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# **Personal Freedom and National Resurgence**

**Lithuanian Philosophical Studies, I**

edited by  
Aleksandr Dobrynin and Bronius Kuzmickas

The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy

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## Foreword

# The Heirs of Gediminas

*Tomas Venclova*

On April 7, 1990, during the dedication of an economic zone in Lithuania by Mikhail Gorbachev, most of the inhabitants of Vilnius assembled in a park. Vytautas Landsbergis, newly elected President of the Republic, gave a short speech, citing the words of Gediminas, the fourteenth century Lithuanian Duke: "Iron will become wax and water will turn into stone before we will retreat." It is difficult to imagine elsewhere a head of state being inspired in a political crisis by a text written six hundred years earlier, though perhaps De Gaulle would have done so. Yet that text expressed perfectly the spirit of the people--so it is with Lithuania.

For the West, the past disappears day by day. No one thinks that the intrigues of the Plantagenets or Louis XIV could provide lessons for society. No one sees the real usefulness of ancient models for finding a good way in the labyrinth of contemporary life.

It is entirely different in Central and Eastern Europe. There the past is living and is expressed daily in newspapers, radio and TV programs. It influences the actions of people and shapes their reactions of sympathy or rejection. In these countries, it is said, traditional situations and attitudes are destined to repeat themselves. This may be a misfortune, a sign of a lack of evolution (and often there is an impression of regression); but it is perhaps equally an anticipated gift of destiny because the past for us teaches a more simple and important lesson, namely, how to distinguish between good and evil.

Recently, a somewhat naive and old-fashioned book was reprinted in Vilnius retracing Lithuanian history (first printing, 1936). Presently it

has surpassed 300,000 copies (in a country of three million) and if not for lack of paper, surely it would have reached a million copies. The reason for this phenomenon is not difficult to understand: the lack of history generates a longing for history.

Here, time stopped for almost 50 years. The totalitarian regime was supported by progressive myths and eschatological images. All was directed towards a shining future whose unquestioned superiority pretended to justify any sacrifice in the present and any crimes by those who would "improve" the universe. At the same time, it was clear to everyone that this future would be only a repetition of the present. It would have a great chief to plan value over value; it already had the masses to carry out, with full hearts, his orders. Very probably some individualists would emerge who, being "unadapted", would have to be eliminated in order to keep the way open and bright.

Within such an ideological framework, the place of the past is quite limited. The past is a dangerous territory, with viruses able to infect in an instant all who are weakened and lack sufficient resistance to protect themselves. Thus, it is ever to be cleansed and restructured. Hence, it is not fitting to remember a number of events and individuals; it is necessary even to eliminate a number of ancient terms, to erase them from the social memory, or to destroy them materially, be they street names or such visual "texts", as churches.

Yet indeed, there are found here and there in the past some clear, if discrete, pages, rich in hope for human renewal, for example, the Commune of Paris or the strike of the maroquiniers at Vilnius in 1895. These isolated moments are the only ones which attract our attention--to be more precise, they are the only ones that constitute the past.

Since Stalin this technique of a mutilating silence is joined by a colonization process tending to further repress of the Eastern bloc nations. Our personal history was replaced by the foreign Russian history which often took the first place in schools and university. In the exams, the Lithuanian or Georgian student, who was obliged despite himself to praise the values of Ivan The Terrible (an outstanding prototype of the recent Soviet period) felt no better, indeed perhaps worse, than the Senegalese repeating by heart: "Our Ancestors, the Gauls".

The erosion and collapse of totalitarianism in Eastern Europe has had several consequences, some fortunate, others less so, and yet others somewhat frightening. One which stands out is the return of history in this part of the world. It came back in triumph, with all its diversity, colors and terrors: the diverse and disordered character of the 1989 democratic movements owes much to this extraordinary resurrection of history.

Lithuania is probably the most interesting example, although it stands on the periphery. History still weighs more upon the Lithuanian than upon the Hungarian, Czech or Slovenian--I hesitate only to cite the Pole. The history of our country has nothing common with the others; it is as if it were cut to the dimension of a quite large country and is as tragic and impressive as that of Sweden or, even, of Russia. In addition, it is not without asymmetry, illogisms, oddness, or absurdity, often breaking the laws of continuity and probability.

Since Antiquity, the ancestors of the Lithuanians have lived at the same place as today, in the southeastern Baltic coast, very far from where European culture developed. Yet, Vilnius is the geographical center of Europe if considered as a whole extending from Lisbon to the Urals, however strange that might appear. These ancestors preserved the most ancient living Indo-European language--according to Antoine Meillet, it is as archaic as would be today the Latin of the time of Plotonius in the third century after Jesus Christ. Here paganism survived for a long time: the Lithuanians, like their distant relatives, the Indians and ancient Greeks, revered Thunder, Sun and Moon, trees and snakes. In this backward northern part of Europe, time moved very slowly, but perhaps with greater dignity than in the Mediterranean regions.

It is not surprising that the Lithuanians have been called Saracens of the North. In the "Chanson de Roland", they are always referred to, without particular proof, as worthless peoples who fought against Charlemagne. During the Crusades, some knights moved not towards Palestine, but towards the Lithuanian borders, striving to convert the refractory infidels to the true faith. The Christian enterprise, as one could expect, was marked by violence and cruelty. The Lithuanians were in the same situation as the "Aztecs", the Incas or the Africans: theirs was a slave destiny; the majority might be eliminated, and the rest assimilated. However, history took an unexpected turn: Lithuania survived! Its combat against the Teutonic knights lasted 200 years, during which it lost at least half its population. Not only did it not disappear, it has created an empire integrating large Slavic territories.

One of the founders of the empire was Gediminas. His speeches, as noted, were still able to inspire crowds in 1990. In a less known article of Nikolai Gogol the Russian writer calls Gediminas "The Great Pagan":

This wild politician who did not know how to write and was praying to a pagan god, imposed neither customs nor changes in government upon the countries he had conquered: he left all as it had been, strengthening all the privileges and requiring of those in power a vigorous respect for the rights of the people. He even did not mark his way by destruction.

In a medieval context this portrait is extraordinary. The Russian duchies rejoined Lithuania on their own, ensuring thereby their physical security and cultural continuity at the time of the invasions by the Golden Horde. One of the warrior chiefs of Gediminas ventured as far as

Brandenburg and came to Berlin, which at that time was a small city surrounded by forests and swamps. Three times, the son of Gediminas besieged Moscow but did not destroy it, contenting himself with obéissance and tribute.

It did not take long to build the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which constituted a very strange mixture resembling the States constituted during the period of the great migrations, though it was a thousand years younger. In Vilnius, its capital, Lithuanians continued to worship thunder; they maintained the sacred fire and, according to the ancient rites, they cremated the deceased grand-ducs. Meanwhile, Orthodox Slavs made their home not far from the capital. They were pious, often literate, and inclined towards Byzantine culture.

The Slav part of the empire was more or less 15 times larger than the Lithuanian. In courses on Russian Literature at Yale University, I ask my students a question they never answer correctly. In *Boris Godounov* by Pouchkine, an important scene takes place in "an inn on the Lithuanian border". An adventurer, who having proclaimed himself the legitimate heir to the Tsar of Russia, flees to Lithuania, and spends a night at the inn. When I ask my students to locate this inn on the map of the world they look for it in the vicinity of Vilnius, at the present frontier between the Lithuanian and Slav territories. In fact, the inn is located very close to Moscow.

Gediminas made tremendous efforts to westernize his nation. He corresponded with Pope John XXII in Avignon, allowed the Dominican and Franciscan orders to be established in Vilnius, and invited knights, merchants, and artisans to settle in his country. He would never prevent anyone from practicing his/her religion, but respected all rites and customs. During this period, important communities of Muslims and Jews were formed in Lithuania, which at this stage was the most tolerant of Jesus in all Europe. Any attacks against them were suppressed severely by the authorities.

Such a tradition of tolerance is one of the most admirable characteristics of the old Lithuania--even more than the obstinacy which Lithuanians always have shown in defending their country. Despite her rudimentary civilization, Lithuania in past times represented a singular primitive democracy. It is not surprising therefore that Lithuania has attracted numerous Russians living from there isolated and much more harshly governed country. An ancestor of the current president, Vytautas Landsbergis, was a Teutonic knight who opted for Lithuania.

However, the efforts of Lithuania to integrate herself into Europe long remained unfruitful, but this was not always the fault of Lithuania. The Teutonic knights continued to struggle against the Saracens of the North. A few years before Gediminas' death, Germans and French besieged Pilenai castle, which became a veritable Lithuanian Massada. Not being able to escape encirclement, the defenders of the castle committed suicide by fire. This legendary event subsists in the traditions of Lithuania. Romas Kalanta, the 19 year old student who offered himself up in fire at Kaunas in 1972, was influenced by the memory of this collective consciousness. The same is true of the young people who locked themselves in the Lithuanian Parliament.

The romantic and almost exotic epoch of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania made a lasting mark on the minds of Lithuanians, as well as other, peoples. A somewhat mythical Lithuania, with her savage forests, pagan habits, and primitive passions, inspired a number of authors from Adam Michiewicz to Oscar Milosz (a French writer who became a Lithuanian diplomat), to Prosper Mérimée. The myth they all celebrated is reflected in present literature, theater and cinema. The pagan heroes are more alive here than anywhere else in Europe, and their names--Algirdas, Vytautas, Aldona--are given to children more than names on the calendar of Christian saints. Thus, at the dawn of *Perestroika* one of the major demands was for the restitution of the old name of Gedimino Prospektas to the central street of Vilnius, instead of Lenin Prospekt. Similar demands

had been made in the past, but those who made them lost their job, and, often, their liberty. Today, this is no longer the case, and such symbols help somehow to repair the trauma of soviet colonization.

If the glorious memories of the Middle Ages still fire noble ambitions, they warn us also to be aware of a great weakness. The Lithuanian nation, which became the leader of an empire, lacked cultural "substance". Its language remained pagan and secondary, without ever reaching the status of a written language: official documents and chronicles were transcribed into a Slav language. For this reason and for a long while, Lithuanian identity has remained unclear. Gediminas' grandchildren were the last in Europe to accept the Catholic faith--Lithuanians sometimes say ironically that they will be the last to renounce it. The faith did not reach then by violence imposed by Teutonic horsemen, but from Poland whose cultural influence was tremendous and ambivalent.

Pagan Vilnius was constructed of wood. The baptism of Lithuania brought Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque style churches which would do honor to any European town. Its university rapidly became one of the most famous in Eastern Europe. Czeslaw Milosz, holder of the Nobel Prize for literature, calls himself the last citizen of the Grand-Duchy of Lithuania, the youngest of its honored graduates. The Italian, French and German influences upon Lithuania were very strong, while its own influence upon other European countries grew. For example, the arms of Lithuania, with Vytytis, the white horseman, are found on the fortifications of Nancy. However, its archaic language has become a cultural phenomenon like Provençal or Breton. For a long time, only religious books were printed in Lithuanian; the highest layers of society, while praising their origins, adopted the Polish language. In public life, a dialect arose, constituted of words with a Polish root and an Italian ending. But the traditional and distinctive culture disappeared around the end of the eighteenth century. In the same epoch, the broad united nation of Lithuania/Poland was erased from the map and the country was placed under the protection of Tzarist Russia; from this nothing good could be expected.

However, after a long break marked by the Napoleonic wars, revolutions and emigration, Lithuania again became a cultural and political unit totally different from that of the Middle Ages. It was included among those nineteenth century European nations created or recreated by historians, linguists and poets. For them in agreement with the German writer, Herder, a nation was defined as a living organism, kept alive by a common language, soul and destiny. History, ethnographic traditions and the dictionary seemed more important than economic or geopolitical activity. The random fact that indo-European specialists were interested at this time in the Lithuanian language constituted an important source of pride.

The first of the new Lithuanian scholars was Simonas Saukantas, a naive historian but a great master of language. He conceived Lithuania as a country after the manner of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, a primeval paradise where nature and culture were not yet differentiated. According to him, this ideal state had been destroyed by Polish influence and participation in European civilization seemed dangerous. He argued that the primordial distinctiveness could be maintained only by language: only by cherishing and revivifying this could Lithuania go back through history.

The second important thinker of the nineteenth century, Jonas Basanavicius, was also a historian and ethnograph. Regarding Lithuanian origins, he invented a strange theory which cannot withstand scientific criticism. In a much more successful project, he published a newspaper abroad and sent it illegally to Lithuania, then under Tzarist occupation. This newspaper, *Ausra*, bore a Latin epigraph: *Homines historianum ignari semper sunt pueri* (Men who ignore history forever remain children). According to Basanavicius, when Lithuania could integrate its historical experience and meditate on past successes and failures, it would come alive, like a patient after



psychoanalytic treatment. Having been permanently released from its weaknesses and anxieties, it would become naturally a sovereign subject and would cease to be at the disposition of the storms of history.

According to this agenda, a small rustic nation languishing without schools, newspapers, and serious literature, after almost 40 years, Lithuania began to generate intellectuals and political parties, and gained freedom of the press. In 1918, Basanavicius was among those who signed the Lithuanian Act of Independence. This meant returning to a historical existence from one that was non-historical. This return, in truth, was not a total success, but the new nation was simply peasant Lithuania. Its thought, traditions and cultural physiognomy had nothing in common with ancient Lithuania. Vilnius, the capital city of Grand-Duchy--a sad symbol--became part of the Polish heritage: Polish language and culture predominated as did the French language and culture predominate in Brittany. This situation was the source of new trauma.

Although Vilnius today is part of Lithuania and Lithuanian culture reigns there unchallenged, memories of the period between-the-wars evoke an accentuated mistrust among Lithuanians toward the Polish which darkens relationships between the two nations. Caught between two totalitarian powers, Stalinist Russia and Hitlerian Germany, independent Lithuania survived for only 22 years. Among its ideological concerns, the most important was to overcome the break in its history and to retrieve a significant unity between its ancient and recent history. These efforts were not too successful: the romantic myth of ancient Lithuania as a force for social integration nourished authoritarian tendencies. The traditional tolerance of the Grand-Duchy gradually lost ground so that at the beginning of the Nazi occupation, this attitude had shameful and tragic results: some Lithuanians accepted the holocaust, while others, at the risk of their life, tried by all means to save Jews from the hands of the Nazis.

Stalinism and Breznevism again caused the death of the Lithuanian nation and culture. Today after all those years of discontinuity, Lithuania is attempting to retrieve its place in history. The world observes this process with sympathy, but does not provide effective support. Lithuanians deserve this sympathy because their behavior, while incredibly perseverent, remained particularly civilized and democratic. Vytautas Landsbergis and his government are sometimes accused of idealism and naivety. Concretely, this is a matter of true fidelity to history, to the will of the majority, and to the concept of human rights. Landsbergis is a successor of Saukautas and of Basanavicius. As in the nineteenth century, Lithuanians review their unique past in search of models for the present. This return to memory is an essential condition for recovering Lithuanian freedom and sovereignty.

Some dangers lie hidden in this process. We cannot accuse Landsbergis and his government of chauvinism or intolerance. But as a nation which twice experienced death, in the eighteenth and the middle of the twentieth century, it tends toward a melodramatic pessimism. Lithuanian intellectuals often state that their fragile culture is going to disappear while they being accorded privileges which anger the country's minorities. Historical experience proves that in spite of its weakness, Lithuania is not condemned to disappear; rather it evokes the idea of resistance, a fundamental feature of the art and culture of the country.

However, the risk always exists of plunging people into the fear, myths and other stereotypes from between the wars. Others, referring to Daukantas, want to refashion a radical and sterile archaism. Some poets and philosophers even imagine a Lithuania where the technology of the West would be harmonized with a national paganism, a little like Japan. To be frank, all this is unsustainable and might indeed lead to bitterness. There is yet another fundamentalism, that of the Catholic Church: without so wishing this has retained anachronistic features throughout the terrible

sufferings endured during Stalin's epoch when Lithuania was almost totally separated from the rest of the world. These slow the development of democratic life and social harmony.

Lithuanian intellectuals underscore the fact that over the centuries Lithuania has been opposed to federations and confederations and has attempted to preserve its identity, even at the expense of isolation and provincialism. This state of mind impeded Soviet projects. At that time, intellectuals could claim some success, but will such particularism survive when in the near future Lithuania comes ever closer to the European community where differences between peoples and nations are ignored.

Politicians between the wars attempted to cover over the gap between the Middle Ages and the twentieth century, as do the Lithuanian politicians who ignore the gap which separates us from the 1918 to 1940 period. International law may prove them right, but this does not mean that actions and gestures successful in 1918 have the same effect today: the rehabilitation or idealization of various authoritarian movements which were highly damaging to Lithuania's prestige during the first half of the century are no longer desirable.

The abstract idea of "nation" for which peoples and their rights are sometimes sacrificed has led in the past and might lead in the future to tragic situations. It is not impossible that the evil of totalitarianism, after being expelled, could return under other forms, namely, that of a very narrow nationalism. There is an important remedy to this danger, which fortunately is not very great: it is appropriate to add to the love of one's fatherland, be it French, German, Russian or Lithuanian, the love of one's region. This is, as it were, *a small fatherland* where the influences of several nations come together to transform and enrich the culture from below. Like Prague and Lublin, Vilnius perfectly matches this type of historical creation characteristic of Europe, with its elements of individualism and romanticism.

The past emerges from a number of interpretations; history can be perceived as a field of evil, the contrary of the divine kingdom, the labyrinth of nightmare from which Daedalus wished to escape; or as the arena in which nations take vengeance for past injustices and offenses, whether real or imaginary; or as a paralyzing factor whose static models produce inappropriate behaviors because of our inability to see that today's conditions are not yesterday's. In Central and Eastern Europe all those readings can be supported by convincing arguments. Nevertheless, history has another dimension, that of salvation. It can help us to clearly evaluate our destiny and the possibilities of our future. It has played this role in Lithuania during its best moments, to which the present belongs.

# Introduction

*George F. McLean*

This volume by Lithuanian philosophers is a first step in the major effort of the people of Lithuania to rethink and thereby to recreate themselves as a people and as a nation. It is supremely right that it should begin with a foreword by Thomas Venclova on Gediminas. This recalls a magic afternoon with Gytis Vaitkunas on a hill overlooking Vilnius when he recounted the ancient myth of the king on a hunt, of his dream, and of the oracle who interpreted the dream as the prophecy of a great people to rise in that land.

It was no accident that the palace would be built at the site of that pre-Christian Sanctuary, that the Cathedral would be built in the palace, and that the major symbol of the restoration of Lithuania to its people was the restoration of the Cathedral (turned museum) to the people as the center of their cult of God. The opening chapter recalls this, situates it in the challenges of the time, and points forward with hopeful concern for the future.

Part I of the volume, by analyzing the two divergent paths of totalitarianism and individualism, makes vivid the difficulty of the challenge now being faced.

Professor Iiogeris provides the basis for identifying the goals of reconstruction by describing the topography of reality. The first task is to liberate our sense of reality both from the ideal realm of the abstractions which have bear the stuff of the great ideologies of the too recent past as well as from captivation by the physical realm of time and place which is in danger of engulfing us at present. By thus slowing the concrete realm of things as manifestations of Being he is able to identify their full meaning and hence the sacred character of the present task of reconstruction.

The work of Professor Bronius Kuzmickas is of itself an historic document. On the eve of becoming Vice President of the newly emergent Lithuania he wrote this both as a scientific assessment of the strength and tragic weaknesses of Marxism and as a personal testimony to the sufferings of an oppressed people. There could hardly be a more eloquent, authoritative or operative document regarding the sources of the Lithuanian revolution.

The work of Evaldas Nekrasas evokes resoundingly the sinister darkness of the recent experience of totalitarian Communism. To the question of whether this can repeat itself he responds with a hopeful negative based on the fact that even a totalitarian regime depends upon some idealism but generates only cynicism both from above and from below, whereas idealism comes from the very sources it is committed to support. The real challenge then is not the totalitarianism of the past, but to discover an orientation for the future. In this, the last point of the chapter is unsettling, for it seems to point toward libertarian anarchism, even while recognizing this to be an extreme. Indeed, such a direction is but the atomistic reverse image of totalitarianism, with a no less frightening anti-social psychosis.

The chapter of M. Saulauskas follows the individualist path, referring to the more sophisticated tools of the nominalist tradition. But will these suffice for life that is social? Would not the libertarian be happy with the notion of the performative individual as a way of showing how one's responsibilities and concerns can and should remain trapped in the self. Could the closed self be a basis for an open society or for any kind of society? Could a return to the Frankfurt school's neo-Marxism, now as a toothless communicative formalism without foundation or

orientation, protect such communication from generating in a time of crisis a totalitarianism such as is described by Professor Nekrasas in chapter I and thereby renewing the whole cycle?

Professor Saulauskas takes an important step at the beginning of his chapter in recognizing the importance of the metaphysical questions regarding the who and what of persons so that all must recognize the dignity proper to every human being. This would seem to suggest real content for morality. Further it could help to surpass the solipsistic individualism which Gadamer describes as reducing freedom to "a flicker in the closed circuit of individual consciousness". But how is such a metaphysics to be founded? The dilemma of this century, epitomized in the Cold War between a repressive collectivism and an aggressive individualism so well described in these chapters of Part I, calls for much creative and constructive in the future work.

Part Two begins this work of constructing describes the goals of a process of the reconstruction of a free society. Professor Dobrynin sets these goals brilliantly by going to the heart of the matter. Where many would see freedom simply as the establishment of an absolutized self against the state, Professor Dobrynin goes much deeper to ask how the self is to be authentically free. How can one overcome the pervasive phenomenon of acquisitiveness, self-centeredness and its implied aggressivity against others? This points him beyond the individual or along the path of transcendence of the self to the transcendent and religion as the essential context of human life and freedom liberated from constitutive selfishness one can begin to speak of the social and its reconstruction. Two outstanding studies of Leonidas Donskis on history and culture follow. He may over-extend the meaning of fundamentalism by applying it to the integrating world view of every great historical epoch, but this gives him the possibility--and the need--to develop the distinction, much needed by Popper, between an ideological and a theoretical fundamentalism or historicism. Against the backdrop of the nominalistic and individualistic nominalism of Hobbes, Popper and present day liberal theoreticians of the social sciences, all is reduced to a set of unconnected isolates warring one against the other in affirmation of their solitary rights. Hence, any nationally, culturally or historically unifying themes or orientations could only be ideologies closing off the random pragmatic and opportunistic choices by individuals in their concrete circumstances.

Donskis rightly sees more to human awareness and leaves room for the constructive theoretical work of the human mind which, in contrast to the exclusive and reductive character of ideologies, are attempts at inclusion and integration. Thus he makes room for the historical views of Toynbee and Spengler which he locates on the level of *theoria* as attempts to understand cultures as self-organizing and self-fulfilling supersystems.

Are these more than intellectual games? Donskis seems to point even further than *theoria* as he takes up the free responses by real people to their concrete needs. If he were to add the way in which these responses extend to stable patterns of capabilities, e.g., to virtues, he would have the stuff of culture as the cumulative patterns of the concrete exercise of freedom by a people which, over time, comes to constitute its traditions.

Professor Donskis does recognize ethno-cultural formations to be natural--I would say even necessary--in a post-totalitarian period in which a people must relearn from the past how to use its newly restored freedom. He considers this dangerous because it goes beyond a set of individuals and self-organizing systems. But in so doing does he not fulfill his open description of an ideology as a limited view for it sedulously omits the whole social dimension of reality and history in which a culture is generated.

This reflects a serious limitation of the broad use in Central and Eastern Europe of "open" and "closed" societies in Popper's individualistic sense. On the rebound from an ideological socialism this provides a tailor made conduit into the mirror individualistic ideology, rather than a way of integrating person and society.

In his second article Professor Donskis shows how a modern culture for Lithuania could be constituted. This is neither by eviscerating all content and reducing all to Popper's set of anomalous and amorphous individuals, nor by looking simply at the surface characteristics which distinguish the Baltic peoples. Instead, his view is much deeper; it points to the way in which the Baltic characteristics constitute a rich and creative articulation of the universal human values found in the Christianity it received from the West. This means that to join the West is a matter, not of adding from the West, but of rediscovering and articulating afresh values found in the roots of Lithuanian life.

In a spectacular move, Professor Donskis then proceeds to look to the conditions of innovation by which these roots might give new life; he finds that these are not endangered by popular culture, but enabled thereby. We can only hope that he is correct and look for further indications of the ways in which this process is taking place and can be made creative elsewhere.

Part III undertakes the more detailed work of reconstructing with this classical content. The chapter of Professor Norkus traces the history of axiology from its classical, more objective, roots in being to its modern more subject-oriented modes. It is a breathtaking scenario, but could appear to undermine the value of any ontological content and reduce mankind to the arbitrary voluntarism described as totalitarianism by Professor Nekrasas. Would it not be more correct to see modern times as coming, not from the imaginary, ephemeral and voluntaristic, but to the fundamental reality of human subjectivity, which I interpret to be the basic thrust of the chapter of Professor Saulauskas. In this light Kierkegaard's position that subjectivity is objectivity would reflect the deeply Christian inspiration of Lithuanian culture. According to this, being should be understood not primarily as atomic, as individuals in conflict, but as the creative power of love after the Biblical image of peoples joined together on a journey, returning from exile and rebuilding their land. This may be why the ritual dimension described by Professor J. Kavolis rings so powerfully in the Lithuanian heart.

The following four papers each contribute to constructing this vision. The chapter of A. Mickunas delves most deeply into phenomenology, in particular the thought of Husserl, in order to investigate the fundamental life of awareness, and thence to move to history and the significance of the body in action. This takes him far beyond an absolutization of individuals in conflict to whom all social life is foreign.

From this there can emerge a sense of living as a people. This is not as a set of "theys" against which each person must defend him- or herself, but of "thous" in relation by which a person's freedom is stimulated, expressed and fulfilled. It points to a road which reaches further than this chapter of Professor Mickunas for it raises the fundamental question of being which is where the "open" and "closed" issue really is situated, namely, whether "to be" is "to be for self against all" or whether "to be" is "to be with". The strong Catholic sense of Lithuanian culture, often cited in this work, becomes central here where the open and shaping character of the Trinity and of Creation set the basic cultural context for a radical openness of the person to all others. This is a matter of deep bonds of care and commitment far beyond the simple protection of minimal human rights in a Hobbesian war of all against all.

This dilemma may not be as insoluble as it seems if ritual expresses a people's deep moral vision and if morals provide the orientation of human freedom. Professor Kavolis fears that this may be an impediment to effective pragmatic testing adaptation to new experience, but the ritual content of culture reflects the lessons learned over millennia from the experience of living and as part of tradition. Their being effectively passed on depends centrally upon the progressive adaptation of their lasting truth for new circumstances. Both for a culture as for a person, facing change is precisely not a loss of identity, but a shaping of that process with one's distinctive gifts and thereby an opening of new dimensions of life.

Professor Karasimenov describes the way in which this dilemma of relationship is constituted in the modern liberal context where freedom has been interpreted as equality with its cognates: liberty and fraternity. Specifically, at what point do the requirements of equality and fraternity impinge upon the freedom of people with unequal capabilities to strive, achieve and enjoy the fruits of their labor. A problem in the days of a planned economy, this represents a major challenge in the more recent context of a "free" market.

Jadwiga Komorowska describes "humaneness" in the form of hospitality, both in the past and today. To live truly was so much a matter of extending and receiving hospitality that she cites cases of hosts forcing wayfarers to stay by sabotaging their coaches or coachmen. She describes as well how hospitality is being reshaped in our day consistently in the direction of greater restriction.

Professor V. Kavolis approaches this theme in a more analytic manner by identifying major characteristics of Lithuanian culture: its moderation, precipitousness, ritualism and moralism. This enables him to identify specific resources, opportunities and challenges for his people in building their future. It is reported that in the midst of Moscow's last great May Day parade a Lithuanian delegation, on emerging onto Red Square from the incline at the side of the Lenin Museum, suddenly unfurled the Lithuanian flag. This changed in the instant the long-standing obligatory commemoration of Communism into a celebration of independence. Twenty minutes later Gorbachev and his politbureau abandoned their reviewing stand upon Lenin's Tomb: Communism died when the Lithuanian flag was raised.

Can this precipitous courage and rich sense of ritual be harmonized with the moderation and morality needed to construct a stable and progressive civil order? The dilemma may not be as insoluble as it seems if ritual expresses one's deep moral vision and if morals provide the orientation of human freedom. Professor Kavolis fears that this may be a *drawback* to effective pragmatic testing adaptation to new experience. But the ritual content of a culture reflects the lessons learned over millennia from the experience of living; as part of tradition these lessons being effectively passed on depends centrally upon a progressive adaptation of their lasting truth for new circumstances. Both for a culture as for a person, facing change is precisely not a loss of identity but a shaping of process with one's distinctive gifts and thereby opening a new dimension of life.

This is the challenge toward which the present volume is a first and basic contribution. May it be followed by many more as the Lithuanian philosophers contribute crucial insight to their people on its pilgrimage into the future.

**Part I**  
**The Challenge**





# Chapter I

## The Person, Society and the State

*Bronius Kuzmickas*

In the European cultural tradition it is almost unquestionable that personhood is the essence of being human, making one a being of moral worth. However, there are innumerable philosophical, psychological and sociological theories or conceptions about what personhood is, that is, what it means to be an individual, a personality, a person.

### **Philosophies of the Individual and of Society**

In the history of philosophy we can distinguish two main philosophical conceptions of person. Both attempt to interpret an evident fact, namely, that the person, understood as an individual having spiritual life, contains in itself an awareness of self-identity, is capable of performing free acts, and realizes itself as a social agent engaged in various areas of social life in relation to other persons. Representatives of one current of thought emphasize the individual as the primary human reality and affirm that one's social relations have an external or peripheral, rather than an essential, character. As a person, each is what he is in his own right as a unique individual or autonomous ego. Relations with other persons, social relations of various kinds, are secondary and can add nothing fundamental to personhood. Supposedly all relationships could be stripped away one after another until all that remained would be the person as pure, indivisible individuality.

According to another current of thought, on the contrary, the essence of the person consists in mutuality, interpersonal relations or involvement in the life of the community or society. The primary and fundamental human reality as person-in-relation. The individual as involved in a variety of social relations, cultural contexts and historicity from birth to death. During their lifetimes all are directly or indirectly interrelated on various levels of social reality—from empirical face-to-face contacts in everyday life to the metaphysical unity of all humankind with God. Interpersonal relationships and relations between the person and the community are intrinsic to one's personhood, for only through one's interpersonal context can a person express the uniqueness of one's individuality, develop one's individual creative abilities, and manifest oneself as a free social agent. Were the relations among people, between the person and the community, to be taken away the person would disappear and individuality would lose its meaning or become empty.

Both of the above mentioned points of view reveal essential elements of the human being, but also contain weakness; both can become extremely one-sided. Either the person is dissolved into society, loses his/her autonomy or capacity of performing free acts, and is reduced to a passive element in the chain of social determinism; or the person is treated as a unique individual, a subject of limitless free actions, an unconceivable mystery.

Concurrently, there are synthesizing theories which take into consideration both individuality and relationality as essential dimensions of personhood. Nowadays, philosophical theories tend to emphasize the exploration of several interrelated dimensions of human existence:

-subjectivity or interiority, and one's relatedness to the world of other persons and to cultural values;

-the fact that the person manifests him/herself as a self-aware individual, but also that every act of self-awareness implies the awareness of a being-in-the-world;

-being-in-the-world is seen as being-in-community and for-community, as sharing with other persons a situation, historicity, choice and responsibility, and ultimately a common destiny as mortal beings;

-the temporality and historicity of the person, essential incompleteness, and the fact that personal fulfilment and completion is achieved through involvement in various levels of community; and

-every person exists in his/her subjective intimacy, while as a participant of a given culture one is inseparable from the other participants of the same culture.

## **Theoretical Models and Historical Practice**

It is not that one or another philosophical theory is better or worse with respect to its consistency and to the extent to which it corresponds to the facts of human reality. Philosophy is an inexact kind of knowing in comparison to scientific knowledge, while human reality, including society and culture, is so complicated and specific that we must reject the desire to have one trustworthy theory which would give most or all of the answers. We must give equal treatment to several theories explaining human reality in terms of realism or nominalism, universalism or singularism, determinism or indeterminism, eternalism or temporalism, etc.

Most influential philosophical theories of the person and psychological personality theories appear more mutually compatible and complementary than contradictory: there are more areas in which they agree than contradict. As always, philosophers speak of the need for an all-encompassing, unified theory of the human being, but it is questionable whether such a theory is possible or indeed necessary. Other branches of social knowledge, too, lack a single, all-embracing theory of their subjects, yet in spite of this the sum total of these theories appears to be effective and productive for human life.

As a unification of person and society, the human being exists in a concrete historical context. The same could be said of various theories, their applicability and their meaning for real life. Most philosophical theories are not engaged in social reality, nor do they pretend to be, but function rather as abstract models, as phenomena of culture. However, some theories of society do pretend to be effective forces in the reconstruction of social relations and in cultivating a “new man.” But solutions to problems of person and society on a theoretical level do not always help to solve problems of persons in actual society. We are confronted with cases of disillusionment in history, when supposedly good programs, based on humanistic theories, in practice give highly undesirable consequences. Humankind has had numerous such bitter experiences. In these cases, we must differentiate strictly the fundamental theoretical models from their political interpretations and practical incarnations. Throughout history these deceptions resurrect old problems, give them new meaning and stimulate new solutions. The practical embodiment of social theories as well as the ability of theoretical thought to reflect an historical reality requires new theories of the relation between theory and practice.

Society is characterized by such attributes as spontaneity, the self-contained social, economic, political, cultural and religious activity of its members, and their capacity to interact and cooperate. One of the essential dimensions of society is its political organization, embodied in the institution of state. Usually, society and the state are connected by mutual relations. The state exerts an influence upon society through a network of governmental institutions—administrative,

legislative, political, ideological, etc. The character of the direct or indirect interrelationships between society and the state determine to a great extent the character of the person's place in society. Notions characterizing the person's life in society as regards rights and duties, justice, freedom, responsibility, and citizenship, as well as individualism and collectivism, acquire different meaning depending upon the character of the relationship between society and state. Therefore, in considering theoretically the problem of the relation of person and society it is very important to pay suitable attention to the concrete historical experience and to specify concretely the society which is being treated.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century we experience an historical reality which in essence may be defined as “a violent decrease of contractual relationships in favor of compulsory (mainly) and (to a lesser degree) family forms. The contractual relationships, which functioned so successfully in the preceding era, since the postwar period have been in a decisive and rapid decline.”<sup>1</sup> In the history of this trend there emerged a kind of state corresponding to this political theory and aimed at the fundamental reconstruction of society. In this social reality the interaction of society and state is so one-sided that the state prescribes and controls all important social relationships—all institutions in all the significant fields of social and cultural life. The state exaggerates its own role and practically becomes an end in itself and for itself. Almost no area of relationship between person and society is left to mutual choice and the free contractual decision of the parties involved; all is authoritatively regulated and controlled. The political ideology of the state becomes a kind of state religion. Superior to all other social institutions, it is imposed on all members of society under the severest penalty for unfaithfulness. Ideological solutions are treated as infallible statements, and provide the principles for solutions in all other fields of social life.

Ideological loyalty is a main criterion of civil loyalty. The law itself must obey the state and its ideology. All laws which are not consistent with the superiority of the state are eliminated, as are any such scientific theories, moral convictions or religious beliefs. Therefore, law loses its validity; it ceases to be a system of norms which assures the free activity of persons, and becomes instead an apparatus of social pressure and constraint. In such a political situation every theoretical proposition concerning the problem of person and society acquires an additional, and at times transformed and perverted, sense.

The ideology declares that in this society the human being is the supreme value; that human life is most precious; that the ultimate end of all social and state efforts is the creation of social conditions which enable everyone to become a well-rounded, developed personality; and that the higher standard of development of one person serves as a precondition for the higher development of others. Here, however, the problem of means and ends arises and the means leading to this great end remain quite vague. The question emerges: to what extent can the life of a common man be sacrificed for the sake of the future? (There seems to be an essential difference between the unavoidable social reality in which the human being unintentionally becomes the means, versus the deliberate use of the human being as a means for society, for the state, for the happiness of future generations, or whatever.)

