PERSONAL EXISTENCE AND IDENTITY

R.T Allen

Abstract

Raymond Tallis claims that a physical body is necessary for self-consciousness, individuation and personal identity. But his arguments apply only to the necessity of a physical body for finite persons living and acting within a physical world, and so leave open the possibility of unembodied persons in a non-physical world. In particular his own answer to the question of personal identity is, he admits, an incomplete attempt to combine two aspects of the self. An alternative view is suggested, that personal identity is constituted by a unique individual 'essence' (which Tallis denies) but which, paradoxically, we cannot recognise in our case but only in respect of others.

Key Words

Cassam (Quassim), cogito, Descartes, embodiment, individuation, non-bodily existence, persons, personal identity, self-consciousness, Strawson (P.F.), Tallis (Raymond).

1. Introduction

Raymond Tallis' trilogy—*The Hand, I Am, The Knowing Animal*—is a profound and refreshingly anti-reductive study of human existence informed by both a wide range of empirical knowledge, especially in *The Hand*, and philosophical understanding which draws on analytical and Continental philosophy.¹ Yet, I shall suggest, Tallis goes too far in *I Am* as a result, paradoxically, of being too close to Descartes who is the main target of his criticism. For, like Strawson and Cassam, whom he often cites, he is concerned with securing the body against Cartesian scepticism regarding the 'external world', and so, again like them, he argues that embodiment is necessary to *all* self-consciousness and individuation and identification of the self, such that a non-physical yet personal existence would be impossible.¹ I do not quarrel with any of the arguments that Tallis offers or cites for the necessity of a body, and moreover a lived and living body, for perception of and action within a physical world. Indeed, Tallis explicitly repudiates any crass materialism or physicalism, and, as we shall see, appears to allow that there are aspects of self-awareness for which the body cannot account. Nor am I defending Descartes' or any other 'dualism'—his error lies more in being *merely* a 'dualist' and in recognising only matter and mind

and not also the missing third between them of life, organic and sensori-motor existence, and also beyond mind the person himself, who uses his mental and bodily powers and can be 'out of his mind' when it operates without his personal and rational control. I seek to show only (a) that a physical body, while necessary for personal existence in a physical world, is not therefore necessary for existence in any and every world (though finite persons may need in any world some equivalent means of expression and interaction with each other), and (b) that even within a physical world such as this, the body cannot account for every aspect of personhood and is not the real basis of personal identity.

2. Tallis and unembodied personhood

Tallis' argument in Chaps. 1 and 2 of *I Am* is that the *cogito* should be understood in terms of the temporally and logically prior 'Existential Intuition', the explicit realisation that I exist. But what am I that I can realise that I do exist? On the one hand, Tallis rightly argues, the 'I' cannot be without 'content', as with the transcendental egos of Kant and Husserl and even with Heidegger's *Dasein* which appears to be no particular person without a particular body. Yet, on the other, Tallis criticises Descartes for importing too much into the 'I' of 'that I exist' in taking it to be a *res cogitans* and a substance, and also for adding too little in ignoring the essential role of the body. Tallis proposes that 'I am' needs to be expanded to '[That] I am [this]', i.e. that I am something or other, and in turn to '[That] I am *this* [x]', i.e. a real, concrete individual. So far, so good, in my opinion. But then he claims that only the body, can provide filling and substance for the otherwise empty 'x' and thus empty 'I'. Thus the Existential Intuition is my 'assumption' of my body, 'the engaged organism assuming itself as 'myself'' (IA, 40).

Surprisingly, Tallis has little to offer in direct support of the negative side of his argument, that only the body could individualise the self and make it concrete. As previously mentioned, he often refers to Cassam, but all that Cassam's intricate arguments and counter-arguments do and could prove is that for a finite person to perceive a physical world, to act within and upon it, and to be the indexical centre of relations to other things in it, he must have a body to be located within it. His arguments have more point

in respect of an 'Exclusion Thesis' according to which, as with Wittgenstein, the subject is outside the world. Indeed, Tallis himself criticises Cassam for arguing that the self-conscious subject can be aware of itself as only a physical object, with shape, location and solidity, in a world of similar physical objects, and not as 'the living, suffering, striving organism in which the Existential Intuition awakes' (*I Am*, 128, referring to *Self and World*, 198). Cassam himself, I would add, is in that respect a Cartesian. Rather, as Tallis rightly says, 'The fact that the 'I' is aware implies that the object it is aware of being must presumably itself be aware' (*I Am*, 128).

Tallis' direct arguments for his negative thesis, that disembodied existence is impossible, occupy only three pages (*I Am*, 120-2) plus a further passage (*I Am*, 260-7) on the necessity of the body for memory, in the full sense of recall of what one has done and experienced, which is obviously true of memories of experiences and actions in a physical world, but equally obviously irrelevant to those in a non-physical world. I shall now take each of his claims in turn and suggest that a non-embodied person could still be capable of doing or experiencing what Tallis claims to be to be 'impossible, self-contradictory, unthinkable or all three' for such a person (*I Am*, 120).

Tallis, citing Strawson, first states that a formerly embodied person would have no further perceptions of a body nor power of initiating with it changes in the physical world (*I Am*, 120; *Individuals*, 115-6). I have no particular quarrel with that, but it does not prove that such a person, and one who has never been embodied, could not have *other* experiences and perform *other* actions in a non-physical world.

Strawson is relying, and hence so is Tallis, on his previous thought experiment of imaging a world of sounds as an example of a non-physical world. In such a world, he claims, there would be no way of recognising continuing and re-occurring particular objects but only sounds of the same sort. Hence only physical entities can provide continuing objects. At the most, via a system of signals (and thus some sort of code), one person might infer the existence of 'voices' behind those sounds (*Individuals*, 69-84). But this whole experiment begs the question, for it is of a world of mere noises and not of the genuine voices of persons speaking to each other, persons each of whom could identify and re-identify himself and be recognised as the same voice as heard before and not just one similar to it. Consider how we recognise the same real and fictitious persons on the wireless by individual tone of voice and continuity and coherence of what each says, and not by any

reference to their bodies which we never see or touch. Moreover, that is precisely what blind persons do for most of the time in our physical world. Hence Strawson has no warrant for saying that persons could not exist in a non-physical world, and would be incapable of any experiences and actions if they were to do so. After all, the important actions, or aspects of actions, in this world are mostly not their merely physical effects but their interior effects upon persons, as in political and religious conversions and reassessments of ourselves and other persons, and the imparting of knowledge by teachers.

So, contrary to what Tallis next says, there would be plenty of possibilities for action, for speaking to, arguing with, enlightening, correcting, informing, and expressing affection for and devotion to each other. Nor would such persons be without any need for action, and Tallis himself rejects the materialist assumption that all needs arise from physiological imperatives (*I Am*, 121). Rather, persons primarily need other persons and personal contact, irrespective of any bodily vehicles by which it may be conveyed in a physical world.

Finally, although Tallis is correct in stating that persons in a non-physical world would not be located in space, he is wrong to add that they would also be unlocated in time. His only argument is that time and space are mutually implicated in modern physics (*I Am*, 121). But physics deals only with physical worlds, and can say nothing about non-physical ones. Persons in Strawson's sound world, for example, would be quite capable of change and hence temporal existence, as obviously with speech and the arts of language and music. Likewise they could form new relationships and deepen existing ones. It is gross physicalist error to assume that action must involve physical movement and changes.

3. The body as the principle of individuality and identity

In Chapter 6, Tallis appears to be committed to the necessity of a body for the individuation and identity of persons. For example, he states that the person I am 'depends on the experiences I have had. These are inseparable from the necessarily unique space-time paths of the token [particular] body that is mine' (*I Am*, 266). Furthermore, he explicitly denies the possibility of individual essences (*I Am*, 224, citing Strawson, *Entity and Identity*, 3-4). And in the final section of the chapter, he restates his conviction that without the body there could be no 'basis for continuity, substantiality or even individuation of the self'; that it links the 'inner' aspect of my awareness that I am, for my body is largely what I live and therefore am, while for the 'outer aspect' it is visible

to others and can be identified and re-identified; and that therefore 'personal identity and the sense of self could not be elaborated in some disembodied state' (*I Am*, 280-1). Yet his treatment of the whole subject contains some important qualifications which undercut these emphatic statements.