The indistinctness of this question is not merely theoretical in nature. When ideology has unquestioned supremacy in the structure of a given society, lawfulness is largely neglected. As a consequence, in real life the common person is neglected or even disregarded as a person and citizen. On the ideological level it is supposed that in the face of great historical purposes the needs of the person today are quite insignificant. In this type of society the legal, juridical sphere of a person's life is considered non-essential. While from an official point of view every person is

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<sup>1</sup> P. Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, vol. 3 (New York: Porter Sargeant, 1970), 118.

considered a builder of the new life, in actuality to a great extent one is deprived of the possibility of realizing oneself publicly as a morally worthy person, a citizen and an active subject of social life. As a consequence, in reality one has almost unlimited duties imposed by the state, but very few rights which juridically are exactly defined and practically guaranteed. In many cases one is called upon to sacrifice oneself, to work hard without adequate payment. People are unlawfully convicted without trial or investigation; many ethnic and national groups have been exiled from their homelands. A great humanistic ideal loses its authentic content and turns into an ideological screen, helping to justify the political omnipotence of the state.

### **The Depersonalization of the Person**

As Marxist philosophy affirms, human reality is essentially social, for the human being as a personality can be realized only in a social context. One of the practical consequences of this general outlook is an emphasis upon collectivism as a mode of life—as the sole means by which personality can achieve its fulfillment and social integration. But there are different forms of collectivism. In one form it is a social unity of free and worthy persons joined together by general goals and views. Here everyone's interests are respected, the primacy of the person is preserved. However, there is another form of collectivism in which the person is neglected, while the collective interest is considered primary and superior in comparison to those of the person. It is precisely this kind of collectivism with which we are dealing here.

A collectivity of this kind is unable to unite persons on the level of their highest aspirations. It reveals itself as not favorable to personal development, but on the contrary as restricting personal growth. Such a collectivity functions as the safeguard of mediocrity; it stimulates and maintains an attitude of conformism, double-facedness and hypocrisy. There is no as effective unity between persons based on continuing trust. Mutual affection decreases and nearly disappears.

Such collectivism is typical in a society ruled by authoritarian principles. Essentially in such cases the collective itself functions not as an autonomous social unity, but is subdued by the state, just as the individual is subdued by the collective. Therefore, a collective in the true sense of community is almost impossible, for society is so subdued to the state by which it is suppressed that it is near extinction. In a paradoxical way we may speak of a society in which there is no society as characterized by self-contained activity on the part of its members. Here the question which arises is what kind of personality is typical in this kind of system?

In a collective subjected to state institutions, personal features which overstep the standard mediocrity are hardly tolerated. Any originality, abilities, non-stereotypical opinions, creative aspirations or deep-rooted morality are not encouraged. Personality is identified with the social role of the individual, or with one's official post: the inner human is neglected. Thus, it becomes difficult to develop a personality with an independent and rich inner world, freely manifesting itself in society as an active citizen with a deep-rooted feeling of social responsibility. Instead, there is an official commanding superior, on the one hand, and obedient submissive subordinates, on the other.

Granted that personhood is essential to human existence, we can distinguish in it roughly two dimensions: personality and person. A human being is an integral, though multidimensional being, existing at the crossroad of freedom and determinism. As a personality, one is orientated to the realm of values and is rooted in freedom; as a person, one is subject to causation and is rooted in social and historical determinations and conditions. This does not mean that as a person one is excluded

from the area of values and freedom, but only that values and freedom are not essential for the person.

As a person one is a rule-following being, a bearer of social roles; one performs free acts only in accord with concrete social norms and patterns—whether administrative, judicial or political. Personality, however, is the whole of an individual's spiritual life, the center of which is conscience, a feeling of personal identity, freedom and striving for an authentic and meaningful life. Thus, whereas as a person is submissive to the outer world, socialized through social roles, involved in a chain of social determination, and changed with the changes of social reality; personality, in contact, is “the unchanging in change, unity in the manifold.”<sup>2</sup>

Person and personality correspond to some degree, although not entirely. This depends on such factors as whether the kind of activity is creative or non-creative, the correspondence between aspirations and objective possibilities, and the type of society. In the society described above, where through an authoritarian collective one is subdued to the state, person and personality in most people are mutually alienated; as a rule one's inner world is more or less split into two faces: one official, the other inner or private. This division in human inner world reflects an alienation of social life., which “manifests itself as a splitting of the objective conditions for human existence into the public and the private conditions.”<sup>3</sup> To a certain extent this takes place in every society, but not to such a degree as in the society we are considering. There, human inner split becomes a profound, if not essential, feature of one's existence.

As a bearer of social roles, one is anonymous, without an opinion of one's own, without initiative, without a feeling of responsibility. In social life one plays a role that is alien to one's innermost self. From this side one is manifest as a full, loyal member of society (loyalty meaning no more than unconditional obedience), and expresses only the official point of view. Hence, according to circumstances, one can easily change one's opinion on public issues; one can extol and glorify an object one day and condemn the same object the next, because one expresses not one's own opinion, but the imposed outlook of such institutions as party, state or the like. When the official point of view is a half truth, a falsehood or a deliberate lie, one submissively repeats all of this.

The inner face—covering almost the entire spiritual life of a human being and including one's opinion, doubts and hesitations, one's conscience and feeling of responsibility—is private, deeply hidden and carefully masked. One's conscience is also hidden; inner freedom is restricted; and the sense of moral responsibility is suppressed. One has no possibilities; afraid of publicly expressing one's own inner world, one's personality is suppressed.

Of course, one experiences a painful tension; the conflict and contradiction of the two faces bear grave consequences for the development of personality. One person may find it quite useful to be deliberately split, another endeavors to introduce an inner harmony by sacrificing some commitments in favor of others. But in the long run the two-facedness is regarded as something quite normal: the tension between the inner and outer sides of personal life fades, the two sides become closer and finally grow together in such a way that the private face is more and more subdued to the official one. One's spectrum of values narrows as one's capability for free thought, evaluation and action weakens. Personality becomes suppressed by person, or more precisely by the state through imposed social roles. Consequently, bypassing society, the state gains primacy over personality.

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<sup>2</sup> N. Berdyev, *Slavery and Freedom* (New York: Scribner, 1944), 22.

<sup>3</sup> D. Kapaciauskiene, “The Moral Nature of Man,” in *The Philosophical Understanding of Human Beings* (Vilnius, 1988), 31.

In such situations socialization of the individual means in part one's depersonalization, especially when we have in mind socialization on the level of the institutions of the state and its official ideological patterns. The more one climbs in civil service, the more one takes the risk of losing positive qualities of personality and turning into a passive object of manipulation. The state strives for the total ideological socialization of individuals, which means their total depersonalization. The criterion for the evaluation of human life is found rather in personality: not in the higher values in which personality is rooted, but in the state's organization and ideology. When personality is suppressed, evil spreads uninhibited in society. Persons become only tools of the state, the party or any political force. When a state disregards and violates humaneness, the person unwittingly becomes a tool of evil. In such social situations in which the human person becomes so depersonalized, an acute double problem develops: one is the personal fulfilment of the individual, the other is his/her social significance.

### **The Search for Meaning**

As a thinking being one can live a fully satisfied life only if one understands its meaningfulness and thus can answer the fundamental question "why". Like other fundamental phenomena of human spiritual life the phenomenon of life's meaningfulness is constituted by the unity of two aspects—the subjective and the historical objective. On the surface, life's meaningfulness presents itself as a subjective phenomenon, that is, as a feeling of authentic employment of one's abilities, of authentic fulfillment of one's life. In contrast, senselessness and meaninglessness present themselves as feelings of inauthentic and false employment of one's energies, of an inauthentic filling of time. These experiences, with their differing degree of emotional strength, all depend for their content upon the values of a culture and the ideals of a society.

The concept of meaning is tied closely to that of value. The employment of one's energies and the filling of one's time with activities based upon one's value aspirations is experienced as meaningful. An individual sees his life as meaningful to the degree that he can relate it to certain values, can employ his abilities for the achievement of positive goals, and can arrange his time accordingly. Engagement in the pursuit of goals and values of the future and the sense of having done well in the past lend meaning to the present moment by including it within a broader canvas of meaning. Lack of prospect for meaningful activity, together with a conviction of senselessness or barrenness of the times deprive the present of value and purpose. The expectation of a future that is more perfect than the present lends a positive meaning to our existence in the present. The conviction that the past was more perfect than both the present and the future makes both the present and the future valueless and meaningless.<sup>4</sup>

Responses to the demand for meaning can be either constructive or nonconstructive. Greater meaningfulness for an individual's life is associated with free, constructive and personal engagement in the pursuit of values and higher goals. At the level of concrete social life, for most people the main condition for a meaningful life is constructive engagement in the main condition for a meaningful life is constructive engagement in everyday work and interpersonal relations, the possibility to relate the fulfilment of personal life to higher values. A necessary subjective condition for a meaningful life is to overcome the split of the inner world.

It is these conditions that are lacking in the society we have been considering. There, for the most part, the socialization of the individual is on the level of internalization of social roles; it

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<sup>4</sup> B.Kuzmickas, "The Meaning of Life: Subjectivity and Historicity," *Ibid.*, 44.

lacks socialization on the level of higher values. A split or two-faced person hardly can satisfy his fundamental need for authentic self-realization.

From culture an individual draws concepts and ideas in the light of which one identifies and rationalizes one's own valuational, sense-endowing experiences, and judges the norms and criteria which underlie one's behavior and the course of one's life. Participation in a particular context of culture and history shapes the content and articulation of one's subjectivity and the orientation of one's personality. Through the internalization of the basic values of a spiritual culture one's personality is constituted and an individual person comes to participate in a culture as a whole, to act as a responsible agent in history and to relate his destiny to the culture and history of his or her nation. This kind of integration into a culture is the main condition for the meaningfulness of one's life. Under the influence of all permeating ideological patterns and the pressure of a bureaucratic system of education, however, most people cannot normally internalize the values of a culture or develop an authentic personal value system which serves one's life-orientation and shapes one's quest for a meaningful life.

Having no possibility of socialization on the level of higher cultural values, an individual has a very limited possibility of satisfying his fundamental need for authentic self-realization by the manifestation or objectification of his creative energies in the domain of culture and history. Individual persons, and even some social groups, often find themselves in a situation where the values and goals of their social context produce no positive subjective response: an individual finds no subjectively significant content in the objectively, officially posited values. This might be called a devaluation or wearing down of values. This is not merely a case of some officially posited values and ideals losing their sense for some people; it is rather the case of social activity and the sharing in historicity itself turning meaningless and irrational. Since the domain of official values and ideals is in many ways alienated from the actual historical experience of people, it has lost much of its ability to affect their subjectivity. Personal authenticity then is sought beyond social processes which are permeated by official ideology. Lending meaning to one's life becomes a purely private or personal affair, while official values and ideals are treated as false or useless.

Lack of free, constructive employment of a person's abilities makes life less meaningful or even deprives it of any personal value. One who is overburdened, wearied and exhausted by unfree, nonconstructive work feels acutely the lack of an authentic employment of one's abilities or prospects for meaningful activity, for personal engagement in the pursuit of higher values and goals. Because of this a sense of meaningfulness of life, leading to social apathy and moral indifference becomes widespread.

The supremacy of the state over society and of politics over other fields of social life exerts a destructive influence upon society. Society falls into separate parts, becomes atomized and is partially paralyzed. When the role of the state is exaggerated, the human person as personality is ruined. One is reduced to being a passive performer of imposed social roles and one's capacity for social initiative and one's feeling of responsibility are almost extinguished. Without a developed personality deeply rooted in universal values, one can hardly give meaning to what one is doing, to how one's energies are realized; one can hardly be an active and responsible citizen. The society in which personality is diminished is doomed to economic, political and cultural stagnation.

When socially crucial periods of historical development occur persons are caught up in a swirl of events, the social significance of which is not matched by their own conception of meaning. As a result, to a great extent they are left without the possibility of authentic choice and authentic self-fulfilment in an era of historical activity. Lack or scarcity of subjectively significant historical values can be compensated for only by personal spiritual seeking and creative activity. When

historical values present themselves in ways that are too indefinite and ambiguous, personal effort is needed.

An individual may not control what happens to him/her or to the community in which one lives, but the meaning one gives to what happens is subject to one's active selection within the limits of one's value horizon. An individual decides to which social law one gives priority—to the written, strictly fixed law of one's state, or to unwritten ethical laws of a broad human community with which one shares basic values and ideals. The bases for compensatory activity are universal values in their non-formal, non-ideologized interpretation, the national cultural and historical traditions, and an explicit rejection of the values of one's present social context. In the wake of this kind of activity, so-called alternative cultures emerge with their own systems of values and beliefs.

## **Conclusion**

As we have seen, a political situation in which the state or a certain political party as an absolute ruler dominates the rest of the social structure is extremely unfavorable for human beings as a personality and for personhood in general. However, such a political situation cannot be changed for a more suitable one by a single political act such as a palace revolution. It can be changed only by a long-term process of gradual democratization of a society, during which persons would have real opportunities to revive as personalities and citizens capable of free social—including political—actions.

The first stage of reviving personality in human beings seems to be an increase in such inward activity as reflection. The social reality is reevaluated by considering notions and concepts incompatible with official patterns: independent thinking induces an independent evaluation of reality.

Freethinking and evaluation can easily evolve into free action. Aside from bodily or physical movement, action “also includes intention (or cognition), sense-perception, choice, motive, and feeling, all of which are integrated with movement to constitute one continuous activity.”<sup>5</sup> Without delving into this matter I seek only to show that the performance of free acts, that is, the falling out of step of a determined chain of social roles is the first stage in becoming a member of the community, a citizen of real value. This, however, presupposes conquering the two-facedness of human person, overcoming the alienation of subjectivity and historicity (objectivity) of personality and person.

Personality as the self's capacity for insight into values, for free action, self-initiative and self-determination, becomes so coordinated with concrete social activity that it determines what social roles one chooses and how one fulfills them. Such a way enables a revived personality to be brought into harmony with a person and, because of this, enables a person be revived a citizen. This is also the way to restore a priority of society over state, that is to resort a normal society so that society itself has the possibility of deciding what kind of a state it prefers to have.

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<sup>5</sup> W.G. Jeffko, “Action, Personhood and Fact-Value,” *The Thomist*, XL (1976), 121.



## Chapter II Totalitarianism at Bay?

*Evaldas Nekrašas*

### **The Nature of Totalitarianism**

The sources and origins of totalitarianism have been investigated quite thoroughly, as, e.g., in the works of K.R. Popper,<sup>6</sup> Hannah Arendt<sup>7</sup> and F. von Hayek.<sup>8</sup> Some results of these investigations may be called classic, for example Popper's conclusion that Plato's notion of the perfect state planted a seed from which the idea of totalitarianism has grown.

Of course, one may attempt to refute this conclusion and claim that totalitarianism is the product of the twentieth century. It was not until 1923 that the term "totalitarianism" occurred in Italy to describe specific political developments taking place in that country that had little in common with Plato's political ideals; the political leaders of the Fascist movement were not philosophers. The movement sprang out of realities peculiar to post-World War I world; and the fact that it developed especially rapidly in war-ravaged countries speaks for itself.

Further, one may say that from the fourth century B.C. till the twentieth century European civilization covered an enormous distance. Hence, to speak about a close link between Plato and the views of a Mussolini, Hitler or Stalin, is rather strange. Even more, it is a sacrilege, for what can the greatest philosopher of all times for whom the Good was the highest value have in common with these evil demons? And does not Plato stress the superiority of law against political power, whereas in a totalitarian state political power dominates the law?

One may go on with the objections, but for all such arguments one can find serious counterarguments. One can explain how Plato proceeds from the notion that the aim of society is to strive for the Good to the notion that all forms of social activity must be regulated and controlled by the state. One can show how Plato's ideas moulded various social utopias, then demonstrate how totalitarian theories grew out of these utopias.

We know how military, economic and political crises affect the readiness of the masses to accept the totalitarian ideas of a perfect social order, and the kind of personality required to put such ideas into practice. We know (or at least imagine that we know) a lot about the philosophical, psychological, economic and political origins of totalitarianism, but the causes of the decline of totalitarianism are not so clear.

The idea that the state is to be governed by the wisest and the most reasonable, i.e., by philosophers, is probably the most dangerous idea ever born in a philosopher's head; nevertheless, it is really exciting. Totalitarianism has plenty of real or seeming advantages over democracy and liberalism, for at first glance a totalitarian society seems more integrated and viable. The strength of totalitarianism arises from the devotion of men to the Great Idea. This is much more important than anything else for the individual who is captured by the Idea; it enables him to endure all burdens and calamities. Devoted soul and body to the Idea, they have enormous advantage over

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<sup>6</sup> Karl R. Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies*. Vols. 1-2 (London: Routledge, 1980).

<sup>7</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, 1951).

<sup>8</sup> Friedrich August von Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (London, 1944).

those who do not want to risk losing everything in a political struggle. They do not want to sacrifice themselves to any Idea, the more so to the struggle against some Idea. Under circumstances of deep crisis when society is ripe for a radical change, a quite small group of fanatical proponents of the new Idea can overcome the traditionalists' resistance, because this is not a real resistance but rather sluggishness, indifference and some kind of apathy born out of frustration. In such a situation a very important role is played by the sociopsychological phenomenon of belief in the miracle: that the Great Idea can save the nation.

Devotion to the Idea enables its supporters to create hierarchically organized and very disciplined structures which are much more effective in the struggle for political power than democratic political organizations. They are more effective because they are created especially for struggle and only for struggle--they are not similar to the organizations peculiar to a stable society. Democratic organizations are not adjusted to the situation of crisis and violent struggle.

For that reason the proponents of totalitarianism seek not to cure, but to deepen the crisis and, if this is impossible, to create at least an atmosphere of danger. They stress that the danger is caused by external and internal enemies and demand mobilization of society for the fight against them. Supporters of totalitarianism always treat society as a dynamic process, development and progress being very important to them: the slogan "forwards" is very characteristic of totalitarianism. In stressing the importance of movement, L. Trotsky expressed the very essence of the totalitarian outlook. The negative programme offered by proponents of totalitarianism is always more elaborated than the positive one. They first seek to destroy the old world using the well-proven means of fear and terror.

### **The Collapse of Totalitarianism**

If one agrees with N. Machiavelli that fear is the strongest and most stable foundation of political power then it is difficult to explain why totalitarian states regularly using terror and repression collapsed so rapidly. To answer this question correctly it is advisable to treat separately totalitarianism in the West and in the East.

The causes of the collapse of totalitarianism in the West are rather clear. In the very nature of totalitarianism there is a tendency to expand maximally the area of control. Therefore almost inevitably totalitarianism means an imperial policy which sooner or later leads to war. But one who unleashes a war must take into consideration the possibility of losing. Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany sought victory, but suffered a military defeat which was the sole cause of collapse of totalitarianism in the West.

As this cause is purely external it cannot be said that in World War II democracy defeated totalitarianism. The main military adversary of Nazi Germany and its allies was the totalitarian Soviet Union. It was a victory of one sort of totalitarian state over another. In this war democracies played a rather secondary, subsidiary role. The notion of World War II most popular in the West is rather opposite to the above, but does not appear to be correct.

The collapse of totalitarianism in general is at best only loosely connected with the military victory of allied powers over their enemy. Of course, this does not mean that military factors are irrelevant when speaking about the collapse of totalitarianism. In recent years in the West and in the East many authors tried to explain Gorbachev's *perestroika* and "new thinking" as an attempt to remove the unbearable burden of military expenditures. But why did this burden become unbearable in the 80s when it had been endurable in 40s and 50s?

The answer would appear to be that by the beginning of 80s the Soviet Union and the whole Soviet block were no longer totalitarian in the strict sense of the word. The disintegration of the totalitarian system had begun much earlier. The main cause of this process was not the challenge of modern Western military technologies; the process was more complicated.

The start of the process goes as far back as 1953, the year of Stalin's death. This may be nothing new, but from the theoretical point of view it is rather strange that the death of the dictator had so great an impact on the disintegration of the system which was not his own invention or creation. After all, the death of V. Lenin who created the Soviet system had practically no effect on his work. You can expect that the death of a dictator may exert a strong influence on the destiny of the authoritarian state, but in the totalitarian state all manifestations of social activity are under the control of a bureaucracy which to a great extent is anonymous. A bureaucracy seeks to realize the main principles of the system and to protect its own political and economic interests. So why was Stalin's death so fateful for totalitarianism?

Thus far there has not been a totalitarian state without a dictator at the top of its power structure. The only known form of totalitarianism is authoritarian, although it is rather difficult to prove that a nonauthoritarian form cannot exist. For this reason the death of the dictator is quite dangerous for the totalitarian system of power. Generally speaking this danger is not mortal. A young, developing totalitarianism can survive the death of its leader. In 1924, the year of Lenin's death, totalitarianism in Russia was not full-fledged and the process of transferring power to enable continuation of the same social order went smoothly, of course in the totalitarian manner (i.e., some heads were cut off). But the death of a dictator is fateful for a fully developed totalitarian system.

Stalin's Soviet Union was a totalitarian state *par excellence*. First, people were deprived of all rights including the right to have private property--which was not the case in totalitarian Italy and Germany. Hence, they depended on the state completely; second, the totalitarian principle of government, "Use as much terror as possible," was put into practice with exceptional effect up to its utter, logical limit. But reaching the limit is very dangerous not only for an individual, but for any form of society, totalitarian as well as liberal.

As long as some principle plays the role of a regulative idea and is treated as an ideal to be striven for, a society can grow and develop. But when the limit is reached a change of direction of the movement is unavoidable. In *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* F. Nietzsche said something similar: in reaching your ideal you exceed it. He had man in mind, but the maxim is valid for society as well.

Putting the principle "Use as much terror as possible" into practice Stalin reached the limit in many respects. The scale of repression was unprecedented, but perhaps more importantly he used terror against his closest associates as well: arrests and even executions of the nearest relatives of the men devoted to him heart and soul, such as Molotov, Kaganovitch, Kalinin and others. It was essential for him that his closest aids should be grateful not only for privileges, but for the very fact of their physical existence. He wanted them to be aware constantly of the danger of extermination.

After the dictator's death there was at least one extremely powerful man eager to continue to play Stalin's diabolic role. But others from Stalin's clique were overstrained. It was unbearable for them to live any longer on the knife's edge. Hence, in rather dramatic circumstances they chose for the top position a man who did not excite enormous fear. The choice of Khrushchev was fateful: a first step which changed the direction of the social movement.

If the reasoning about the importance of reaching the boundaries is correct this change of direction of the movement was in some sense necessary (if there be such thing as historical

necessity). After the first step others in the direction of liberalization of the system followed. Of course, resistance by the totalitarian system even to the most timid attempts at liberalization was enormous. It is important to stress that when you move back from the limit you have a new opportunity to move forward again. Hence, the period of thaw was followed by a period of so-called stagnation. In the 70s the restoration of some more rude elements of Stalinist order was, of course, possible, but not very successful.

Why? Because at that time the process of disintegration of the totalitarian system was far advanced. This may sound quite incredible. Many people, both East and West, are afraid even now of a new totalitarian dictator in Russia. Dictatorship in that country is possible and it is not sure whether B. Yeltsin's rise to the newly established post of President in Russia decreased or increased the probability of dictatorship. But it seems extremely unlikely that any possible dictator of Russia would be able to become a totalitarian dictator.

The changes begun after Stalin's death led to a decrease in the power of the apparatus of terror, which had played not only a political, but also an economic role. On the one hand, it supplied a cheap labour force; on the other hand, the fear it raised substituted for material work incentives for those outside the Gulag. So after its power had diminished it was again necessary, even if restrictively, to use such incentives. Hence, it was necessary to make some alterations in the ideology; modification of cultural policy also became inevitable. All these changes meant the beginning of the erosion of the totalitarian system.

It should be emphasized that there are no mechanisms of self-regulation in a totalitarian system. Hence, the loosening of bolts began the deregulation of the system. Further, the supergoal of the totalitarian system is to breed a "new man" with qualities contrary to those of the man of the old "decaying" society. On the whole this goal was achieved--the breed "homo sovieticus" without a trace of personal initiative or personal responsibility.

The "new man" was to be a perfectly functioning small screw in the big state machine. But after the deregulation of the machine such a man lost the meaning of his existence. He became a cynic and was not so brave as the totalitarian ideologists expected him to be. For the sake of the triumph of a glorious idea he was not willing to sacrifice his personal interests, for he had no sense of personal responsibility. He tried simply to adjust himself to the ill-functioning system, but was absolutely incapable of strengthening it.

By definition totalitarianism requires a demonstration of active support. In the 20s some parts of Russia's population were truly captivated by totalitarian (Communist) ideas, but the number was not great and was constantly decreasing. In the 60s and especially in the 70s it became excruciatingly small. Thus active support was gradually changing into its simulation and by the end of the 70s even simulation of active support became unnecessary--passive support sufficed. That meant the conversion of totalitarianism into simple authoritarianism.

Certainly, the changes after 1985 were especially spectacular, but their way was prepared by the less visible but no less important earlier process of the slow destruction of totalitarian order. It is worth mentioning that in these earlier processes, as well as those which followed, an important role was played by intellectuals taking every opportunity to expand the narrow limits of free thought and free expression and to show that totalitarianism was not the only way to live. These opportunities were very scanty in the mid-50s, but in the 70s the situation changed quite considerably. The new generation of intellectuals was not so afraid of repression as was their fathers' generation.

On the other hand, the technocrats who took power in the 60s were less interested in ideological dogmas. They were more pragmatic and not so eager to waste energy on witch hunting.

Most of them were corrupted to a very great extent; for them the system was not an absolute value, but only a means to serve their own interests.

Cynics and timeservers brought up by totalitarianism eroded the system from within. They could not form such a strong nucleus of the system as had the staunch Bolsheviks. For this reason perfect totalitarianism could not endure. Paradoxical as it may be, totalitarianism can be realized only by men brought up in a nontotalitarian society. After the extermination of the Old Guard (which Stalin was especially eager to carry out as soon as possible) and after the extinction of the old generation in general, the inevitable process of decay of totalitarianism began. Totalitarianism is in bad need of idealists, but it is practically incapable of producing them.

This circumstance is fatal for totalitarianism: the sooner it eradicates all remnants of the old society, the sooner it digs a grave for itself. All social activity gradually becomes uncontrollable. The economic crisis which shattered the Soviet Union in the early '90s is a natural result of that deepening degeneration of the system.

## **The Future**

As early as the 70s the degree of erosion was so great that to call it a totalitarian system would be an exaggeration. It was rather an ill-functioning authoritarianism with totalitarian ambitions, but without the possibility of control over society; at best it was an agonizing totalitarianism.

This agony may continue for there are many of hindrances to the radical reforms of the political and economic structures of society in the direction of liberal democracy and a free market. The most important is the stereotype of the totalitarian mentality lurking deep within the head of almost every person, not the interests of the partocracy. These stereotypes very seriously complicate the formation of civic society and a liberal political system.

The viability of the stereotypes is conditioned by the above mentioned success in creating the "new man". But the "new man" is by nature unable to ensure the durability of totalitarian system. Yet very effectively, although often unconsciously, he prevents the final and total destruction of totalitarianism. This can be seen especially clearly in the Republics which were annexed by the Soviet Union and now are struggling to realize their new independent forms. Lithuania may serve as an example. The overwhelming majority of Lithuanians unconditionally support their newly independent Republic and want to be free of the reflexes of the totalitarian empire. But in attempting to form their own political structures they very often reproduce the old, essentially totalitarian, patterns under new names. The political thinking of some leaders is not new, even in the Gorbachev sense.

The most important totalitarian stereotype in Lithuania and other former Soviet Republics is the sharp division of all citizens into champions and adversaries of the right cause. Another is the notion that the state has its own interests differing from those of its citizens, which effectively elevates the state above individuals.

Liberal ideas are not very popular. Of course, the declarations of faithfulness to human rights are common here, but only a few politicians support the liberal idea that the most important, if not the sole, function of the modern state is to protect the rights and freedoms of the individual. Therefore it is quite natural that few are devoted to the principle of the division of powers.

The role of the state in our society is still enormous. And the degree of concentration of power is very high. There is a good excuse for this, for political leaders claim the need for a concentration of power, and hence they call for national unity rather than for a free play of political forces. They

appeal to people to make a sacrifice, but the notion that authorities must protect the people, and not vice versa, is alien to many of our politicians.

How explain the rejection of essential liberal ideas in a country which so resolutely has sought liberty? The question is rather rhetorical, because I tried to explain this phenomenon in general terms above. There are some interesting observations in J. Goldfarb's book;<sup>9</sup> here I would add only two remarks.

First, when the real priority for most Lithuanians was an independent nation, the needs of the nation state had priority over those of the individual. But there is another reason too. The appeals to unite and to sacrifice for the sake of independence were a very convenient way of disguising the requirement of unconditional support for a definite policy and definite political leaders.

Thus, though for a long time totalitarianism in the Soviet block was being demolished both from the top and from the bottom and was a colossus with feet of clay, if someone would now ask directly: "Is totalitarianism at last dead?" one could not answer simply "yes". Totalitarianism does not exist at present in East Europe as a firm social order, but human minds, economic activity and political decision making are contaminated by its numerous relics. Were totalitarianism to be dead, the prospects for liberalism would be good; but this is not so in East Europe and it is rather doubtful that they will improve in the nearest future.

For most countries in East Europe the immediate future would appear to be a more or less enlightened statism with some elements of political democracy and free market economy. These countries will have a mixed and not well-balanced social system; to find an adequate label for this is quite difficult. As the mixture of elements of totalitarianism and liberalism, authoritarianism and democracy, state planning and free market is quite explosive, the danger of political and economic crises in this region is obvious.

As it is rather difficult to draw a sharp line between statism and mild totalitarianism. For if the elements of statism in the social order of (some) Eastern European countries are strengthened then the probability of a backward devolution will increase. I do not think that such a devolution would lead these countries back to a pure or classical totalitarianism, but who said that a social order must be pure?

Democratically-minded politicians and political scientists in Eastern Europe comprehend the imminent danger of strengthening statist tendencies in their countries. Many of them, especially in the former Soviet Republics, do not see the real political powers within their countries which could prevent such a turn.

Second, these leaders look with great hopes towards Western Europe, especially towards the EC. They argue as follows: (1) Democracy in Western Europe is of great value; (2) the economic integration of East Europe into Western Europe is inevitable; (3) hence, economic necessity will stimulate developments in East Europe in the direction of liberal democracy. They believe that this is a very strong external stimulus for democratization of their countries; but are they right?

First, the prospects of swift integration of Eastern Europe into Western Europe are not as good as these politicians and political scientists would think. It is not that such an integration is nonsense logically or geographically; if we understand what we are really talking about, we may put aside such formal perplexities. But there are important economic hindrances to such an integration, for it is quite difficult to integrate ruins into a well-balanced economic system.

Second, the modern Western economy may not be a firm warrant for a liberal political order. Who would claim that at end of the twentieth century liberalism reigns in the West? Francis

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<sup>9</sup> Jeffrey C. Goldfarb, *Beyond Glasnost: The Post-Totalitarian Mind* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989).

Fukuyama from the U.S. State Department would do so, but many political scientists reject such a claim as absolutely unsound. M. Rothbard would rather insist that the present is the time of the decisive battle by real liberals, i.e., libertarians, against an aggressive and corrupting statism.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps he exaggerates somewhat, but one cannot speak of a triumph of liberalism, even in the West.

Today Western governments are ever more deeply engaged in numerous social, scientific and other programmes. By financing them, governments acquire the right and ability to control various domains of intellectual, cultural and social activity which were outside governmental control only a few decades ago. In this way governments acquire more and more power. If this reasoning is correct then statism has not only a gloomy future in the East, but a rather strong presence in the West.

East Europe strives for a free market and free societies, but is modern Western society as free as L. von Mises or F. von Hayek would like? Perhaps J.M. Keyes and F.D. Roosevelt made an irretrievable step and it is now simply impossible to stop the creeping expansion of governmental power to control everything? If this is not a sheer fancy then we must wait a moment before burying totalitarianism.

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<sup>10</sup> Murray N. Rothbard, *For a New Liberty: The Libertarian Manifesto* (New York: Libertarian Review Foundation, 1989).





### Chapter III

## The Challenge of Post-Communism: Philosophy and Politics

*Marius Povilas Saulauskas*

Although from different perspectives, today we are all observers of, or participants in, a new challenge to contemporary history. The emergence of post-Communism has produced many problems. Here I shall concentrate on the most general features of the main hurdle which impedes the transition from a closed society to an open one, as seen from the perspective of the developments of Western metaphysics. I shall point out some methodological and historical aspects of the analysis, rise and significance of the distorted individual consciousness and disrupted rational discourse which have been nourished by the various forms of totalitarianism, and which zealously uphold and strengthen it. An analysis of post Communist society would be incomplete and even misleading without deliberately taking into account this important aspect of its inner structure.

My paper is based on one general presupposition, which I will briefly discuss, namely that the political, social and cultural history of Western civilization is deeply influenced by the history of ideas articulated in Western philosophical discourse. So, in order adequately to grasp the meaning of cultural, social and even political problems as they are currently posed by the challenge of post-Communism, one must evaluate them, *inter Alia*, against the background of the history of Western metaphysics. This is so, because the present state of affairs in Europe is deeply affected by the intellectual history of thought in general, and the history of metaphysical thought in particular. Implicitly or explicitly, this affects not only the contemporary methodological stance of philosophy and the social sciences, but our morality, legislatures, and even the way we imagine our future, including the limits of our political choices.

This sense of the overwhelming influence of the past on the present and future is most radically advocated by the philosophical hermeneutic of Hans Georg Gadamer. The notion of *Wirkungsgeschichtliche Bewusstsein* as it is formulated by Gadamer, that is, the notion of "historically effective consciousness" is crucial to understanding this kind of philosophizing. Although I disagree with philosophical hermeneutics on many points, I shall take for granted the overwhelming influence of the past on the future because, for the purpose of the present article, the very meaning of the notion of "historically effective consciousness" as it is mediated through intersubjectively and historically constituted language helps to make my argument more precise.

My argumentation will follow this general schema:

1. An interdisciplinary approach is capable of disclosing the enormously complicated fabric of the transition from Communism in its full diversity. The history of Western metaphysics is one of the most important parts of this interdisciplinary approach, which embraces as well psychology, sociology, political sciences and anthropology.

2. The metaphysical presuppositions of both closed and open societies were laid down in Greek philosophy, and may be analyzed in terms of tribal and performative individuality. This enables us to interpret the concepts of rational discourse and double language irrational discourse, not only as essential factors of closed and open societies, but also as guided by the normative attitudes of tribal and performative individuality.

3. From the broad perspective of the history of Western metaphysics, one may argue that the main hurdle on the path from a closed society to an open one is the persistent presence of tribal individuality, which inexorably dictates its own rules of distorted double language. In order to aid the transition one must shatter the last but most strongly fortified Berlin Wall which fatefully limits the horizon of tribal individual consciousness. In other words, a new sweeping informational rather than economic Marshall Plan is needed. That would be the best response to the post-Communist challenge.

### **Metaphilosophy of the Relation of Metaphysics and the Social Sciences**

Here the key-words are borrowed from the most outstanding philosophies of twentieth century, hermeneutics and analytics. The first thesis is: the importance of epistemic activities or understanding in the analysis of the social and historical problematic of transition points to the relation between metaphysics and the social sciences. Metaphilosophical discourse, that is, an analysis of how metaphysics is related with other sciences and para-philosophical discourse in general, is a useful instrument in developing an adequate methodology for a consistent elucidation of the transition encountered today in post-Communist societies.

Epistemic activities may be analyzed as processes of understanding, that is, they may be understood as broadly as possible and include, for example, everyday expectations, motivations and so on. Processes of understanding manifest themselves not only in the sciences, but on the level of everyday consciousness as well. Such understanding was scrutinized by Gadamer in terms of *Wirkungsgeschichtliche Bewusstseins*, "historically effective consciousness", by Ludwig Wittgenstein in the guise of *language games*, by Martin Heidegger as *Seinsverstaendnis* or the understanding of being. In short, what I call understanding or epistemic activities constitutes a *Weltanschauung* or world view: the way people imagine and act in the world they inhabit.

I hope it is clear from this that the shift of world view rests upon the transition from a closed society to an open one, that is, from a mode of life grounded on a collectivistic tribal consciousness, as Karl Popper has labelled it, to a mode of life based on the idea of individuality as performative Ego in the sense of Jurgen Habermas.