He rightly distinguishes the 'vertical' (or synchronic) and instantaneous awareness of our own identity from the 'horizontal' (or diachronic) and continuing identity of oneself over time (*I Am*, 228ff). He rejects Locke's and similar accounts of the 'inner' aspect of the latter in terms of memory because memory presupposes continuing identity (*I Am*, 234-9.15. *I Am*, 249-60; D. Parfit, *Reasons and Persons*). Likewise he rejects the nonsense of thought experiments about transferring or creating memories in the full sense of *recalling* what one has experienced and done and not mere knowledge *about* such matters (*I Am*, 260-8). Similarly, he rejects any account, such as Parfit's, of either aspect of the latter in terms of the continuity of some certain characteristics because it omits my own awareness that, despite whatever changes I have undergone, I am still the same person and not someone else (*I Am*, 236-49). The self is 'diagonal', a continuing linkage of the 'vertical' and 'horizontal' dimensions which cannot be detached from each other. The 'I' requires temporal depth, reaching out of the instantaneous present to a past and to a future—even an amnesiac, I would add, who cannot remember anything about his past and has few expectations of his future, nevertheless knows that he has a past and will have a future. But without the instantaneous self the episodes of life would not be linked together (*I Am*, 268-73). Yet, Tallis admits, this account has its difficulties and may be only a compromise between two equally unsatisfactory accounts: a point-identity of the 'vertical' self that fails to unfold; and objective bases, such as the body and memories, which fail fully to enter the former and to give it substance. The body, he states, is indubitably attractive as the basis for self-identity, but there is no principled way of deciding just what aspects of the body should be included within the instantaneous and 'vertical' self: 'invoking the body does not give us all the answers we need' (*I Am*, 273-8). Yet in the final section of Chapter 7, Tallis re-affirms that without the body 'there can be no basis for continuity, substantiality or even individuation of the self', and that it links the outer and inner aspects, the outer as what others encounter and recognise and the inner because 'my body is largely what I live and hence 'am'' (*I Am*, 280). Nevertheless, my body may not disclose who I am, because, for example, I may have lost my

memory and everything that goes with it—'job, relations with others, interests, passions, sense of being located in a framework of past and future—that define (and indeed constitute) my personal identity' (*I Am*, 281). But this last contradicts the decisive criticisms that Tallis has previously made about basing identity upon continuity of a given set of general features whether outer or inner: that all these can change, yet I would know that I would still remain the same person. Furthermore, it also conflicts with what he has just said about the body as what we largely live and 'are'. For what he lists as constituting personal identity are primarily personal and not bodily attributes and activities. We do live in and through our bodies, but we do not primarily live for them but for things that transcend the physical. Even those who live for their stomachs prefer certain cuisines and not just anything edible, and the grotesques of 'physical culture' seek the admiration or envy of others. What is distinctive of personal existence is to turn all or most of our activities into some sort of art. Nevertheless, Tallis still maintains that 'personal identity and the sense of self could not be elaborated in some disembodied state' (*I Am*, 281).

So despite some clear affirmations of the centrality of the body for personal identity, Tallis clearly recognises indications to the contrary and that he has not really found something which could give substance to the 'vertical' and instantaneous 'I', the 'I' of self-consciousness, the 'I' that recognises its continuity among all its sundry and manifold changes.

To resolve Tallis' problem I shall now suggest a paradoxical answer: that I do not know what makes me me but that others can recognise it. I know that in the profound sense I am still the same person that I was despite the many changes, some perhaps radical, that I have undergone. But I do not know what I really and deeply am. I can recognise my traits of character and dispositions of temperament—that I am opinionated, a poor listener, generally patient but sometimes given to fits of temper, turned in upon myself yet seeking conversation and companionship, and so on. But these are general characteristics and nothing peculiar to me. And I could change and become less opinionated, a better listener, more patient and even tempered, less occupied with myself, etc., and yet I would still be the same person. All these are facts that Tallis acknowledges and cites. Where he goes wrong is in following Strawson's explicit denial of genuine individuality, an individual essence, a unique personality. For, if the person is a collocation of universals, then he can have no permanent identity as and when they change, or any genuine

individuality but only the accidental uniqueness of a conjunction of certain universals so far unrepeatable. Hence either Hume, Parfit *et al.* are correct and there is no continuing self (but, of course, they do not really believe this: trying refusing to return what you have borrowed from one of them on the grounds that you are no longer the one who borrowed it and that he is no longer the one who lent it), or the self is an extensionless point like the empty self of Sartre, and hence also nothing, as Sartre says and whom Tallis cites (*I Am*, 275). Both possibilities come down to the same thing. But if we return to real life, poetry and popular songs, whose constant theme is ‘only you’, then we see that in romantic love, friendship and love of home and homeland, it is the unique person or place that is both the object of love and what love discloses. No one else can take the place of the beloved: ‘Get another cat’ was heartless advice to the parents of a broken-hearted child whose pet had died. So, then, I suggest that this uniqueness of the individual, which remains through all the changes that one may undergo, as perhaps a unique style of being and acting, is what others can recognise in oneself but which the individual himself cannot. Hence the apparent emptiness of myself to myself, perhaps best manifested in the case of the amnesiac when he realises that he does not know who he is and has no memory of what he has done and how he has done it to tell him what sort of person he is. Likewise an artist has to discover his unique style and even then it may be his audience who can recognise it better than he can.

It is curious that Tallis follows Thomas Reid in holding that only persons have genuine identity (*I Am*, 248-9, 278-9: an exaggeration, I would say: organisms are certainly self-defining), and yet locates that identity not in what is distinctively personal but in the body. Why should so clear and penetrating a thinker do this? Perhaps because of his commitment to secularism (see *I Am*, 261 on Sir Richard Swinburne, and *The Knowing Animal*, Epilogue)—the one other element of his trilogy to

which I would object—and with it a suppressed fear as to what an avowal of the possibility of non-physical personal existence and inherent personal identity, independent of the body, may lead. But this is mere speculation. Otherwise I heartily recommend Tallis’ trilogy and hope that any reader of this article who has not yet read it will do so.

Loughborough
rt.allen@ntlworld.com

Bibliography

- Cassam, Q., *Self and World*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Parfit, D., *Reasons and Persons*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1987.
- Strawson, P., *Individuals: An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics*, London, Methuen, 1957.
- Entity and Identity and Other Essays*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Tallis, R., *The Hand: A Philosophical Inquiry into Human Being*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2003.
- I Am: A Philosophical Inquiry into First Person Being*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2004.
- The Knowing Animal: A Philosophical Inquiry into Knowledge and Truth*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2005.

Notes:

1. See my review of *The Hand* in *Appraisal*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Oct. 2005, and also Chris Goodman’s reviews of *I Am* (Vol. 5, No. 4, Oct. 2006) and *The Knowing Animal* (Vol. 6, No. 2, Oct. 2007).
2. Descartes took the *cogito*, without acknowledgment, from St Augustine’s *si fallor, sum*, ‘Though I err, yet I exist’. But whereas Descartes sought truth via doubt, Augustine sought it via faith, quoting the Old Latin of Isa. 7:9: *nisi credideritis non intelligitis*, ‘Unless you believe you shall not understand’ (*De Libero Arbitrio*, I:4). The whole story of modern philosophy might have been very different had Descartes paid more attention to Augustine.

DISCUSSIONS

1. A RESPONSE TO R.T. ALLEN

Fauve Lybaert¹

Abstract

In a response to Richard Allen I argue that the body is a necessary condition for self-consciousness and personal existence.

Keywords

Personal identity, self-consciousness, body

1. Attention for the factual meaning of persons in the life world

As I understand Allen he does not see Cassam and Tallis demonstrating that, in a non-physical world, no non-bodily existence of persons would be possible (§1 and §2). One of his motivations then not to exclude this possibility starts from an important place for philosophy. Allen is sceptical for those conclusions that do not align with how we tend to experience things: if we usually see personhood as determined by personal, not bodily attributes, then perhaps bodily attributes are not crucial for personal existence. I would like my comments to function as a sign of appreciation of Allen's attention for the factual meaning of persons in the life world.

2. The body as necessary condition for self-consciousness

Allen points out that when we live in a world with persons, we will not live in a world of mere noises, but of "genuine voices of persons speaking to each other, persons each of whom could identify and re-identify himself and be recognised as the same voice as heard before and not just one similar to it." (§2) This implies that these persons are conscious of themselves as diachronic persisting selves and the question arises whether the body is not a necessary condition for this self-consciousness.

(a) This could be so for a *synchronic consciousness*. A given that supports this idea is the following. When somebody is losing himself either in a psychosis, or in grief, or despair or shock over some kind of traumatic experience (say having seen an accident or being raped), our first reaction will not be to say to this person that he has to think about who he truly is, so as to distance himself from and posit himself over and against what overwhelms him. Rather psychiatrists have wrapped these persons in bandages or cold-water

packs; we will grab this person firmly by the shoulders, let him sit on a chair or have some water; and these persons themselves will often splash some water in their face, or take a shower. Here it seems like we first need to know where we are, what our boundaries are, before we can even start inwardly reflecting on who we are.

(b) Secondly, there are indications that our body may be necessary for our *diachronic self-conscious*. (i) In this regard I would first like to suggest that our internal mental connectedness is too weak to account for this consciousness. Allen himself points to this fact by saying that we can sometimes think incoherently or have changed character and still consider ourselves as the same person through this incoherency and change (§3). It would be interesting to think through if, given this, our bodies are necessary to keep track of ourselves. (ii) One could deny that they are and claim that all our experiences are united by a feeling of mineness: I know that all my experiences are mine, because they present themselves as mine. One could argue over whether this is a valid idea. An argument in favour could be that when I remember something I experienced, I also remember it as something I experienced and not just as something that someone experienced. But can this feeling of mineness really be isolated and used as a criterion for personal identity? (iii) One problem with this is that we are capable to recognize that we did something even if we do not recall it. Allen can acknowledge that this is the case and say that this is possible because, as he points out, others recognize us as the same (§3). But one could question whether this recognition would have the force it has if there were no objective observation possible of our physical behaviour.