One may examine the political and politological question of "How this transition is possible, what impedes and what facilitates it?" by asking the metaphysical question, "How is the change of world view possible, which factors are involved in such a change, and are we in a position to ease the birth pangs of the emergence of a new world view - of a new language game?" Such a reformulation of the question permits us to fix a fruitful relationship between metaphysics, social sciences, applied philosophy, psychology and even politics. In other words, in order to analyze the problematic of transition as fully as possible, an interdisciplinary approach based on a metaphilosophical level is needed. Similar questions concerning the necessity of an interdisciplinary approach are posed from the perspective of hermeneutic by Paul Ricoeur. The problem of how to substantiate the interrelations between metaphysics, the social sciences and eventually politics on the methodological level is undoubtedly of the greatest importance, but I shall not discuss it in detail because it would raise issues beyond the boundaries of the present paper.

### **Individuality and Accountability**

In returning to the historical development of the metaphysical presuppositions of these two basic modes of social life, world views or language games, that is, the metaphysical underpinnings of closed and open societies, the key concepts are the concept of individuality, in particular its performative aspect, the term of free rational discourse, and the notion of individual moral accountability.

The thesis of this second part of the analysis is as follows: The most fundamental conceptual difference separating the two opposite modes of social being, that is, democracy and totalitarianism, lies in the concept of individuality as it has developed from Socrates and Plato in ancient Greek philosophy to its modern versions in the philosophical systems of Kant and Hegel, Mill and Marx, as well those of today.

The sociopolitical dichotomy of closed and open societies is correlated with the purely philosophical methodological opposition between what Popper calls prophetic historicism and essentialism on the one hand, and the rational method of peacemaking, social engineering and nominalism on the other. These two methodologies are of crucial importance in distinguishing between the metaphysical presuppositions on which the conceptual framework of closed and open societies is grounded. The distinction is perspicuously reflected not only on the level of ideology and in the practice of social or economic planning, but on the surface of the everyday consciousness of ordinary people. It is even possible to show that the prophetic and irrational as well as the peacemaking, rational methodologies are fundamental factors constituting the patterns of subjective motivation, moral codes and self consciousness, not to mention the domain of culture and authority or methods of government. But in my view these two methodologies themselves are rooted in different normative concepts of individuality, both of which may be traced as far back as the insights of Greek philosophy.

The first concept is that of individuality implicit in the dialectics of Socrates and Antisthenes. Socrates, the author of the first "Copernican revolution" in the tradition of Western philosophy, transformed metaphysics, which in its pre-Socratic stage, as Ernst Cassirer said, took the shape of an intellectual monologue, into a vivid dialogue grounded on rational discourse and moral responsibility. Only a person can ask a question and only a person can respond to it; only he or she can be treated as a personally responsible creature. To pose a right question and to give a right response means to be righteous. To have knowledge of truth means to abide in it; to be in truth means to participate in the good, and therefore to be moral.

Philosophy from then on became a specific discourse, to enter which implies a moral attitude of questioning and responding, an attitude of what might be called accountability. By the latter I mean a unique mode of the philosophically cognizing consciousness characterized by the reflective movement of mind which meets the demand of truthfulness; this is the intellectual sincerity of the Socratic philosophical discourse: accountability is always personal, always "mine". This aspect of philosophical discourse was stated especially clearly in the philosophy of Marcus Aurelius, and in the Stoic and nominalistic traditions in general. In modern times it is emphatically reiterated in the insights of Kierkegaard, Rousseau and, by and large, in twentieth century existentialism. All of this illustrates that Western philosophy has never erased its Socratic brand.

But the most important thing I want to stress is the transformation of the idea of personal accountability into a constitutive factor of the epistemological discourse articulated in Cartesian philosophy. Undoubtedly, the Cartesian *ego cogito* inaugurated the new era of modern philosophy --the era of what may be called anthropocentric epistemology. As Heidegger notes, from Descartes on the *sub-iectum* took the shape of *hypo-keimenon*, that is, of that which lies at the bottom. Descartes radically related *sub-iectum* to self-reflection, to self-consciousness. He drastically

forced the *ego* to define itself, making it wholly responsible for its own self. The apex of this Cartesian attitude, which may be called the attitude of the subjectivization of epistemology was reached, says Heidegger, in the philosophy of Kant. Here reflective reason is treated as the only source of law and reality--reason and reason alone promulgates laws for itself, reason shapes reality and gives account only to itself for all that it is capable of doing.

I am going to add only one aspect to this Heideggerian account of the history of modern philosophy, but a fundamental one. The linking of what I have called Socratic accountability with what Heidegger has labelled *hypo-keimenon* gives us a new Cartesian concept, or philosphema, of the subject which is implicit in the philosophical project of Descartes. This is a new concept of individuality, the idea of the performative epistemological *ego* which later, in the seventeenth century, led to the articulation of what is called the concept of performative individuality. (The term "performative individuality" follows the recent report by Habermas to the 1988 World Congress of Philosophy held in Brighton.)

The performative epistemological *ego*, that is, is the personally responsible agent steered by normative ideas of accountability, is the producer and censor of the Cartesian philosophical discourse. He alone carries the burden of accountability for the certainty and perspicuity of the envisaged philosophical vision of reality. Only he is capable of naming its structure, because he himself is the place in which this structure may be manifested and articulated. Being a vigorous agent of philosophical discourse, he gives names to what he does and creates; he is personally responsible for what he has done.

I stress that it is impossible to dispense with this Cartesian reinterpretation of Socratic accountability if one aims at the reconstruction of the history of Western philosophy in which were formulated the principles brought to bear in historical analysis, especially if we will keep in mind that the rise of constitutive democracy was discernable in the relevant ideas of Luther, Mill, Jefferson and others. The ideas on which an open society is based are in some way genetically bound up with the concepts of accountability and individuality.

Another concept of individuality developed in the Western philosophical discourse is found in Platonism. This too has a long history, but thanks to the brilliant and widespread works of Popper devoted to the analysis of Platonism and historicism in general, I need not engage in a detailed exposition. I shall only indicate what I have in mind by reinterpreting the Popperian concepts of tribal consciousness and tribal individuality.

By this I mean a self-consciousness which posits itself not as a separate individual or as a person endowed with a performative capacity, but rather as a separate spiritual entity linked to some community by inseparable bonds. Tribal individuality perceives itself, to use a term of Gadamer, as sometimes indistinguishable and at other times as a remarkably distinctive sparkle in a circuit. An exclusively personal life as an inner sphere of individual intimacy hidden from the alien outside view is disparaged and minimized: the innermost spiritual life and even self-reflection are deflected and undefined. Tribal individuality, in contrast to performative individuality, has no refuge in an inner personal life untouched by others. On the contrary, the deficiency of the purely private is compensated for by enlarging the sphere of the public. Such individuality feels good only in this open public sphere and looks there for its own true self.

I may summarize the above in terms of metaphysics as follows: tribal individuality, taken as an epistemological *ego*, posits itself not as source of values and of the conceptual framework of being, but as an intermediary entity constituted by independently existing factors governing the processes of the formation of meaning, and endowed by these processes with a limited self-

reflective capacity. The philosophies of Plato, Hegel and Marx are the best examples of metaphysics based on the idea of tribal individuality.

From the perspective of the history of Western philosophy. It may be said, that in order to help in the present transitional process individuality as understood in the traditions originating with Socrates and Descartes must be expanded, while minimizing the majestic but dangerous and unfortunately ubiquitous influence of Plato and Hegel. Thus, in the transition from a closed society to an open one, changes are needed at the very base of individual consciousness.

A lesson to learn from the way Western democracies have evolved is that an open society cannot exist without the concept of performative individuality (which is grounded in the metaphysical concept of an epistemologically performative *ego*) as its basic axiological attitude.

### **Performative Individuality**

Among the synchronic aspects of the transition to democracy several problems derive from the preponderance of the tribal individuality of which I have just spoken and with which we are wrestling in Lithuania; these are found also in other so-called "post Communist" societies. The key terms of this third and the last part of my article are: double language, tribal individuality and language games. First I shall discuss the concept of language games, and secondly the term double language in the sense of George Orwell.

Language games is a system of diverse rules which determine various practices of society and the psychological, spiritual, epistemic or aesthetic activities of the individual. This concept is closely related to the

notion of "understanding"; at least in the context in which I am speaking, both terms may be used as synonyms. Roughly speaking, in my analysis of the state of transition it is expedient to speak about two fundamentally different language games based on the two opposed concepts of individuality. These are realized in the complex bodies of open and closed societies *inter Alia* by institutionalization and interiorization, that is, on the level of state institutions, constitutions, moral consciousness, codes of motivation, etc. Such a loose term is useful because it points to the inner core which supports these two societies. I have mentioned above the concepts of performative and tribal individuality.

The inherent and perhaps most important part of language games is the more or less coherent body of moral principles implicitly embodied in a variety of ways in the systems of law found in both democratic and totalitarian countries. This set of moral principles determines subjectively enacted commitments as well as overriding and officially instituted practices of legislature. Roughly speaking, they constitute the basis upon which is founded an open society as *Rechtsstaat*, or "state of law", and without which such a state is impossible. The issue may best be illustrated by the dispute between natural law and legal positivism in the contemporary discussion of the philosophy of law.<sup>1</sup>

The cluster of philosophers advocating natural law are convinced that morality as it is expressed in human rights and fundamental values forms an indispensable part of constitutions and positive law. We cannot be obligated to do what is undoubtedly immoral. For example, John Finnis' account of the general principles of moral conduct in *Natural Law and Natural Rights*<sup>2</sup> contends that the law ought to conform to fundamental and self-evidently obvious moral

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed exposition see Lloyd L. Weinreb, *Natural Law and Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard 1987).

<sup>2</sup> Oxford, 1980.

principles expressed in natural rights, that is, grounded on the depth grammar of language games. When the law does not fit these moral precepts, one's obligation to obey the law is undermined. So, by the very nature of things, we are not committed to comply with amoral law that outrages human rights and moral values given to common sense as a self-evident cluster of truths. It is of the greatest importance that this opinion in fact fully coincides with the prevailing attitude of laymen and lawyers in traditionally democratic countries, and serves as the best possible illustration of how performative individuality actually appears.

The opposite view is held by legal positivists such as H.L.A. Hart and H. Kelsen.<sup>3</sup> They believe that moral codes and systems of law are quite different things in principle, and that natural law theorists are committing a conceptual fault by confusing what is with what ought to be. It must be stressed that they do not deny the tight interconnection between morality and positive law; instead of treating an amoral law as not a law at all as do natural law theorists, they simply recommend not complying with it for the very reason that it is and remains an amoral law.

What is especially relevant from this sophisticated contemporary discussion to the problematic of transition? Clearly it is hard to overestimate the importance of the moral dimension. Morality has developed and persisted for hundreds of years. The place it occupies is situated nowhere and everywhere--it is within the individual consciousness, in the institutional network of society, in the everyday practice of adjudication, education and so on. If it is true that an open society is grounded on the idea of *Rechtsstaat*, on the state of law and that the latter is impossible to realize without a relevant morality constituting the inner gauge of the way people behave in day-to-day life, and if it is true that this hidden but very efficient gauge is correlated with what I have called performative individuality, then in order to quicken and facilitate the process of transition, there is need for a radical remolding of the code of morality, that is, for a radical reshaping of the patterns of individual consciousness amounting to a transition from the tribal individuality to the performative one. This can be done only by shattering the informational blockade separating a closed society from an open one.

But in order to ensure such a break, free rational discourse must be permitted to unfold without any restrictions. The main precondition of rational discourse is the presence and display of performative individuality. As Habermas noted in his report in Brighton, this performative individuality is quite impossible to represent only in descriptive terms.

Performative individuality must be understood as the claim of uniqueness made by the first person in an audience in which other persons are gathered, that is, made by an "I" in an audience of "theys". Such an individuality comprehends itself as a unique moral entity which warrants its own capacity of self-identification in the face of second persons and, at the same time, claims to be acknowledged as that concrete person responsible for itself.

In contrast, tribal individuality has no possibility of entering free rational discourse in so far as it inevitably looks for its self-identification not by relying on its own capacities, but by trying to reconstruct its own self from the anonymous mass of third persons. Instead of free discourse, rational argumentation and unrestricted exchange of information, in totalitarian society we have a specific mode of communication which may most adequately be named and analyzed in terms of *double language*. The double language game suits the nature of tribal individuality. This mode of speech does not require that the participants act performatively, that is, as personally responsible agents steered by normative ideas of accountability: *hypo-keimenon* and *atomon*. It demands from

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<sup>3</sup> H.L.A. Hart, *The Concept of Law* (London: Oxford, 1961); H. Kelsen, *Pure Theory of Law* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967).

them just the contrary: to posit themselves as not fully authorized representatives of some vague community or anonymous system of officially posited values.

Double language implies double acting and a double life. It severely separates the way people speak from the way they act, the way they think from what they applaud. It makes them uneasy, perplexed, frightened and dissatisfied. It corrupts the very idea of free rational discourse because it is impossible to be responsible while representing oneself in the name of the third person.

It is not surprising then that people are easily mistaken when they witness Communist or post-Communist leaders using democratic slogans to express their progressive goals and future plans, while at the same time doing their best to safeguard the old totalitarian values and intentions. It was indeed curious and discouraging to observe crude efforts to derive democratic ideals from the heritage of Marx and Lenin and how the dormant forces of inertia instigated by the tribal consciousness came to the surface as the effort of tribal individuality to preserve itself.

The whole fabric of language games and their hypertrophic double languaged counterparts embrace pervasive attitudes and deeply rooted habits of thought firmly grounded in the practices of everyday life and institutional arrangements. They beg to be questioned but there is a lack ascertainably correct considerations capable of confronting the old system and of overriding its values with new ones.

In the case at hand, in order to reject the familiar totalitarian order and choose constitutive democracy first of all somehow one must know not only the inequity and injustice of the former, but also the presumptive advantages of the latter. But the essence of a closed society lies in the presence of a closed mentality; it is nourished by the ways and habits in which the consciousness of tribal individuality works. One may say that the Berlin Wall encloses the inner core of the individual being and mutilates its thinking, dreaming and doing. It is not impossible for this powerful Wall to be reinforced by religious fundamentalism, nationalism or some new of totalitarianism after the collapse of Communism. We will not be secure and must not be self-confident until the tribal individuality upon which totalitarianism rests is transformed into performative individuality.

The best way to crush this last but strong Wall is through inter-individual rather than inter-institutional, personal rather than official, relationships. I believe with Popper that free rational discourse and the broadest exchange of information is the only path to a firm and secure future. Thus it is of the greatest importance to post-Communist societies, and consequently to the whole world, to realize as soon and as carefully as possible far-reaching humanitarian aid in the form of an informational Marshall Plan directed to the Soviet Empire and Eastern Europe. This would be the best response to the challenge of post-Communism to find the right way from the closed totalitarian states to an open democratic society.

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## **Part II**

### **Reconstruction**



## Chapter IV

# An Outline of Philotopy

*A. Liogeris*

Philotopy is an effort at thinking along the road towards Being. This kind of thinking is a yearning for Being which reveals itself in questioning. Being is not a place or local where the road terminates and questions disappear; nor is Being the peaceful blessing of a final answer achieved by confining oneself within pure interiority. As Being is not an answer, the road does not end in Being itself or in a safe "possession" of Being.

Philosophy, as a reflection on Being, refuses to begin by raising directly such questions as "what is Being like?", "why does Being exist, rather than an empty void?" because such questions already precondition the need and the possibility of an answer. Here the aim is to locate that metaphysical territory where such questions originate. A man who questions Being already faces it, and consequently has access to its mystery and, to a certain extent, to Being itself.

The basic question of philotopy is where does Being reveal itself for humans as mortal and limited beings. This thinking is directed to the place where Being becomes accessible. It is only upon pondering this place and finding oneself before the revelation of Being that one faces for the first time one faces the metaphysical questions: "what is Being like?", and "why does Being, and not an empty void exist?" Philotopical questions are premises of the metaphysical question of Being. They include the following seven points.

1. Being is substantial and reveals itself for man only as things where access to Being is located. Things are identified with the world which reveals itself through sensations, called phenomena, "these always have meaning for a person<sup>1</sup> inasmuch as they are useful: a thing is an ensemble of pragmatic human meanings, which the Ancient Greeks called *pragmata*. From the ordinary point of view, the Being of a thing is nothing but an accumulation of pragmatic meanings, so that being equals such meaning. If meaning fixes man's instrumental relationship with a thing, then a thing as a phenomenon remains only the sum of relations whose mode is that of quasi-being; thus as phenomena things also belong to quasi-being: all phenomena belong to quasi-being rather than to Being. Yet, insofar as the Being itself of things and not their human meaning is concerned, things cannot be identified with phenomena. In order to be revealed the Being of a thing must be singled out from amorphous and anonymous phenomena and placed in contrast to man. What is here called a metaphysical phenomenon should not be confused with a metaphysical noumenon, i.e., the product of reason and imagination, or the "ideal" things represented by ideas, phantasms, geometrical figures, etc. A thing is not "beyond" phenomena, but closer. Yet ordinary people always practically and theoretically trespass this intimacy to enter distant and artificial relations; as a result an instrumental attitude invades the world of meanings and damages the aura of value which surrounds things. We acknowledge a thing and its Being only by returning from such distant quasi-being relations to the place where Being is located and concentrated. This is the only way for a thing to reveal itself as a thing and a phenomenon of Being.

2. Being is absolute transcendence in contrast to the position of a thing with respect to man. As a meaningless entity a thing is self-centered and is not revealed as a thing in itself; such self-

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<sup>1</sup> In Lithuanian the words *phenomenon*, *to mean* and *meaningful* are of the same root: *reikinys*, *reikti*, *reikmingas* (translator's note).

seclusion has a limited and negative transcendence. Where being is open and reveals itself, things are closed, though not hidden for the transcendence of a thing is evident and can be directly observed. Only as a phenomenon of Being is a thing real, but phenomena are pseudo-transcendents because the realm of meanings is created by man himself and hence immanent for him. As ensembles of meanings and concentrations of relations, phenomena are quasi-beings. Metaphysical noumena concentrating hypostasized meanings are pseudo-transcendents. A thing locked in itself is a point of opening of Being revealing itself up close. Being, as "this" self-evident substantial phenomenon of Being is sensitive transcendence.

3. Due to its absolute transcendence being is agnostic. Cognition is a process of immanence, but not everything transcendental can be immanent. Whatever is primarily transcendental is also primarily agnostic. A thing, as this single, individual, materialized, monolithic entity, is transcendental; as a phenomenon of Being it is a substantial individual, which is agnostic due both to its individuality and substantiality as absolute characteristics of Being. A substantial entity has no clefts of un-being (non-existence); it is a monolith of Being. Cognition, in contrast, must penetrate within a phenomenon, which is possible only provided the entity has clefts of un-being: thus, cognition is un-being's aggression against Being. As a thing has no clefts of un-being, however, it is agnostic. This is true of everything that is absolutely individual, i.e., individuum. Therefore, because being is indivisible, it is agnostic. All kinds of *gnosis* begins where individuality is broken and there is an invasion of the space of universality or quasi-being, that is, of meaning and relations. As the Being of a thing, the phenomenon of Being is void of meaning and relations; being reveals itself only as agnostic reality.

All kinds of *gnosis*, whether religion, philosophy, science or mysticism, trespass the phenomenon of Being and destroy its Being. *Gnosis* makes immanent whatever quasi-exists beyond man. Gnostic pursuits are a shift from transcendence to immanence, whereas Being is absolute and remains transcendent. Thus, cognition constitutes only a pseudo-transcendence and quasi-being for the ultimate key to cognition is un-being--though in real existence both pure un-being and pure Being (i.e., Being without its substantial phenomenon) are humanly unattainable, and man can "possess" neither. Whereas *gnosis* engages man's fundamental orientation towards un-being, it expresses a fundamental orientation towards Being. A person is always swinging between Being and un-being. In knowing one leans toward un-being and falls into its abyss, for cognition is nothing but a "theoretical" transcending of the phenomenon of Being.

4. Being is something with which one becomes acquainted: access to Being is the acquaintance of a mortal individual with this substantial phenomenon of Being. Contrary to cognition, acquaintance does not suppose fusing a thing in anonymous meanings and relations, but is an authorized meeting of two substantial individuals, persons or things. Where cognition is transcending, acquaintance is retranscending for meeting with Being is an act of Holy Communion of man and thing, the acquaintance of a mortal individual and the phenomenon of Being. This acquaintance is an "unmasking" of the phenomenon, for in getting acquainted one strips off masks of meanings, husking the individual, yet meaningless, form of a thing, and consequently the thing itself as this substantial individual and concentration of Being.

Yet acquaintance is not to gape at the appearance of a thing. In becoming acquainted with the Being of thing, a person actively constructs or, to be more precise, reconstructs and stabilizes the individuality of a thing, which is constantly fusing in the twilight of anonymous phenomena and quasi-being. Acquaintance is actively to place a thing against man and, at the same time, to consolidate a thing's Being-beyond-human-perception. While getting acquainted with a thing's Being, by an onward-backward gesture, one draws the thing nearer, pulling it from distant

anonymity as phenomena and displaying it for direct sensible vision. At the same time, one pushes it away from one's natural impulse to cognize it, to fuse it in hoministic meanings, to blend with it, transcend it, and "swallow" it up, or be swallowed by the Great Anonym so as to disappear in an inarticulate mass. Access to Being, as the acquaintance of a mortal individual with this phenomenon of Being, is an active stance of a subject against a sensibly evident object. This means that the acquaintance is none other than the consolidation of the transcendence of Being.

5. Being reveals itself in its eternal present: there was no being in the past, and there will be none in the future: "the time" of Being is now. Being can reveal itself neither through the past, nor through the future, because the past no longer exists due to the tension between man and thing, while the future does not yet exist due to the same opposition. The past and the future pull a person back from the phenomenon of Being enclosing him in pure interiority. The past and the future lack the two most essential components of the phenomenon of Being--sensible evidence and sensible transcendence--and are occupied rather by fluttering pseudo-transcendental noumena. In the past-future horizon a person does not break the seclusion of his "soul", but remains inaccessible to being-beyond-human-perception. Generally, time is just immanent quasi-being and not transcendental to man; in its essence it is identical with instrumentally overstepping the horizon of a thing's Being. Time is the hypostasis of un-being: being has no attribute of time, time has no Being--it does not exist. The phantom of time exists only as a metaphor of the aggressive origins of entity as the materialized formation or un-being under the mask of quasi-being: time embodies this fundamental human orientation towards un-being. Upon winning access to Being in the substantial phenomenon of Being, one drops out of time and finds himself in the eternal present. Dropping out of time he drops out of history as well: being is beyond both time and history. From the point of view of Being there is no history, just as there is no time. History has no Being: there simply is no history, provided the word "is" be perceived in the sense of Being rather than quasi-being, which is the mode of history.

6. Being reveals itself here, manifesting itself as being-here, at this place, that is, at the place where "I" am as a spatially limited corporal individual existing at a definite place. Being here fixes the direct relation between man and the substantial phenomenon of Being, which cannot be revealed by pure reason, imagination, recollection or reflection. As reflection on Being is the capacity to see, being is always something visible: access to Being is always and primarily a visual (optic) experience which takes place in a substantially individualized situation. This means not only that Being has no attribute of time, neither does it have any attribute of space: the phenomenon of Being exists on this side of time and space. Time is but a dynamic abstraction of pure relations, an hypostasis of formation without any substantially concrete "now"; likewise space is a static abstraction of pure relations without any substantially individualized "here". Pure space is monotonous and inarticulate, as is pure time. The primary articulation of Being is impossible without "here" as its basis which focuses the phantom of space into the sensible transcendence of a proximate thing.

Access to Being "here" fixes the priority of proximity against distance. Man's accessibility to Being makes him the product of proximity, for he is the only creature able to exist "here" and to return back from the anonymous everywhere and nowhere--from the sphere into which man is thrown by transcendence as formation and as cognition over-stepping the Being of a thing. Accessibility to Being primarily means to be here or attached to things of our acquaintance. Thus "here" is not an abstract spot, but an articulated and concrete expression of the phenomena of Being; it is the place where this mortal individual holds existential meetings with the phenomenon of Being and the community of these phenomena. "Here" is constituted of concrete things,

inasmuch as these things as phenomena of Being are single and irreplaceable with regard to this moral individual.

7. Being reveals itself *hic et nunc*, i.e., at a definite place constituted of things of which we are acquainted, the locality-on-this-side-of-sensible-horizon. This metaphysical locality revealed directly is the basic place of Being's accessibility; it is the cosmos of substantial phenomena of Being and the ensemble of substantial individuals. Being void of locality-on-this-side, it is but a speculative chimera and gnostic abstraction. The image of the locality-on-this-side indicates that the place and moment where a mortal individual and Being meet is not any "now". As a mortal substantial being one exists within some "here" and "now", but one is finite not only in time, but in space as well: one is not only mortal, but bounded. As the boundary is absolute for a mortal, the human horizon is singular. One always exists on this side of the sensible, substantially bounded horizon; but he exists virtually on the side of the horizon where the phenomena of Being are located. What a mortal is acquainted with in the locality-on-this-side are but the phenomena of Being. Such phenomena lose their anonymity and are substantial paths of Being; they are bursting with Being and enjoy perfect completeness of Being. In such a locality a mortal discovers the metaphysical place where he can establish worthwhile contact with things and convert them into phenomena of Being.

Primarily, this is creative contact through which a mortal substantializes and individualizes noumena, ideas, symbols, and forms of quasi-being: in this way significant things are called into existence. The phenomenon of Being has minimum meaning and maximum significance. Being in such a thing as attained is meaningless, but in erecting the phenomenon of Being a mortal erects a significant centre of the highest intensity. On the other hand, this contact is authorized, for it is as an individual person that one creates both the phenomenon of Being and the cosmos or locality-on-this-side of such phenomena. This locality is sensible and can be absorbed both mentally and visually. Yet at the same time it is a metaphysical locality as the field where sensible transcendence takes place in the sight of a mortal. To name this metaphysical locality we can borrow a Greek word *arche*. As the author of the phenomenon of Being, a mortal is the architect of the locality-on-this-side. Authorized construction of the locality-on-this-side and the erection of the ensemble of the phenomena of Being is the way a mortal becomes acquainted with things and meets their Being.

It was noted above that the significance of the phenomenon of Being is meaningless, since significance arises not from man himself, but from Being-beyond-man. Significance is always transcendent and turns sacral within the agnostic context. The locality-on-this-side is a cosmos of sacred things, a sacred field or sanctuary of Being. Being is always identical to the proximity of sacred things and to the sanctity of their intimacy. The locality-on-this-side is an abode of living gods. The contact of a mortal with the locality-on-this-side is marked by a predominant mode of "ownership". The phenomena of Being are erected by me and are my things; the locality-on-this-side is the proper field of this mortal. Significance, intimacy, sanctity and possession are the basic components of man's access to Being, naturalized in the phenomenon of Being.

Orientation towards Being is predominant in the locality-on-this-side. Within naturalistic needs man is forced to pay tribute to the furies of un-being, yet here a mortal is primarily an architect and gardener of Being. However, as being is an immense burden to carry, man's nature is perpetually in search of ontological relief. Non-being or quasi-being are easier than Being. To transcend into anonymic meanings, to over-step the individuality of a thing, to destroy its Being, to fuse with the Great Anonym is easier than to erect and foster the phenomena of Being. Orientation towards un-being, the possibility and need of fluttering in quasi-Being--all this is

hidden in man's naturalistic nature. Such orientation may get loose and predominate due to stress on cognition as an instrument for control. The mastering of this controlling process is called method and technique. The tyranny of methodical cognition initiates the intensive and systematic destruction of Being: un-being becomes the highest value.

How is all this realized? First, the transcendence of Being-beyond-human-perception is denied and any manner of transcendence is considered a phantom or illusion. This concurs with the death of God and aggressive destruction of nature; it is given a blessing by declaring that "man is the ultimate value", yet a revolt against transcendence is nothing other than a human orientation towards self-destruction. It is directly manifest in destroying the thing-like place of man's existence, in ravaging the locality of the phenomena of Being. Thus the field in which a creative meeting with the whole of Being could take place disappears; morality becomes something relative. A mortal abuses his ontological competence and breaks the horizon encircling the phenomena of Being. Thus begins an endless war against things, and indeed the substantial element of man himself. One refuses to recognize the substantiality and individuality of a thing, the right of a thing to be in itself and for itself, even within the frame of its natural existence.

The authorized-creative contact with things slackens; the wasteland of instrumental meanings expands and the fields of significance contracts. The sacred space of substantivity is destroyed. The process of acquaintance is utterly replaced by methodical and technical knowledge. What remains is, on the one hand, significance without things (formulae) and, on the other hand, things without significance (technology and articles of consumption). The locality-on-this-side falls prey to a place-less and thing-less universe, which can be named a city. This refers not to a physical, sociological or geographical reality, but rather to the situation determined by man's orientation toward un-being, by the naturalistic desire of alleviation, of which the principal vector is a fluttering among the phantoms of quasi-being without a place where things are to be authorized and naturalized, indeed without things themselves. In the urban situation Being abandons things coming from the anonymous world that stretches beyond the horizon of things, which are reduced to pure instruments and fall under mortals' competence, Such things without Being are but pseudo-things, or articles of pure consumption.

In the urban situation authorized construction is replaced by power-gaining anonymous destruction. The construction of the phenomena of Being turns into its caricature--the manufacturing of articles for gaping and consumption: this is a kind of destructive consumption. The city denotes the space and time of the decline of Being, it is the space where the furies of transcendence stretch their wings most broadly, ravaging the fields of mortals' Being and feeling. The city is a wasteland of quasi-being, without oases of Being; its principle is unrestrained and unceremonious naturalism under the mask of aggressive anti-naturalism. The resident of the city is both nature's enemy and at the same time its friend, who both promotes the naturalistic or non-being possibilities of nature and makes them absolute. The city is the universe of triumphant naturalism, whereas nature is the opposite of Being, or the synonym of un-being. The time of the city begins at the hour Being dies. We are living the time of the metaphysical agony of Being, of which political, economic, social and spiritual agonies are but reflections and distant sequels.





## Chapter V

# Freedom's Paradoxes in Search of Their Roots and Fruits

*Aleksandr Dobrynin*

Freedom pertains to a range of human values which have critical meaning for the existence and survival of civilization. The history of Western culture provides many splendid descriptions and explanations of the nature of freedom and of the goals towards which it should be directed. In the fifth century B.C. a great citizen of Athens, Pericles, in his famous funeral oration, formulated the principle of a democratic *polis* as the place where every single citizen, "in all the manifold aspects of life, is able to show himself to be the rightful lord and owner of his own person, and to do this, moreover, with exceptional grace and exceptional versatility." There, all know that "happiness depends on being free, and that freedom depends on being courageous."<sup>1</sup> Some ten years later another great citizen of Athens--Plato, who somehow was a political antagonist of Pericles--reconstructed as a dialogue the image of Socrates, the sage who in his last words before his death appealed to his friends: deck the soul "not with a borrowed beauty but with its own--with self-control, and goodness, and courage, and liberality, and truth."<sup>2</sup> Only a soul so endowed can "collect and concentrate itself by itself" and trust nothing but "its own independent judgment upon objects considered in themselves." Only such a soul will attribute "no truth to anything which it views indirectly as being subject to variation"<sup>3</sup> and actually will be liberated from the fetters of the material world.

So in the very beginning of Western civilization one finds two closely related definitions of freedom. The first, which could be termed political or institutional, concerns decisions, action and self-realization in social life. This description of freedom expresses the essence of a democratic society understood not only as a process of choosing or decision-making, but as the more general guarantee of the realization of natural human rights. The second definition is rationalistic and rather individualistic; it focuses on the self-affirmation of the thinking human being, affirms the validity of unrestricted yet critical intellectual research, and proclaims the significance of truth in human life.

The resemblance between these two definitions is clearly that both are founded in the "self" as the principle of every intentional state, social or mental, in which freedom exists. Both definitions illustrate what later was discovered by Schelling, namely, that the being of freedom is "being-in-oneself."

But besides this striking similarity there is an essential difference between these two paradigms of the Western philosophical tradition. The difference consists not in the thematic aspects of the two approaches--external and social vs inner and individual--but in their very mode of representing freedom. On the one hand, freedom means the possibility of free concrete acts by limited human beings living in a society of similarly limited human beings. On the other hand, the ability to be free is considered to be without limitation, for by its very nature personal intellectual freedom cannot depend on something that limits the mind. In the first case the freedom of one is

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<sup>1</sup> Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. R. Warner (London: Penguin, 1972), pp. 147-150.

<sup>2</sup> Plato, *Phaedo*, 114e-115a, trans. H. Tredeanick, in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. E. Hamilton and H. Cairns (New York: Pantheon, 1971), p. 95.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 83a-c, p. 66.

dependant upon the freedom of the many; in the second case one's freedom depends only upon oneself and supposes an unrestricted ability to search for truth.

These "outer" and "inner" aspects of freedom, their resemblance and difference, are, of course, enduring features of human intellectual history. At the same time, however, they are the source of great difficulties in understanding the metaphysical substance and social attributes of freedom.

From its ancient context of Greek culture Western civilization inherits its great questions. One of these can be formulated in the following terms: how can unrestricted freedom be realized in the restricted conditions of the actual social order? Certainly this paper is not able to solve the problem of coherence between these "inner" and "outer" aspects of freedom. The goal of the present discussion is more modest, namely, to sketch the metaphysical contour of the problem, and to illustrate it with some examples which, I believe, will help to recognize the danger of ignoring this problem.

### **Can Unlimited Reason Be Free?**

As has been seen, the Western philosophical tradition relates the notion of freedom to the spontaneity of the human intellect. Classically this was expressed in the Cartesian position regarding the "cogito." According to Descartes, spontaneous human thinking is critical self-reflection which in the act of thought affirms its subject or the one who is doing the thinking. Besides this affirmation of the subject's existence, what is more interesting here is the very ability to direct the act of thinking to itself. The nature of this reflection was grasped by St. Augustine in his famous words, "si fallor sum," which historically preceded the Cartesian "cogito ergo sum." From this point of view the act of thinking as doubting appears as the decisive element in the self-affirmation of the subject as "res cogitans."

The process of doubting is not similar to a dog's chasing its own tail, rather it presupposes distance between the subject and the object to be doubted. In order to negate my mind, I must exit my being-in-thought, i.e., I must recognize the otherness or non-being of thought. Or to put this the other way around, when I *reject doubt* about myself as a subject of thinking, I indeed affirm myself as a thinking subject: but when I *have doubt* about my own thinking, then by the very fact of doubting I affirm my existence before and outside of thinking. In other words, by doubt I affirm an "I" which cannot be the object of thinking, for in relation to the "cogito" it is nonbeing or other.

Everyone can verify this mental fact by attempting to localize or "to catch" his own "I" in his thinking. Just as an eye cannot see itself, so an "I" cannot think itself. Perhaps the existentialists were correct in denying the correctness of "cogito ergo sum" because this reflective act does not express the completeness of human existence. But at the same time one can agree that critical thinking or doubting affirms reflexively the existence of the "I," though it does so indirectly and without concrete specification.

In discussing above the uncovering of the existence of the "I" we had to speak rather in negative terms, for such an understanding does not imply the existence of sensible objects or of objects of thought. Kant suggested describing the grasp of such existence by the term "apperception," that is, a non-thinking re-presentation (*vor-stellung*): this is an act of spontaneity<sup>4</sup> in which the proper content of thinking consists. In other words, the synthetic activity of the "I" which gathers the manifold of sense data into the unity of judgment stands before or re-

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<sup>4</sup> See *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. N.K. Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1969), p. 153.

presents that unity. Between "I am" and "I am thinking" there is a "split" or space in which our thinking originates.

What does this re-presentation" mean? This fact of non-identity between "I am" and "I am thinking" has been treated in the philosophical tradition in the form of conceptions about "free will." According to this conception, besides intellect, the intelligible human soul has another, higher faculty, namely will, which governs all human acts including thinking. But the conception of "free will" or the "will to choose" can add nothing to the problem of "re-presentation" because of the close interrelation between the will and the intellect. In a classic description of this Thomas Aquinas wrote that the intellect "moves the will, because the good understood is object of the will" and the will "moves the intellect, and all the powers of the soul."<sup>5</sup> So the act of willing is intellectualized and what is called "free will" is really intellectual will. Because the spontaneity of willing and of thinking are in the same field there is no need to suppose, that one precedes the other: though intellect and will have different content their source is the same. Between "I am" and "I am willing" there is the same split as in the case discussed above.

Nevertheless, the term "free will," though it does not help in discussing the re-presentation of the "I" to oneself in the act of self-consciousness, can help make this problem more precise. First, critical doubt and choice belong to the same level of our existence and presuppose the ability of going out of the present state in order to re-present. This choice, whether or not intellectual, requires some distinction of what is chosen from what is present. Second, in the philosophical tradition this choice is usually determined as "free" in a negative sense, i.e., as the possibility of falling away from the given order of things. Third, the traditional context in which the problem of "free will" has been discussed points to the field of religious philosophy, where the problem of "re-presenting" takes on great interest and has been the subject of a vast amount of reflection and writing.

How will the problem of the re-presentation of the human "I" appear in the context of the Christian image of the human being as a created, finite and free person? This image does not contradict the critical philosophical tradition where it is precisely the "I am thinking" (or *cogito*) which is the focus of Kant's attention. He wrote: "An understanding in which through self-consciousness all the manifold would *eo ipso* be given, would be *intuitive*; our understanding can only *think*, and for intuition must look to the senses."<sup>6</sup> The usual interpretation of this statement notes that human understanding consists of two different levels: sensible intuition and rational thinking. But another interpretation in the Christian tradition would see the intuitive re-presenting of the manifold through self-consciousness as reflecting God's absolute knowledge which actually is His creative act. God's "thinking"--or in Kantian terms "intuition"--includes His "act of being": God's affirmative self-consciousness of His "I" is formulated in the proposition "I am, Who am." Finite or created beings do not possess the act of being in their very essence or nature, and in this sense originally or spontaneously: for them the act of being is distinct from their essence. Thus, when the human being reflects his essence in terms of his "cogito", he cannot simply and from himself affirm his existence.

Furthermore, as Kant's interpretation of "I" was limited by the context of a synthetic unity of given data, the later philosophical tradition perceived in the re-presentative apperception of "I" an earthly likeness of divine activity in Its creative intuition of the objective world. In the context of

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<sup>5</sup> *The Summa Theologiae of St. Thomas Aquinas*, I, q. 32, a. 4, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, D.J Sullivan (London: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1952), Vol. I, p. 434.

<sup>6</sup> *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 155.

this tradition the spontaneity of the "I" expressed in its re-presentative thinking is an affirmation of the creative activity of the subject and an expression of its freedom.

In this sense the spontaneity of my "I" has its source in the act "I am," which refers to the Divine affirmation "I am Who am." In other words, a person's freedom is a Divine gift and my freedom, which precedes any re-presentation or choice, by definition is the very same creative act as the Divine creative act. The difference between them is only in possessing the act of being: where God's creation presents objects, man's creation re-presents objects.

But in the same sense the latter is nonetheless also a creation from nothing. The human world consists in thoughts and deeds, meaning and values created from nothing, for the whole human world as a representation requires space where there is no presentation. In this sense human freedom transcends the corporeal world not only because it is analogous to the act of being, but by the very fact that it always has to overcome the givenness of this world.

This could be a way of understanding some philosophers who affirm that freedom precedes being. Discovering one's freedom in one's re-presentation or construction of the human world, the person discovers that Being is hidden in the elusiveness of the free "I" as the source of all one's intentional presentations.

This transcendent dimension of freedom does not allow any restriction or limitation of its creative or re-presentative aspects, but only its manifestations in the human world such as thinking or willing. Indeed, man can freely construct his own world mediated by meanings, though each person not only re-presents the living world, but also is present in it as a finite corporeal being. Kant had this very fact in mind, when he proposed that freedom as source of reason at the same time limits pure reason to its manifestation in the corporeal world.

In other words, this limitation is possible only with regard to the objective authenticity of what is comprehended in the field of experience, but not as regards the subjective authenticity which becomes the object of belief. It is the latter which is the common principle for comprehending the manifestations of freedom in the world of finite beings. The absolute spontaneity of my "I" is restricted only by itself. But if it does not depend on the condition of the intelligible world; it does depend on the condition of the world of finite corporal beings. Man's belonging to the corporeal world, his bodyness, does not allow him to merge with the source of his freedom, to merge with the Divine free will (*Willkür*). When one forgets human limits, one protests against the Creator. This implies an intention to usurp its ontological place, to substitute "I am, Who am" with the dull "I am thinking" or "I am willing". This is actually a rejection of God's being and of the divine gift of freedom.

This is a paradox: being free we do not possess our freedom but only its manifestations in the world. The effort of Kant's practical reason to find its foundation in belief in freedom, in the soul's immortality and in the being of God demonstrates the meaningfulness of this subjective evidence. But reason based on belief and on God as the source of freedom can say nothing about how concrete freedom must be expressed in the world. It says only that this realization of freedom must take into account the existence of other free people, who also are realizing their purpose as free persons. This is not only a result of philosophical meditations, but a fact of our life as free persons. Hence, as freedom is an unsolved mystery for human reason, mystery directs us throughout out life. Its intelligible sector extends to the limits of intelligibility, but crossing this limit is not possible without non-intellectual belief. This requires belief as faith, which is not postulated by reason but given as grace "ut intelligam," i.e., for the understanding of self and the realization of the gift of freedom.

It would seem that at this point philosophical thought must stop and give way to theological investigations, but there is another philosophical aspect of this problem. Believing could be taken as a non-intellectual act of soul which opens the space of the noumenal world. But when in this noumenal world we begin to discuss the correspondence between God and person, we must speak rather about faith than belief. Further, we must note that this faith is not only a personal reality, but is institutionalized to a degree which must not be ignored. This institutionalization, or more precisely institutionalized tradition, mediates between the free person and the ultimate ground of one's freedom. In the Christian tradition this institution, situated between the transcendent God and individual interiority, is called the Church. One should not be surprised then that in the Western tradition the realization of freedom depends upon the institutionalization of Christianity in this time and place.

There are many examples--theoretical and practical--of ignoring this institutional aspect of freedom. The Platonic concept of freedom mentioned above is a striking example. Plato was concerned that philosophical freedom does not correspond to social freedom. Democracy presupposes some rationalization of action, free discussion, competition, or *agon*, but in this do the wisest prevail? Socrates was the wisest and, in terms of the definition of a philosopher, the freest man of Greece. Nevertheless, the demos saw in his intellectual freedom a danger to their political democratic order, and for this reason sentenced him to death. The freedom of the many had denied the freedom of the one!

Plato agreed with the proposition that the state could be free and intelligent, but at the same time affirms that in this state freedom must be "limited with measure."<sup>7</sup> What this "measure" means for Plato can be seen from his *Republic*, where the strict rationalistic regulation of social life has nothing in common with the Athenian ideals of democracy. The *Republic* described a situation where the intellectual freedom of one or a few denies the freedom of many. It is not surprising that in twentieth century some philosophers have seen the "Gulag Archipelago" as a realization of a Platonic social construct, image or *eidos*. Certainly, Plato would never have intended a *gulag*: as he said, his Republic was only *u-topos*, i.e., a place that never exists. But obviously he overlooked the mediating tradition in which freedom must be realized. Plato believed that the Spartan lifestyle best agreed with free philosophical reason, but seems never to have asked whether this tradition could tolerate philosophers as free people.

Another more practical example can be found more proximately in the political process of liberalization. From the Romantic epoch in Western culture comes the image of the hero who is able to sacrifice himself for the sake of freedom. This desire for freedom, exactly described by Nietzsche, suggests that freedom is some sort of absolute willing, self-willing. For him every institutionalization of the realization of freedom implied treason against freedom. In this mode of thinking in freedom its function of "going out of the present state" is absolutized and for this reason it appears as a fully destructive and negative force, having nothing in common with the critical and constructive (re-presentative) thought described above. For Nietzsche freedom was only one aspect of his famous unrestricted desire to power (*Wille zur Macht*).

What will happen when the romantic hero who wills by power to institute freedom finds himself in prosaic, nondemocratic conditions which offer him very limited means to realize his goal? Actually, one can expect a fantastic metamorphosis of the individualistic revolutionary desire for power into something non-individual, common and static. To realize freedom by power requires an institutionalization of power whose main function is to achieve, hold and reproduce it. This institution provides the conditions for the individual to realize his "will to power" on each

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<sup>7</sup> The Law of Plato, 701e-702a, trans. Th.L. Pangle (Chicago: The Univ. of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 87.

level of the social hierarchy. In return, however, it uses all human values such as intelligence, morality, etc., as mere means which must serve the main goal, namely, power.

The misfortune of all revolutionaries and the absurdness of all revolutions consists in this very fact that, though driven by the romantic idea of liberating people with the help of power, they do not take into account the dehumanized function of usurped power. In states where power is the main concern (V. Lenin) and principle of social life all revolutionaries become but screws in the enormous mechanism of power.

One can be an adroit tactician of street battles or political intrigue that lead to a usurpation of power though rarely can one combine tactical with strategic talent in order to hold power for some period. But when the question of power is raised "seriously and forever" there is no need of the resources of intellect and will which spring from the source of freedom, for these factors only prevent the realization of power which is dictated not by the possibly ingenious will of the tyrant, but by the forms of human society and culture which sometimes have been deformed by past power. Present rulers can only adapt their knowledge, skills and instincts to these traditional cultural forms of regenerating power. Their choice in this case is not to restore or to prevent the old order, or to attempt with some risk to change the surface patterns of power without changing its very structure. This world gives birth to reforms, modernization or perestroikas, but it becomes manifest that the revolutionaries of power become subject to power: every Julius Caesar has his own Octavius Augustus.

This leads to the conclusion that the appeal to unrestricted freedom's manifestation from "inside" leads to contradictions with freedom from "outside", that such "freedom" in fact denies itself. "Free" thinking or "free" willing, which does not recognize their ontological limits and storm the metaphysical heaven of the act of being, always risks sharing the lot of Lucifer: the unlimited reason of finite being through unrestricted thoughts and willful deeds falling into the hell of nonfreedom.

### **What Spirit Do We Believe?**

As noted above, free reason being critical requires believing and at the same time an institutionalized tradition of belief in order truly to be free. But, on the other hand, does the understanding of a meaningful institutionalization of belief inevitably secure freedom from "outside", or social freedom? Let us to attempt to consider this problem in the more concrete and illustrative context which will be called "open society and national ideology."

It seems unnecessary to examine so well-known and well-described a context. Enough analyses seriously conclude that today liberalism has no serious competition, that Fascism and Communism have receded into the past, and that such problems of the contemporary world as nationalism or religious fundamentalism will be solved almost automatically in a liberated, free society.<sup>8</sup> But what would such analyses conclude in the case where liberalism is not fully realized or where it does not exist at all? What is one to do when for most members of post-totalitarian society the ideas of liberalism mean no more than a non-comprehensive concept of that Communism which has just been buried? Then one must recognize that the problems of nationalism or fundamentalism are truly open, and, in particular, that the national idea requires not a lack of reflection, but careful examination.

First, there is need to describe what is meant by the terms "national ideology" and "open society". If an ideology is an ideal form of world re-presented in human minds and which specifies

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<sup>8</sup> See for example: Fr. Fukuyama, "The End of History," *The Nation, al Interest*, n. 16 (Summer, 1989).

the criteria of what is "suitable" or "unsuitable" according to the interests of some social groups or strata, then the term "national" will mean this special ideological "re-presentation" of world by the group called "nation". This "representation" requires the fulfillment of two conditions: first, that the "nation" recognize its own identity as differentiated from other groups and interests, and second that it possess some measure by which the social events and processes could be marked as "just" or "unjust" depending on the correspondence of these events and processes to national goals. It is clear enough, that national interests have been declared to be of main importance, subordinating to themselves all the interests of other social groups.

While this definition of "national ideology" has been constructed in terms of the "critical" Marx, the expression "open society" ought to be defined from the philosophical critique by Karl Popper of the "closed society". In Popper's definition "the closed society is characterized by the belief in magical taboos, while the open society is one in which men have learned to be to some extent critical of taboos, and base decisions on the authority of their own intelligence (after discussion)."<sup>9</sup> Thus, open society requires the fulfillment of two conditions: first, that this society consist of independent or free thinking persons; second, that the social life of such a society be founded upon critical discussion. In other words the open society allows the individual to realize the main features of his "inner" freedom: thought that is based on itself (being-in-oneself) and critical doubt. In such a society higher interests could consist only in the search for truth by the individual. In that case clearly all interests of groups must be subordinated to the interest of the individual.

An open society thus understood does not accept any ideology, including one that is national, by the very fact that in an open society no social interest can be collectively represented, but must be reduced by rational procedures to the private interest of the thinking being: only on this basis does it have a right to exist. On this basis an open society is not compatible with a national ideology, and all discussion is closed. But these definitions and principles exist only in theory: in practice there are only approximate constructions of this open society. Moreover, many existing "open societies" arose as national states, i.e., as societies under the domination of some kind of national self-concept. Therefore, instead of rejecting national ideology as something contradictory to the idea of an open society, it would be better to discuss its sources and forms.

It would be naive to suppose that a national ideology arises by itself from a nation's natural needs and self-consciousness of its place and fate in history. Certainly, concrete historical conditions--victory in war or humiliating oppression, the search of prosperity or the desire to partition off disruptive neighbors--influence the tempo and manner in which the national idea is formed. But in spite of these historical conditions and representative forms of national ideology, the later has its own metaphysical foundation, which suggests that it is not only a unique experience of social life, but an expression of some global process.

The Russian philosopher Berdyaev noticed right away after the Bolshevik revolution that Russian messianism had been an essential element of Russian communism. Later, Popper attempted to show that both Marxism and nationalism were based upon the doctrine of a "chosen people". This interpretation concludes that the role of the "chosen people" from the Old Testament is reflected both in the notion of an "advanced" revolutionary class whose rule is prophesied in the sacred laws of historical progress, and in the notion of a chosen nation whose historical and political pretensions are strengthened by a mystical experience of "blood and soil". In both cases blind belief in the magic taboo of historical "laws" or in sacred tradition are sure signs of a closed society, which by Popper's definition would be called a tribal society.

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<sup>9</sup> K.R. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), I, p. 202.

At first sight nationalism could seem closer to tribal society than Marxist communism. One can imagine a nation as a large family, where relations must be deeply felt, with a cult of the deceased and respect for the elders through a guaranteed ritual unity and deep response to one's home and land. It is not surprising that the national idea acquires authority in a context in which all speak of man's alienation, of an earlier romantic "golden age" with morality, brotherhood and enthusiasm for the common life.

But these tendencies are well-known in communistic ideology as well. Marx spoke of this as follows: "In fact, the proposition that man's species nature is estranged from him means that one man is estranged from the other, as each of them is from man's essential nature."<sup>10</sup> According to Marx, communism is intended as a way to overcome man's estrangement and alienation. In fact it restores to man his "species nature" and at the same time his tribal society.

The difference between a communistic ideology and a national one lies only in their respective means of returning to tribal society. Whereas a national ideology recalls one to his "native roots" to restore the good old traditions and to pureness of race, communistic ideology insists on the "worker's liberation" from "the oppression of capital", on rejecting classes and private property, which according to Marxism is the economic and juridic basis, in Hegel's terminology, of the individual's "unhappy" consciousness. When one supposes that nationalistic ideology is an effective weapon against totalitarian structures produced by communistic ideology and practice one does not take into account either the metaphysical similarities of these types of ideology, or the elementary lessons of history. But in 1939, concerning Fascism as the extreme form of national ideology, P. Drucker wrote: "Not that Communism and Fascism are essentially the same. Fascism is the stage reached after Communism has proved an illusion, and it has proved as such an illusion in Stalinist Russia as in pre-Hitler Germany."<sup>11</sup> Only one thing needs to be corrected here, namely, that Communism and Fascism specifically as political phenomena are not the same; essentially they are the same in their intention to realize a closed tribal society and to go the way of serfdom.

Though communistic and nationalistic ideologies declare different ideas and values they concur in the principles of movement toward their goals. The interests of nation or class are proclaimed as total: they control the choice and measure the responsibility of individuals. Society creates a cult of heroes who carry the best traits of nation or class. The ideologists of the closed society produce a program of ideological education, relating to all fields of culture, beginning with national education or "cultprosvet" (cultural education for the proletariat in Bolshevik Russia) and finishing with the restoration or recreation of old and new rituals. Finally, in society charismatic persons are promoted--fathers of nations and leaders of revolutionary masses who have led the people to the promised land, to the "light," to the tribal, closed society, where everybody *must* be happy. Individuals who have no wish to join this "joyful" movement are proclaimed traitors of national or class interests: they are subject to ostracism or simply destroyed.

There are many explanations of this amazing similarity between communism and nationalism, but in the context of the examination of the problem of freedom let us return to the Popperian illustration of this phenomena in terms of a "chosen people". In this light the phenomena could be described in terms of heresy. In the traditional context of European culture, one can speak about a chosen people and their society founded upon belief only with regard to the Christian Church. The Christian's "chosenness" has not only an earthly level but a mystic one. This means not only belonging to the Church in a formal sense, but asserting the equality of human beings as free

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<sup>10</sup> K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, trans. M. Milligan (New York: International Publishers, 1964), p. 114.

<sup>11</sup> Fr. A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 29.



persons and bearing metaphysical responsibility for their free choice, without denying any "physical" or earthly conditions. When this "chosenness" is interpreted in an earthly context, it means not simply returning to the Old Testament, but also destroying the New Testament. The same act destroys the Divine ground of human personality. Arguments that only the nation or class, with their institutionalization of belief in their taboos and rituals, can be the real measure of the free deeds of individuals, i.e., that they can be the source of morality, point to usurpation of the ontological ground which in fact can never be achieved by finite beings.

As if in view of these latest difficulties, Kant suggested distinguishing the juridical community based on "outer" law ("legality") from the ethical one based on "inner" obligation ("morality"). In the first case, the majority united in community has to be presented as the legislator of its own constitutive law. But in the second case the common will of the legislator cannot be thrust upon individuals as moral obligation without infringing upon their freedom. The source of moral legislation must be the same as the source of freedom, namely, God. Therefore, according to Kant, "an ethical commonwealth can be thought of only as people under divine commands, i.e., as a *people of God*, and indeed *under laws of virtue*."<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, the idea of a *people of God* can be realized in traditional institutionalization only in the form of Church.

One ought not to be surprised that nationalism, like communism, in search of a collectivistic justice and in advancing national or class morals, gravitates, first to anti-Christianity in its pagan or atheistic form, and second, to a eudaimonistic or utilitarian ethic whose moral maxim could be expressed in the sentence: "All that gives joy and is useful to nation or class are moral and truly good." There is but one step from this to the initiation of propaganda for racial or class discrimination and the justification of all deeds done in the name of group interests. In this situation personal responsibility does not exist, but only collective "responsibility" which controls the correctness of individual actions. In other words personal responsibility is substituted by collective irresponsibility.

Unfortunately, for people from post-totalitarian societies this theory is known practically only from communistic ideology. That a national ideology is a kindred sister of communism is not seriously appreciated. In societies which publicly declare a break with totalitarian practice one finds enthusiasm for the idea that only a nation firmly believing its historical fate and preserving the legacy of its past has a right to its own state as the highest form of its historical being; only such state can have the form of an ethical commonwealth.

In reality many members of this society with some disillusionment must accept the idea that the state is not the highest form of a nation's being, but rather is derived from private interests expressed in the general form of law. This nomocratic notion of state leads to quite another vision than the one to which they are accustomed because it leads from a closed, tribal community to an open, juridical one. Then as noted by J. Ortega Y Gasset:

Race, blood, geographical position, social class--all these take secondary place. It is not the community of the past which is traditional, immemorial--in a word, fatal and unchangeable--which confers a title to this political fellowship but the community of the future with a definite plan of action. Not what we were yesterday, but what we are going to be tomorrow, joins us together in the state.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*, trans. Th.M. Greene and H.H. Hudson (New York: Harper, 1960), p. 91.

<sup>13</sup> Y. Ortega y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1932), pp. 184-85.

But, perhaps, this mode of political thinking has to await its own time. Probably the post-totalitarian state will pass through a stage of national (or similar) ideology as the successor to the communistic ideology. The point here is not an historical parallel or determination, but the spiritual situation which these societies inherit from their communistic past. The thesis popular in the West regarding God's "death" and the nonexistence of a moral society could be applied more fundamentally to the post-communistic East. One has to know that the social, economic, political and spiritual structure of these societies is that of collectively organized societies. Communistic ideology can return with an absolutely different image, but in the same structure which it had created.

The danger of the present situation consists in the moral indifference of societies in their intellectual decay, and in their rejection of constructive critique. The communistic regime has destroyed many virtues and spread instincts of the herd, hate of people who are not part of the mass and a mystical belief in the authority of leaders. Post-totalitarian societies can generate a new ideology which will excuse their member's irresponsibility and unwillingness to carry the heavy burden of freedom, and lead again to a closed collectivistic society. No one can say if there is a critical mass of free persons in post-totalitarian society who "do not believe every spirit but test the spirits to see whether they are of God" (I John, 1). They would turn society in another direction-into the way toward freedom. But could they do so?

## **Conclusion**

Strictly speaking there are no conclusions, no results which one could use as a technology for the realization of freedom in the world. The "inner" aspect of freedom has shown that the road to the discovery of freedom through critical thinking manifests not an equality between them, but rather an ontological dependence. If one wishes to defend freedom one has to limit reason by belief in the pure givenness of the sources of freedom. But from the point of view of the "outer" aspect of freedom it has been shown that not every belief institutionalized in society preserves freedom: indeed, society cannot be free without some institutionalization of the tradition of critical discussion.

This is not merely a dull dialectical game, but an attempt to discover the mode of institutionalization which paradigmatically joins the "inner" and "outer" aspects of freedom. In this context the intent of the turn to the Christian tradition was not theological but metaphysical, namely, to identify the principle of the correspondence of the freedom of the one with that of the many. In this sense the notion of the Christian Church has nothing in common with any concrete institutionalized form of Church, but is the principle which must be realized in the life world. Moreover, only by this principle can concrete traditional institutionalization be open, whereas forgetting this principle closes all.

Therefore, what has been said above in section II does not mean that the national idea as such is depraved and leads automatically to totalitarianism. Its positive character appears not only in its well-known confrontation of the mechanistic communist ideology, but in the fact that the word "freedom," as with any word "from God," is pronounced in one's native language. All societies and their members must be able to choose their own national way to an open society. Nevertheless, when the principles of freedom are formulated in terms of a cultural tradition one must not forget that the national ideals are only the means, not the goal, of the process of realizing a free society.

To conclude, I would emphasize once again that the sources of freedom must be found within the transcendent in order for its fruits to emerge in earthly life. Sometimes it is thought that in

choosing its fruits one finds freedom. That is not correct: on the contrary one reaps these fruits only by choosing freedom. Perhaps, this is the greatest paradox of freedom, that of our transcendent yet immanent life.

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**Chapter VI**  
**Lithuania at the End of the Twentieth Century:**  
**The Creation of an Open Society and Culture**

*Leonidas Donskis*

Contemporary Lithuania aspires to return to the great Occidental civilization, to reintegrate itself into the process of European history and culture from which Lithuania has been isolated for half a century. This aspiration, as well as the related theoretical considerations regarding its possibility, must not be turned into the schematic and naive theoretical and ideological alternatives put forward in the disputes of the nineteenth century Russian Slavophiles and Zapadniks (Westernizers).

**Baltocentrism**

In Lithuania, these disputes have been continued by intellectuals who believe in the idea of the West and by the Baltophiles. This alternative could be formulated roughly as follows: does one's historical fate and the road of civilization have to be connected with the foremost region of world history, namely, the West and its civilization, or do we have our own unique historical fate and road? Could this help us to avoid the obvious drawbacks of the Western world: extreme heterogenization of cultural creation, differentiation of activity, pragmatism, the trivialization of culture caused by economic fundamentalism, the spirit of expansion, extensive cultural phenomena ousting intensive creative action, and the evils of mass society?

On the other side of such schematic, binary and fatalistic thinking there is the fact that the development of historical culture (civilization) is always probabilistic and does not submit to any pretentious theoretical planning and modelling. While being a supersystem that organizes and regulates itself, at the same time culture is also an axionormative dimension of a human being's existence in the world. That is why any preliminary attempt to model culture optimally, to make projects for its future is, as a matter of fact, a normative action. Explaining what a culture should be like and what it should avoid reveals belief in the unconditionally standardizing and manipulating power of theoretical thought, not to mention the wish to treat culture and its historical forms instrumentally. This attitude should be distinguished strictly from a cultural strategy or policy which, though being inevitable and indispensable parts of the instrumental process themselves, stipulate not an instrumentalism of culture, but merely an effort to preserve its historical form and protect it institutionally, to take care of freedom and of its immanent dissemination.

From the normative point of view in cultural modelling and axionormativity it is but one step to declaring that the world can and must adapt itself to a rational theoretical scheme. If the world has its own ontic vector and systems of orientation then the worse for the world. It is hardly necessary to prove to somebody nowadays that every serious theory always tries to speak from the distance of time or of historical perspective, though it is caused directly by present existence. It strives for a long view of research processes and phenomena so as not to be absorbed by them and lose conceptual distance.

The romantic-ethnocentric and monadic visions of culture treat it as a closed, unique and sacred world--a specific theophany or monad. Such planning of the future of our culture is the point of view of contemporary Baltophilism, which is simply a national fundamentalism.

### **Christian Universalism**

There is an alternative to the romantic Baltocentric, or to be more precise, to the neo-Romantic point of view which hypertrophizes the phenomenon of the nation and the uniqueness of its historical path. It is sufficient to cast a theoretical glance upon the real, rather than the ideal, history of our culture and sociodynamics and to attempt to identify to which world regions and civilizations we are related by the fundamental forms of life and culture found in Lithuanian history. Lithuania is part of Christian civilization; it is a fragment of the Christian occidental world. Hence, it would be naive to describe its cultural reintegration into the West as sociocultural mimicry or as an artificial transfer of the Western mode of life and consciousness into the Lithuanian sociocultural context. This, in any case, would be impossible and irrational.

Western ideals of intellect and freedom and their absolute primacy over other possible orientations, activities and cultural creations, as well as economic and political liberalism, polycentrism and pluralism--all this is nothing other than the openness of society and culture, which concept was explicated thoroughly and clearly by Karl R. Popper. Openness can be understood as a metaphysical dimension of the Western world, that is, as the sphere of existence and substantiality, the assertion of individuality, and the basic principle of the life of society; it is the fundamental point of orientation and organization extending to various spheres of activity and creation.

Further, the experiences of both Europe and the West as a metaphysical vector and ontocultural movement undoubtedly are concealed in, the forms of Lithuanian history. They are found in urban culture (though not in purely European forms), in architectural forms, in structures and models of economic and state life. This appears in great historical and cultural programs and epochs and in the records and transformations of their styles and physiognomies, as has been made manifest through the investigations of private property and of the concept of regional world development by the medievalists, E. Gudavicius and A. Bumblauskas.

It must be acknowledged that the great European processes and historical cultural phenomena, though they did not leave Lithuania behind, still reached Lithuania very late and already strongly modified, rather than in their pure and primary shape. For instance, there was neither Renaissance, nor Renaissance Humanism, nor Romanticism as great cultural programs and orientations. Nevertheless, Lithuania was and still is a part of Western civilization, though unfavorable world processes and historical circumstances made it a marginal, rather than a central, part of the Western world.

In any case, contemporary Europeanization or Westernization of Lithuanian culture should mean not a blind, submissive, poor imitation of Western fashion and standards, but an actualization of its sociocultural potency. It should constitute a spread of the forms of its culture in space and time. This it should do in the shape not of national myths, but of a real, historical and cultural configuration.

It is an ethnocentric superstition which established itself in the minds of many people that Lithuanian national culture is totally strange to the civilizations of the great world regions and world processes, and that it is therefore so extremely fragile and lifeless that it must be protected from harmful external influences. One could understand, or even approve, such an attitude when

formulated through the constant life or death struggle of the Lithuanian nation for its survival and the preservation of its historical fate, future and identity. Inevitably, this had to mark contemporary Lithuanian culture as well, which till now seems less concerned about the possibilities and perspectives of opening itself to other cultures. The constant defensive function performed by culture, suppressing the layers of creative experiment and free construction, left its imprint on the native language which still is in the constant state of standardizing, cleansing and purifying in a simply protective stance. Most probably for a long time this will continue to prevent our language from fixing in itself the vision and experience of the modern world.

But one should not miss the facts of history and the reality of life. First of all, the idea of an ethnically purified national culture, with elements of a prehistorical pagan culture, prevailing in the contemporary world is simply a fiction. It is possible and necessary to reconstruct theoretically the dawn of Lithuanian civilization, i.e., its historical culture, but it is hardly reasonable to provide these theoretical visions with a normative dimension or power in contrast to the contemporary world. First, with the exception of primitive cultures, fully localized models of culture no longer exist in a modern integrated world. Secondly, an ethnocentric understanding of contemporary culture only mystifies and distorts its real configuration. The nation, along with its culture, is a multidimensional, multilayered, polymorphic historical and sociocultural phenomenon, gathering the experience and forms of the dissemination of many nations and cultures. A national culture and nationality, when discussed seriously and exactly, is nothing but a specifically concentrated universalism. Only nations which do not find their place in the world and in history can make themselves an object of painful reflection.

Furthermore, the modern understanding of a nation, ethnocentrism and the ideology of a nation's primacy (nationalism) are phenomena of the Romantic epoch of European culture. That is why the juxtaposition of a national culture and civilization with the world cultural regions is totally unsubstantiated. Indeed, the term "nation" could be applied also to a large, even polyethnic historical-cultural community of people. Thus, the term European nation was used by L. Karsavin and P. Bagley who spoke of Europe's *Oikoumene* or superculture.

## **Westernization**

Thus, the contemporary occidentalization of Lithuania has two aspects: (1) it reflects the configuration of the real growth and development of our culture, without losing sight of Lithuanian emigrants or Western Lithuanian diaspora, and stretches out its historical panorama to clarify the real place of Lithuania in global Occidental processes; (2) at the same time, it opens the whole Lithuanian civilization to the world, so that society and culture should not be reduced only to the spheres of economics and politics.

The contemporary transfiguration of Lithuanian civilization and its resurrection to a new existence in time and space is in no way an artificial culturing of our society with the help of forms of Western civilization. It is based, first, on a clarification of the extent to which the idea of the West, with its conceptual grounds of freedom, openness and rationalism, and the forms of Western culture, with its urban planning, architecture and intellectual culture, are conveyed and disseminated through Lithuanian civilization. Secondly, it is based upon a clarification of how and to what extent the Lithuanian cultural creation can be projected upon Occidental civilization and at the same time integrated into the modern Western world.

But why emphasize the necessity of opening our society and culture to the West (the necessity of Occidentalization); why are the Eastern and non-Christian *Oikoumene* left out of sight? The

answer is both twofold and very simple. On the one hand, Lithuania belongs objectively to Occidental civilization, to the Western Christian *Oikoumene*. That is, its history more or less absorbed European processes and cultural influences. On the other hand, the openness of society and culture is a Western mode expressed concisely by liberal democracy in the economic and political spheres. It is not at all necessary to divide artificially the modern integrated world into East and West, North and South; these world regions have only geo-political meaning. It goes without saying, that openness of society and culture is openness to the whole world.

In truth, not much is said while giving a strictly defined culturalogical meaning to the concept of one mankind and one world culture as applied to the concept of a world region. Every historical culture is open, first of all to its own historical-cultural *Oikoumene*. There is an open intellectual and cultural world exchange, free information, free cultural communications and references, without which it would be impossible to imagine the present day and the future world. At the same time, there also are localized forms of culture, modes of life and thinking which unite the great historical and cultural regions.

From this point of view it is enough to begin clarifying the real contents of Lithuanian cultural history, that is, its fundamental cultural orientation and programs, in order to clarify the civilization to which we can really open ourselves. First, we would speak about interest in other cultures and wish to interpret and understand them; second, we would speak of a metaphysical movement peculiar to a concrete *Oikoumene* and of the ontic vector and sociocultural program. Here, it should become clear that Occidental civilization cannot be an object of naive mimicry or an unachievable ideal for Lithuania, for it is but a return to the freedom, rationalism and individuality (the West) as orientations which have been encoded in Lithuanian history and its historical culture. A specific vision of existence and of the world is coded in every historical culture (civilization); in reflecting it everyone can experience its unity with one's own individualized *Oikoumene*.

## **Mass Culture**

Briefly, I would like to mention a problem or threat connected with the possible opening of our society and culture to the West which disturbs many Lithuanian intellectuals. This is the threat and problem of Pan-Americanism, which supplanted classical Eurocentrism in the twentieth century, and the mass culture it directly implies. There is hardly any doubt that a wave of mass culture, whose expansion may soon reach its culmination, is flooding post-Soviet and post-totalitarian Lithuania in the midst of their difficult struggle to overcome economic and cultural collapse. This really is barbarizing and disorienting Lithuania. Could anything else be expected in our present situation? For the greatest part of our society the idea of the West itself and Western liberalism implies not the esoteric layer of Western culture--its classical humanities, intellectual culture and forms of classical art--but merely its mass culture. It is not the university culture with its freedom of academic and intellectual life independent of political involvement, nor the possibility freely to project oneself, to create and realize oneself, but the freedom transmitted by mass culture regarding sexuality and from the conservative imperatives of life and morality which have come to represent Western liberalism and democracy in the eyes of the greater part of our society. It is especially this exoteric or mass dimension of freedom, negative freedom, which flourishes in our country.

In Sovietized totalitarian Lithuania, the mass culture of the West always symbolized the free world. Youth counterculture, later integrated by mass culture, inspired many of the younger generation as a source of freedom and personal autonomy, molding their way of life, feelings, and



thinking. It proposed an alternative vision of reality to that of the totalitarian monodimensional reality which could not comprehend it. Western mass culture promised a lifestyle and consciousness, programmed hallucinogenically and protected from the intervention of brutal monodimensional totalitarian management and the tendencies of authoritarian thinking with its many consequences: state paternalism, servilism, constant education of people and moralizing from tribunes of different rank, an infantile attachment of the masses to the political elite, ritualized worship of political leaders, a nearly mystic devotion to the charismatic leaders of the nation, domination by the true followers, and the persecution of dissidents.

Western mass culture will root itself deeply in our sociocultural media. Inevitably, it not only will begin to symbolize liberalism, but will become also a sign of libertarianism. According to that doctrine the state and its institutions must reject all pretensions of influencing people and their behavior, as well as any intention to control and regulate the relations between people, except, of course, the application of law and the regulation of their formal contracts where necessary, as is quickly becoming more and more popular in the West.

In such a social situation mass culture will always manage to integrate people--the youth first of all--not only by suggesting a special rhythm of life and a hypertrophied sensory and visual perception of the world, but also by opening the dimension of negative freedom, that is, freedom from, rather than for, something. This negative, destructive freedom from is easily achieved. One does not need any special act of will or any act of consciousness; it suffices to open one's senses to a narcotic trance, hallucinogenic freedom, a liminal balancing on the threshold of different realities. This is a matter not only of hallucinogination, but also of commanding the world in a supreme manner as with the heroes of contemporary movie fairy tales, gaining victory against gangs of criminals, coping with groups of stupid policemen, neutralizing different maniacal sexual and moral perverts. It includes as well the special existential rhythm and sensual expression presented to the mass recipients by rock groups.

What is most important is that mass culture and its different hierarchical levels images human beings and shows them as a visual being, as the subject of mass culture. In turn, this helps them to liberate themselves from various oppressions. Thus, in the sociocultural context of our poor liberalism and immature democracy, which by no means is the most prominent phenomena of Occidental civilization, nevertheless can represent the West.

Today's struggle against the mass culture of the West is tilting at windmills, because its expansive dissemination is stipulated not only by the growth of the technical transmitting media and some liberalization of our society, but by the rapid and soon to be intensified commercialization of our life. The roots of this go deeply into all market-oriented spheres of human relations, as Erich Fromm called them. Economic and intellectual competition, risk and success, become the motive power of life as stipulated by the development of the open society itself; the artization, that is, theatricalization and visualization of political life follow.

Hence, mass culture is not the apocalyptic expression of destruction, but more likely one of those big and painful problems which an open society inevitably encounters. Besides, in Western countries, an elite layer to balance all the sociocultural spheres is becoming a serious counterweight to mass culture: a refined academic and intellectual culture, the inheritance of the classical culture and the esoteric (not commercial) forms of art, provide a counterweight to the mass art industry. The elite layer of culture renders mass culture harmless to non-commercial art, to the theoretical mind, to traditions and to the preservation of classical culture.