3. Material or personal characteristics of the body

Another way to accommodate for Allen's worry that the alleged importance of bodily attributes makes us forget about the importance of personal attributes in the constitution of personal identity could be provided if we stopped seeing the body as a merely material thing to which we can only ascribe material attributes and say that the power it has to constitute personal existence is already

derived from our idea of what a person is, and that none of the body's characteristics that allow for personal existence are thus merely material, but all of them are already personal. Some examples. If the body is important for personal existence because it allows us to sense things, then the characteristics of the body that allow for this sensing, i.e. its sensors but also its boundaries, may be personal rather than bodily attributes. Also we may perhaps think of our bodies as symbols of ourselves, just like a piece of clothing may become a relic of someone. If we touch the clothing or the body we may then get the feeling that we touch the person, because it has been so close to the person for so long. As a symbol of the person we could then perhaps deny that the body is something merely material.

4. Recognizing others

Allen suggests that others would still recognize us as the same, even if we were not embodied, by hearing his tone of voice and the coherence in his stories (§2). It is certainly true that our voices get invested with our personality. When I hear someone speaking in the voice of a late beloved this will do something to me and not be a neutral event. Still, tone and coherence of speaking may neither form a necessary nor a sufficient condition for personal existence. They may not form a *necessary* condition for personal identity since when we lost these, say through brain damage, then what often will happen is that we will consider the new characteristics of this person to only be peripheral and we get the feeling that the character this person had earlier must somehow still be at his core. They may not be a *sufficient* condition for personal existence for it would be hard to follow a certain characteristic through its manifestations in different bodies. It seems that like a dress can look different at different persons, so can certain gestures. The same tone of voice can sound paternalizing coming from one and genuinely enthusiastic coming from another body. But, unlike the dress, it is hard to separate these characteristics of the body. Perhaps we should consider the thought that the soul may, as Aristotle stated it, be the activity of the body, and take that to be the activity of a particular body.

5. Names and bodies

First off, I contest Allen's point that we always recognize persons on the phone by the tone of their voice and their coherence of speaking (§2). When we do not, we will ask who we are speaking to, and they will say their name and with this name we will associate a life of someone we know. The

name and the body here seem to carry the person in a similar way. It would be interesting to find out how this happens and why something like a name or a body that does not literally make visible the inner life of a person can help us to recognize someone at a moment where something that often makes the inner life of a person immediately visible or audible fails to do so.

Secondly, Allen states that there may be actions that a never embodied person could undertake (§2). I wonder whether we could also hold a never embodied person responsible for these actions. When a political party gets convicted for racism and is for example no longer allowed to participate in elections, its members may easily form a new party in which the members and ideas remain the same, but which has a different name. This new party will then not suffer from the restrictions put on the old party. Would the same apply for persons who were never embodied or did not get a proper name (which is some sort of body)? And if so, can we then still legitimately talk of persons?

6. Time and bodily boundaries

Allen says that although it is legitimate to say that persons in a non-physical world would not be located in space, it is wrong to conclude that they would neither be located in time (§2). Now it is of course true that non-spatial 'things', like thoughts, can have their place in time. But a question I have is whether it would be possible to in such a world situate yourself in time, to be conscious of being a diachronic self. I think that this is not the case, because for the idea of a transcendent or worldly time to arise, i.e. the time of hours, days, years and so on, the time in which we can *conceive* of something as past, actual or future, we need to be able to *experience* something as actual, fading away, or having been present. For this to happen we appear to need boundaries. Or would it be possible to experience a sound, light, chill or smell without it hitting our surface, or for me to have thoughts without ever experiencing them as within me? Even if you do not locate a sound in your ear but as coming from the left, you need to imagine yourself with some boundary to have it come from the left. Even if you conceive of a thought as something that can be had by anyone, you perceive it as something you have now and may not currently be in the persons around you. And even if this would not require you to conceive of yourself as having a physical body, it still requires you to think of yourself as having some kind of boundary and thus body.

7. The unique self

I agree with Allen when he says that we attach ourselves to unique individuals that cannot be replaced by others (§3) but would draw an opposite conclusion from this. Allen concludes from this given that we do not attach ourselves to empty selves and suggests that “this uniqueness of the individual, which remains through all the changes that one may undergo, as perhaps a unique style of being and acting, is what others can recognize in oneself.” (§3) But it is possible that you at some point meet someone who you first recognize as one of your beloveds, but then turns out to be a complete stranger; just as it is possible that you cross an old beloved without recognizing him at all. What will happen here? I think that we will usually excuse ourselves to the stranger and walk away, whereas we will treat the beloved that we had not recognized at first as someone we know. I would then conclude that we apparently attach ourselves

to formal selves, exactly because we attach ourselves to persons that we may at some point not even recognise, yet fulfil this one formal requirement: they have a body that is continuous with the body of the person we once knew. The formality of this requirement makes me then call these selves empty because it does not refer to any of their personal characteristics.

Dept of Philosophy
University of Leuven
Belgium
fauve.lybaert@hiw.kuleuven.be

Note:

1. My research and the writing of this comment is made possible by the financial support of the Belgian American Educational Foundation and the Flanders Research Foundation.

2. RESPONSES TO WALTER GULICK AND PHIL MULLINS

Alan Ford

Abstract:

Gulick misunderstands some features of John Macmurray's philosophy in relation to Polanyi: the priority of the personal over the material, and over the distinction between mind and body; the importance of the Form of the Personal; the priority of value and the ethical over facts and logic; the necessity of love in establishing the distinction between reality and fantasy; the importance of existential integrity in the forming of the cultural; Macmurray's attack on Descartes' idea that the self is essentially a thinker; the importance and the priority of the ethical in establishing the true. is largely correct in his comparison of Polanyi and Macmurray but there is more convergence over science than Mullins allows and likewise more to be said for Macmurray's 'architectonic' account of science, art and religion.

Keywords:

Agency, animal/human, art, communal, emotion, the ethical, existential integrity, form of the personal, identity, internal relations, mind-body dualism, morality, objectivity, persons in relation, philosophy, priority of the ethical and the personal, the real, reason, relationship, rhythm of withdrawal and return science, self as agent, transitional phenomena, the true.

1. Walter Gulick

In his paper 'Who are the persons of Michael Polanyi's *Personal Knowledge* and John Macmurray's *Persons in Relation*?' (*Appraisal* Vol. 7 No. 3, March 2009 pp. 3-10) Professor Walter Gulick launched a wake-up call in his vigorous critique of certain features of John Macmurray's philosophy. He quoted key passages from JM, and gave a searching and conscientious account, often to the advantage of Michael Polanyi (MP). His motivation was to encourage debate: this report will respond in this light.

Walter stated:

For Macmurray, the place to start is persons in active relation to each other. Here is a key passage:

'[T]he concept of a material world is abstract and derivative. The material is, in fact, the non-personal; and as a negative conception, it depends for its definition upon the positive which it negates. Our knowledge of the material presupposes, both logically and genetically, a knowledge of the personal. Logically, the Other is the correlate of the Self as

Agent. . . . Thus the primary correlation, on which all knowledge rests, is the 'You and I' in active relation.' (*Persons in Relation*, 79-80)

There is a certain arbitrariness in the way Macmurray argues here. One could equally say ... that the personal is the non-material, rather than that the material is the non-personal, as Macmurray states. And if the personal is the non-material, one could say that as a negative conception the personal depends for its definition upon the positive, the material, which it negates. Consequently, our knowledge of the personal could be equally well said to depend upon a knowledge of the body and its processes, for without the body there would be no person. My complaint about Macmurray's view, then, is not about the significance of the You and I in relation; it is about the glib way he argues for its ultimate significance as 'the primary correlation, on which all knowledge rests.' (*Appraisal* Vol. 7 No. 3, March 2009 pp. 3 col. 2, p4 col. 1)

Is 'glib' appropriate when one realises JM wrote many books and articles spelling out just why he thought this?

In fact JM himself argues that the body, the material, is *necessary* for identity, but that, like the self as thinker, it is *insufficient*. A person is essential for making the distinction between mind and body because he has both, but neither has sufficient identity to exist independently. Can bodiliness create identity independent of a person? Can minds exist independent of personhood? [Persons create identity – because they have it in internal relationships and are constituted by them].

Since this seems to be the burden of Walter's arguments, and since it concerns JM's central concept of the *Form of the Personal*, I shall make this the burden of my response.