Another counterforce is that absolutely static models do not exist in culture. The former phenomena of mass culture or even the archetypes of mass consciousness eventually can become

phenomena of an elite culture. Thus, free jazz has become esoteric and avant garde, as has progressive rock. There is something similar even in cultural phenomena which balance paradoxically between mass and elite culture. For instance, big sports is mass from the point of view of its industrial and show properties, but is an elite phenomenon from the point of view of institutional representation and professionalism. Finally, the obvious confluence of elite and mass culture in modern cinematography should not be forgotten.

It is necessary then to clarify and understand culture as a distinctive phenomenon of modern culture. Its conceptual analysis and criticism are necessary, but it will not be easy to investigate this sphere seriously and professionally until there are cultural sociologists and psychologists of Western orientation and Western level, and until there is competent modern interpretive sociology in our country, not to mention philosophical and anthropological studies of culture.

The first movement of an open society is its opening not to something exterior, but to itself--its overcoming of monocentrism and the cult of the strong center and its establishment of polycentrism. Deliberate dispersion of intellectuals rather than their concentration in one intellectual center; rotation of academic forces and the spread of university cultural possibilities are necessary for that purpose. An open world is born and forms, first of all within the country and culture; only after that is it projected on the exterior environment and history. It is no use having illusions that an open society and culture can be created only with regard to the outer world. Lithuania at the end of the twentieth century should become a place for an open society and culture, and for their creators. There is simply no other way for successful development and for integration into the, civilized world.

**Chapter VII**  
**Ethnocultural Fundamentalism in Post-Totalitarian Society:  
Methodology, Ideology and Self-fulfilling Prophecy**

*Leonidas Donskis*

**Fundamentalism**

The concept of fundamentalism is the very nucleus of the problem of national culture in the post-totalitarian stage of the development of society. Its definition is connected with such concepts as collective solipsism<sup>1</sup> (the phenomenon of a solely self-oriented consciousness, i.e., of collective selfishness) and the closed society. There are two levels of explication of these phenomena: psychological and sociological. On the first, we can explore its psychic origins as well as its deepest psychic inspirations. On the second, we can explain fundamentalism as a sociological phenomenon, exploring sociocultural origins, nature and functions. From a psychological point of view, fundamentalism is an attitude towards full self-founding as well as towards full self-fulfillment. It should be noted that it is necessary to distinguish between tendencies towards any kind of autonomy (personal or collective, political or cultural) on the one hand, and tendencies towards fundamentalism as an exaggerated, even absolutized, self-founding and self-fulfillment, on the other. At this point, autonomy represents and expresses openness, whereas fundamentalism, on the contrary, represents personal as well as collective forms of closure. The differences between autonomy and fundamentalism are so evident, particularly on psychological grounds, that it is not really necessary to prove it in more explicit terms.

Both autonomy as well as heteronomy can be analyzed on various levels of theoretical knowledge: from divine autonomy to human heteronomy (in theology and religious experience), from the autonomy of substance to the heteronomy of accidents, from the autonomy of the transcendent to the heteronomy of immanence (metaphysics), from the autonomy of human thought and consciousness to the heteronomy of the whole non-human world (the rationalistic tradition of the Western philosophical thought: Descartes, Berkeley, Fichte and their methodological solipsisms), from the autonomy of the human world to the heteronomy of the surroundings (contemporary social sciences and so-called "cultural sciences", i.e., the humanities), from the autonomy of intellectual activity to the heteronomy of the "low" psychic world (contemporary psychology), etc.

Autonomy, as principle, idea, purpose and, at the same time, the nucleus of the social order, is a great part of the overall historical process of human emancipation towards positive freedom (freedom for, rather than freedom from, or negative freedom) and self-fulfillment. But an autonomy which as noted above exaggerates momentous purposes as well as the means to realize them (especially self-founding and self-fulfillment) is dangerous for it can turn quite easily into fundamentalism. That is to say, exaggerated and absolutised autonomy can destroy its primary principle and primary idea.

It is not easy to make a strict distinction between the psychological and sociological approaches to fundamentalism. In both cases, fundamentalism is the same dangerous tendency

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<sup>1</sup> 1. Solipsism (metaphysics) is a theory that one can have knowledge only of the self; at the same time, it is belief that all reality is subjective or that the self can know more than its own states.

towards autarchy. That is to say, fundamentalism is always the same wasted effort, hopeless and doomed to failure, while at the same time being the most pretentious project both of self-founding and of self-fulfillment. It can concern individuals, religious communities, whole nations or national cultures, and even states. In other words, it can embrace almost everything: human beings and ideas as well as economic, political, and cultural systems.

The essence of any kind of fundamentalism is very simple: by its nature it is a purely ideological phenomenon, where ideology means a closed system of views, values and ideals. Ideology always functions as a closed value system prevailing over reality. Generally speaking, it means nothing but the domination of principle over fact, of idea over reality, of word over thought, i.e., the domination of language over thought and meaning. Ideology is a state of consciousness in which value either prevails over, or is separated from, meaning. So ideology is total separation of ideas from reality, and, at the same time, separation of language from thinking, that is, from free and critical thought.

Ideology is consciousness separated from reality. It is small wonder, then, that the synonym of ideology is logocracy--the supreme power of language or the domination by word. Therefore, ideology always points toward closing society and, particularly, to closing consciousness. Both mean an attitude of collective solipsism, which is why the phenomenon of fundamentalism is integral to the closed consciousness and society. From a sociological point of view, this is not simply a state of mind, for that would be a purely psychological approach, rather, it is an active force that creates a social consciousness.

Fundamentalism is a many-sided sociocultural phenomenon. Undoubtedly it has its own rich historical context. Every *Weltanschauung* or world view of a great historical epoch can be defined and described as an historical form of a cultural fundamentalism. For example, the cosmocentrism of Ancient Greek-Roman civilization is nothing else but Ancient cosmocentric fundamentalism; the theocentrism of the Middle Ages is a theocentric fundamentalism; and the anthropocentrism of the New Age is Modern anthropocentric fundamentalism.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the tendency towards fundamentalism is the inner possibility of every culture and of every historical epoch. For this reason, almost every culture and almost every historical epoch seems to be a closed and even monadical entity in Leibniz's sense of a world of monads. It goes without saying that fundamentalism can be divided into economic, political, national, religious, etc., fundamentalisms. Indeed, every kind of totalitarian regime is, more or less, based on a political fundamentalism, i.e., on the exaggeration and absolutization of political ends as well as of political means. But here I shall turn to another kind of fundamentalism, namely, particular cultural fundamentalism.

## **Sources of Fundamentalism: Ideology and Theory**

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<sup>2</sup> S. Barnet, in a brilliant introduction to C. Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*, devoted to analysis of cultural change in the Renaissance, noted:

One can see the Renaissance as the period in which man's thinking took a bad turn and entered upon the course it still pursues. In this view, unappeasable curiosity catastrophically banished intuition and faith. Etienne Gilson in *Les idées et les lettres* puts it thus: "The difference between the Renaissance and the Middle Ages was not a difference by addition but by subtraction. The renaissance...was not the Middle Ages plus man, but the Middle Ages minus God, and the tragedy is that in losing God the Renaissance was losing man himself (I, x-xi).

Cultural fundamentalism has two main sources: ideological and theoretical. The first was elaborated by German Romanticism whose emphasis upon both the nature and the development of culture was built upon the national idea as well as upon the innermost national beginnings of culture. It would be no exaggeration to say that the idea of history was transformed into the idea of culture by the Romantic movement, particularly in Germany. But there were others such as the famous French nationalist and Romantic thinker, J. Michelet, who was deeply influenced by G. Vico's *Principi di una Scienza Nuova d'intorno alla commune natura delle nazioni*. The idea of history was transfigured into the idea of nation and its historically unique self-fulfillment, i.e., into the idea of national culture. Vico's and Herder's theoretical works constitute a transition from the idea of world history or of universal history to the idea of national history or the history of national cultures.

Two main sources of cultural fundamentalism were distinguished above: ideological and theoretical. It is not easy to make a strict distinction between these two aspects, but it is important to strive for some clarification on this point. The first source of cultural fundamentalism has been pointed out: the second is connected, or should be, with the so-called morphology of culture, that is, with the organic growth and development of culture. This was elaborated by the German theorists of culture, Leo Frobenius and Oswald Spengler. From the methodological point of view, it was nothing less than an acknowledgment of the autonomy of the cultural dimension. In other words, it is the acknowledgment that culture is a self-organizing and self-fulfilling superorganism or supersystem.

C. Kluckhohn notes:

The danger in the construal of culture as an emergent level evidently lies in the consequent tendency to reify or hypostasize culture, to view it as a distinctive substance or actual superorganism, and then to assume that it moves through autonomous, immanent forces. Spengler certainly believed this; so did Frobenius, at least at times; and Kroeber has been flatly charged with the same errors by Boas, Benedict, and Bidney, besides incurring opposition to the concept of the superorganic from Sapir and Goldenweiser.<sup>3</sup>

It is necessary to note that Romantic thinkers and nationalists, despite the undoubted close theoretical "relationship" between the Romantic philosophical heritage and Spengler's brilliant work *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, are not real forerunners of Spengler and his concept of culture. First, Spengler was greatly influenced by: (a) Goethe's phenomenology and especially by his well-known morphological method, (b) Nietzsche's idea of the life-cycle of every culture, and the idea of the eternal return, and (c) Frobenius' idea of the nucleus of cultural forms. This mysterious nucleus, which is deeply hidden from other cultures, is the real source of the uniqueness of every culture. Frobenius called this nucleus of culture *paideuma*, while Spengler called it the soul of culture.

Second, culture in Spengler's theory is not national, but is always a transnational or overnational phenomenon. Thus, there is an evident difference between the fundamentalism of the national culture, which has been protected by the Romantic movement, and the fundamentalism of transnational culture. As the idea of transnational culture leads towards acknowledgment of world history, the famous expression of Hegel, *Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht*, undoubtedly is valid for Spengler. According to him, world history is the eternal configuration and

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<sup>3</sup> A.L. Kroeber and C. Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* (New York: Vintage Books, 1952), pp. 290-201.

transfiguration of majestic, tragic and mortal cultures, whereas transnational culture is a monadic *Weltgeschichte*. A. Kroeber notes:

In spite of the formal dichotomy of the words (culture and civilization), Spengler's basic concept with which his philosophy operates consistently is that of culture. The monadic entities he is forever attempting to characterize and compare are the Chinese, Indian, Egyptian, Arabic, Magian, Classic, and Occidental cultures, as an anthropologist would conceive and call them. . . . Spengler's theory concerns culture in at once the most inclusive and exclusive sense, and nothing else. He sees culture manifesting itself in a series almost of theophanies, of wholly distinct, uncaused and unexplainable realizations, each with an immanent quality and predestined career and destiny (Schicksal).<sup>4</sup>

Why did Spengler, who was so greatly influenced by German Romanticism, neglect the substance of national culture as a subject of philosophical discourse? It could be answered easily that Spengler was greatly influenced by a Romantic *Weltanschauung* theoretical thinking and philosophical reflection, rather than by a Romantic ideology or value orientation. On this point it would be interesting to compare Spengler with another outstanding representative of so-called historical-cultural monadology, Arnold Joseph Toynbee. According to Toynbee, civilization is a transnational or overnational unit of history. The starting point in Toynbee's philosophy of history, *A Study of History*, is his contention that the proper unit of historical study must be a civilization, rather than the traditional unit, the nation-state.

The concepts of the organic growth of culture, the morphology of culture, and historical-cultural monadology (Frobenius, Spengler, Toynbee) represent cultural fundamentalism as panculturalism and panhistoricism, or radical historicism. These concepts depend upon the acknowledgment of an autonomy of the cultural level or dimension. Hence, cultural fundamentalism and the fundamentalism of national culture are not the same thing, but differ by nature.

## **Utopia and Historicism**

Despite this difference, almost every representative of morphological and monadological standpoints was criticized seriously by liberal philosophers for negating the importance of free will in history, as well as for negating the rational moral responsibility of human beings. Their strongest critic, Karl R. Popper, in his *The Poverty of Historicism*, made a creative attempt to show all the possible errors and dangers of historicism, i.e., of historical and cultural fundamentalism. He was quite sure that Spengler's and Toynbee's over-all thoughts were most dangerous steps towards creating the closed consciousness and the closed society.<sup>5</sup> Both Spengler and Toynbee have been accused of creating an overarching view and of historical determinism, i.e., a teleologic vision of history, an exaggeration of the historical aspect of human experience, and the absolutization of inexorable historical laws. Both were charged with a tendency towards pure ideology as well as with "inspiring totalitarianism" by Popper, who believed that the sin of historicism leads to forms of human serfdom.

It would seem that Popper is not absolutely correct. Theory in itself can never inspire a totalitarian regime or a totalitarian way of thinking. As, the phenomenon of both closed

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<sup>4</sup> Kroeber and Kluckhohn, pp. 48-49.

<sup>5</sup> Karl R. Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979).

consciousness and closed society, totalitarianism needs an affirmative ideology, but not theory. On the contrary, theory as theoretical discourse is the most dangerous thing for any totalitarian regime, for the essence of theoretical discourse is always openness. Doubt and the verification of facts and statements are the most important parts--even, I would say, the very nucleus of critical theoretical thought. Moreover, free and autonomous philosophical discourse, or pure theoretical thought in general, can destroy any kind of ideology from outside as well as from within. For this reason ideology is never afraid of another ideology, but only of both reality itself and critical theoretical thought.

In short, ideology as a closed and unverified system has only two real enemies: open consciousness and open reality, that is, the open society. Closure is the essence of ideology. Thus closedness as the main attitude towards reality, and ideological affirmations which are blind and deaf to the truth, though possibly really eloquent, are the real roots of totalitarianism. Totalitarianism is based not on real philosophy and real science, but, on the one hand, on an ideological affirmation of the existing social order, and, on the other hand, on the rejection of natural and inevitable differences, variety and, finally, openness.

My argument then is quite different. From this point of view Popper's accusations concerning Vico, Spengler, Toynbee, etc., seem due to some misunderstanding. Philosophy is not responsible for all social evils; it is ideology not philosophy which is the *spiritus movens* of totalitarian regimes. Totalitarianism is caused basically by the breakdown of the economy or by the decline and fall of the entire society with its economic and political structures, as well as entire huge empires. Such regimes emerge as responses to the challenge of crises, that is to say, as "a strong social order" following "disorder and confusion". They are a child of the archaic phenomenon which could be termed the great illusion, namely, a naive belief in the happiness of the whole society which, allegedly, can be reached by the elimination of any form of social conflict.

The great illusion always means escape from "the dangers and evils of freedom", that is, from the complicated real world to the realm of consciousness. Here the most dangerous and fatal substitution takes place: instead of reality we have pure imagination; instead of fact we have value; instead of thing we have image; instead of real world we have artificial world; and finally, instead of theory, which is open towards reality, we have only ideology, which is closed.

This is the road of utopian thought, or, to use the title of Hayek's famous book, the road to serfdom. The road of utopian consciousness means the road to hell, which is always based on high intentions. This is the road of Plato, More, Campanella, Rousseau and Marx. Not only social utopias and entire so-called social mythologies, but even architectural and aesthetic utopias bring the rejection and destruction of reality before the utopian dream comes true. Blake's poetry would be a particularly clear instance of this phenomenon (the divine city, the heavenly city of the divine imagination, *Golgonooza*, the skull-city; and the city of Satan which is nothing but Blake's living reality, that is, the real city which came out of the British Industrial Revolution).<sup>6</sup>

Myth can destroy history; image can destroy reality; value can destroy truth. To put the utopian project into life means to destroy inevitably the reality already existing. From this point of view, references to "inexorable historical laws" as well as to "inexorably doomed epochs and civilizations" mean nothing. For in this case we have historicism as real destruction of history, not

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<sup>6</sup> In his masterpiece "Open Your Human Gates", Blake writes: "For every human heart has gates of brass and bars of adamant / Which few dare unbar, because dread Og and Anak guard the gates / Terrific: and each mortal brain is wall'd and moated round / Within, and Og and Anak watch here: here is the Seat / of Satan in its Webs: for in brain and heart and loins / Gates open behind Satan's Seat to the City of *Golgonooza*, / Which is the spiritual fourfold London in the loins of Albion."

historicism as real protection of both the idea of history and history itself, i.e., not historicism in Popper's sense.

Utopia comes out as the double-faced Roman god of origin and time, Janus: one the one hand, it is undoubtedly a protector of the idea of history (this is evident, particularly, in the reverse or retrospective utopias of Romanticism); on the other hand, nevertheless, it is undoubtedly a predator upon the idea of history because its history transfigures itself into pre-history with a view towards majestic futurist utopian projects. According to Marx, for instance, real history still awaits human kind. The past as well as the present belong to the overture of history, that is, to pre-history; they manifest the evident tendency towards antihistoricism in utopian consciousness.

Utopian consciousness is ever balancing between myth and history. This happens for the very simple reason that utopian consciousness is the phenomenon of permanent contradiction between myth and history, between imagination and reality, between value and truth. The final result is absolutely clear, for the first part of these oppositions has a quite evident advantage and always overcomes the second: myth prevails over history, imagination over reality, and value over truth.

In this way any utopia moves from theory into self-fulfilling prophecy, from theory to ideology, from the open consciousness to a closed one, and, finally, from an open society to a closed one. Thus, the totalitarian utopia becomes the fatal link in the chain of manifestations of the great illusion. It emerges as the most radical mode of escape from the "dangers and evils of freedom". Totalitarianism itself, as the logical consequence of totalitarian utopia, is a child of the great illusion, namely, the naive belief in the happiness of the whole society which allegedly can be reached by the elimination of any form of social conflict. Besides, the great illusion means the exaggeration, even the absolutization, of a strong external order and means. Totalitarianism is born by absolute negation of the self-organizing individual and the self-organizing society.

Spengler and Toynbee believed that culture can express itself in the eternal configuration and transfiguration of majestic historical forms. They both believed that culture as a self-organizing system can express itself on the road of historical self-founding and self-fulfillment. Their position, then, is the same negation of free will, of rational moral responsibility on the part of human beings, and of the self-organizing individual. But this is nothing but a *coincidentia oppositorum*, and from this point of view Popper is quite right in his strong criticism of historicism and its major representatives.

Yet I disagree with Popper's identification of methodology with ideology. True, culture in itself is only a metaphor, which can never become a self-organizing system; true, culture has no aims, it has no fights or conflicts--only men, real flesh and blood human beings are both active forces of history and self-organizing individuals: a self-organizing society is nothing other than the totality of self-organizing human beings. But it should be noted that the methodological historico-cultural fundamentalisms of Spengler and Toynbee are purely theoretical, not ideological, phenomena. It goes without saying that fundamentalism can exist as a pure ideological phenomenon; the emphasis in my analysis is placed upon such ideological phenomenon as ethnocultural fundamentalism.

Ethnocultural fundamentalism (especially its ideological consequences) is much more dangerous than methodological historico-cultural fundamentalism, or, in Popper's terms, historicism. First, ethnocultural or national fundamentalism leads in the end to a decline of pure and abstract cultural principles in ideological practice. But, on the contrary, the historic-cultural fundamentalism, that is, the so-called historic-cultural monadology of Vico, Frobenius, Spengler and Toynbee, can be a pure methodological experiment or methodological innovation and nothing more. Second, ethnocultural fundamentalism, as a form of collective solipsism, often comes



dangerously close to messianism. The best evidences are the instances of ethnocultural fundamentalism in the post-totalitarian stages of social development.

### **The Post-Totalitarian Society: Ethnocentrism and Its Corrective**

The post-totalitarian society is a closed society with deep belief in its own openness. It is a closed society with democratic slogans and an authoritarian way of thinking. It is an historical freak or centaur with an authoritarian sociopolitical body and a democratic self-consciousness--the society of ideology *par excellence*. Post-totalitarian society is the historical field of the cruel struggle between the present and the past; it is the phenomenon of ideological revenge caused, basically, by the breakdown of the economy. Strong, even aggressive ideology usually follows upon the collapse of the economy and misery, which generates the need for ideological efforts to find a successful image of an enemy. Allegedly, the existence of a "guileful enemy" enables one to explain all kinds of social evil and misery. For this reason, the post-totalitarian society is fighting permanently against its own past; it becomes a field of ideological superstition.

Ethnocultural fundamentalism is the most appropriate form of ideology for the post-totalitarian society. It happens not only because of the total sociocultural emancipation of the post-totalitarian country. On the one hand, the post-totalitarian society collides with the totalitarian heritage inevitably generating a culture in crisis, the complete breakdown of the economy, a schism in the body social (Toynbee's term), the loss of inner solidarity on the part of the civil society, the loss of common sense as the meaning of the common being, etc. On the other hand, the post-totalitarian stage means a real flowering of all kinds of collectivism: the collective will (almost in the sense of Rousseau's *volonté générale*), collective thinking and collective, but unfortunately not common, sense.

All this places an evident priority on collectivism over individualism and it would be no exaggeration to say that the revival of socialism, "enriched" by the national idea, is quite possible; indeed, it is a matter of fact. This strange revival appears to be a logical consequence of contemporary national collectivism. This revival of socialism with the national idea is caused by the *étatisme* or statism of the post-totalitarian society. It is interesting to note that the brilliant passage from G. Russell's *Collections and Recollections* concerning the contradiction between the old Manchesterism and the new socialism sounds so eloquent and timely. It defines the situation of contemporary society as precisely as if it were written specially to describe our post-communist society:

The old Manchesterism had limited the functions of the State to the preservation of life and property (especially property) and the enforcement of contracts. The new Socialism, on the other hand, regarding the State, with Burke, as "*the Nation in its collective and corporate character*" [italics mine, L.D.], saw in it the one sovereign agent for all moral, material, and social reforms. The state is omnipotent where the individual is powerless; and in the new Socialism it was bound to concern itself with the health and housing, the food and raiment, the culture, and even the amusements of those who were least able to help themselves.<sup>7</sup>

It should be noted that ethnoculturalism or ethnocentricism, as well as ethnostatism or national statism, can quite easily be reduced to ethnocracy, government by a particular race or a particular nation. And it is not difficult to explain the roots of this danger. The nation acquires a new

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<sup>7</sup> G. Russell, *Collections and Recollections* (London: Thomas Nelson, 1909).

historico-cultural quality in the post-totalitarian society: it becomes the nation as the collective hero and, at the same time, the nation as protagonist of history. The many-sided sociodynamics of cultural change can be reduced to the "majestic historical process of national emancipation". Rigorous and authentic theories of culture and history disappear; ethnocultural and ethnohistorical theories replace them. Ideology as logocracy transforms into ethnocracy, that is, into the combination of ethnocracy and logocracy.

The self-fulfilling prophecy created by a past-oriented, that is, archaist social consciousness is the only theory of culture and history of post-totalitarian society. From this it follows that the post-totalitarian consciousness is, undoubtedly, a past-oriented phenomenon, though it believes deeply that it is most fundamentally oriented towards the future. It is based on the permanent historical remembrance of the Golden Age of the Nation, on the one hand, while, on the other hand, being based on the consideration that the past is still alive and even more real than the present.

F. Braudel's model of the historical explanation of the human world (that the present explains the past, while the past explains the present) does not work in the circumstances of post-totalitarian reality. The post-totalitarian model is quite different: the past prevails over the present and strictly commands the present. The present post-totalitarian reality emerges as a time of troubles: misery, misfortunes and "guileful enemies" surround the "healthy forces" of the society. The past, on the contrary, appears as the time of pride and dignity, that is to say, the time of national self-foundation and national self-fulfillment: heroes, majestic battles, noble knights, wealthy and wise kings, victories and conquests. So the conflict between the past and the present results in the full domination of utopian consciousness. Instead of the present we have worship of the past and rejection of the present. Small wonder then that the post-totalitarian epoch is a time of reversal, or retrospective utopias.

The reversal utopia comes into the world together with post-totalitarian consciousness as a desperate effort to restore the lost values of freedom, human integrity, honesty, dignity and courage. This kind of utopia is a search into the past for lost human values. That is why the search for values in the past is the most exciting phenomenon in contemporary culture. In other words, the reversal utopia comes into the world as a self-fulfilling prophecy and, at the same time, as the forgotten language of forgotten values. In this context ethnocultural fundamentalism is nothing but the imperfect and naive historical response of the post-totalitarian society to the challenge of the Great Loss: the loss of freedom, prosperity, democracy, rule of the law, cultural heritage, cultural continuity, etc., caused basically by totalitarian serfdom.

In conclusion it should be noted that no ideology or social mythology can substitute successfully for reality itself. Even the well-formed, high-level, qualified consciousness cannot substitute for the "low" reality. Belief in this substitution is, I suppose, the most dangerous ideological superstition of the present; its deepest roots are both fear and hate towards openness, risk and democracy. The future shock of the post-totalitarian society is, first of all, the freedom shock and openness shock. From this standpoint, post-totalitarian society is a society lost at the crossroads between the open and closed society. There is no other way to overcome this condition than to enter the open society.

The tragedy is that it cannot function as a self-organizing system. It is not the semi-mystic bodies of history (*paideuma*, cultures as monadal entities, divine nations, and so on), but only real populations, real flesh and blood human beings who can be self-organizing systems. For this reason the self-organizing population of cities and states must not exaggerate any form of social

goal. Exaggeration of the goal is connected closely with priority of consciousness over reality. In the end, this exaggeration is most dangerous for the open society as a self-organizing system.

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**Part III**  
**Components of a Renewed Lithuanian Culture**



## Chapter VIII

# Axiology: Classical and Modern

Z. Norkus

One of the recurrent topics in modern philosophical discourse is the search for the self-identity of this discourse. The usual approach to this is to counterpose modern with classical philosophy. This is done in many dimensions with classical philosophy characterized as "metaphysical", "logocentric", and so on. This paper will explore another dimension of such self-identification through a counterposition of "the classical and the modern".

It is widely agreed among philosophers that until the last third of nineteenth century what is now called "axiology" or the theory of values was absent in philosophical language.<sup>1</sup> Until then philosophy was divided into theoretical philosophy, of which a branch was metaphysics, and practical philosophy, whose main branches were ethics and logic. Theoretical philosophy was treated as the foundation for practical philosophy. After the crisis of metaphysics in the middle of the nineteenth century, practical philosophy or the "normative sciences" lost their foundation. Axiology emerged as an attempt to provide new theoretical foundations for the "normative sciences".

From these as "surface facts" let us proceed to search more in depth. One of the main assumptions of classical philosophy is what might be called the "thesis of the identity of being and value": "to be" means "to be good". Here, "goodness" is so-called "intrinsic goodness", to be distinguished from "instrumental goodness". So, e.g., Plato and Aristotle identified "intrinsic goodness" with "perfection" which was predicated upon being. Kinds of entities differ in their degree of intrinsic goodness, and thence in their degree of perfection; individuals belonging to the same kind differ among themselves. Thus, men as a kind or species are intrinsically better than dogs as a kind, while this one man is intrinsically better or more perfect than another man, and this one dog is intrinsically better than another dog, and so on. The "ontological hierarchy" of kinds and individuals is identically an "axiological hierarchy" of goods.

Each kind of entity and each individual entity is not only intrinsically good, but also instrumentally good and useful, or bad and harmful. Instrumental goodness (or badness) are relational characteristics of entities and kinds of entities. One entity or kind of entity is instrumentally good for a certain other entity or kind of entities as a condition, cause or means of existence for that other entity or kind of entity. Otherwise, it is instrumentally bad.

In distinction from instrumental badness, intrinsic badness has no positive reality: "to be intrinsically bad" means "not to be". What may seem to be an "intrinsically bad entity" is in reality a "less intrinsically good entity"; intrinsic badness (evil) is real only in appearance. Such appearance arises, first, when the valuer compares an entity with great intrinsic value to another entity of small intrinsic value; in such circumstances the latter entity may appear indifferent if not intrinsically bad. Second, when an entity is harmful or instrumentally bad for the valuer, he or she mistakes the instrumental badness of the entity as intrinsic badness. Such a mistake arises out of the propensity of each valuer to attach to his own existence absolute intrinsic value, beyond the

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., R. Frondizi, *What is Value? An Introduction to Axiology* (2nd ed.; La Salle, Ill., 1971), p. 3; N. Rescher, *Introduction to Value Theory* (2nd ed.; Washington, 1982); W.H. Werkmeister, *Historical Spectrum of Value Theories*(Lincoln, 1970), vol. I, p. xii.

intrinsic value of all other entities. In other words, the illusion of a positive reality of intrinsic badness arises out of the egocentricity of the valuing entity. The propensity to such an illusion in theology is called "original sin". The Christian doctrine of "original sin" asserts the obvious fact that all men are persistently inclined to regard themselves more highly and are more assiduously concerned with their own interests than any "objective" view of their importance would "warrant."<sup>2</sup>

The identification of being and intrinsic goodness is characteristic not only of the spiritualistic (Platonic and Aristotelian) trend of classical philosophy, but also of classical naturalism, e.g., the trend of Democritus. The spiritualistic and naturalistic interpretations of the identity of being and intrinsic value differ, however. For spiritualism, intrinsic value as identical with being depends upon the valuing entity or valuer, either epistemologically or ontologically. The epistemological independence of intrinsic goodness from the valuer allows the dichotomy "truth versus falseness" to be applied regarding intrinsic value: each such valuation, or, more exactly, preference, is true or false. The ontological independence of value from the one who values means that the presence of intrinsic goodness in the world is independent of the existence of entities capable of valuing. Entities capable of value have more or less intrinsic value according to their degree of perfection. But they are not the sole intrinsic goods. Were one valuer, one specific kind of valuer, or all kinds of valuers to disappear, there would remain enough intrinsic good in the world (not to speak of God).

Classical naturalism, while accepting the epistemological independence of intrinsic value from the valuer, rejects the ontological independence of intrinsic value from the existence of entities capable of valuing. The sole intrinsically good entities are those capable of valuing. More precisely, only the mental states of such entities are of intrinsic value. The range of entities possessing such intrinsically good states may be circumscribed more or less narrowly. When this range is circumscribed least narrowly, intrinsic goodness is predicated of the mental states of all sentient entities. When this range is circumscribed more narrowly, intrinsic goodness is predicated only of human mental states; still more narrowly it is limited to some human group, and most narrowly it is acknowledged of the mental states of only one entity. All other entities, not belonging to the range circumscribed, may have only positive or negative instrumental value. If one day all sentient entities would disappear, there would remain in the world nothing of intrinsic value.

Unlike the spiritualists, classical naturalists acknowledged the positive reality of intrinsic badness: the intrinsically bad is suffering, especially feelings of pain. In naturalism there is a tendency to consider as intrinsically good not all mental states which are not bad, but only part of them, namely, feelings of pleasure. This type of naturalistic conception of intrinsic value is called "hedonism". Hedonists acknowledge only instrumental value for perceptions, representations, thoughts and so on. These mental states are instrumentally good or useful if they cause or take part in causing feelings of pleasure; otherwise they are harmful or indifferent. But, generally speaking, naturalism does not imply hedonism. Hence, e.g., F. Brentano denies positive or negative intrinsic value to all except mental states. Among the mental states, he predicates intrinsic goodness not only of feelings of pleasure, but also of all representations, judgments (especially, true ones), and emotions, e.g., love.<sup>3</sup>

Spiritualists, identifying being and intrinsic goodness, recognize an intrinsic goodness for all mental states, including suffering. There is a hierarchy of degrees of perfection among these states. The highest degrees of perfection and hence the greatest intrinsic goodness belongs to thinking, especially true thinking. Error is evil, but only apparent evil for false thought is intrinsically better

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<sup>2</sup> R. Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History*, L. , 1952), p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> See F. Brentano, *Grundlegung un Aufbau der Ethik* (Bern, 1952), pp. 184-217.



than no thought at all. True thoughts do not all have one and the same degree of intrinsic goodness; the intrinsic worth of true thought depends on its content. The highest intrinsic worth among true thoughts is had by true thoughts about thinking, i.e., true philosophical thoughts. Sometimes the "thesis of being and value" takes the shape of the thesis of the identity of being, thinking and value. This is the case of the extreme rationalistic spiritualism of Leibniz and Hegel who proclaim being to be thought objectified or alienated.

Metaphysical knowledge enables one to partake in the greatest good accessible to him--thinking about thinking--and by this, to impart to his own existence the highest possible intrinsic value. This knowledge also frees man from his egocentricity, enabling him to overcome the overestimation his own intrinsic value. The aforesaid may be summarized in the following table.

### **Table I**

Axiological Theses

Types of axiological thinking

Identity of being and intrinsic value

Identity of intrinsic value and states of valuing entity only

Epistemological dependence of intrinsic value from valuing entity

Spiritual

Naturalism

Briefly, both classical spiritualism and naturalism identify being and intrinsic value, but while spiritualists identify intrinsic value and all being, which in turn is identified with thinking, the naturalists identify intrinsic value only with a more or less widely circumscribed part of being.

### **The Crisis of Classical Axiology**

The crisis of classical metaphysics was a crisis of classical axiological thinking, for metaphysical and axiological thinking coincided. Specifically, I. Kant's thesis that "being" is not a predicate deprived the spiritualistic conception about degrees of reality of its ground and, by the same token, of its intrinsic value. There was now nothing with which "intrinsic value" could coincide. Classical naturalism was discredited by G.E. Moore's criticism of the "naturalistic fallacy", for the identification of intrinsic goodness and pleasure in classical naturalism usually took the shape of an identification of the meaning of the expression "intrinsically good" with the meaning of the word "pleasant". G.E. Moore's criticism may be generalized to qualify as a "metaphysical fallacy" the identification of the meaning of the expression "to be" (in the sense "to exist") with the meaning of the expression "to be intrinsically good".

Value was thus differentiated from being and became an independent object of philosophical reflection. Such reflection took the shape of a new philosophical discourse known as axiology. This new axiological discourse from the very beginning of its independent existence was differentiated into the two main types: axiological absolutism and axiological relativism. Both varieties deny the main assumption of classical axiological thinking, namely, an identity of value and being. Axiological absolutists, while recognizing the epistemological independence of intrinsic value from the valuer, denies the ontological dependence of intrinsic value not only upon

the existence of valuers, but also upon the existence of any real entities whatsoever. Axiological absolutism is represented by the axiology of the neo-Kantian Baden school (W. Windelband, H. Rickert, B. Bauch) and by phenomenological axiology (M. Scheler, H. Hartmann, D. von Hildebrand).

In neo-Kantian axiology values are interpreted as attributes of the transcendental subject which, unlike empirical subjects, is not part of reality. Unlike empirical subjects, it is "pure" subject and simultaneously an object or part of the existing world. In distinction from entities, values "are valid" (*gelten*) but do not "exist". For empirical subjects these values are *a priori* forms of their culture-creating activity. Empirical subjects create the goods of culture and, realizing values in the goods of culture, realize them in themselves and thereby become persons. Only the activity determined by valid values may be qualified as "rational".

In phenomenological axiology what was united in "classical being" is divided into two varieties: "real" and "ideal". To the first variety belong spatio-temporal (physical) and temporal (psychical) reality, to the second variety belong aspatial and atemporal "ideal objects", which historians of philosophy tend to identify with Platonic ideas. But phenomenological Platonism is Platonism of a special sort that may be called "inflated Platonism". If Platonic ideas and Aristotelian forms are more real than their spatio-temporal exemplifications, phenomenological "ideal objects" are mere possibilities. Platonic ideas and their exemplifications correlate as necessary and perfect entities with contingent and imperfect entities. This idea may be interpreted as the limit of perfectibility within the species, or as the most perfect specimen of the species.

Phenomenological "ideal objects" and "real objects" correlate as possibilities and actualities. The mediators between possible and actual are the valuers, which are themselves actualities. They discover new values (new possibilities of culture-creating activity) and realize them in the goods of culture, while simultaneously changing themselves. Discovery of new values may lead to the oblivion of the one or to a change of perspective and horizon in which old values are grasped, or to a conflict of values which may end with a temporary victory of one of the sorts of values, or lead to some compromise expressing it in a new cultural synthesis. All these changes in the "value outlook" manifest themselves in the reappraisal of the results of past culture-creating activity.

But these results are not values themselves: if "real being" one day would be annihilated, values (and other "ideal objects") would remain. Still less do values depend on the existence of the valuers. Disappearance of the valuers would mean only that from now on there would be no one capable of realizing values, of "embodying" them into the goods of culture. Without the relation to values established by the value cognition of valuers, all actualities are intrinsically indifferent--neither intrinsically good, nor intrinsically bad.

Post-classical axiological absolutism and relativism differ in three ways:

(a) While denying together with post-classical axiological absolutists the "thesis of the identity of being and value", post-classical axiological relativists accept the thesis about the ontic dependence of all value on the valuers.