When Walter contrasts the material with the personal he is not, in JM's terms at least, contrasting like notions. The material is an *aspect* of the personal, not independent and free for comparison. The material, and the subjective, are abstractions that only persons can make, and to see them otherwise is to slip into mind/body dualism out of which one cannot climb if one considers this distinction to be logically fundamental. Yet it does not mean that we don't have minds and bodies, although 'have' shows the peculiarity of our outlook when we have to adopt it.

Perhaps an examination of the *Form of the Personal* might help. Walter seems not to

understand JM'S idea of the Form of the Personal, where he says, specifically, that the negative is essential in constituting the positive. The positive is such since without it the negative would have no *existential integrity*.

Walter's misunderstanding is clear when he talks about 'Macmurray's choice of privileging one side of his dualism: the personal over against the material. (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p.4 col. 1). To repeat, JM is not privileging one side of the dualism, but criticising dualism as such. There is no dualism of the personal and the material, because the material is one negative aspect (in JM's terms) of the personal; the other being thought or subjectivity. JM's aim is to show that our habit of thinking, philosophically, in terms of mind and body is mistaken. The fact we do so in everyday conversation is because it is a useful, conventional, but not the fundamental distinction that philosophers have believed.

Here are two examples in which can be seen the constitution of the Form of the Personal. A baby, Winnicott writes, becomes a self by using transitional objects e.g. a teddy bear. (Winnicott *Playing & Reality*, 1974, especially Chapter 1 'Transitional Objects & Transitional Phenomena') This symbolises the *relationship* of mother and child when the mother is absent or *withdrawn*. In this way the child negotiates the separation from Mum without trauma if her presence is *returned* within the optimum time. (Withdrawal and return are played in 'peek-a-boo'.) Yet this relationship must be based on love, care and consistency to establish Mum's identity as a source of security, and something from which to separate. When the child is comfortable with this separateness and newly formed identity, the transitional phenomena seem to disappear, but we're told they become the space of culture, that realm of communicative languages that mediates between selves and where agency is possible – and which constitutes the world. *This creates the distinction between Self and Other*. But the self is clearly a function of personal *relations* with a personal Other, not a metaphysical abstraction, but one *existentially engaged* with it, where *the self is an agent*, not merely a thinker, whose actions have consequences in a real world, and where the mind-body problem is not an issue.

When this self becomes self-aware there come, of necessity, other forms of withdrawal; e.g. Mum decides to withdraw her constant support and places Johnny on his feet and says, 'Come on Johnny – walk!' Johnny feels abandoned, he might even hate her, but when he walks, or is caught if he totters, with a cuddle for either outcome, he realises Mum loved him after all and that what he *thought* about

her withdrawal was a mistake. *In this way he makes the distinction between fantasy and reality, truth and falsehood*. Yet this would have been impossible if Johnny had not been loved, since there would have been no reference point to which to return to show a mistake had been made. (John Macmurray *Persons in Relation* Chapter Four, 'The Rhythm of Withdrawal and Return', esp. pp. 96-101.)

The necessity of love for the truth-falsehood distinction also makes evident another distinction, *that between fact and value with which philosophy has struggled so long. For this shows values make facts possible. The ethical is logically prior to logic itself*. Value is to be found, not in abstractions, but in everyday active love, necessarily between agents. The self as agent is the positive, constituted by the negatives, Subject and Object, Mind and Body, Mental Material, Thought and Fact, which makes them distinguishable and puts them to work.

Therefore to contrast the material with the personal is to make a category mistake: the material is an aspect of the personal, not an independent item to compare with it.

I believe the above shows the constituting of the Form of the Personal in action. It also establishes the nature of *existential integrity* and what I shall call *internal relatedness*.

JM tells us the Form of the Personal consists of a positive constituted by its negatives: for him the self as agent is the positive constituted by the negatives of mind and body, and its derivatives in several forms e.g. subjectivity/objectivity, materialism/ idealism, mind/matter, thought/thing etc. The self's *existential integrity* arises in the loving relationship between mother and child, where the distinction between self and other, fantasy and reality, are established, as described above. What, for human beings, makes this positive is the open, mutual relationship between persons, which can be called love, because without it existential integrity, if the above argument is correct, must be threatened, since the distinction between fantasy and reality, self and other is precariously based. Because reality and identity are based on the personal in this way, one can see that it's this that is positive and ontologically prior to the distinction between mind and body etc. When Walter says that the personal could be the non-material, he seems to be slipping into the mind-body dualism that the Form of the Personal is designed to overcome. How can a person be derived, as the Logical Positivists attempted, from the material, when the material itself implies, is logically dependent on, the person? That's why JM states that the 3rd-Person world of science

(and objects) is derived, by reduction, from the world of persons in relation, and why science is and can only be an activity of persons in ethical relationships where truth, an ethical term outside the realm of the material world, is what makes science possible. Science, the ostensible world of facts in the lexicon of dualism, is reliant on values.

On the other hand, JM puts subjectivism in its place, since for him this cannot exist outside personhood, as we can't have persons without bodies. We don't need to find some way of relating mind to body since they are abstractions of actual personhood. Personal integrity is thus created and maintained, and mind and body are the necessary though insufficient aspects of the self as agent.

The nature of *internal relatedness* can be seen in Winnicott's notion of the origins of culture in personal relations. This separation from Mum is necessary for identity, but is never absolute if based in love, for this foundational relationship continues at a deeper level and enables the infinite separations of self from the multiplex other in what we call culture; that familiar, though extraordinary realm of meaning, communication, empathy etc., where things, even mere material objects, take on an identity, because they are differentiations of that prime relationship, and not meaningless objects in an alien world – as in e.g. borderline narcissism.

The full-blown implications of materialism – or indeed idealism – is that existential integrity, internal relations, and consequently culture, are impossible. And, if this is the case, science itself, which Polanyi rightly insists is a cultural activity, would also be impossible.

Walter's critique of Macmurray continues, and to address it at all adequately would require an article much longer than Walter's 6,500 word paper. I've expended over 1,600 words and am barely off page 2!

I have put Walter's comments in the context of JM's central notion of the Form of the Personal to try to show why some of Walter's criticism might not obtain. In this light I believe there are to be found fundamental congruences between JM and Polanyi, which cannot be shown adequately here. Nonetheless I shall dip further into Walter's critique of what he sees as JM's inadequacies.

In criticising JM's attempt to show the emergent philosophies that adopted first a mathematical-mechanical approach, Walter states that Descartes did indeed adopt a mathematical-mechanical approach 'hardly because the self was conceived as a non-spatial substance' but rather as 'an elaboration of spatial relations' as in Cartesian geometry. Walter

is clearly right about the latter statement, but Descartes takes his mathematico-deductive logic beyond this useful application into the metaphysical with his *cogito*, 'I think, therefore I am', where it is used to place science upon foundations of mathematical certainty, by reducing in the process the self to an item in a logical proof – a disembodied thinker. Since this approach made the mind-body problem a philosophical obsession for centuries, it seems reasonable for JM to point out its misapplication as a model for the self.

Walter concedes that:

Macmurray's threefold schema of mechanical, organic, and personal may have uses for classificatory purposes, but it is not rooted in emergent reality the way Polanyi's levels are (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p. 5 col. 1).

This seems a superficial reading of JM. To see it as merely 'classificatory' is to really miss the point. JM is, in more or less his own words, about 'the emergent philosophical problem of our time', the task of finding an adequate Form of the Personal.

Walter quotes Polanyi to good effect:

In a conflict between our appetitive and our intelligent person we may side with one side or the other. . . . As we identify ourselves in turn with one level of our person or another, we feel passively subjected to the activities of the one which we do not acknowledge for the time being (*Appraisal* p. 5 col. 2).

But then says 'knowledge, . . . is not the knowledge of a unitary person, as would be the case for Macmurray' (*ibid.*). This is odd, for JM makes specific reference to notions like self-deception, self-division etc. as being a necessary feature of the person or self.

Walter is also critical of JM'S psychology:

[H]e does not place enough importance upon perception as our basic relation to the environing world in which we dwell (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p6 col 2).

A reading from Chapter Five to the end of *The Self as Agent* would show how JM deals in detail with the emergence of perception from basic touch, through motive to intentional consciousness.

There are further disagreements with Macmurray, but I shall close with brief comments on three further features of the paper, that clearly deserve a much more detailed response than can be given here.

Walter states:

It is difficult for me to see how Macmurray's moral ideal of community escapes the criticism he launches against idealistic systems of thought such as that promulgated by Rousseau. (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p.9 col. 1)

This might sound odd since JM's whole programme is based on showing the consequences of accepting

one or other of the two social negatives of 'pragmatism' and 'contemplation' with Rousseau an exemplar of the latter. JM's praise of the down-to-earth engagement with the real, characteristic of Jewish religion, suggests a rejection of any kind of idealism. About these negatives modes he says:

These two modes of society, like the two forms of apperception which sustains them, are ambivalent expressions of the same negative motivation. Consequently, the one can transform itself into the other with ease. If the 'organic' society, idealizing its actuality, is compelled to take its practical life seriously, if the self-deception cannot be maintained any longer, then the struggle becomes real and is waged in earnest. ... Rousseau gives place to Hobbes; idealism to realism; modern democracy to Totalitarian state. (*Persons in Relation* p. 145)

What sustains these two modes from collapse into each other is the mode of Community, which tempers the imagination of the contemplative with the practicality of the pragmatic, and frees one from the deterministic laws of the pragmatic in the light of the real that, for reasons already given, arises in the communal mode.