(b) A second difference concerns the epistemological independence of values from valuers. While absolutists accept this thesis, relativists consider intrinsic value to be epistemologically dependent on valuers. This view usually is associated with relativism in general. In my opinion, it is not correct to qualify classical naturalism as relativistic, for classical naturalists hold as inconceivable that, e.g., own pleasure would not be valued as intrinsically good: at least this one valuation of intrinsic goodness is analytically true. For post-classical relativists concepts of truth

and falseness are not at all applicable to valuations, be these conceived as intellectual, emotional or volitional acts.

(c) The third dimension in which post-classical relativism opposes axiological absolutism concerns the ontic dependence of value on ontic actualities in general. Being dependent on the existence of valuers, all existence is thereby ontically dependent on the existence of some ontic actualities. But this does not exhaust the question. For axiological relativists, assertion of the ontic dependence of values on actualities means, in addition, the assertion of the nomological explainability and predictability of differences in valuations between valuers and of changes in valuations by the same valuer. Depending on the kind of laws and initial conditions which are singled out for such explanation, relativism may be biological, psychological, sociological, and so on. Causal explanations of differences in valuations and changes of these valuations is not the only sort of "research program" possible within the bounds of axiological relativism. The aforementioned causal explanation deals with the dependence of valuations from some external conditions.

It is possible to investigate as well the interdependence of valuations among themselves and their dependence upon the propositional attitudes of valuers. Generally, speaking, the valuations may be mutually independent, not depending also from propositional attitudes. More definitely, such independence takes place, e.g., when the valuations by some valuers are inconstant: when the same valuer, in the same conditions, with the same propositional attitudes values differently the same object or two objects with indiscernible differences. Such independence may manifest itself as an independence of valuations of instrumental value from valuations of subjective intrinsic value. Or it may be the independence of valuations of instrumental value from changes in propositional attitudes concerning conditions and nomic relations between subjectively intrinsically valuable and instrumentally valuable objects, and so on. In all such cases the valuations by the valuer may be qualified as inconsistent, incoherent and thus irrational.

The interdependence of valuations and propositional attitudes is a characteristic of the rational valuer. Valuations by both the rational and the irrational valuers are ontically (causally) dependent on external conditions, but this dependence in the case of the rational valuer is mediated by the interdependence of his valuations. Conditions of consistency and coherence of interdependent valuations and propositional attitudes may be illustrated through logico-mathematical models. The first explorations of such conditions (still in nonformal idiom) were presented by its Austrian economists C. Menger, F. von Wieser and E. von Boehm-Bawerk in their theory of economic value and by its Austrian philosopher A. Meinong in his theory of moral value.<sup>4</sup> The Austrian "marginalist" theory of economic value was synthesized by O. Morgenstern and J. von Neumann through the mathematical theory of probabilities, from which the modern mathematical decisions and game theories emerged. These theories complete the evolution of post-classical relativistic axiology. Absolutism itself turned out to be too uncongenial to the "spirit of times", and vanished. Table 2 sums up the main characteristic features of postclassical axiological thought:

## Table II

Axiological Theses

Types of axiological thinking

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<sup>4</sup> See A. Meinong, *Psychologisch-ethische Untersuchungen zur Werttheorie* (Graz, 1894).

Ontic dependence of values on actual being  
Ontic dependence of values on existence of valuers  
Epistemological dependence of values on valuers

Axiological absolutism  
Axiological relativism

## Chapter IX

# History: The Grand Fact of Being

*Algis Mickunas*

### Introduction

Some of the major philosophical trends of the last decade, such as historical and methodological hermeneutics, various types of dialectics, reconstructive and pragmatic deconstructionisms and post-modernisms are historiocentric.<sup>1</sup> In contrast to analytic and critical procedures, philosophical hermeneutics and dialectics seem to claim a primacy for history. The former emphasizes the historical development of the lived world, while the latter seeks to decipher some necessary dialectical structure as a basis for historical sociopolitical forms. Concerning dialectics, Husserl noted that:

In no other place do we find the appearance from darkness of such logical spectra, formed in common traditional conceptuality, that is so replete with paradoxes and logical nonsense. Nowhere is the confusion so great, resulting in disputations and logical *aporiae*, indeed foreboding nothing favorable to science, while the basic task of articulating the phenomena themselves is placed constantly out of sight.<sup>2</sup>

Husserl seems to object to the "self-evidence" with which the dialecticians and the historicizers accept traditional conceptualizations. Such conceptualizations imply, for Husserl, the quite unwarranted prejudgment that language and its historical development takes precedence over awareness and the phenomena to which awareness is correlated.<sup>3</sup> In view of the controversies concerning the meaning of the term "history," it might be difficult to claim that there is one history. Moreover, daily life does not post signs suggesting that the perceived phenomena, including daily discourse, are historical. One reads texts, books and numbers, goes about daily affairs, is engaged with others, and even claims to be temporal, without having to say that such phenomena are historical.

History then is not an obvious phenomenon and may well be a complex theoretical design requiring critical access to its own ground. This essay is designed to probe whether the access to history is hermeneutical or phenomenological. This is especially important in the light of the constant conjunction of hermeneutics with history, i.e. that history is understandable only hermeneutically and that hermeneutics is historical.

Neither hermeneutical nor phenomenological claims concerning history can be affirmed at the outset; it is necessary to raise the question of "what" and "if" there is such a domain as history. While the title of this essay suggests that Husserl also takes history as a given, he does so by deciphering the multi-layered phenomena that comprise the problematic of science, reification, and the life world. That is to say, the analyses of these phenomena are not granted *a priori* an

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<sup>1</sup> J.A. Greimas, *On Meaning*, P.J. Perron & F.H. Collins, trans. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 204ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Husserliana*, vol. IV, p. 123.

<sup>3</sup> VI, *Ibid.*, p. 372.

historical status. The latter must show itself to awareness and is given validity only to the extent that it becomes a phenomenon for awareness. The investigations that follow move through various problematics that constantly reveal phenomena involved in the constitution of history. Although the problematics are complex, including time, intersubjectivity, and praxis, there are in Husserl's work indications of resolutions. At what level the latter will emerge and how they will show what phenomena are historical might well depend on the level of analyses constituting the problematic of awareness. This is to say, the phenomena comprising history and awareness are not obvious and require investigation.

### **The Fundamental Life of Awareness**

If historical phenomena are to be exhibited, they must be connected with the phenomena of awareness, and in such a way that both show themselves in full evidence and in their mutual relationships. In this sense, the point of departure for these investigations is delimited: what are the problematics of tracing awareness which, at the same time, show this awareness to be a trace of historical phenomena.

The problematic of historical phenomena and lived awareness hinges on the constitution of the self and others. The assumption that historical phenomena are the bases of all awareness includes the claim that the "we" is prior to the "I", without divulging the manner in which one comes to such claims and how then the individual is possible. In order to suggest some of the issues involved concerning the self and others, it is necessary to perform a radical epoché on the noematic content and focus on the access to the poetic *Leistung* of awareness.

This opens Husserl's problem of the "primordial, passive stream," the "Heraclitean flow" as fundamental. We lack names for its constitutive moments for there is nothing found in the flow that would be an objective identity. Names, however, apply only to constituted identities, to already objectified sense units."<sup>4</sup> Such units, identities or rudimentary terms of reference are discovered only in "subsequent" reflection that traces something already constituted in the flux, such as the identity of an ego that remains identical in the flow. The ego is glimpsed here as retained and subsequently objectified in memory.

How can this ego, discovered in the flow, be identical with the ego enacting the flow? The latter cannot be exhausted in the represented flowing ego, i.e., the already objectified ego present as reflected *noema*. The ego experiences itself in the flow of its already accomplished acts. "Its own identity, encompassing both, cannot become an object but is rather ahead of any objectification and is not reducible to an objectifying act of reflection."<sup>5</sup> The transcendental ego is anonymous and the anonymity cannot be eradicated by reflection. Hence, there arises a problem concerning the access, if any, to the primordial life of awareness.

Given this problematic, it becomes obvious that one traces various levels of constitutive activities in an effort to exhibit the extent of the phenomenological visibility of the absolute life of awareness. Such tracing reveals various modalities of time constitution such that each modality shows an impenetrable wall of anonymity, "being too late," and objectivity. This means that the presence of the experienced ego to the aware ego reveals a distance between them that is the very condition of such an experience.

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<sup>4</sup> L. Landgrebe, *Der Weg der Phaenomenologie* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliches Buchgesellschaft, 1963), p. 200.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 205.

How is this distance to be understood? One must perform a "radicalizing epoché" in order to open the poetic side of the living stream of experience. That allows one to trace the living present which is not to be understood in an ordinary sense; the present of the ego is not given on the basis of a presupposed temporal position. The radicalizing epoché also brackets the conception of temporal succession. The present of the ego, its presence, could be called *Ur-modal*, pre-temporal or originary.<sup>6</sup>

While opening the poetic as such, this epoché shows that the poetic is a constituted flow and must be interrogated with a view to the ground of its constitution, to the very conditions of its being, in brief, to what makes it possible. At this juncture, various characteristic modalities emerge for the decipherment of the seemingly impenetrable life "already given and constituted," leading to such questions as "what constitutes it," and "is the constitutive process given in its immediacy and apodicticity?" Obviously, this is more than an attempt at a direct phenomenological manifestation of phenomena; there are moments of transcendental argumentation concerning the status of the phenomena, the priority of one phenomenon over another, questions of foundations and of what constitutes more and less basic phenomena. The argumentative procedure transcends the phenomenological strictures and, due to the most fundamental questions, leads to a unique interpretation of problems and resolutions, as Landgrebe has pointed out.<sup>7</sup> Perhaps such a procedure cannot be avoided when encountering the most fundamental questions at a level where "words fail."

Returning to the question of what makes the stream of *noesis* possible, the answer is obviously: the originary function of the ego. The ego is given as the endlessly reiteratable, "I can." This "I can" is encountered at any temporal locus in the stream of lived awareness. Yet any reflection on the "I can," on the primal function of the ego, reveals the ego as a temporal object. While the constitutive ego appears as standing and pre-temporal, it is also experienced as temporal, streaming or flowing within the accomplished *noesis*. The living present of the ego appears reflectively as pre-temporal, standing in constant transformation.

This analysis, therefore, yields adequate but not apodictic evidence of the ego's life as a constant flow. The best that can be attained is the ego's constant reflection upon itself, constituting a stream and revealing the original flowing of the transcendental ego. In this sense, insight into temporality and the simultaneous reflectivity and objectification of the transcendental ego leads phenomenology to experience its ultimate, critical, and apodictic foundation. This is the view maintained by Seebohm.<sup>8</sup> He argues that the temporalizing ego is grasped in reflection as already temporalized and objectified, requiring no further interrogation concerning the temporalizing ego prior to temporalization.

Yet according to Held, and indeed Landgrebe,<sup>9</sup> this fails to account both for the possibility of discussing the absolute ego as a "functioning ego" and how the absolute ego becomes accessible to objectification. Phenomenology must decipher the ultimately functioning subjectivity if it is to adhere to its principle of not accepting any prejudgments and phenomena without first grounding them in awareness. Thus, if the founding transcendental subjectivity is left out of consideration then phenomenology would be based on unwarranted assumptions and would have to surrender its claim to be a presuppositionless philosophy. Hence, against Seebohm's interpretation, Held argues

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<sup>6</sup> K. Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart* (Den Haag: Nijhoff, 1966), p. 63.

<sup>7</sup> L. Landgrebe, *Faktizität und Individuation* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1982), p. 72.

<sup>8</sup> T. Seebohm, *Die Bedingung der Möglichkeit der Transzendental Philosophie* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1962), p. 105.

<sup>9</sup> L. Landgrebe, *Der Weg der Phaenomenologie*, p. 201f.

that the fundamental task of phenomenology is to extricate the ultimately functioning subjectivity from the self-objectification of the ego.<sup>10</sup> If this task could not be accomplished, then one could not show phenomenologically that the presently functioning ego and the objectified ego are the same. But to establish this we must resolve another issue: since the sameness of the ego is given in reflection, what makes reflection possible?

For an ego to turn back upon itself, to revert to itself, it must already have constituted a gap between the experiencing and the experienced ego. At the same time, and despite the gap and hence division, the unity between them cannot be lost. Thus, it is argued, the reflecting ego must identify itself with the ego reflected upon. Given this argument for identity, one has to show how this can be achieved phenomenologically. In what sense can the functioning or noetic ego be identified with the object ego, the noematic or the just-enacted ego? Is the just-enacted given as an ego or merely as an act? If it is the given as an ego, then the currently reflecting and functioning ego is more than the just-enacted ego; the former contains all the possibilities of enactment while the latter is exhausted in the act that it has just performed.

But if the just-enacted is an act, then it cannot be identical with the currently acting ego, since this ego is performing acts of reflection upon the just-performed act. On the other hand, it would be an unwarranted presumption to claim that the currently functioning ego is more than the act upon which it is reflecting. After all, phenomenological explication cannot grant more than what is given, and how it is given. If the reflecting ego is performing an act, then one cannot claim that it is more than the act performed. Moreover, is there a tacit and unwarranted assumption in the term "just enacted" suggestive of a sequence of acts? Do the acts themselves come with a given sign of temporal sequence? This is by no means a necessity.

Held attempts to deal with these philosophical problems by both argument and phenomenological description. In reflection, the ego attains its accomplished act, its just having functioned, as retained. Concurrently, as the presently reflecting ego, it grasps itself as acting. For the reflecting ego, the distance between the act being performed and the just enacted is experienced as bridged. Reflection experiences unity in separation, identity in difference. The reflecting unification with itself, constituting the experience of bridging the distance and keeping an identity of itself at the present, is possible because the ego enacts a constant flow of consciousness. The possibility of self-reflection emerges on the basis of the constancy of streaming as well as on the basis of the streaming constancy of the ego. Thus, before all reflection, it has unified itself, and has bridged the distance in its streaming.

This is the originary passive constitution where the transitory synthetic presentation of the ego to itself occurs. Thus all reflection is founded on the self-presenting of the originary functional ego "before reflection." In the transitional synthetic unification of the living present the ego connects with itself before this unity is grasped in reflection. The pre-accomplished self-presenting of the ego is the self-actualizable reflectivity of the ego. As Brand states, it is the functioning of "reflection in inception."<sup>11</sup>

The ego-logical functioning of the living present is seen as a preaccomplishment of passive transitional syntheses that are equivalent to self presenting. In each recouping reflection, the ego of the pre-temporal living present encounters itself as the flowing, self-temporalizing object. In any added reflection the ego is encountered irrevocably as a temporalized object. Thus reflection never encounters the standing flow of the ego, as the living present, in pure pre-temporality. This

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<sup>10</sup> K. Held, pp. 76f.

<sup>11</sup> G. Brand, *Welt Ich und Zeit* (Den Haag: Nijhoff, 1955), p. 66.



is not an inadequacy of reflection; rather it reveals that there is no ego-presence which is not presenting and thus self-presenting.

In this sense the ego is never a pure ego, never a pole without a temporal objectivity. The ego has itself as an object and as transcendent in such a way that a pure ego immanence cannot be extricated and, in fact, might be quite irrelevant. The notion of an immanent stream of conscious life is thereby relativised. Thus the meaning of the transcendence of the natural world is already encountered in the living flow; the latter is already temporalized as first and thus as "immanent transcendence." All this is understood in terms of sense, not of ontology.

The immanent transcendence, as first objectivation, forms a temporal objectivity encounterable in an objective topography of time; and thus reproducible. The passing, the streaming present as objective past, is the first objectivity in immanence, the first meaning of transcendence. At the same time it is the foundation of history in the form of first temporality. Objectification and temporalization of the noetic stream constitute the *topoi* for all objectivities and for historical events.<sup>12</sup> History is therefore constituted with this first temporalization and transcendence. The relationship between this level and historical time will be analyzed subsequently.

While there is an intuitive agreement that the immediate life of consciousness is pretemporal, there is no unanimity concerning the manner of its givenness. Brand contends that the pre-reflective synthesis is founded on the primordial passing of the ego and its constitution of the ground for differentiation which is, at the same time, a self-identification in the originary transitional syntheses. As he states, "I am present to myself in a specific form of the now without becoming objective, without mediation."<sup>13</sup>

But Held points out that this betrays a presence of objectifying temporalization; the very naming of the "now" destroys immediacy and assumes a temporal field.<sup>14</sup> If reflection is temporalization and the primordial life is pretemporal, then any reflection will have to explicate the pretemporal in a temporal way. It has been a persistent phenomenological finding that any temporal awareness is essentially incomplete and can never obtain apodicticity--though of course, we may add, that one has eidetic and apodictic awareness of this incompleteness. Any grasp of pre-temporality must remain at the prereflective level. Once the pretemporal life is given to consciousness, it becomes identifiable as a temporalized object, an object in flux.

What then is this pretemporal life of consciousness? It is possible to agree that it is anonymous. Traditional designations would not only fail to enlighten, but would be most misleading. Hence, it is essential to perform an epoché on various preconceptions. Both, the natural and the psychological views of time are to be excluded, as well as their opposites, eternity and duration. Moreover, the various special and linear metaphors are to be avoided. What is left consists of such possibilities as "everywhere and nowhere," fixed once and for all as "all time" or "all temporality," and "all temporality of the identical being as the universality of its past, present, and future." While these designations are an improvement, they offer no clear clue concerning the relationship of the standing-flowing issue. Is the all-temporality permanent or flowing, or constitutive of both? Could it be seen as a permanence in transition? Despite all these questions, it remains that history cannot be grounded in some presumed temporal sequence.

Permanence in transition is fitting for the constitution of the ground of inter-subjectivity and history; it opens access to the meaning of otherness. All the mechanisms of "filling in,

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* p. 63.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* p. 105.

<sup>14</sup> B. Waldenfels, *Das Zwischenreich des Dialogs* (Den Haag: Nijhoff, 1971), p. 36.

apperception, associative pairing, empathy, appresentation" assume *a priori* evidence of alterity. This means that the origin of the experience of the sense of the other is given in the pretemporal activity of the ego. This is maintained on phenomenological, and also on logical grounds. Since the ego is anonymous to itself and its own apodictic evidence of itself. It cannot claim to be more certain of itself than of the other. Waldenfels agrees with this assessment. If the ego is an anonymous life, then it cannot have the slightest power of disposal over itself. It need not be understood solipsistically or even ego-logically; it could be prior to all intentional activity and receptivity.<sup>15</sup>

Given this context, it is difficult to say which activities are of the ego and which belong to an alter-ego. Held points out that at the anonymous level there emerges a first connection between an ego and an alterego. This emergence is necessitated by the slippage, the stance in transition, and the reflective recouping of the self in that transition in an immediate recognition of itself as other and self. Originary self-constitution is coequal with a "we" constitution. Thus, the "other-functioning" at this level of anonymity is not yet distinguishable from the self-functioning. The only difference is the sense of self and other and the first and second person designation.<sup>16</sup> These, of course, are dependent on linguistic traditions.

Having a sense of the other as being-with is not separable from the being of the a-temporal, anonymous self, in the self-presencing of the ego. This means that common ontification or temporalization, presupposes an anonymous inter-subjectivity already present in the constant slippage of the ego. It constitutes the transcendental area of atemporality and contains the copresence of other functional presents, of the sense of others. This sense leads to the notion that each experience of the other in its originary ontification, i.e., its immanent transcendence, constitutes an horizon wherein the experience of all others as co-present leads to the notion of the living present as an indefinite horizon encompassing the totality of all egos and their self-temporalization.

It is to be noted that such encompassing is given in the originary reflection, and hence constitutes an originary temporalization and an originary compulsion toward ontification. This appears to be one aspect of the constitution of history. In brief the functioning of the transcendental subjectivity is the ground of common sedimentations that are not past, but remain coextensive with, and play a role in, the field of awareness. They are not yet ontologically temporalized, nor metaphysically eternalized; one could say that they are a-temporal.

The term "a-temporal" has been used to avoid both the purely formal sense of eternal, and the pure concept of succession. It is neither one nor the other, but stakes out a problematic that intimates history without ontologized time. If one were to raise the question of history that leads to the life of anonymous awareness, one could point out that the very problematic in the modern tradition constitutes the catalyst for the discovery of the transcendental. In this sense the problematic is historical, but not somehow given in the past; rather it comprises a field of tasks, or horizons of engagements. Thus, how something is "given" and becomes "mine" points to this a-temporal field wherein one finds one's contributions and, correlatively, one's place. Awareness is a compilation of sedimentations of a poli-centrally comprised objectivity. Any philosophical reflection is singularly general to the extent that it is a problematic domain that is open for resolution by anyone.

Waldenfels has exemplified in detail the poliocentric field in terms of inter-subjectivity and dialogical mutuality, showing that the field is essentially triadic. That is to say, to speak is to speak

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<sup>15</sup> K. Held, p. 168.

<sup>16</sup> B. Waldenfels, *Das Zwischenreich des Dialogs*, p. 134ff.

to someone about something, to do something with someone is to be world and other-oriented without positing the other as an object of interrogation.<sup>17</sup> The dialogue is not restricted to two present subjects facing a topic or a task, but may include the views embedded in established modes of activity and language. In this sense it is a field that has not yet become historical as a temporal succession of events, dates or pronouncements, but is coextensive with the subjects engaged in the dialogue and tasks. What is specific about this engagement is that the subjects are not separate egos, but comprise phases in the dialogue, each being at once both active and passive. There is no required objectivation of the other, both because the sense of the other is already given, and because the ego and the other are world and task oriented or intentionally engaged.

The triadic composition of the field opens another problematic level: history and individuation. It appears that we have been shifting from the inadequacy of the ego as the ground of history, to the anonymous life and its constitution of the sense of the other, and finally to the field wherein the individual always finds itself.

This seems to suggest that the anonymous life of awareness is this very history as a problematic which leads to its own self-discovery by way of an individual reflection. Does the latter emerge from the given problematic as a reflective moment that establishes individuation in thy very interrogation of the problematic, and hence as self-differentiation from it? This would suggest that the condition for singular experience appears in the problematic wherein interrogation functions to distance the individual from this atemporal field.

Obviously, there remains an issue to be resolved: whence the sense of individuality, the sense that reflection upon the field emerges from individuality, from an ego? Moreover, in what sense is the ego individual? Why is there an I, this particular person, when the investigations so far seem to fit anyone's problematic.

## History

Husserl saw history as the "grand fact of being." It could be said, that this grand fact has a different sense from a common conception of history. Seen from the side of crisis it is obvious that it is not the succession of events and theses that comprise the focus of discussion, but the problematic of the modern Western philosophical and scientific field that yields the crisis. There is a temptation to temporalize and thus ontologize such a field, leading to the view of historical causes and movements. But the analyses are more noetic-noematic, comprising the polio-centric field of dialogue with the significations of others, borrowing, extending, transforming and being transformed in this dialogue about the world. Indeed, the West was facing a plethora of issues ranging from nihilism, reductionism, irrationalism and radical relativism.

While from one angle one could regard these phenomena as a succession of philosophical views in history, from another, and I think Husserlian, phenomenological point of view these phenomena were coextensive with the problematic of the still present inadequacies in points of departure: the analyses of domains of objectivity of transcendental life, etc., were insufficiently radical. In this sense there is not yet a need to speak of history in the former sense; rather it is coextensive with our polycentric engagements in the problematic that constitute our crises. One could argue that the above-mentioned phenomena are for Husserl merely ontologized and temporalized signs of a deeper malady that pervades modernity.

Given this composition of history, its a-temporal character as a polio-centric field with triadic structure, it becomes obvious that the given objectivities are not blind facts; they bear meaning

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<sup>17</sup> L. Landgrebe, *Faktizität und Individuation*, p. 111.

and can be regarded as traces of the constituting activities of transcendental inter-subjectivity. Without the latter, history has no foundation and can be posited as a self-generating event that dominates a people. Such domination has been assumed by too many modern thinkers, specifically in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It could be noted that one major impediment in the early works of Husserl was the strict separation of fact from essence, of cultural life from transcendental subjectivity. In brief, transcendental subjectivity needed neither historical nor natural facticities.

The first task is to show that factual history and essential awareness are not antithetical in at least two important ways. First, history is completely tied to human experience, and second, the historical extension of awareness from generation to generation is not material, but signitive. This is to say, what is transmitted is the essential meaning and not brute facticity. Indeed, the latter is not even a possible given in any phenomenological sense. Every "fact" is basically a system of awareness.<sup>18</sup>

The polycentric field, the dialogical encounter, was thought to be inherent in the always and already anonymously functioning absolute subjectivity, its first traces of temporalization, and its primordial institution of the sense of "we consciousness" in the flow of noeses. This meant that any objectivity encountered in time is an indice or trace of the absolute life. This leads to the experience that the historical facticities are not bracketed contingencies, but essential traces of the constitutive acts of the transcendental subjectivity. Indeed, the "already given objectivities" point to sedimented modalities of the poetic process of judging, predicating and perceiving as constituted in the pre-predicative life of consciousness.<sup>19</sup>

The sense of the real encountered in experience implies a specific process of consciousness wherein the real appears as "this kind," or having "this type" of being. Thus the question is: what kind of experience is or was required in order for a particular kind of being, having a particular meaning, to be present? This means that a question about the essence of specific entities, historical and cultural objectivities or their significance becomes a question of noetic activities, intentionalities. Every given objectivity in time is already subtended by, and correlated to, the temporalizing noeses and the essential structures of such objectivity.<sup>20</sup>

The noema, as objectivities in the a-temporal field, are not in nature, but are eidetic morphologies of awareness, accessible to all. The accessibility hinges upon the primordial life and its incessant transformative syntheses: this is its "slippage" that exhibits self-distanciation and unification of ego or originary we. Hence, every objectivity encountered in historical sedimentation, is accessible to any subjectivity in terms of sense constitution and its kind of objectivity. If the pre-temporal awareness has no pre-given temporal location, if it is everytime and "all time," then any objectivity in historical time is traceable "vertically" to the transcendental conditions required for its constitution. Every facticity is not only a system of perceptions, but also an indice or clue.

The totality of clues need not stem from present awareness, from the manner of present activity. Yet they can be relived, reanimated as achievements of others and thus opened to the totality of subjects. Even if forgotten in their uniqueness and singularity, they are sedimented in ruins and institutions, with all the typological structures for continuous re-experiencing. The sedimentations need not be recollected explicitly by a singular consciousness as sedimentations of

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<sup>18</sup> E. Husserl, *Erfahrung und Urteil*, L. Landgrebe, ed. (Hamburg: Classer, 1963), p. 21.

<sup>19</sup> U. Claesges, *Edmund Husserl's Theorie der Raumkonstitution* (Den Haag: Nijhoff, 1967), p. 27f.

<sup>20</sup> L. Landgrebe, *Phaenomenologie und Geschichte* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftlichs Buchgesellschaft, 1968), p. 23.

a historical past in order to function as typological indices. Mainly, they are acquired quite tacitly through education and enculturation, and already provide an horizon of indices.

These passively given accomplishments are not discovered as a substructure, a purely associative mechanism subtending perceptual life, but are accessible as an open horizon of poetic indices of activities to be done because they are both suggestive of them and indicative of my activities. They are given in their sense and phenomenological analyses can show their sense implications horizontally, and their constitutive and pretemporal activities vertically as already accomplished by others, by the polio-centric field as the presence of all consciousnesses. The passive interconnections of indices, bearing every experience, comprise the meaning of phenomenological intentionalities and motivations already found in the atemporal historical field.

The passive indices constitute the field of expectations in a passive mode. It is not necessary to orient oneself to what is expected explicitly. Being in a particular modality of awareness and activity, one assumes a passively open horizon that contains an inherent orientation. The latter can be regarded provisionally as a collective concept of interconnections of indices, a tacit sketch of possibilities of experiencing, sedimented as a field of presence. This presence, in turn, points to a continuous effort of teleological unification, integration, and synthesis of sense. The unification does not mean a system of thought designed to explain all events, but an unexplicated preconception that the most remote and the nearest events can be understood, can make sense in the temporal field. Even if such sense contests our own, we are able to understand the contrast, and thus extend our awareness by its presence.

The indices lead to transcendental inter-subjectivity, to the vertical constitutive achievements which are always and already enacted, and are accessible to any intentional consciousness in its poetic activities of reiterating the sense implications of correlative objectivities. In turn, each novel determination of objectivities, each new articulation of world and ourselves, is a new clue for the interrogation of the sense implications inherent in the encountered beings. But this novelty is not free floating; it inheres in, and is co-constituted by, the field of horizons. What is or can become a clue is prefigured by a context of the field and by our experiential treasury. "We cannot understand ourselves any deeper as transcendental subjectivity than would be allowed by the clues encountered in the temporalized historical region."<sup>21</sup> In this sense the tracing of historical situations, comprising the context for objectivities, is equivalent to tracing the all-temporal, everywhere and nowhere of the life of transcendental subjectivity that has been notified and temporalized as history.

If all beings, including ourselves as worldly in a specific self-understanding of who we are, were taken as clues, then they would no longer function as accidental, contingent facticities, serving to exemplify eidetic necessities, but would be beyond the difference between them. Each being, including ourselves, becomes an historically factual necessity, answering to the question: what is necessarily presupposed in the constituting activities, what sense constitution is required as both unconditionally universal and factually contingent to yield a being of a specific perceptual type and meaning.

This is precisely where the difference between fact and essence must be surrendered. Whatever is given as historical facticity is already a perceptual indice of the constitutive achievement. The relationship to the perceptual, the factual, is incorporated into the clues incessantly pointing to the ground of their constitution. Through free variations, as an attainment of essence, the factual is not abolished, but unfolded in its complete sense. In this process, the transcendental subject becomes transparent to itself in its horizons.

The region of constituted meanings as presently given can be reached through a reduction to the passively enacted and accepted field of indices and interconnections, prefiguring the typologically delimited objectivities. Historical understanding is a trace that leads to the absolute, anonymous transcendental subjectivity. Obviously, the tracing of the latter is an infinite task, and the historical process must be regarded as an atemporal problematic leading to the self-explication of transcendental subjectivity in the living present.

The investigations have taken for granted Husserl's notion of history as the grand fact of being. Each ego has a history, in each experience what is retained is effective in its sedimentations. What is experienced at present is understood along experiences of typological similarity. While the sedimentations are directly effective, they can be recalled. Yet, as was noted, the originary experience includes the sense of otherness. This constitutes the passive side that is pre-given anonymously. The latter, meanwhile, still presents an issue of individuation and inter-subjectivity. One answer commonly proposed to solve this issue is that individuation can be accounted for through body as the distinguishing factor. Yet what makes corporeity individual? My corporeity cannot be based on physiological conceptions. My body is recognizable as mine on the basis of activities. Note that the term "activity" does not designate a substance or entity "in action", but a corporeity whose very constitution is activity, whose every shape is a kinaesthetic formation. In this sense, activity is neither an inner nor an outer characteristic of corporeity, but a structuration that can be regarded as the "nature" side of transcendental subjectivity and, in a somewhat rough fashion, as coextensive with it. Movements that are not simply serial but overleaping subtend all formations of sensory receptivity, and yet could not be designated as "active." They belong to the anonymous poetic background of enactments wherein the noematic correlates appear.

If activities are taken as basic, various issues suggest themselves. The historical field, as noted above, is coextensive with the poetic enactments and their noematic correlates. At the same time such a field seems to be an unavoidable *a priori*. Yet if the activities are to be taken as founding, then it would seem that the *a priori* becomes a factual process. How can a factual process become an *a priori*, and in turn encompass the field? This facticity would imply relativity and hence the Husserlian claims that history is the grand fact of being would lose their force. This issue can be stated as follows: how is it possible to accommodate the facticity of our activities and by implication the facticity of the historical field with phenomenological claims of essential and generally valid insights?

Husserl was well aware of this issue.<sup>21</sup> Historical facts are understandable from an *a priori* stance, yet the *a priori* presupposes the contingency of the corporeal field. If one claims that phenomenology is a rigorous science, then the latter emerges as a facet in the field, while presupposing the field as factual. This is to say, the *a priori* is constituted in an historical field which is also factual. In the face of this dilemma Husserl posited an infinite idea of history as teleological. Yet, as professor Huertas Jourda argues, this very positing is based on an uncritical acceptance of modern evolutionism and, one might add, historicism.<sup>22</sup>

Another issue which must be resolved stems from the problematic of assigning possessive language to the ego. How is it that a particular thought is "mine" or an action belongs to me in distinction from being yours? Moreover, how does the ego recognize its own individuality? At the level of the pure standing-flowing, it appeared that the ego differentiates itself into self and the sense of the other, yet the ego was here presupposed in its identity without phenomenological depiction of its individuality.

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<sup>21</sup> E. Husserl, *Krisis*, Beilage II, p. 362.

<sup>22</sup> J. Huertas-Jourda, *Phenomenology of the Living Present*, (unpublished monograph).

This issue is not characteristic only of phenomenology. Psychologists also wanted to account for it and were compelled to introduce various tricks such as "mirror image wherein the subject recognizes itself". But a mirror image takes for granted that one knows oneself already to make the claim that the image looks like me. This is to say, the solution is a mere postponement of the issue. To find a plausible resolution of this issue we shall turn to the active body and its constitution of the individual and of the other in action.

## **Body in Action**

While in his earlier works Husserl still spoke of hyletic data as given, in *Ideen II* and in *Krisis* this view is undercut by the functioning of corporeity. This belongs to the passive side of transcendental subjectivity, yet in such a way that it transgresses the factual and the essential, while in its generality founding both. The constitutive activities subtend the hyletic data and show that the latter appear on the basis of the kinaesthetic constitution of temporality. This means that even the primordial data are apperceptive. The impressional data already have a form and content and both are mediated by constitutive activities of temporalization that provide duration for the data. Without apperception there are no impressions, and without kinaesthesia there are no apperceptions. The ur-impressions are synthetic units of kinaesthesia. In this sense, kinaesthetic consciousness is time consciousness.

This means, furthermore, that the corporeal is not constituted, but constitutive. It is a system of activities to which sense fields are coordinated and as such is on the side of transcendental subjectivity. This means a precedence of the body is as "I can," provided no phenomenological credence is given to the "I." It could be said provisionally that the empowerments of the body is genetically prior to the appearance of the ego, or that the discovery of the "mine" precedes the discovery of the ego.

Here the world and other relationships are predelineated. But this subjectivity has the world not as something facing it, but as coextensive with it. The world is to the extent that our corporeal activities constitute it in synthetic praxis and articulation: we know as much of it as is announced in corporeal activities. The activities are not at our disposal, but are what we are in praxis, and the world is the world of praxis. In this sense the world is not confronted, but is coextensive with transcendental becoming. This is precisely why the world escapes us as an object or subject and remains as an anonymous groundless ground. Nonetheless, it bears in itself the principle of both individuation and other relatedness, their difference and commonality. It preestablishes a process which can be called mine and differentiated from others on a common ground.

Without corporeal activities, consciousness of self is a presupposition, a condition for the possibility of experience, but not an experience of the individual self or ego. The unity of the transcendental ego might turn out to be a construction or an explanatory principle which one presupposes in order to explain the unity of experience, and in recourse to factual experience and the conditions which make it possible. This is the central issue. If this is a result concerning a necessary condition which must be presupposed, what constitutes its universal necessity? It might be a hypothesis which could turn out to be unwarranted, or an ideology that is disproven in subsequent experiences.

The problematic could be restated in other terms. The basis for which Husserl seeks must be absolute: yet the question of the individual is not answered purely on the transcendental arguments for an ego. Individuality is to be sought elsewhere and it is precisely such a search that leads to the absoluteness of the factual individual and inter-individual relationships: contingent absoluteness.

How is this contingency to be understood? Earlier discussion would have suggested that it is a fact correlated to an essence, but such a correlation turns out to be impossible since every fact is already a constituted system in a field. In addition, reflective thinking cannot determine the limits of the facticity of passive activities and hence correlate them to essential insights. Neither facticity nor essentiality will do, specifically if experienced facticity of self in activity does not yield any substantiality and predicative characterizations. The factual process is not experienced as a brute and dumb fact to be subsumed as an exemplar of an *eidos*, but as a system of dynamic abilities deployed from a here and a now, and not in the sense of being inserted in a pre-given space-time, but as that from which the world is opened in action. The null-point is the corporate from which all actions unfold, but in such a way that the null-point itself is apperceptive and located in a process of shifting and intersecting activities comprising a field and not a position.

Our contention is that this field and its field nature is pre-delineated in its factual life as a constant activity and a structuration of the perceptual world. The ego is an achievement of factual enablements that are not factual data. In this sense, the ego is absolute fact. Its necessity is neither essential nor contingent. Both are subtended by the acting body and its systematic engagements with practical affairs. What follows from such an absolute fact is that any of its essential and contingent determinations are inadequate. In this sense it is without ground. One could claim that the activities are constitutive, while being unconstituted by, the phenomenal field. Given this, it is now possible to take the last step in tracing the question of individuality and inter-subjectivity.

Bodily activities constitute an ineradicable facticity that is not dumb, but an articulated process which does not emerge into the foreground--specifically since it is not entitative but constitutive of the spacio-temporalization of patterns. The latter are neither interior nor exterior; hence, reflective awareness is inadequate to grasp it. Rather, it is taken for granted as a point of departure for any investigation of the lived world and field of history. Each gesture and movement is accomplished spontaneously and recognized in correlation to, and distinction from, others. From childhood on there is a vital kinaesthetic exploration of the world and the constitution of corporeal abilities. The latter are neither inner nor outer, but are primarily effective. One can reach something, move something, pull, push, lift and throw. This effectivity comprises its own domain of cognition.

While prereflective, nevertheless, corporeal movements constitute their own self-reflexivity and self-reference. In a missed attempt to reach something, the attempt is immediately repeated. The missing comprises an instance of movement which reflects back upon itself and calls for a variation of itself in a second attempt. There is a direct kinaesthetic question: can I do this? This reveals at the outset an already articulated field of abilities and tasks with possible variations that never offer a final, factual limitation.

Here one builds a recognition of oneself in terms of what one can do. This self-recognition is coextensive with the recognition of the abilities as mine, not because the abilities are mirrored in a psychological inferiority or in a mirror, but because they are kinesthetically reflexive and at the same time coextensive with, and differentiated from, those of others. That I cannot do this means not only that I have tried and failed, but that I have seen others perform it. The correlation of abilities and inabilities is an inter-corporeal experience present in the handling of tasks and undertakings. Corporeal abilities comprise an understanding of commonalities and individuating differences.

The commonality has two components: first, the common task in which we are engaged, and second, the continuity of activities that differentiate themselves into variations. We lift something, but you do it from that side and I do it from this. Though the end you are lifting may be heavier,



you can, and I cannot, lift that end. Yet I can lift this end, and thus discover a common activity and its corporeal differentiation. This constitutes a polio-centric field of activities and includes others who are not present at the task. "If only Joe were here to lend us a hand," includes the abilities of Joe as coextensive with, and differentiated from, our capacities. Or, "Lucky that Mike is not here; he certainly likes to lend a hand, but tends to be more of a hindrance than a help."

The investigations reveal possible variations that take over the suggestion of *Cartesian Meditations* concerning empathy. At the active level the term empathy can be modified by "filling in." It is quite a common notion; we do fill in for someone at the job by taking over a function, or by putting our shoulder to the task from another side. All these functions suggest a commonality and a variation. This is corporeal individuation and an inter-corporeal field that is neither a simple fact, nor an essence, but which subtends both. Concurrently, there is a level of reflexivity, of direct apperception of the self and the other on the basis of activities undertaken by both. The other's ability to reach something, and my lack of such an ability, despite my efforts, reflects directly our corporeal commonality of reaching, and our differences. Thus, the "I can" is prior to the pure "I", since the former is individuated and differentiated from others, and yet is directly aware of them as well as of itself.

By now it should be somewhat more obvious that the ground of history is neither historical nor constituted by a logic of continuity of time, but is the very process of inter-corporeal making. This comprises an interconnected field of bodily activities such that the activities constituting systematic engagements in tasks are individuating and coextensive with others. Yet this leads to the reinvestigation of the "factual" tasks and objects to which such tasks are related.

The factual states of affairs, correlated to our activities, are equally prior to essentiality and brute actuality. Rather they have an open explodability and generality, specifically with respect to their practical functions. It is to be noted that history is not thought, but built or made in practical engagements. Such engagements reveal another aspect of activities which could be called dimensional, leading to corporeal analogization of the field of praxis. The active handling of objects does not exhibit one-to-one correlation between activities and the objects. Each activity can range over various and typologically distinct objects and tasks. The hand can pick up a stone, a hammer, a stick and use any of them to pound a stick into the ground.

This constitutes a primal analogization in two senses. First, one can perform similar activities and recognize them directly anywhere and anyplace prior to historical temporalization. Second, the activities perform a passive analogization of objects by using them as interchangeable in the face of a task. The hammer, the stone and the stick are analogates by virtue of the generality of our abilities. In this sense the "I can" is a factual generality that cannot be reduced either to a closed essence or a brute fact. One can claim then that the historical field is recognized by interchanging functions as analogous to one another, capable of filling in one another, and equally by facts as systems. They reveal not essentialities, as was shown at the outset, but various analogical interconnections which are corporeally recognizable. It is this that allows an archeologist, an historian, and an anthropologist to reconstruct the so-called past on the basis of some handy find. This is to say, those scholars and researchers do not have to date the find in a preconceived temporal sequence--this comes subsequently as an occupational tandem--but to encounter it as an analogate of what they could do with this object and imply that we, too, already recognize that we could do similar things.

This means that there is no necessary interconnection among all activities; some are continued, others discontinued, and still others postponed, thus constituting varied time structures and task structurations that prohibit any teleological direction to history. With such a prohibition, any quest

for history as something that is unidirectional and above the activities and tasks that build it ceases to make sense. The activities, of course, are interconnected in various ways, inclusive of the above limited commonalities and differentiations, yet they comprise a continuous field without a telos, without a direction. Hence, there is continuous building, but not in any sense atemporal building. It is rather an atemporal intersection of activities wherein the so-called past and the presumed future, as ontologizations, come too late. In brief, the lived world as historical is a world of praxis that admits neither essentiality nor facticity; rather both are coextensive with what Husserl describes as "primordial techné."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> E. Husserl, *Nachlass*, Bd. I, 21, 1, 1932.

**Chapter X**  
**Equality and Freedom:**  
**Two Values to Be Rediscovered in the Transition to Democracy**

*Georgi Karasimeonov*

**Equality and Freedom**

The issue of the role and relationship of the values of liberty and equality is as actual today as it was centuries ago when liberal ideas began to question the organic and holistic view of society and the place of individuals therein. Whereas the doctrine of natural rights and the Kantian view of the autonomy of the individual are accepted as the core of liberalism, the concept of equality in its relation to liberty remains under discussion.

Classical liberalism accepted the notion of equality as normative for the citizens before the law. The followers of Kant saw personal freedom in the context of equal autonomy for all. In other words, the quest for equality is legitimate when it does not interfere with the fulfillment of individual autonomy.

Equality is the right to freedom; it is classical liberalism subordinated to liberty. For many liberals it is a tool, guaranteed through democracy's equal suffrage, etc., to achieve individual freedom and autonomy. Equality in liberty means that each person should enjoy as much liberty as is compatible with the liberty of others, and may do anything which does not diminish the equal liberty of others. According to Norberto Bobbio, very early in the development of the liberal state this form of equality inspired two fundamental principles that came to be expressed in constitutional provisions: (a) equality before the law, and (b) equality of rights. The idea of the rule of law and the state of law (*Rechtstaat*) was developed on the basis of liberal conceptions of the relationship between liberty and equality.

The rule of law had to guarantee equal freedom for its citizens: equality before the law. Any other state interference in personal autonomy was condemned as restricting personal freedom. The minimal or *laissez faire* state was the classical liberal view on the role of the state in society. The notion of equality of rights extends beyond the idea of equality before the law since it presupposes the equal enjoyment by all citizens of certain fundamental constitutionally guaranteed rights.

**Equal Opportunity**

The idea of equality of opportunity as a condition for achieving liberty is already a deviation from classical liberalism. It has a social component connected to a new understanding of the role of equality in a much larger sense than pure normative equality or equality of rights. It sees the achievement of freedom as not only restricted to the efforts of the individual by itself, but in a societal context where equal opportunity are given to everyone to achieve personal freedom. Extending the reach of equality of opportunity to all classes and groups in society brought a new dimension to the idea of liberty.

To a great extent, socialism is a result of that understanding of equality. Freedom for everybody as precondition for freedom for all was the closing sentence of the "Communist Manifesto". The phrase was very much forgotten by orthodox Marxism, not to speak of Leninism

and Stalinism. It was Bernstein in his reformist socialism who reminded socialists of the liberal strand in some of Marx's work.

The discussion regarding the boundaries of equality of opportunity and the extent to which it is acceptable without interfering with the value of liberty has never ceased. Proponents of the welfare state (social liberalism and social democracy) have different views on this point. Some accept the view in support of equality of opportunity "at the start"; others see it as equality over the life span of an individual. The common idea behind these divergent views is the notion that the state has the main responsibility for assuring everybody the opportunity to realize their potential talent and professional capabilities. This implies equality of opportunity for education, work, health, retirement, etc. In other words, the notion of equality of opportunity has expanded so much in scope that at the beginning of the 70s liberals returned to the classical issue of equality or freedom, or, more ideologized, freedom instead of socialism. The attack against the welfare state was a direct reflection of these sentiments of liberals--conservatives as well as neo-conservatives. All of them feared that the value of equality in its concrete political implementation was endangering personal liberties and restricting the territory of individual autonomy and achievement.

### **Egalitarianism**

In its Leninist-Stalinist version Communism turned the whole equation upside down. Social equality was the aim of the communists, while individual liberty was subdued. Egalitarianism against social differentiation, "collective freedom" against personal liberties was the ideological base of the attack by the communist partocracy against human rights and freedoms. In the name of "collective equality" personal initiative was repressed and eventually was to a large extent restricted. Private property was declared evil and banned; personal achievement was not well regarded.

A uniform society was created in which all were equally poor, equal in their misery, equal in the deprivation of happiness and security, equal in their small homes, equal in their small salaries and, in the end, equal in their irresponsibility to their job and community. Communism created a pseudo-equality or equality in the lack of freedom for all. Of course, for part of the populace this was a condition for being accepted, while it corresponded to a life and work style based on irresponsibility and little or no effort. The value of liberty was suppressed as bourgeois individualism. The ruling elite saw the greatest danger to its dictatorship in autonomous thinking and expression. Of course, in that Orwellian society, some were "more equal" than the great mass of people; today many learn the truth of that deceitful pretense of "equality" in totalitarian communism. The ideology of communist egalitarianism was a facade behind which the higher nomenclature had unlimited freedom for personal enrichment, possessed a multitude of privileges, and were corrupt even to extent of criminality.

Egalitarianism as ideology and political praxis failed because it destroyed the basis for personal freedom and individual autonomy. It was formal equality without freedom; it was forced equality based on political repression. The state "planned" the scope of equality and defined the boundaries of personal freedoms. The state totally overwhelmed civil society and restricted its autonomy. Every attempt to assert one's autonomy or individual liberties outside state regulations was severely punished.

As Bobbio rightly observes, libertarianism and egalitarianism are rooted in profoundly divergent conceptions of man and society--conceptions which are individualistic, conflictual and

pluralistic for the liberal; totalizing, harmonious and monistic for the egalitarian. The chief goal for the liberal is the expansion of the individual personality, even if the wealthier and more talented achieve this development at the expense of that of the poorer and less gifted. The chief goal for the egalitarian is the enhancement of the community as a whole, even if this entails constrictions of the sphere of individual freedom.

## **Social Changes**

The transition from totalitarianism to democracy in Eastern Europe in 1989-90 is linked to fundamental changes throughout the structures, institutions, habits and beliefs of society. It is a painful process of revival of civil society and of the identity of all social groups and individuals. Society awakens from a deep trauma and an experience that brought serious damage to all aspects of social and individual life. History has not known such a great upheaval when, in a short period, a society had to move from one status to another, radically changing its political and economic foundations.

This process is related to a change in values affecting fundamental notions of relations between human beings, between social groups and even within families. Communism destroyed not only the economic base of natural human relations (private property, market economy, etc.), but tried politically and ideologically to erase in the minds of people classical liberal and democratic values. Today the values of freedom and equality have to be rediscovered and put into practice in brand new conditions on the path leading to a pluralistic parliamentary democracy and market economy. All this must take place in unstable political conditions, economic crises, a rise of national and ethnic conflicts, a lack of international security, and so on. What challenges face the newly-won personal liberties and how will these post-communist societies move from egalitarian irresponsibility to competitive inequality?

## **The Challenges of Pluralism and Political Liberties**

Political pluralism is one of the major achievements of the transition from totalitarianism to democracy. It has manifested itself in the formation of many parties and political movements which compete with each other. Pluralism has manifested itself also in the freedom of the press and expression, and in the restoration of fundamental human rights. The monopoly of party rule was broken and the totalitarian suppression of fundamental freedoms has been eliminated.

At the same time these newly won freedoms are threatened by two major negative aspects of post-totalitarian development. One is the lack of understanding and of tradition to support the ideas that liberty means responsibility and goes hand in hand with the rule of law. With the collapse of the supercentralized police state a vacuum was created in the authority of the state so that liberties are being applied in the atmosphere of growing irresponsibility and lack of respect for the law. This is further stimulated by the passive attitude of the police and other major institutions engaged in law enforcement. The former hostile attitude to the totalitarian state which enforced law through oppressive methods has not been transformed in the conditions of democracy into a new positive attitude to state structures. Many react in that way because they are discontent that part of the former nomenclature are still in strong positions, especially in the provincial cities.

The notion of the rule of law and its relationship to political freedoms and civil liberties is lacking in the minds of great parts of the populace. This has encouraged individuals and groups to many gross violations of the law. The crime rate has grown enormously, economic speculation,

disobedience of many kinds (nonpayment of taxes, "free" use of public transport, etc.), and other manifestations of nonrespect of law threaten to undermine democracy and turn it into anarchy. The danger of chaos is a good argument for conservative and antidemocratic forces in their growing aggressiveness against democratic changes.

The trials of former higher members of the nomenclature also showed another aspect of nonrespect for law. These trials became caricatures of the judicial process because their main aim was to punish for the sake of punishment in reaction to popular demands for justice. This might be a justified moral demand, but the course of these much-publicized trials showed a shortness of legal provisions. The Ceausescu phenomenon does not correspond to notions of the rule of law.

The other negative effect of the post-totalitarian transition is the lack of democratic culture in the implementation of civil liberties. Freedoms not only are normative notions, but have an ethical component related mostly to the way they are used in daily life. Democracy is not only symbolized by institutions, but is a way of thinking and behaving which excludes nondemocratic means (for example, the destruction of the totalitarian state) in order to reach formal democratic ends.

The lack of democratic traditions and culture which characterize nations with a longstanding practice of democratic government results in the revival of certain aspects of totalitarian culture in the practice of political pluralism. Even political parties and politicians engaged in the democratic cause cannot escape the pitfalls of autocratic manners and nondemocratic behavior manifested in the use of ideological tools, terminology and even concepts from the former communist ideology. Fanaticism and extremism have been recent aspects of political pluralism in Bulgaria. The democratic values of tolerance, respect for opponents, compromise, social peace, nonviolence, etc., have been lacking in political life. The negative elements of political behavior undermine democratic institutions and endanger democracy itself by creating new animosities and social conflicts resembling a civil cold war. Revenge and hate have dominated the political scene; bipolarization and confrontation have characterized many political relations. Revolutionary logic confronts evolutionary and reform-oriented policies.

In other words, the civilized understanding and application of civil rights and liberties, with a harmony between content and form, will take a long time; in the meantime these liberties themselves could be threatened. As Voltaire once said: it is hard to win freedom, but it is much harder to make use of it.

## **Challenges of the Market Economy**

If political pluralism has at least gained some hold for the time being, in these fragile conditions the path to a market economy creates much more fundamental problems. The destruction of private property and of the bases for a market economy created not only an egalitarian and uniform society, but a specific attitude towards professional work and personal initiative. The egalitarian ideology destroyed the psychological attitudes of competitiveness and striving for personal achievement. The paternalistic state, which Kant called the worst state, created an attitude of passive obedience to orders from "the top" and a psychological atmosphere of irresponsibility and lack of individual initiative. This, of course, was stimulated by salaries which made almost no differentiation among physical and intellectual work, between various professional or social strata, etc.

In the transition to a market economy a completely different system of working relations, work habits and enumerations has to be created. This is done on the basis of reintroducing private property as a basic human right constitutionally protected, and privatization which must dismantle

state monopolies and create the base for competition. Painfully, the economic reforms are reintroducing the institutions and principles of a functioning market economy. This process, never before experienced in history, carries with it many unknown and serious consequences for the populace.

First, it leads to an "explosion" of the "leveled" society and its structures. Social differentiation begins to uproot the old psychological attitudes of egalitarianism. Communist equality is substituted by a growing difference in incomes and social and material conditions. A small strata of very rich entrepreneurs, speculators, or former nomenclature is coming to the fore. At the same time, in the aftermath of inflation and monetary reforms, of great masses of people--especially those with fixed incomes--are impoverished. Unemployment is reaching dangerous levels and creates a group of people directly suffering from the market developments. The speed with which all this happens catches people in a state of great confusion and unpreparedness, combined with suffering and lowering living standards.

This situation leads to growing animosity against the introduction of "wild capitalism". This could turn into animosity toward the liberal values of individualism and the new democratic institutions. In May, 1991, a poll taken by an official institution showed that 40 percent of the populace preferred law and order even if it meant less democracy, in other words, fewer liberties--and this even before they had the chance really to enjoy them. The nostalgic attitudes toward the past, when all had their guaranteed work and social security, has begun to "infect" more and more people. Egalitarian notions have begun to revive and create an atmosphere of animosity toward new businesses, the new rich, and private initiative.

The further dwindling, due to the economic crisis, of a middle class which is generally the social base for a stable democracy, creates serious threats to liberal and democratic values. In other words, new reforms have not, for the moment, created favorable conditions for the revival and furthering of liberal values. Democracy and individual liberties have to prove their role and value in the face of political instability and the economic catastrophe which puts them and their political and ideological proponents in unfavorable surroundings. After the euphoria accompanying the revival of liberal values and the rise of liberty over communist dictatorship and egalitarian irresponsibility, the tide has begun to turn in favor of a growing desire for stability and law and order, even at the expense of democracy and liberty. The emergent desire for a return to the monarchy and the rise of nationalistic parties reflect that mood.

At the same time, the erosion of the old social security system furthers insecurity and leads to a growing desire for equality and social guarantees for justice and solidarity. In other words, economic distress generates a need to find a new dimension to the values of equality and justice without which the value of liberty will be very vulnerable. But the resources for achieving equality of opportunity and individual development are more and more lacking. The distributive and redistributive capabilities of the state are shrinking in step with the crumbling of the old economic system before the new market economy has proven its effectiveness in the tide of economic growth.

The question of survival haunts a growing number of people. Before the values of liberty have taken hold to create a new type of democratic culture and a democratic form of relationship among citizens, the process of atomization of society is speeding up. The breakup of paternalistic attitudes has created a vacuum which must be filled by a new form of civil community of independent and self-confident individuals. But that process will need time, appropriate conditions, and at least a stable economy and a functioning political pluralism.

The conflict between liberty and equality, between individual autonomy and collective solidarity, will have brand new dimensions in post-totalitarian societies. It will take great political mastery to evade deepening that conflict and to design policy that will create conditions for the most favorable applications of both liberty and equality. As both values are needed for policy decisions, the way in which they will be harmonized will depend to a large extent on the success or failure of political parties and governments as democratic institutions.

## Notes

1. Solipsism is a theory that one can have knowledge only of the self; at the same time, it is belief that all reality is subjective or that the self can know no more than its own states.

2. S. Barnet, in a brilliant introduction to C. Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*, devoted to analysis of cultural change in the Renaissance, noted:

"One can see the Renaissance as the period in which man's thinking took a bad turn and entered upon the course it still pursues. In this view, unappeasable curiosity catastrophically banished intuition and faith." Etienne Gilson in *Les idées et les lettres* put it thus: "The difference between the Renaissance and the Middle Ages was not a difference by addition, but by subtraction. The Renaissance . . . was not the Middle Ages plus man, but the Middle Ages minus God; and the tragedy is that in losing God the Renaissance was losing man himself (I, x-xi).

3. A.L. Kroeber and C. Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* (New York: Vintage Books, 1952), pp. 290-301.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.

5. Karl R. Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979).

6. In his masterpiece, "Open Your Human Gates", Blake writes: "For every human heart has gates of brass and bars of adamant / Which few dare unbar, because dread Og and Anak guard the gates / Terrific: and each mortal brain is wall'd and moated round / Within, and Og and Anak watch here: here is the Seat / of Satan in its Webs: for in brain and heart and loins / Gates open behind Satan's Seat to the City of *Golgonooza*, / Which is the spiritual fourfold London in the loins of Albion."

7. G. Russell, *Collections and Recollections* (London: Thomas Nelson, 1909).

8. W. Lozinski, *Zycie polski w dawnych wiekach* (Warsaw, 1976), vol. 1, pp. 176-177.

9. J.S. Bystron, *Dzieje obyczajow w dawnej Polsce* (Warsaw, 1976), vol. 1, p. 248.

10. *Ibid.*

11. Z. Gloger, *Encyklopedia staropolska*, vol. 2, pp. 207-208.

12. *Ibid.*

13. J.J. Klausch, "The Image of the Polish Nation", in *Polska Stanislawowska w oczach cudzoziemcow* (Warsaw: W. Zawadzki, 1963), vol. 2, pp. 307-308.

14. Z. Gloger, p. 208.

15. A. Zajaczkowski, *Glowne elementy kultury szlacheckiej w Polsce Ideologia a struktury spoleczne* (Wroclaw-Warszawa-Krakow, 1961), p. 71.

16. J.S. Bystron, vol. 2, p. 160.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 164.

19. A. Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz or the Last Foray in Lithuania*, translated by Kenneth Mackenzie (London, 1966).

20. Quoted after J.S. Bystron, vol. 2, p. 172.



21. J.S. Bystron, p. 175.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 175-178.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 214.
24. A. Bruckner, *słownik etymologiczny polskiego* (Warsaw, 1974), pp. 26-27.
25. Z. Gloger, *Encyklopedia staropolska*, vol. 1, p. 172.
26. Two types of culture are distinguished by R. Benedict, see: *Models of Culture* (Warsaw, 1965). The Apollinian type is characterized by moderation, self-control and a tendency to eliminate conflicts, while the Dionysiacal type is characterized by vehemence and elation.
27. J.S. Bystron, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 186.
28. Z. Kuchowicz, *Obyczaje staropolskie XVII-XVIII wieku* (Todz, 1975), p. 465.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 467. See also M. Baranski, "Rodzina od czasów najdawniejszych do końca XVIII wieku", and Z. Jablonswska, "Rodzina w XIX i na początki XX wieku", in *Przemiany rodziny polskiej* (Warsaw: P. Matuszewska, 1971), p. 580.
30. Z. Kuchowicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 466-467.
31. A. Kitowicz, *Pamiętniki czyli Historia Polski. Oprac* (Warsaw: P. Matuszewska, 1971), p. 580.
32. Kuchowicz, *op. cit.*, p. 473.
33. L. Dyczewski, *Wież pokoleń w rodzinie* (Warsaw, 1981), pp. 177-193.
34. A. Klosowska, "The Family as a Factor of Cultural Transmission and Creation", in *Les fonctions éducatives de la famille dans le monde d'aujourd'hui*, pod red. A. Klosowskiej, K. Tyborowskiej, E. Zakoscielnej i M. Ziemskiej (Warsaw, 1972), pp. 145-153; D. Dabrowska, "Wartości związane z życiem rodzinnym" in *Przemiany rodziny polskiej* and L. Dyczewski, *Rodzina polska*, pp. 207-228.
35. J. Komorowska, *Świąteczne Zwyczaje domowe w wielkim mieście* (Warsaw, 1984), pp. 92 and 96.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 131.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 86-94.
38. *Ibid.*, pp. 51-55.
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142.
40. Z. Kuchowicz, p. 45.
41. J. Huizinga, *Homo ludens* (Warsaw, 1967), p. 290.
42. See, e.g., R. Frondizi, *What is Value? An Introduction to Axiology* (2ed ed.; La Salle, III., 1971), p. 3; N. Rescher, *Introduction to Value Theory* (2ed ed.; Washington, 1982); W.H. Werkmeister, *Historical Spectrum of Value Theories* (Lincoln, 1970), vol. I, p. xii.
43. R. Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History* (London, 1952), p. 15.
44. See F. Brentano, *Grundlegung und Aufbau der Ethik* (Bern, 1952), pp. 184-217.
45. See A. Meinong, *Psychologisch-ethische Untersuchungen zur Werttheorie* (Graz, 1894).



## Chapter XI "Humaneness" in the Past and Today

*Jadwiga Komorowska*

### Classical Hospitality

Sociability, hospitality, politeness, cheerfulness and kind open-hearted frankness was once called, in old Polish, "humaneness". It was generally expressed in accepted ways which together formed a whole range of social morals. To observe this code was to display one's social polish and humanitarianism. The code was binding for the nobility, several times more numerous than in other European countries, but through imitation it penetrated to other classes of society. What came from the manor was thought to be better and became the object of the ambitions of the young rural generations.<sup>1</sup> In towns, too, the way of life of the nobleman's, and later of the post-nobility, along with its forms of social customs, was a leading model.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the humane behavior of today may be considered a model of old Polish culture functioning in the common consciousness. It was also very attractive for newcomers travelling from other countries.

Recluses were not liked, nor were reserved and sullen people. Every opportunity was eagerly used for social purposes. People feasted, held councils and prayed together, while work and amusement were shared with others. Great holidays of church and family were numerous,<sup>3</sup> and it was always the senior's duty to see that everything was done according to custom.

A guest was warmly greeted in a Polish house as he brought news from the world or, at least, from the neighborhood--new tales and jokes, and a fresh spirit for amusement. Zygmunt Gloger wrote that:

There was an old and widespread custom in the Polish nation that both in the lord's dayroom and in the villager's hut the table was covered--with a white tablecloth or a colorful carpet in the manor house or, with a towel, in the hut; bread and salt were always lying ready to be offered to guests on the doorstep according to the ancient custom. Later, when in noblemen's houses bread was no longer kept on the table in the parlor, there still remained the traditional haste in serving a meal immediately after the guest's arrival. In many villages of the Mazovian and Podlasian regions country people still keep the old custom: the bread is always on the table, covered with a white or grey homespun tablecloth.<sup>4</sup>

It was also a common custom in Polish manors to leave a few empty seats at the table for guests "from beyond the mountains", i.e., those likely to arrive. The same author says:

At whatever time you came to a nobleman's house you were always treated; a leftover part of the dinner or an already dressed hen was waiting for you, and the prompt preparation of food for the guest reflected the order of the house, the haste of the servants, the kindness of the host and the hostess. If someone was invited to your house, he had the right to bring along some friends and

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<sup>1</sup> W. Lozinski, *Zycie polski w dawnych wiekach*, vol. 1 (Warsaw, 1976), pp. 176-77.

<sup>2</sup> J.S. Bystron, *Dzieje obyczajow w dawnej Polsce*, vol. 1 (Warsaw, 1976), p. 248.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Z. Gloger, *Encyklopedia staropolska*, vol. 2, pp. 207-8.

though, in this way, some scores of people arrived instead of a dozen, it did not cause disorder or the host's anger. . . . And if something was lacking, e.g., bedclothes, people slept side by side on hay and nobody ever thought of complaining of discomfort where heartiness overabounded. In peaceful times the manor gates were always wide open according to the well-known motto: "The wide-open gate tells passersby of the hospitality, and invites them all."<sup>5</sup>

"In Poland, you can hardly find a case of anybody refusing help to a traveller if he needs it", wrote J.J. Kausch,<sup>6</sup> a German travelling in Poland in the later part of the eighteenth century.

Sometimes hospitality became importunate and immoderate. According to the anecdote, detaching the wheels of the guest's carriage, hiding his luggage, making the driver drunk, etc., forced chance travellers to come to the house in spite of their reluctance and violent resistance. Such doings were criticized by Krasicki in his "Lord High Steward". In the middle of the seventeenth century importunate hosts were even prosecuted as, for instance, the nobleman Golski who "holds up honest people on their free way, turns them back, catches them and compels them to stay, making them prisoners." Such behavior and excesses were, of course, exceptional; the majority practiced the virtue of hospitality with Apolline moderation.

Ludwik Krzywicki explained its commonness by the fact that in an epoch when agricultural products were not sold, but stored in granaries and larders, "economy often became waste since not people but worms devoured nature's gifts."<sup>7</sup> Maybe that factor played some part, but certainly other factors were important, e.g., the need of entertainment and common amusement, the want of news from the wider world, etc.

Old Polish hospitality was strongly supported by religion. This can be seen, for instance, in the popular saying "guest in the house, God in the house". This may be based on the ancient, pre-Christian foundations of the Slavonic culture and on old beliefs and legends of wandering gods and their mysterious messengers. All Polish customs were strictly connected with religion and also, in the case when customs related to holidays, with the liturgy of the Catholic Church. A guest in the Polish house was a sacred person who was to be entertained with respect and generosity even if he was a personal enemy of the host. Alexander Fredo has presented it remarkably well in "The Vengeance", in the scene where two quarreling neighbors meet in the house of one of them:

Don't lead me into temptation  
Great God of my ancestors!  
Since he has crossed my threshold  
Not a hair of his head can be touched.

Old Polish hospitality is not the exception in this cultural sphere. I may cite, as an example, a Modavian farm in the Bucharest Scansen museum where, at the entrance, near the gate, there is a little wooden roofed hut on a post with a shelf for bread and cheese and a jug of water or milk. In this way, the farmer going to work in his field ensured help for any tired strangers passing through the village. Thus they could appease their hunger and thirst though the cottage was temporarily deserted.

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, p. 208.

<sup>6</sup> J.J. Klausch, "The Image of the Polish Nation", in *Polska Stanislawowska w oczach cudzoziemcow*, vol. 2 (Warsaw: W. Zawadzki, 1963), pp. 307-308.

<sup>7</sup> Z. Gloger, p. 208.

Neighbors were the most frequent guests both to the cottage and the manorhouse. The nobleman's neighbor came from "the small neighborhood" or from the "large neighborhood" beyond the locale. The nobleman's republic was a federation of neighborhoods and the informal bonds of neighbors were strong and very important from the sociological point of view.<sup>8</sup> In the remote countryside neighbors were a very important factor in comfort and contentment.<sup>9</sup> "Don't buy an estate, buy a neighbor", a "close neighbor is better than a distant brother", a "bad neighbor is an enemy", and "buy out a bad neighbor or escape"--such proverbs and many others illustrated that point distinctly.

A kind, friendly neighbor was always welcomed sincerely and heartily, and generously treated. But also any brother-nobleman, if he had difficulties in finding accommodation in an inn, which was scarce in the old times, was put up at the nearest manorhouse and found there a hearty welcome. Sometimes it happened that such a chance guest became attached to the house where he felt as comfortable as if he were a member of the host's family, and stayed there longer or even for a very long time. Lonely people, having no family of their own gladly prolonged their stay or even remained for good as so-called residents. They were treated as permanent guests with no particular duties, but they usually acted as masters of ceremonies during important celebrations, or taught the young riding, fencing or languages.<sup>10</sup>

If the arrival of the guest had a formal character, then the welcome, the whole visit, and the farewell were determined by many conventions. The infringement of those rules of hospitality could hurt the guest's feelings painfully. Guests were to be awaited, looked out for from afar, and welcomed on the doorstep by the family in festive attire. Then, among compliments and ceremonies they were introduced into the parlor. Frequently a welcome speech was pronounced and the guest was expected to answer in the same ceremonious manner. The same took place upon his departure.

It was the guest's duty not to abuse the host's hospitality and not to take advantage of his or her privileged situation, ensured by customs. This was sometimes extremely troublesome for the household. Popular proverbs show the troubles and pains of some hospitable hosts:

A frequent and longstaying guest soon makes you tired.  
The guest and the fish stink on the third day.  
Guest, do not poke your nose into the host's affairs:  
mind your own business.

But generally, yielding to the pressure of customs, people endured those toils and troubles, avoiding open conflicts, though sometimes it happened that "guests ransacked the house with impunity."<sup>11</sup>

Social contacts required consideration in treating everyone with due honor:

. . . Courtesy, I deem  
Is neither easy nor of small esteem.  
Not easy, for there's more in it than's done

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<sup>8</sup> A. Zajaczkowski, *Główne elementy kultury szlacheckiej w Polsce. Ideologia a struktury społeczne* (Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków, 1961), p. 71.

<sup>9</sup> J.S. Bystron, vol. 2, p. 160.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* p. 161.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* p. 164.

By clever bows and smiles for everyone.  
Such manners suit a merchant better than  
Old Poland or a true-born gentleman.  
To all men courtesy, but to each his own.  
To parents in their children's love is shown,  
To wives by husbands in society,  
To servants too--in due variety.  
But one must study long not to neglect  
To pay to everyone his due respect.  
. . . Courtesy is nothing small,  
For while we learn to pay respect to all  
According to their virtues, birth and age,  
We also learn our own dessert to gauge,  
Just as, if we desire to know our weight,  
We must put someone in the other plate.  
But most important is that you should know  
The courtesy young men to women owe. . . .<sup>12</sup>

But "the fair sex" also had to be careful in order to deserve politeness. They should not impair their rank, modesty, and manners by using a vulgar vocabulary. Elizabeth Druzbacka who complained:

I feel pain in my heart  
Hearing ugly words in a Polish girl's mouth."<sup>13</sup>

Offending someone by not rendering him or her their due honor either through forgetfulness or purposefully--a too familiar welcome, an impolite form of speech, taking a higher seat at table, inviting a lady to dance overlooking social hierarchy--was an insult and often the cause of a quarrel or even of a duel.

There were many opportunities for social contacts, wishes and orations offered by area hunts, by political life (regional councils, civic meetings), by social promotions or by departures and returns from long journeys. Family festivities such as weddings, births, burials, all kinds of anniversaries, jubilees and name-days afforded occasions for social contacts. Among yearly holidays, Christmas and Easter particularly gathered numerous relatives.

It was a special custom on such occasions to give one another gifts. "Gifts were brought as signs of fondness, friendship, affection; they should be reciprocated with another gift which--according to the occasion, the wealth and generosity of people--ranged from trifles received as symbols to handsome fortunes falling to lucky fellows as a magnate's favor."<sup>14</sup>

Gifts were given even without any special occasion, e.g., in a sudden flash of gaiety and cheerfulness of a wealthy host who forgot Appoline moderation during a party.

Krasicki wrote in the "Satires":

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<sup>12</sup> A. Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz or the last foray in Lithuania*, translated by Kenneth Mackenzie (London, 1966).

<sup>13</sup> Quoted after J.S. Bystron, vol. 2, p. 172.

<sup>14</sup> J.S. Bystron, p. 175.

Long live our host!  
The drunk mob wallows, quarrels and yells,  
The host is glad, he admits everyone into his house,  
One takes his horse with a saddle  
The other his forefather's Tartar sword,  
Someone drags away a golden carpet . . .

Women and girls offered their courtiers small presents such as embroidered handkerchiefs, cushions made by themselves, etc., while young men brought them flowers.

Welcome guests were endowed with presents at their departure. Some gifts were very expensive and frequently it happened that a thing praised by the guest was immediately offered to him. People returning from long journeys could distribute inexpensive trifles, but they had to be characteristic of the country where they had been.

"The borderline between a courtesy gift and interest where one gathered partisans by means of gifts was rather imperceptible. No wonder then that in the eighteenth century when there was a lot of money, but much less morality, gifts became more and more expensive and visibly more motivated by interest." This differed much from the symbolic "binding" of the old days when bonds of friendship were confirmed by symbolically tying a straw rope, a belt, a ribbon or a handkerchief round the person entertained.<sup>15</sup>

Social life imposed a number of obligations on the members of parties. They were expected to behave in accordance with rules of etiquette required by the social culture of the gentry, to render everyone his due honor and, besides, to be pleasant, interesting, cheerful and enterprising, stimulating others with humor. People chatted for hours on autumn and winter evenings, they played dice, cards or--less frequently--chess and draughts. They enjoyed fortunetelling, raffles, blindman's bluff, and the "green" game. Sometimes masquerades, theater and ballets were organized. In mixed company dancing was the favorite entertainment; these were numerous and varied from dignified "pacing" to the "race": one was danced with stateliness at courts, and the other briskly in pubs. The most beautiful and presentable dance was the "Polish" or, as we call it today, the polonaise.<sup>16</sup>

For larger parties musicians from the village or even from town were hired. On smaller occasions music was performed by some dweller of the manor who played the lute, the dulcimer, the violin or viola d'amore, the pipe or piano. Sometimes wandering artists, blind lyricists or singers were invited.