When Walter asks,

on what grounds does Macmurray show that an individual's moral behaviour will be replicated by enough others that loving communities become the norm? (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p. 9 col. 1)

JM suggests this is a role for true religion. Yet JM, since he is philosophising, and not offering a political programme as such, describes what will work and why. That should be enough for a philosopher *qua* philosopher.

Walter's comments on commitment and responsibility in Polanyi are admirable, but he once more picks fault with JM where there is much agreement. JM's notion of 'chastity' (*Persons in Relation* pp. 117-144, 'The Virtues of Chastity') or 'emotional sincerity' has much in common with 'commitment' although such terms might raise hackles, since 'sincerity' has been sentimentalised – as 'commitment' in Existentialism can have an 'I-am-more-authentic than thou art' tone. The antidote is perhaps a careful reading.

Walter continues:

The priority of truth for Polanyi seems to clash with the priority Macmurray accords to morality. (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p. 10 col. 1)

Again, for JM, the Form of the Personal places truth as a necessary negative, along with beauty, in relationship with good's positive. In practice truth can be used for evil, as in Blake's 'The truth that's told with bad intent beats all the lies you can invent'

(*Auguries of Innocence*), whilst beauty can be reduced to mere satisfaction, even the aestheticism of sado-masochism. Certain things *should* be seen as ugly.

The priority of 'good' is seen thus: one can, logically, qualify 'truth' with 'bad' and 'beauty' with 'evil' whilst 'good' cannot be so qualified, unless the good in question is not actually good.

The ethical sees truth and beauty in a context that they, as such, cannot understand. Outside the good, lying and kitsch would reign, science and art would end.

Walter then says:

Nevertheless, there is a greater emphasis in Polanyi than in Macmurray on the discovery and honouring of what is real. (*Appraisal* *ibid.*)

The emphasis on truth in Polanyi might make Walter think so. Yet the real is not quite the same as the true. The ethical for JM establishes the real, as the distinction between reality and fantasy, the basis for truth, is established in the loving, essentially moral, relationship between mother and child. The greater completeness of the good means that it can relate the true and the beautiful in the context of the real.

Walter continues – and makes my very point:

Now, if we attempt to analyze a situation dispassionately, might we not come to a more objective decision as Macmurray states reason accomplishes? Not according to Polanyi. Dispassionate decision-making levels different possibilities of action and opens the door for self-indulgence *rather than to commitment to the good for all as has come down to us in the religious examples we respect and the moral firmament.* (My emphasis) (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p.10 col. 1 and 2)

He quotes Polanyi, saying:

Man is strong, noble and wonderful so long as he fears the voices of this firmament; but he dissolves their power over himself and his own powers gained through obeying them, if he turns back and examines what he respects in a detached manner. [My emphasis] Then law is no more than what the courts will decide, art but an emollient of nerves, morality but a convention, tradition but an inertia, God but a psychological necessity. Then man dominates a world in which he himself does not exist. For with his obligations he has lost his voice and his hope, and has been left behind meaningless to himself. (PK 380)

This is a beautiful passage (showing the priority of the good) with which JM would heartily agree, because for him objectivity is a *passionate* pursuit, based on the love of the truth, and an exercise against self-deception, totally opposed to those whom Polanyi castigates. To accuse JM of this is surely a misreading, for the whole of *Reason and Emotion* dwells on the *necessity* of emotional engagement for

thought itself. Rationalism, that detaches itself from the ethical and the emotional, is what the book condemns.

Walter ends by asking,

Can communities be formed, as Macmurray postulates, where loving friendship rules? ... I wish Macmurray told me more about how this might be achieved. (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p. 10 col. 2)

As philosophers Polanyi and JM do not offer programmes, political or otherwise, but provide careful analyses that such programmes must take into account.

2. Phil Mullins

In his paper, (*Appraisal* Vol. 7 No. 3, March 2009), adapted from the Polanyi/Macmurray Joint Conference in Oxford on 18th April, Professor Phil Mullins describes his aims as:

to try to carefully sort out the elements of [a] theory of agency that is found in what Polanyi says about the study of biology and the nature of living beings. A secondary agenda in these reflections is to make some comments linking and distinguishing the thought of Michael Polanyi and John Macmurray.

This response is to the 'secondary agenda', where Phil comments on the resemblances and differences between Michael Polanyi (MP) and John Macmurray (JM).

Phil concedes that others have thought JM and MP had much in common:

Harold Turner suggested Macmurray and Michael Polanyi, 'both made the concept of the personal central to their thinking, and one would have expected them to complement each other'. (March, 1997, 'Discussion' column of *Appraisal 1* and *Appraisal* March 2009 p. 12)

JH Oldham, we are told, was emboldened to encourage MP

to take a look at Macmurray's books and consider ways in which their respective projects overlapped. I know of no record that indicates Polanyi did this however. (*Appraisal* p 12 col. 1, March 2009)

Phil continues:

Macmurray's effort to re-conceive and re-orient philosophy, (focusing on the person as an agent interacting and shaped by a community of persons) certainly appears to parallel themes developed in Polanyi's thought. In the final section of this essay, I briefly explore three (of the many possible) areas in what one might consider the convergence and divergence of Macmurray and Polanyi's ideas. (*Appraisal* *ibid.*)

Although complementary, they should also be seen as quite different.

I suspect if Polanyi read Macmurray [he would have] found some Macmurray ideas very puzzling and other perspectives quite congenial. (*Appraisal* *ibid.*)

As stated above, I shall attempt to précis and respond to Phil's argument only as it applies to his comparisons between MP and JM, since *Appraisal* readers will be familiar with the former's writings. Phil's detailed comments on Polanyi's philosophizing about the nature of science however, proved stimulating and informative to those in the JM Fellowship who were not as familiar.

The three aspects that Phil explores are: Macmurray's and Polanyi's approach to philosophy; Macmurray and Polanyi on agency; Macmurray and Polanyi on science.

2.1. Macmurray's and Polanyi's approach to philosophy

As noted above, Harold Turner stated he thought MP and JM 'made the personal central to their thinking' (Turner, 155). Phil however thinks that 'the way the personal comes to be central in these thinkers and the way they philosophize is rather different'." (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p.16, col. 1.)

Phil begins with a clear account of JM's aims and key concepts, which I do not need to repeat here, and goes on:

Macmurray presents a well-distilled, sharp criticism of the way things have gone in the recent history of philosophy; offers a different starting point that he believes leads in a new, different direction toward a different conclusion for philosophy: 'the Self is neither a substance nor an organism, but a person.' (*Self As Agent*, (SA) 37) he contends, and ultimately this new starting point leads philosophy to consider new things. Finally, it leads philosophy back to an appreciation of theism. But philosophy has the 'immediate task' of discovering 'the logical form through which the unity of the personal can be coherently conceived' (SA, 37). There is a logical orientation and a formality about Macmurray's philosophizing that he accepts as appropriate and necessary for what he regards as his 'pioneering venture' (SA, 13). (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p. 16, col. 2, and p.17, col. 1.)

Phil admits that there are certain parallels between MP and JM in that both consider their work a new direction for philosophy, a turn away from the critical tradition that both trace back to Descartes, and states:

Certainly some of the things I have above set forth as integral to Macmurray's orientation and approach somewhat fit with Polanyi's comments on philosophy and his approach to philosophising.

And:

If you examine Polanyi's major texts, there are critical and constructive elements interwoven in most of them, just as in Macmurray's books.

Yet:

Although Polanyi like Macmurray seeks to address a larger cultural crisis (not formulated in quite the same way), Polanyi's philosophising is not, however, a sustained and focused conversation with modern philosophy. (*Appraisal* *ibid.*, p.17, col. 1)

We are told that, for MP in the sixties, philosophy was rather an 'afterthought' (*TD*, 3) and that he 'backed into philosophy somewhat accidentally' and 'was not single-mindedly concerned about the tradition in philosophy.' (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p.17, col. 2),

His key book, *Personal Knowledge*, is an account of the nature of knowing, emphasizing the importance and inevitability of commitment. Polanyi links perception, ordinary knowing and the scientist's endeavours and breakthroughs, and provides a justification for the kind of inquiry about the universe that responsible humans can undertake. In the middle period of philosophizing he focused on the 'theory of tacit knowing' with its concomitant 'theory of ontological stratification.' Later he made an effort to analyse the nature of meaning and conditions for the human discovery of meaning, not only in science but also in art and religion, and to articulate a theory of human life situated in the larger context of the evolving natural order. Yet, Phil writes:

I hesitate to dub Polanyi primarily an 'epistemologist' or a 'philosopher of science' or even to say that Polanyi was deeply in conversation with and intent upon reforming the philosophical tradition. (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p.18, col. 1)

But, we are told, MP does in some way recast what philosophy is *about*, when he writes:

I believe the function of philosophic reflection consists in bringing to light, and affirming as my own, the beliefs implied in such of my thoughts and practices as I believe to be valid; that I must aim at discovering what I truly believe in and at formulating the convictions which I find myself holding; that I must conquer my self-doubt, so as to retain a firm hold on this programme of self-identification (*PK*, 267). (*Appraisal* *ibid.*, p.18, col. 1, and col. 2).

2.2 Macmurray and Polanyi on agency

MP's theories about the critical and convivial nature of biological understanding suggest he sees agents as 'living comprehensive entities', active centres with tacit powers which can produce achievements situated in a particular environment, whilst action has an aim, which subordinates a set of particulars to a focus and shapes a response. And this, more or less, applies to all living things. 'Human agency is a subset

of this broader environmental understanding of agency.' (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p. 18, col. 2)

In a footnote Phil writes:

Macmurray seems to think it important sharply to distinguish animal behaviour and human action whereas Polanyi tends to look for commonalities. Macmurray warns against 'failing to distinguish categories which must not be blurred. We have to distinguish absolutely between acting from knowledge, and reacting to a stimulus' (*SA*, 167). Macmurray says 'in any reaction, the initiative of behaviour lies with the stimulus' (*SA*, 30). (*Appraisal* *ibid.*, p. 23, col. 1 and 2, n. 21)

Phil then gives an outline of action from a Polyanian viewpoint, when he argues that humans are social and exist in a social and historical context. Our chief gift is language, which makes us articulate, cultural creatures. He then adds:

Certainly it appears that the human range of things we can make subsidiary exceeds those of other living things. We seem to be capable of extending our physical bodies, of dwelling in the human world, in ways other environmentally- shaped creatures are not even on the brink of. (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p.19 col. 1)

At this point Phil seems to reinstate the difference between animal behaviour and human action that JM insisted upon in the quotation Phil cited above, and to which he demurred on this very point, and adds that JM's

discussion attempting to flesh out the notion of the self as agent as a personal figure is the section of Macmurray's Gifford Lecture volumes that seem most like Polanyi, (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p. 19, col. 2)

especially in JM's discussion about the rhythm of withdrawal and return in the relationship between mother and child. Phil gives a clear account of this, and then adds:

In sum, Macmurray's genetic or developmental account of how the self as agent becomes a person constituted by relationship with others in a particular human world does seem to me very much to complement the account of human agency embedded in Polanyi's thought

although Polanyi does not self-consciously develop his account of a

human being ... by examining in detail the shortcomings of the philosophical tradition. Nor does Polanyi, like Macmurray, draw sharp lines between animal behaviour and human agency. (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p. 20, col. 1).

Again, this last quotation seems to just point out, as I have done above, that their *aims* were not identical, even though much of what they imply can be seen as congruent.

2.3. Macmurray and Polanyi on science

Phil now provides a clear and reasonable account of JM's view of science, but suggests MP would find JM's comments on science puzzling, and this is where Phil sees clear divergences occurring between the two:

What is clear, however, is that Macmurray's description of science is what I call an architectonic-driven description. That is, his account of science is bound up inextricably with his account of art and religion and he intends for the three to be seen in relation. (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p. 20, col. 2)

And:

Architectonic-driven accounts are quite common in philosophy and theology; they fit with formal and systematic inquiry and clearly have a certain aesthetic appeal as well as an aspiration for thoroughness. But architectonic-driven approaches also are in danger of sounding an empty ring. (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p20, col. 2, and p. 21, col. 1)

If JM can be accused of 'sounding an empty ring', perhaps Phil should have been kind enough to demonstrate this.

Phil then gives a concise description of MP's view of science that I believe would actually accord with JM, with its emphasis on the communal and its clearly *ethical* orientation:

Science is a communal endeavour that investigates the nature of the universe. At its best, it represents human excellence. Scientists make contact with reality and struggle to understand it more deeply; they have modestly succeeded over the course of several centuries. Science has significantly shaped the modern worldview. Scientific discovery was for Polanyi the paradigm case of human knowing. (*Appraisal* *ibid.* col. 1)

But a discussion, to avoid misunderstandings, might be necessary regarding MP's notion of science being the paradigm of knowledge, since JM saw religion as the fullest form of knowledge, although the most difficult in formulation. This might also seem like the reductive urge, frequent within philosophers of science, to reduce human knowledge to the scientific paradigm. JM would certainly have regarded this as a mistake, as would I.

Phil then adds:

I do not think Polanyi would have found much in Macmurray's description that resonated with either his experience as a scientist or his description of science. I suspect that Polanyi would have found Macmurray's reflection on science to operate at a level of abstraction that passes over interesting fundamental issues in science such as accounting for the nature of scientific discovery and its connection with ordinary perception. (*Appraisal* *ibid.*)

One sees why Phil might say this, but the difference might be accounted for by JM's aims being concerned with what he saw as *general* mistakes in philosophy, not those solely concerned with science. In this sense, JM's approach can be seen as more *philosophically* adequate.

Phil offers an objection to JM's attitude to science by quoting JM: 'In the 'scientific' world there is no place for the scientist.' (PR 220). And he continues:

Certainly, I can see where this claim fits into Macmurray's architectonic-driven framework, but I suspect that Polanyi would find it very odd that Macmurray actually accepts this statement as representing the nature of things, for Polanyi, such a statement identifies the problem with most accounts of science. (*Appraisal* *ibid.*, p. 21, col. 2)

Phil *seems* to have a point here, but one should note the quotation marks around 'scientific', which imply 'so-called 'scientific'' and acknowledge the reason for this statement. JM never saw science as an emotionless, 'objective' activity, in the way that many thought at the time. Indeed he wrote his book *Reason and Emotion*, to show that thought and emotion, science and emotion, could not, logically, be separated. In this he is at one with MP, contrary to what Phil states. In the above passage he is pointing out that science necessarily implies persons in relation who are not, as he puts it, mere physico-chemical happenings, or mere agglomerations of sense-data, as e.g. the Logical Positivists thought at that time. JM is here showing that such a theory must reduce itself to absurdity, since if such a theory were true, and could be claimed as the only true form of knowledge, as some certainly wanted to argue, then persons (scientists) would be an illusion.

The view that science could be 'objective', ethically neutral, is clearly something both philosophers opposed. MP showed how in fact science was indeed an ethically loaded pursuit; JM that it must, *logically*, be so. And yet JM showed that the philosophy of science *could* so isolate itself from the ethical, and Nazi scientists showed how science could in deed do so. The fact that the allies kept the data of death-camp experiments using torture suggests that such science, *qua* science, was indeed regarded as scientific. But even then Nazi scientists adhered to a kind of ethics, since they tended to provide *truthful* accounts of their horrific activities. [I hesitated to use this particular example, because of its sheer horror, but it makes the points *a fortiori*] In this way we can see both that science *can* act unethically, yet at a logically fundamental level, it can't, without the risk of destroying its foundations. Yet these foundations can be seen to be essentially ethical, and it is for reasons of this kind

that JM argued that the ethico-religious has a logical priority and greater completeness over the so-called factual or scientific. In a similar way he argued that art too is a limited, though valuable form of knowledge, incomplete in that its aim was limited to aesthetic satisfaction. One *can* try to live the aesthetic life, and Oscar Wilde tried his best to do so, but he couldn't help, it seems, slipping from an amusing quip into such deeply ethical works as his *The Ballad of Reading Jail*, and *De Profundis*.

To separate science, art and the ethico-religious into 'realms of meaning' might seem, as Phil suggests, 'architectonic', but JM shows how these important disciplines or 'ways of seeing' *relate* to each other and what, as a philosopher, are their logical priorities. They are in fact also 'languages' which humans have devised in order to grasp the world and, as such, are worth exploring in their relationships and differences, despite having a ready-made 'architectonic' structure.

The philosophy of science MP was attacking is identical to that which JM repudiated, namely a world seen as 'objective' facts, where indeed there would be no place for scientists as human beings. JM showed the philosophical consequences of this viewpoint; MP showed how science actually takes place.

Phil ends with:

Much of Polanyi's writing is devoted to showing that in the scientific world or any other less specialized community of interpretation there is a place for persons and we need a rich enough epistemically-oriented account of things to appreciate that place. (*Appraisal* *ibid.* p. 21, col. 2)

Which is precisely what JM argued by showing how a world seen purely from what had until then been seen as 'scientific', was an impossibility, and, in addition, how those 'other less specialised communit[ies] of interpretation' related to each other. This is why I think Phil might have misunderstood JM, who combated those who, like the Logical Positivists wanted to reduce the cultural realm to sense-data – and end that 'rich enough epistemically orientated account of things'. JM is clearly one of the first philosophers, like MP himself, to challenge scientism in its twentieth century form and to show not only that 'there is a place for persons' but also how a new and richer epistemology, with the person as agent, is *necessary* for *any* epistemology.

Stroud, Glos.

alanford@ukonline.co.uk

3. REMEMBERING DAHRENDORF

Klaus Allerbeck

Abstract

Ralf Dahrendorf (1929-2009) established modern sociology as a normal science in the traditional university in post-war Germany. After ten years as a Full Professor, he joins the German liberal party, then in opposition. He stands successfully in a regional and then a national election (Landtag, Bundestag). He serves as junior minister under chancellor Willy Brandt and becomes a European commissioner less than a year later. Upon his resignation from the European Commission, he makes the UK his home and becomes a British subject, becomes knighted and later appointed Lord. The second half of his life, as an intellectual amid the powers and a liaison between England and the continent, as a self-described 'straddler', may have been even greater in importance than the first, with his meteoric rise as a highly visible professor of sociology and as German politician of national prominence. His analysis of society and democracy in Germany, though dated (1965) appears still for the most part as valid. Historically, his own elite positions mark transition periods in the process of generational change.

Key Words

Ralph Darendorf, German history, history of sociology, Liberalism, politics

The last time I saw Lord Dahrendorf was in Darmstadt where he was awarded the Schader Preis, shortly after his 80th birthday. He had himself typed his words of thanks for the award, but someone else had to deliver his planned speech. He had almost lost his voice and could say only a few words, like 'I do not have a Zweitstimme' (a bilingual pun, *Stimme* meaning both voice and ballot). His death a few weeks later coincided with the 80th birthday of Jürgen Habermas, and drew equal attention in the German media.

I prefer to remember a meeting in London 2003. We did not talk much about a study I was conducting then. He seemed happy when I reported that the topic of Mitbestimmung had come up in a discussion of the consequences of the possibilities of a European SA. He obviously rather enjoyed being a tour guide for my wife and me, showing us around the House of Lords. Few of them were in attendance. Dahrendorf introduced some and pointed out a few crucial facts. Two members of Attlee's

cabinet, he said, were still among the Peers. It was an unforgettable hour, during which I could not completely suppress thinking of Janis Joplin. An awesome accomplishment for a German intellectual, sociologist and politician. At the time, I was not aware that he had chosen his title 'Baron Dahrendorf of Clare Market in the City of Westminster' himself.

His life's threads are interwoven with the history of the past century, especially British German relations, of course, including misunderstandings which got some attention on the 20th anniversary of the opening of the iron curtain and German reunification.

If history is a stream, the Berlin wall marks a watershed. In 1961, Germany appeared divided permanently. So were the political divisions: chancellor Konrad Adenauer, who had been mayor of Cologne before the Nazis took power in 1933, called the SPD candidate Willy Brandt by his original name 'Frahm', thus adding his not widely known illegitimate birth to the known fact that he had returned from emigration to Germany. Adenauer's party lost the majority in parliament, but stayed in power due to a coalition with the liberal party.

This was about the time when Ralf Dahrendorf must have started working on his masterpiece *Society and Democracy in Germany* which was published in 1965. Adenauer was still alive but out of office, and there was a lot of political talk about the 'inheritance' he left. Dahrendorf's book provides a clear statement of the 'German question'. Well written, cogently argued, filled with facts – there is no way to summarise it in a paragraph or two. His focus is on the German elite and its structure. His eloquent call for change was a challenge for the 'frightened elites'. Political reality, however, was to follow Professor Dahrendorf by moving exactly in the opposite direction. In 1966, a coalition of the two largest parties, CDU and SPD was formed. The Grand Coalition combined a technocratic modernisation with an agreement of both parties to reform the election law in a way to guarantee that no other party could possibly be elected and a change of the constitution ('Basic Law') to limit civil liberties in times of crisis. Kurt Georg Kiesinger, a spokesman for the German Foreign Office during the war, was elected chancellor and the emigrant Willy Brandt his deputy and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I could have been Dahrendorf's student. However, in 1964, following my Abitur, I decided to study sociology in Berlin, and Dahrendorf was Full Professor of Sociology in Tübingen (and soon at the University he founded in Konstanz, with the support of Kiesinger who was then Prime Minister of the State of Baden-Württemberg then). In terms of generations, we were quite apart. Born in 1929, Ralf Dahrendorf spent time in a concentration camp. My own first memory of anything historical is a flight from Berlin-Gatow to Hanover during the Berlin air lift as a boy, almost four years old.

In terms of party politics, I was, however, much older than Professor Dahrendorf. I joined the liberal students in Berlin in 1964, became a member of the party (FDP) with the intention of kicking out the national chairman and Vice-Chancellor Erich Mende (the first German politician who dared to display his Wehrmacht Ritterkreuz in public). As national chairman of Liberaler Studentenbund, I was a member of the party executive committee, at a time, when the conservative / liberal coalition fell apart in 1966. Thus, I was a political insider. Mende stepped down in 1968. Dahrendorf joined the party shortly before.

Thus, my perspective on the life and work of Ralf Dahrendorf must be somewhat odd in its duality.

He undergoes all the ritual requirements (doctorate, Habilitation, plus a doctorate of the London School of Economics) at a formidable pace. At the age of 29 he becomes full professor in Hamburg, and accepts the Chair in Tübingen in 1960 when he is just 31 years old. As Ordinarius of the field, he is the personified discipline of Sociology at the leading, classical university of Württemberg in the classical German tradition. In his ambitious writings, and probably in his lectures, Karl Marx, Max Weber, Tocqueville, Robert Merton and Talcott Parsons, to name but a few, look like his equals.

But while sociology in Germany at this time is rather idiosyncratic, very different from university to university, if there is a chair in sociology, the sociology Dahrendorf teaches is a normal science, even if not completely mainstream. It has an American flavour, but disagrees with structural functionalism and considers Karl Marx as an earlier conflict theorist. The highly visible young professor (and his publisher, Klaus Piper) are crucial in establishing sociology as a legitimate, if too successful, discipline in post-war Germany.

The Californian dream of a social scientist of being invited to the Centre for Advanced Study in order to enjoy the leisure of the theory class for a whole productive year became true for him at the tender age of 28 years. He writes the rightly famous

English version of his Habilitationsschrift on classes and class conflict there, and a very successful (for the publisher) German introduction to Role Theory, as if Economic Man had to be supplemented by a Homo Sociologicus. This very learned literature review is a very German view of a Robinson Crusoe who, unfortunately, must live among others and suffers from all the constraints of his roles society imposes on him, preventing him from being his real self, certainly in public. It is included in his collected works, published in 1967 as *Paths Out of Utopia*, where he declares it as dated. In retrospect, his career as a German sociologist appears even more brilliant than it must have been in the eyes of his own generation (most of my professors must have envied him).

1968 became a turning point in his life. For little over a year, he was a member of the state legislature of Baden-Württemberg. Elected to Bundestag in 1969, he became junior minister in the Foreign Office of the Brandt/Scheel coalition. Less than a year later, he was a member of the European commission.

To understand his departure from academia and turn to politics, one has to take a close look at a publication that appears as minor, at best: a four page to the German translation of Goffman's masterpiece 'The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life' he wrote in early 1969. It can be read in at least two ways.

The inconsistencies and errors in it are impossible to notice for anyone who is not a learned professional sociologist. Perhaps these should be overlooked, as if an absent minded professor who gives in to the demands of a publisher, as a courtesy, had dictated a brief text in haste.

On the other hand, the allusions, especially the tacit ones, are too carefully written to be ignored. It seems at least highly likely that he did read the book, including its first footnote, carefully before composing the preface. Suddenly, the author of *Homo Sociologicus* realises that he managed to completely overlooked the German origins of Chicago sociology, founded by Albion Small and Park. (Park obtained his doctorate in Heidelberg with a dissertation on 'Masse and Publikum'.) But then, he is a politician with ambitions to become German chancellor, he cannot easily withdraw his widely available text on role theory (the ill-advised exercise is still available in print, separately).

There is no need to withdraw it later, either, when he leaves politics.

'Wieland Europa' was the (soon lifted) pseudonym he picked for an analysis of the state of the European Union. (Wieland translated Shakespeare

into German, as did Schlegel). His resignation as EC commissioner followed. He begins to define his own unique role for the three decades that followed. He serves as interpreter between England and the Continent.

The almost countless honours bestowed upon him, his academic appointments in the LSE and Oxford university, his prolific writings – all this has been mentioned in the numerous obituaries. What impressed me most, however, was the House of Lords as a living institution and an embodiment of tradition to which the Queen appointed him, precisely because most of its members appeared to be absent at the time I was there. I suppose that the strength of the United Kingdom as a political system is the part of Parliament which is not fully mobilised most of the time.

Without submitting to his authority either as a politician or sociologist, I cannot help admiring his lifetime achievement reducing the enormous misunderstandings between the nations in the process of becoming a united Europe, not really possible for his generation. We need reverence to perceive greatness, even as we need a telescope to

observe spiral nebulae', writes Michael Polanyi in the third of his Lindsay Lectures published under a title Ralph Litton used 23 years earlier, *The Study of Man*. We need this to appreciate his self description as a 'straddler', neither philosopher nor king, as he describes himself on the second (and last) page of his manuscript, accepting the Schader Prize for his lifetime achievement on May 7th 2009, exactly 64 years after the unconditional surrender of the Third Reich.

Germany, celebrating its reunification as I write this, has yet to appreciate the magnitude of its loss with the passing of Ralf Dahrendorf.

Dept of Sociology,
Johannes Wolfgang Goethe University,
Frankfurt-am-Main

INDEX TO VOL. 7, MARCH 2008 TO OCTOBER 2009

Articles

A response to R.T. Allen	4/33
Eric Voegelin's immanentism: A man at odds with the transcendent, Pt I	2/21
Eric Voegelin's immanentism: A man at odds with the transcendent, Pt II	3/25
Gnosis, sustainable development and racism: Hans Jonas as a political thinker	2/13
Hans Jonas' contribution to bioethics: 40 years after his 'Philosophical reflections on experimenting with human subjects'	2/4
Jacques Rancière: The philosopher and his poor on the shores of democratic politics	4/3
Mental causation and explanatory practice	4/11
'Person' seeks 'Man': A very quick immersion in, and evaluation of, the philosophical debate on personal identity since Locke	4/24
Polanyi on agency and some links to Macmurray	3/11
Raymond Tallis and the alleged necessity of a body for personal identity	4/33
Remembering Dahrendorf	4/48
Responses to Walter Gulick and Phil Mullins	4/40
Seeing, saying and <i>being</i> the Gestalt: Continuing investigations on Wittgenstein and Polanyi on the concept of the person	1/22
Singularity and the identity of persons	4/29
The primacy of space in Heidegger and Taylor: Towards a unified account of personal identity	4/17
Transhumanism, technology and the future: Posthumanity emerging or subhumanity descending?	3/38
Who are the persons of Michael Polanyi' <i>Personal Knowledge</i> and John Macmurray' <i>Persons in Relation</i> ?	3/3
William Poteat: the primacy of the person	2/31
Wittgenstein and Polanyi on the person	1/3

Books Reviewed

Marco Abel: <i>Violent Affect: Literature, Cinema, and Critique after Representation</i>	3/53
Falvio Baroncelli: <i>Mi manda Platone</i>	3/53
Graham Dunstan Martin: <i>Living on Purpose: Meaning, Intention and Value</i>	1/37
Dominic Hyde: <i>Vagueness, Logic and Ontology</i>	2/38
Dan O'Brien: <i>A Critique of Naturalistic Philosophies of Mind. Rationality and the Open-Ended Nature of Interpretation</i>	1/38

Authors and Reviewers

Allen, R.T.	4/33
Allerbeck, Klaus	4/48
Arriagada Moya, Ignacio	4/17
Baruchello, Giorgio	2/13, 3/53
Casado da Rocha, Antonio	2/4
Doede, Bob	3/38
Gulick, Walter B.	3/3
Hamblet, Wendy	1/38, 3/53, 4/3
Lowney, Charles	1/37
Lybaert, Fauve	4/11, 4/33
Manolache, Viorella	1/37
Mullins, Phil	3/11
Poirier, Maben Walter,	2/21, 3/25
Rodriguez-Arías, David	2/4
Rolnick, Philip	1/3
Rutledge, David	2/31
Serban, Henrieta	1/37, 2/38
de Vleeschouwer, Gregory	4/24
Welty, Ivan	4/29

APPRAISAL

The Journal of the Society for Post-Critical and Personalist Studies

www.spcps.org.uk

Vol. 7 No. 4, October 2009

ISSN 1358-3336

Jacques Rancière, Mental Causation, Personal Identity

Wendy Hamblet

Jacques Rancière: The philosopher and his poor

Fauve Lybaert

Mental causation and explanatory practice

Ignacio Moya Arriagada

The primacy of space in Heidegger and Taylor

Gregory de Veerschouwer

'Person' seeks 'Man'

I van Welty

Singularity and personal identity

R.T. Allen

Raymond Tallis and the alleged necessity of the body



APPRAISAL

published twice a year in March and October; four issues per volume.

© Copyright SPCPS 2009

Editor: Dr R.T. Allen

Assistant Editors: Simon Smith (Contents), Mark Arnold (Receipt of Submissions), Colin Burch (Typesetting)

Editorial Advisers:

- Prof. Klaus Allerbeck Faculty of Social Sciences, J-W Goethe University, Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany
Prof. Giorgio Baruchello Faculty of Law and Social Science, University of Akureyri, Iceland
Dr Angela Botez Institute of Philosophy, Romanian Academy of Sciences, Bucharest.
Dr Bob Brownhill Formerly of the Dept of Educational Studies, University of Surrey, Guildford
Mr Gene Callaghan Cardiff and New York
Dr Éva Gábor Dept of Philosophy, Technical University of Budapest, Hungary
Dr Wendy Hamblet, Dept of University Studies, North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro, NC
Dr David Hiles, Dept of Psychology, De Monfort University, Leicester
Dr David Lamb Dept of Biomedical Science & Bioethics, University of Birmingham
Dr Tihamér Margitay Dept of Philosophy, Technical University of Budapest, Hungary
Dr Endre Nagy Dept of Social Policy, Janus Pannonius University, Pécs, Hungary
Dr Henrieta Serban Institute of Politics and International Relations, Romanian Academy of Sciences, Bucharest.
Dr Simon Smith, Dept of Philosophy, University of Southampton
The Rev'd Julian Ward Nantwich, Cheshire (formerly at Regents Theological College, U. of Manchester)
Dr Norman Wetherick Edinburgh (formerly at the Dept of Psychology, University of Aberdeen)

Editorial Policy:

- P** *Appraisal* seeks to develop and promote constructive ways of thinking, especially from within a personalist perspective, in philosophy and other intellectual disciplines.
P Articles should be addressed 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. Shorter items (discussions, working papers, notes, etc.) are especially welcome.
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 All contributions should be ready for blind review and be sent via e-mail to the Submissions Editor, submissions@spcps.org.uk.
P **Please ask for the Style Sheet or save or print it from our web site: www.spcps.org.uk.**
In particular, please write or rewrite all notes as end-notes (no footnotes) and their indices (superscript) as ordinary text and not in the special formatting for foot- and endnotes; and please include Abstract (no more than 100 words), and a list of Key Words.

Indexing: *Appraisal* is indexed in *The British Humanities Index* and *The Philosophers' Index*.

Reciprocal Arrangements:

Appraisal exchanges copies with *Polanyiana*, the journal of the Michael Polanyi Liberal Philosophical Society (Hungary), *Tradition and Discovery*, the journal of the Polanyi Society (USA), *Humanitas* (USA), *Personalism* (Poland), *Prospettiva Persona* (Italy), *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia*, *La Revue Roumaine de Philosophie*, and *Romanian Review of Political Sciences and International Relations*, and would welcome similar exchanges with other journals.

Subscriptions: Please see inside rear cover.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

All individual subscribers become members of the SPCPS for the two years of each Volume.

All prices in £ Sterling and include postage (by airmail for Overseas)

	Vol. 8, 2009-10, 4 issues		Vols. 1-7 in .pdf format on CD
	Printed	Download from website, .pdf format	
UK			
Individuals	12.00	5.00	5.00
Institutions	20.00	-	8.00
REST OF EUROPE			
Individuals	15.00	5.00	5.50
Institutions	24.00	-	8.50
REST OF WORLD			
Individuals	18.00	5.00	6.00
Institutions	26.00	-	9.00

Please send cheques or money orders (payable to 'SPCPS') in **GBP (£)** to *Appraisal*, 20 Ulverscroft Road, Loughborough, LE11 3PU, UK, or pay on-line at www.spcps.org.uk and follow the link to Subscriptions (*NB On-line payments have 4-8% added to them to defray the charges levied by PayPal.*)

Copies of any issues of the current Volume already published will be sent upon receipt of your subscription.

References to books by Michael Polanyi:

Because of the particular interest in the work of Michael Polanyi, and in order to avoid unnecessary repetition, please make references to his books by means of the following abbreviations followed by the page number:

- CF = *The Contempt of Freedom* (London, Watts, 1940; reprinted New York, Arno Press, 1975)
- FEFT = *Full Employment and Free Trade* (London, C.U.P., 1945; 2nd ed. 1948)
- KB = *Knowing and Being* (London, Routledge; Chicago, University of Chicago Press; 1969)
- LL = *The Logic of Liberty* (London, Routledge; Chicago, University of Chicago Press; 1951)
- M = *Meaning* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1975)
- PK = *Personal Knowledge* (London, Routledge; Chicago, University of Chicago Press; 1958)
- 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).