Much time was spent at the table. Very crowded feasts were not popular, according to the old principle: "Fight in a large throng, but eat in a small company.". Władysław Lozinski has written of the proverb that "seven make a feast, nine make a quarrel."

The Polish word for feast, *biesiada*, comes from sitting down in company; originally, however, it meant speech or talk.<sup>17</sup> Zygmunt Glover describes it as "a gay meeting at table with drink and dishes, a feast, a banquet, a festivity, revelling, amusement. Villagers give the name of *biesiada* to all family festivities such as weddings and baptisms where, as is the old custom, the whole village takes part. In the past, all the neighboring gentry gathered for such occasions in a nobleman's house since the ancient custom was common for the whole nation."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> J.S. Bystron, pp. 175-78.

<sup>16</sup> J.S. Bystron, p. 214.

<sup>17</sup> A. Bruckner, *Słownik etymologiczny polskiego* (Warsaw, 1974), pp. 26-27.

<sup>18</sup> Z. Gloger, *Encyklopedia staropolska*, vol. 1, p. 172.

Apolline moderation and temperance provided in the old Polish culture and commonly respected customs controlled revellers who became too merry. Later, in the "Saxon" epoch (end of the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth centuries) they were menaced or even supplanted here and there by unrestrained Dionysiacal<sup>19</sup> licentiousness, though this was not general nor greater than in many European countries of that period.

Still later, in the time of partitions, uprisings and repression, Polish feasting again approached the Apolline model. A Polish feast described by Adam Mickiewicz in "Pan Tadeusz" shows in a masterly way this ideal model. In various circles actual behavior approximated this more or less, though deviations and excesses also occurred.

The feminine members of the feast were particularly expected to show moderation and temperance. "Women never used to drink liquors and they did not listen to indecent jokes and vulgar tales. Women had to demonstrate temperance. So if they were taking part in a banquet, most often in wedding parties, they only touched the filled cup to their lips to show they joined in toasting."<sup>20</sup>

This, of course, was an ideal model and in reality departures from those principles sometimes occurred. However, this model was noticed by foreigners travelling in Poland, who in their descriptions of the country emphasized the exceptional modesty of women and--surely connected with this--the special gallantry shown them by Polish men.<sup>21</sup>

Z. Kuchowicz writes that:

Against the background of the general discrimination of women at that time Polish customs were progressive. It was often noticed that women played an independent role and exerted a serious influence on the community. The saying "we rule over the world and women rule over us" was formed in Poland in the eighteenth century. Generally all foreigners noticed that feature and considered it peculiar to Polish conditions.<sup>22</sup>

In describing Polish customs they mentioned that feature, besides the predilections to sumptuousness, hospitality and the sociable character of Poles, as their art of enjoying life and its everyday charms.

The customs of the nobility spread among other classes and the awareness that they differed from those of other nations became a new element in addition to the bonds of language and religion, in the sense of belonging to the nation. "It was a factor of patriotic consciousness and an essential moment in the formation of the modern Polish nation, a tie uniting the different social classes of old Poland."<sup>23</sup>

Old Polish customs were not only the heritage of the nobility, but also the legacy of popular elements of the olden times along with assimilated and often precious foreign models. This inheritance soothed and considerably humanized interhuman relations during the time of

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<sup>19</sup> Two types of culture are distinguished by R. Benedict, see: *Models of Culture* (Warsaw, 1965). The Apollinian type is characterized by moderation, self-control and a tendency to eliminate conflicts, while the Dionysiacal type is characterized by vehemence and elation.

<sup>20</sup> J.S. Bystron, *op cit.*, vol. 2, p. 186.

<sup>21</sup> Z. Kuchowicz, *Obyczaje staropolskie XVII-XVIII wieku* (Todz, 1975), p. 465.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 467. See also M. Baranski, "Rodzina od czasow najdawniejszych do konca XVIII wieku" and Z. Jablonswska, "Rodzina w XIX i na poczatyki XX wieku", in *Przemiany rodziny polskiej* (Warsaw, 1975), pod red. J. Komorowskiej.

<sup>23</sup> Z. Kuchowicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 466-67.



partitions. Due to this inheritance, the country, in spite of all its political disasters in the late nineteenth century was inhabited by kind and polite people.<sup>24</sup> Poland, though it had been wiped off the maps of Europe, could be proud of its progress in morality, the democratization of both cultural and moral life, and its courageous aspirations for further achievements and transformations.<sup>25</sup>

## Contemporary Hospitality

Today, however, is a Pole really a humane person? Are we sociable, hospitable, polite, kind, open-hearted and frank toward other people? Today is a time of unparalleled progress in technology and science and, at the same time, of growing discrepancy between progress in science and in morals. Today is the longlasting period of dehumanizing power of totalitarian systems. In Poland, this means also a time of hope after the period of "faults and distortions". Hope has not died and Poland has not turned into Dante's hell (*Losciate ogni speranza*) owing to its strong Christian culture and the "humaneness" handed down from one generation to the other.

The degree of intergenerational coherence in a family is now greater than ever before, although the stable coexistence of generations is smaller.<sup>26</sup> This kind of coherence was, and still is, a warrant for an uninterrupted transmission of culture among generations,<sup>27</sup> including a model of social life in which the family retains the central position.

Today, foreigners coming to our country extol the same Polish virtues they wrote about in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, namely, sociability, politeness, and kind, openhearted frankness. They no longer talk about cheerfulness, for today people are more tired and nervous; they talk less, sing less, and are more depressed and sad. But by no means do they give way to despair and low spirits. What strikes foreigners is that despite all the difficulties in our country, Poles are the gayest of all people. The ideal model of the "humane" person still lives, even though it escapes us more often than before.

We have remained social, willing to dine together with our relatives, friends, and colleagues, and eager for discussions; we pray in common at school or at work; we treasure good and firm friendships. Amusement shared today is scarce, but it comes immediately to life as soon as the circumstances allow. Great holidays still evoke the same amount of social celebration as before, and seniors see to it that old habits and customs are observed.<sup>28</sup>

The traditional haste in serving a meal immediately after the guest's arrival has survived to the present, though the pace of our life is considerably faster compared to that of the old days. Unfortunately, however, neurotic haste in serving a meal has become usual and common. There are, however, certain changes and reductions: an empty seat is left at the table for guests "from beyond the mountains" only once a year on Christmas Eve. In the cities, guests announce their arrival by telephone or in other ways, and are entertained very modestly with only tea and pastries;

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<sup>24</sup> A. Kitowicz, *Pamiętniki czyli Historia Polski. Oprac* (Warsaw: P. Matuszewska, 1971), p. 580.

<sup>25</sup> Z. Kuchowicz, *op cit.*, p. 473.

<sup>26</sup> L. Dyczewski, *Wież pokolen w rodzinie* (Warsaw, 1976), p. 161, and by the same author, *Rodzina polska i kierunki jej przemian* (Warsaw, 1981), pp. 177-93.

<sup>27</sup> A. Klosowska, "The Family as a Factor of Cultural Transmission and Creation", in *Les fonctions educatives de la famille dans le monde d'aujourd'hui*, pod red., A. Klosowskiej, K. Tyborowskiej, E. Zakoscielnej i M. Ziemskiej (Warsaw, 1972), pp. 145-153; D. Dabrowska, "Wartosci zwiazane z zyciem rodzinnym" in *Przemiany rodziny polskiej* and L. Dyczewski, *Rodzina polska*, pp. 207-228.

<sup>28</sup> J. Komorowska, *Swiateczne zwyczaje domowe w wielkim miescie* (Warsaw, 1984) pp. 92 and 96.

still, they would be offered some kind of meal. It is different when a host is celebrating special occasions such as weddings, name days, birthdays or other family festivities. On such occasions, in spite of an economic slump, our predilections for sumptuousness or "living beyond our means" comes to light. Particularly, foreign guests are to be entertained in a sumptuous and abundant way, at times causing great negligence of the usual course of life and resulting in a heavy burden upon housewives who do not have the necessary help.

Today, if someone is invited, he no longer has the right to bring along friends, especially without earlier confirmation from the host. Yet, there are wide open houses, in which old customs of hospitality are observed. The worst problem with accommodations: the needs of guests are greater, while the possibilities of putting someone up for the night have grown smaller and smaller. The housing problem is responsible for this situation. Particularly in cities our gates are not so wide-open and invite only the chosen ones; contemporary apartment complexes are not the calm and peaceful villages of the old days where robberies and assaults were scarce.

Moreover, instances of immoderate hospitality are not heard of today: guests no longer are forced to stay on against their will for the amusement of the host. Television has become the sole source of news and entertainment. Due to telephones and the modern means of transportation one can communicate with family and friends more frequently than could the previous generations. Close neighbors are not the most frequent guests; it is different in villages where close vicinity plays an important role in social relations. Cities provide an opportunity for the selection of both friends and acquaintances, which is done willingly, but even today a good, friendly neighbor who is ready to offer a helping hand is praised and raises the social status of the place in which we live, in the cities as well as in the villages.

The ceremonious welcome has become less frequent and many old conventions previously deemed obligatory are no longer observed. However, on very formal occasions like weddings, guests should be treated with due honor appropriate to their social status. The formal character of the guest is more often determined by his belonging to the older generation than to his high social position. It is an important and acute problem for the organizer of the wedding ceremony, whether at home or at a restaurant, to place the guests properly at the table.<sup>29</sup> This is witnessed by the inquiries included in the letters sent by worried readers, especially younger people who have come from the villages to towns, to editors of so-called "agony aunt" columns. These inquiries concern not only wedding ceremonies, but also the general social tact observed by "high society."

The proverbs, concerning the prolonged stay of guests in the house of a hospitable host, are repeated even today; the most frequent is the analogy between a guest and a fish. These proverbs, on the one hand, provide the evidence of pains and troubles of hospitable hosts and at the same time the overwhelming power of old customs; but, on the other hand, they are also warnings and instructions not to overstay one's visit.

There are great changes in the behavior of the "fair sex". Elizabeth Druzbacka would feel pain in her heart if she heard all the ugly words used by some contemporary women, who do not merely symbolically touch the full cup with their lips.

As before, so today there are many opportunities for social contacts and greetings, especially family festivities and yearly holidays. The range of participants varies, depending on the importance of a holiday or festivity, or the present capacity of the house. The relatives, friends and acquaintances of a host are still included.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 86-94.

As it was before mainly in the well-to-do classes, so today hospitality is commonly associated with generosity. On such occasions the participants endow each other with many different gifts, particularly in towns where there is easy access to trifles. This custom has penetrated to other classes and age categories. To express love, friendship, gratitude and respect is the only aim of this symbolic behavior, though often a more utilitarian gift goes with the poetic symbolism of a bunch of flowers or even of one flower.

Bunches of flowers were once offered only to women and such symbolic expression was an important element of courtship. Today they are given on many different occasions, even to men. Flowers have become essential accessories, and a bouquet is often given hand to hand. However, the uniformization of many different areas of contemporary culture has affected expression through flowers, where color and species once played an important role. These days it is no longer a complicated, socially formed code of meaning; instead, fashion and what is in stock determines the choice.<sup>31</sup>

Today, as before, the most welcome guests are kind, entertaining, cheerful persons; they are full of initiative and enliven the company with good humor. Once, the art of storytelling was widely appreciated; today, in the age of television, it is no longer so precious. Due to a 40 year period of Sovietization, which disturbed the balance of the cultural model, active entertainment has suffered. This imbalance has become greater and stronger due to the influence of Western materialistic culture. As a result, active entertainment is in crisis: dancing is less common and less frequent, singing which was so popular among previous generations very rarely now unites participants at social festivities and meetings. In some houses, however, carols are sung at Christmas, though more and more often they are played on the cassette player. Of the once numerous festive songs--carillons, couplets--little is left: what has remained is the "Happy Birthday" song. As the background of festivities, mechanical music is used more and more often. Only at suburban or village weddings do people sing new as well as old songs when a "live" orchestra of amateur players provides accompaniment.

"A Pole is a festive man"--even today. In certain circles, however, the lack of active and moral forms of entertainment, which formerly controlled the consumption of alcohol, and the simultaneous lack of cultural aspirations, have stimulated alcohol abuse. This is connected with the intensification of Dionysiacal type festivities, and in some cases, unfortunately, with a deformation of festive customs. "Humaneness", supporting moderation and social order, turns into drunkenness, as it was in some circles in Saxon times.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, in the last 25 years of the eighteenth century, the abuse of alcohol fell out of fashion as the personal example of King Stanislaus Augustus, who held alcohol abuse in disgust, became very important<sup>33</sup> and moderation and temperance returned to fashion. Unfortunately, today, in an industrial and urbanized country, after the communist oppression and economic slump, there are cases of alcohol abuse in all social classes, including women and teenagers. The problem of preserving the old model of "humaneness" has become critical.

As before, so today, Poles rarely sit at the table in a large company except at weddings or in villages during baptisms. Ordinary festivities are held in small groups. In all social classes, tables should look as beautiful as possible. So, necessarily, there is a tablecloth, tableware or cutlery, and very often flowers in a vase, and during formal celebrations flowers upon each covering.

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 51-55.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 141-42.

<sup>33</sup> Z. Kuchowicz, p. 45.

"Prynuka" or "eating too much" is now out of fashion; overeating during holidays has also disappeared. The spread of knowledge about dieting and the fashion of slim figures, particularly among the younger generation, inclines one to moderation in eating. The tendency to over-drink appears more often, especially in environments where drinking becomes a habit. The possession of cars is a good excuse against "prynuka" in offering alcoholic drinks.

## Conclusion

Compared with the "old days", or even the twenty year period of independence just before the Second World War, social life has become more homelike. Home, as well as church, has given shelter to many of the virtues endangered by communism. Among them were family life and "humaneness". Today, either because of the changing situation or for economic reasons, all holidays and family festivities are celebrated at home. Friends and acquaintances are invited to one's house. Coffee bars and restaurants are now less numerous than before the war, and prices are too high for the average person. Balls and festivities, once so frequent, are now very exceptional; the price of a ticket prevents the majority of people from taking part in such events. What remains are private meetings in friendly homes.

As the Dutch cultural researcher, Johan Huizinga, has written in his book *Homo ludens*,<sup>34</sup> a festivity is neither "ordinary" nor "proper" life. It is more a stepping out of the utilitarian circle into the world of disinterested deeds which give opportunity for artistic expression and at the same time social-civil coexistence. Even today companionship is not without cheerfulness or humor, though it is sometimes grim; it is widely known that Poles like to tell and listen to jokes. Foreigners visiting our country today are astonished when among the dullness, negligence and weariness of everyday life they see kind, openhearted frankness and social politeness. There are, however, at the fringes of society, violations of the rules of good morals and all kinds of derelicts and human wrecks are becoming more and more frequent.

It should be stated in conclusion that, despite external pressure, the "humaneness" of Poles exhibited in hospitality, politeness, cheerfulness and kind, openhearted frankness in favorable circumstances very easily intensifies and enters upon our privacy and considerably enlivens our world with others. Disinterested hospitality, generosity, and the brotherly kindness of people living in towns and villages still manifest themselves, for example, in organizing pilgrimages to Czestochowa and other Polish shrines.

Beyond any doubt, such great vitality of "humaneness" is based on a highly praised tradition, on the social need for continuity and permanence and on the aspirations for preserving national unity and its cultural identity. In spite of all, moderation and temperance are strictly associated with Christianity, which is so deeply rooted in Polish culture.

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<sup>34</sup> J. Huizinga, *Homo ludens* (Warsaw, 1967), p. 290.

## Chapter XII

# The Second Lithuanian Revival: Culture as Performance

*Vytautas Kavolis*

The central concern here is how culture is involved in current social processes. In a tightly organized traditional society this would be easy to analyze, for then we could describe the structure of the culture and ask whether social events can be understood as an interpretive re-enactment of that culture, in the course of which the culture is changed by acquiring new empirical contents.<sup>1</sup>

IN the present case, we have not a firmly organized culture, but rather a sense of deforming artificial constraints imposed by the Stalinist system, which by common consent are to be rejected. But there is no general agreement on which one can stand while creating a new culture. Do we join the pluralistic West, reaffirm half-forgotten (or wholly invented) certitudes of our own past, or seek to create a more universal post-totalitarian culture?<sup>2</sup> There is a good deal of fluidity, conflict and contradiction between ends and means, improvisation, bluffing, assertiveness training, imitativeness, etc.

### Characteristics of the Lithuanian National Temperament

#### *Moderation*

Nevertheless, the ways in which the various nations in Central and Eastern Europe at present assert themselves, while exhibiting many commonalities, do differ. This allows us to ask, on the one hand, which of these differences can be accounted for by the peculiarities of their current social-structural setting or the shifting patterns of leadership and group alliance. On the other hand, which differences can be traced to elements of their culture, historical memory, collective identity and similar features of their symbolic heritage which either have resisted Sovietization or are now spontaneously reviving or being consciously reconstructed.

All three Balti states differ from other areas of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe by the moderate or restrained manner in which they pursued their political goals of national independence. Blood does not flow in political transactions; there is considerable attentiveness (perhaps especially in Latvia) to minority groups; the elected political leaders tend to be moderates; fundamentalist political groupings tend to be unpopular and there are no highly visible anti-Semitic themes as there are in Russia, Poland and Hungary.

At least in the case of Lithuania, this moderation in political action is not rooted in a generalized culture of liberality. There is currently a lively debate on liberalism, which has acquired a somewhat artificial attractiveness as the opposite of totalitarianism, but is interpreted widely in 19<sup>th</sup> century terms and attacked by some representatives of the Catholic nationalist coalitions as “cosmopolitan” or having been “soft” on communism or on immorality.<sup>3</sup> The basic premise of liberalism—that society begins with the individual and has to respect his or her

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<sup>1</sup> Marshall Sahlins, *Islands of History* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1985).

<sup>2</sup> Jeffrey C. Goldfarb, *Beyond Glasnost: The Post-totalitarian Mind* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1989).

<sup>3</sup> The intellectual level of this criticism is indicated by a prominent writer citing Paul Eluard as a paradigmatic liberal.

choices—flies in the face of the attitude apparently prevailing in the second Lithuanian revival, namely, that individuals begin as members of a nation and that its leaders are “indistinguishable” from the nation, as the Lithuanian Democratic Party declared regarding Vytautas Landsbergis.<sup>4</sup>

Opinion polls commissioned by Tomas Remeikis and conducted late in the summer of 1990 suggest that only about a third of the Lithuanian people could be described as oriented toward a liberal democratic point of view. In the degree of the majority’s preference for social equality over individual freedom, they are most similar to West Germany and Spain, and far indeed from the Anglo-Saxon peoples, Holland and France. Only 11 percent disagree with the statement that “in a just society there cannot be any conflicts between the individual and society.”<sup>5</sup>

Liberal attitudes are frequently expressed in the Lithuanian press and in the Parliament. The editor of the leading literary weekly, Vytautas Rubavicius, writes, “In political life, there dominates an atmosphere of Bolshevik intolerance; relations between the parties are based on the well-known logic of enemies of the nation.”<sup>6</sup> Yet so far a reasonable amount of restraint has prevailed in the interactions of people in pursuing political or cultural goals. This moderation in the absence of liberalism needs to be explained.

To some, it seems reminiscent of the second half of the sixteenth century, when Lithuania was the center of European religious tolerance. By a Venetian account, there flourished then in Vilnius 70 different sects, whose members—until about 1590—maintained friendly social relations with each other.<sup>7</sup> This period, in fact, is mentioned as a point of reference by some of the most thoughtful participants in the present national revival, such as Darius Kuolys. But the jump from the sixteenth to the twentieth century is too great to convince one of any direct transmissions.

However, a tendency toward conservative moderation, possibly of peasant origin does seem to have been a recurrent feature of Lithuanian history in the twentieth century, and more so than among their neighbors. Hence some cultural factor may be operative here. The moderating effects of the symbolic leadership coalition of the liberal-nationalist President, the Cardinal, and the head of the independent Communist party may also be important.<sup>8</sup> But the Latvians and Estonians are moderate without the benefit, apparently, of this kind of coalition. Thus moderation may rest on different kinds of supports in each country.

I would expect that there might be more of a native framework for a liberal political culture in Estonia. I deduce this from the more democratic past of Estonia and from such indicators as its having the highest rates in Europe of book publishing and of psychiatrists per patient. I am less certain about the sources of Latvian moderation. Historically, Latvia has exhibited stronger tendencies toward leftist or rightist militancy than Lithuania, but these do not seem to be important at present.

### *Precipitous and Dangerous Courage*

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<sup>4</sup> *Mazoji Lietuva*, June 4, 1990, 3.

<sup>5</sup> Cited from Remeikis’ report to the Santara-Sviesa convention, Tabor Farm, Sodus, Mich., September 7, 1990.

<sup>6</sup> *Literatura jr men as*, September 8, 1990, 2.

<sup>7</sup> Vytautas Kavolis, “The Devil’s Invasion: Cultural Changes in Early Modern Lithuania,” *Lituanus*, 35 (Uinter, 1989), 5-26.

<sup>8</sup> The Cardinal made a point of publicly expressing his joy that the President congratulated him on his anniversary together with the head of the independent communist party: national unity, in the struggle for independence, above all.

There are, of course, good pragmatic reasons to be moderate in the current East Baltic situation—but they have not proved sufficient elsewhere. I would suppose that, to some extent, moderate conduct in one of the Baltic countries reinforces it in the others, although it may be premature to speak of a “Baltic style” as a powerful force in popular consciousness. The best, though still somewhat fragile, assurance of continued moderation is that national self-respect appears to have become contingent on it for all three Baltic nations. This is how we prove we are “Nordics.”

But if moderation is a characteristic more or less shared by the present day national movements in all three Baltic republics, in rushing through its declaration of independence on March 11, 1990, Lithuania has revealed a greater disposition toward dangerous, even foolhardy, courage. This disposition, which in Lithuania is now designated as “radicalism,” was contrasted at the time by Estonians, who were cited in the Western press as referring to their own more calculated, gradualist and, therefore, presumably more rational pursuit of the same goal of national independence. It might appear surprising that Estonians who had taken the initiative in an earlier stage of the Baltic revival and who were perceived by the Lithuanians, with some envy, as being better prepared, politically and intellectually, to push forward,<sup>9</sup> did not lead in the final thrust toward independence. Differences in the demographic situation are cited as an explanation, but cultural differences may also play a part.

In particular, an “heroic” self-perception may continue to be shaped by the Lithuanian collective memory both of the Grand Duchy, of the several 19<sup>th</sup> century rebellions, of 20<sup>th</sup> century struggles with Poland over Vilnius, and of the more prolonged armed resistance against the Soviet Union, which endured in an organized manner until 1953. Distant history appears to be used politically more in Lithuania than in Latvia or Estonia, presumably because there is a more impressive history to be used. Thus, during the crisis with Moscow, Landsbergis cited a 14<sup>th</sup> century Grand Duke to the effect that sooner will iron melt and stone turn to wax than we shall retreat. Nothing comparable is reported from Latvia or Estonia. These historic self-perceptions may predispose Lithuanians toward more daring actions in international relations. The Estonian gradualist did not prove any more effective than the Lithuanian “radical” rush toward independence.

The risk taking courage of the Lithuanians has, however, attracted the attention of the world and helped to transform Lithuania, in the imagination of the world, from a provincial cause into a universal symbol of the justified struggle of a small people for freedom. Thus, *The New York Times* would describe Tibet as “Deng Xiaoping’s Lithuania.” One keeps coming across references to Asian and African countries for which Lithuania is cited as the metaphoric standard.

### *Ritualistic and Theatrical*

This acquisition of symbolic visibility, on a level with Israel, black South Africa, and the Palestinians, is a major achievement. It is due not only to Lithuania’s being first among the Soviet republics in declaring her independence, and not only to having withstood an economic blockade by the Soviet Union, but also to the style in which Lithuanians presented themselves in their

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<sup>9</sup> In a speech on November 20, 1988, the future President of Lithuania noted that “the political cultivation of the society, the understanding of democratic principles and of one’s rights is apparently *much weaker* in Lithuania than in Estonia...And in the whole society there is apparently much less of a mature political intellect than in Estonia. Vytautas Landsbergis, *Atgave vilti. Pertvarkos tekstu knygele* (Vilnius, Sajudis, 1990), 16.

campaign toward national independence. This style was sometimes interpreted by the Western press early in 1990 as “pagan theatre” or “Lithuanian mysticism.” That is, it seemed totally incomprehensible to the contemporary West, and seemed to distinguish Lithuanians not only from the Slavs, but from their apparently more pragmatic Baltic neighbors as well.<sup>10</sup>

The second Lithuanian revival reveals a more theatrical or ritualistic cast of mind than the corresponding processes in Latvia or Estonia. There are forms of newly devised Baltic ritual shared by all three contemporary versions of Baltic nationalism: an unbroken human chain holding hands (and singing peaceful folk songs) from Estonia to Lithuania, and demonstrations with lighted candles, etc. But only in Lithuania are there processions in the tens of thousands carrying crosses across the country to the Hill of Crosses (Everyone on that day was filled with faith like precious vessels with aromatic myrrh,” wrote the government’s official daily),<sup>11</sup> and a few men and women lying crosswise in the cathedral square. Only in Lithuania can young men in the guise of medieval knights march in to defend the Parliament building against Soviet tanks, defusing the tension of the moment. Only in Lithuania could there have been a leader who simultaneously would be described in the German press as a *priesterlicher Præsident* and strike some American observers of his TV interviews as Peter Sellers in *The Mouse That Roared*, a man of obviously greatly condensed symbolism.

All this occurs against the background of almost daily celebrations of all conceivable memorial days, numerous reinaugurations of destroyed monuments, reburials of exhumed bodies of Siberian deportees—expressions of the ancient belief that a person ultimately belongs to his or her native soil. I would imagine that the recent celebration in which, with leaders of the government present, the whole nation—Protestants, Jews, Muslims, and atheists included—was dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ would be inconceivable in Latvia or Estonia, or indeed in any European society other than Lithuania (or Poland). There are evident efforts to capture the whole national revival by those who specialize in ritual performances. This is a power play, but while participation in some of the rituals seems to be declining, obviously they strike a widely popular chord.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> *The New York Times*, September 22, 1990, 1.

<sup>11</sup> *Lietuvos aid as*, June 22, 1990, 1.

<sup>12</sup> The ritualization of politics is much more evident in the second than in the first Lithuanian revival, which conventionally is dated from the publication of the journal *Ausra* in 1883. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century theatricality was far more characteristic of the behavior of the culturally Polonized nobility of Lithuania than it was in the movement of national reawakening led by such sober personalities as the liberal physician, Jonas Basanavicius. On the employment of symbolism in aristocratic dress in the periods of the two 19<sup>th</sup> century rebellions against Czarist rule, see Ruta Guzeviciute, “Lietuviu bajoru kostiumas 1830-1863 metais,” in *Etnografiniai tyrinejimai Lietuvoje 1988 ir 1989 metais* (Vilnius, 1990), 38-52. Political ritual is not as deeply rooted among Lithuanians of recent peasant origins as among the Irish. An event like the Easter uprising of 1916—a stage effort to create a myth in anticipation of being defeated and turned into Christlike martyrs—has not been replicated in 20<sup>th</sup> century Lithuanian history. Cf. F.X. Martin, “The Evolution of a Myth—The Easter Rising, Dublin 1916,” in Eugene Kamenka, ed., *Nationalism: The Nature and Evolution of an Idea* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1976), 56-80. At present, political ritualism in Lithuania appears to be an aspect of a post-Soviet, anti-modernistic retraditionalization of life, and as such stronger than earlier in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. But no general theories of “nationalism in advanced industrial societies” or of “the ritual process” explain why ritualism is stronger in one country than in others, or how it operates not only to dramatize the power of the powerless, but also, in some cases, to contain it within the bounds of moderation.



The musical accompaniment of these rituals is usually gentle—either religious and devotional or national and nostalgic—not militant marching songs as in some other versions of nationalism, and not performed by uniformed bands.<sup>13</sup> This musical style may have contributed to maintaining an atmosphere supportive of moderation.

A Baroque popular culture, derived perhaps from 17<sup>th</sup> century Spain, is still alive in contemporary Lithuanian political or politico-religious ritualism. This proclivity toward ritualism—which sometimes, even in parliamentary debates, simply precludes any recourse to rational calculation—has a great deal to do with the Catholic background of most Lithuanians, although the country is less homogeneous and less devoted to the Church than Poland. However, it also carries pagan notes such as the importance of reburial in the native soil and such echoes of the Grand Duchy as the march of the medieval knights. Specifically Catholic ritual seems immersed in, and not always clearly distinguishable from, a general sea of nationalistic ritualism, which frequently influences not only the style, but also the very conception of politics.

The foremost Lithuanian philosopher, Arvydas Sliogeris, wrote at the beginning of 1990: “Over the last 18 months, Sajudis’ politics has been ritual and charismatic; the ritual elements of this politics were dominant and stifled its pragmatic elements.” He goes on to subject the ritualization of politics to a highly critical analysis:

The ritual goal requires from each person striving for it unconditional submission and unwavering adherence to the ritual. Whoever deviates from the ritual is denounced as a heretic...The slave syndrome (produced by the Soviet system) remains unchanged; only the ritual orientation of this syndrome changes...As long as politics continues to be ritualized, it will be dominated from top to bottom by structures of dependence.<sup>14</sup>

While he may be right about many politicians, this is not what ordinary people expect: in 1990 the first pragmatic Prime Minister long remained the most popular leader. The majority are people who can keep their liking for ritual in perspective and favor what they perceive as rational courses of action.

### *Moralism*

A fourth tendency prominent in the second Lithuanian revival—its moralism—has two distinguishable aspects. One is a belief in collective moral superiority, not only over the Russians who are thought generally to have been corrupted by a longer exposure to Stalinism, but (a view less generally held) also over the “pleasure loving” and “compromising” West. The other moralistic aspect is the frequent but less appealing demand for individual repentance. In either of its two, mutually inconsistent versions, moralism tends to be linked with the ritualistic tendency. Most of the time the same people seem to be expressing both attitudes, and these are also public pressures for ritualistic enactments of “purity.” Sending one’s children to religious classes has

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<sup>13</sup> In the emergence of the national movement in 1988, rock music, together with ecological concerns and national feeling, “mobilized the youth of Lithuania behind Sajudis,” Alfred Erich Senn, *Lithuania Awakening* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990), 94. But then the stabilizing music, peculiarly prominent in traditional Lithuanian popular culture, took over providing an immediately available frame for all public rituals.

<sup>14</sup> Arvydas Sliogeris, “From Ritual Politics to Pragmatism,” *The Lithuanian Review* (March 2, 1990), 8.

become *de rigueur* particularly for opportunistic former Communists. Only an old anti-Communist can afford no to do so.

The emphasis on superior national morality goes back in Lithuanian literature to the Lutheran pastor Donelaitis in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and to the first national revival in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when pagan Lithuanians of old were first presented as people of superior virtue who had been corrupted later on by foreign influences. The Lithuanian national anthem is exceptional in this genre in containing references not only to national themes, but also to “the paths of virtue” in general. But the emotional roots of ritualism extend still further back and seem to be deeper than the rigorous moralism.

Fred Martin has noted a “first lesson about current Hungarian—indeed, Central European—politics;...moral purity, or the appearance of purity means everything to those who have lived in a system dominated by corruption, compromised and opportunism.” He argues from the standpoint of a political consultant that “the main obstacle before Central European reform movements” is “the reformers’ morality, their dedication to truth” which “makes them shun the levers of power that heretofore have been reachable only by immoral means.”<sup>15</sup> This plays into the hands both of the old bureaucracy and new conservative-nationalist elites, both of which tend to be more comfortable with their own power than the more liberal reformers.

While these are probably general tendencies to the north of Romania and Bulgaria, the degree to which they are systematized in action may vary and the symbolizing of integrity probably has nationally specific characteristics. Lithuanians seem currently to be giving more credit for integrity to some past or even current members of the (independent) communist party than do Poles. Visible church membership probably counts less as a measure of purity in Lithuania than in Poland—but more than in Latvia or Estonia.<sup>16</sup>

## **Integration of a National Character**

My description of the cultural differences among the three Baltic national movements may be subject to empirical qualifications. But if we assume that they have some merit as tentative generalizations, it becomes possible to point to a peculiar internal tension within the Lithuanian movement: moderation, dangerous courage and theatricality do not easily go together. The latter two characteristics may support each other, but they seem to be psychologically antithetical to moderation. How then is it possible for the Lithuanian movement to reconcile theatricality, courage, and moderation?

The reconciliation may be unstable. If it disintegrates, a deeper cultural fissure promoting political polarization might open up among Lithuanians than among Latvians and Estonians. One possible axis of such polarization would be between the “ritualistic” nationalists and greens and

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<sup>15</sup> “Politics at the Club Tomaj,” *The New York Times Magazine*, May 20, 1990, 41-59.

<sup>16</sup> The *National Geographic* report on “The Baltic Nations” (vo. 178, no. 5, November 1990), cites a Lithuanian priest: “If a Lithuanian is an atheist, he is already a collaborator. It is difficult for Americans to understand, but here, if you do not believe, what kind of a Lithuanian are you?” (35). No equivalent views are reported from Latvia or Estonia. The priest in question, widely known by his first name as Father Stanislovas, is regarded as an exceptionally sensitive man, the savior of the troubled souls of the young intellectuals.

the moderate liberals and socialists, with the Catholics divided between the two camps and claiming to be the only bridge. There is some evidence of this, in fact, taking place.

However, if the present configuration of courage, theatricality, and moderation is sustained, it could serve as a matrix for maintaining (or perhaps generating) a distinctive cultural identity rooted in the authentic tendencies of Lithuanian culture and visible abroad as an attractive alternative to an “homogenizing” modernization. In the current Lithuanian revival, there are some raw materials for collective originality. The statement on American TV by a character about his father: “He’s very hypnotic: comes from being Lithuanian or something,” (9/27/1990) may indicate that a myth is already being created.

On the other hand, the deeply grounded ritualist component of the Lithuanian movement suggests an “archaic” state of mind, in which nation is not yet distinguished from religion, individuals not differentiated from the whole, ethics, aesthetics and politics are fused into one, critical distance and an analytical perspective prove to be difficult to attain, and the style of performance takes a certain priority over the substance of achievement. This way lies a cultural provincialism which may become attractive as a curiosity, but does not take part as an equal in the concert of contemporary cultures.

There are already some signs of an emerging cultural “fortress mentality,” such as came to be established in both Poland and Lithuania from the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. *The American Spectator* cites the Lithuania philosopher (and self-declared liberal), Arvydas Juozaitis, as arguing:

This may not seem serious to you, but the Roman Catholic Church will be Lithuania’s fortress against the Western invasion, as it has been against the Eastern. Whether the nation can retain its distinctive culture once it has been reunited with Europe depends on how well Lithuanian souls are equipped to resist an unexampled wealth of pleasure. We will all melt away without Christianity.

The American-Lithuanian author of the article comments: “Most philosophers who do their philosophizing somewhere between, say, Dresden and Berkeley would sooner dissolve into a puddle on the spot than be caught talking like that.”<sup>17</sup> Is 18<sup>th</sup> century Spain a model for the future of Lithuania? And if this is what a liberal is saying, what can the conservatives be imagining? What some conservatives are for is suggested in Darius Suziedelis’ program of “the more conservative members” of the recently reconstituted Christian Democratic Party:

The focus of the plan is a Lithuanian state which would protect the moral rights of its citizens, and introduce a legal system which, theoretically, would provide guidance for those who are unfamiliar with the morals to which a Christian society must adhere... The full use of the law is viewed as the only means to reinstate traditional values.<sup>18</sup>

In trying to anticipate the internal cultural dynamics of the Lithuanian national revival, we may ask: How strong are the above tendencies relative to each other? On what groups can they rely for support: upon what kinds of resources, material or symbolic, can they draw? How grounded are they in the ways of life and in the psychic structures of the young and the old, of intellectuals and workers of recent peasant origins? How much internal change is possible, as a result of learning from the successes and failures (and from other peoples as well) within the half

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<sup>17</sup> Algis Valiunas, “Homage to Lithuania,” *The American Spectator* (July 1990), 24.

<sup>18</sup> “Morality in Politics: Lithuania’s Christian Democrats,” *The Lithuanian Review* (October 31, 1990), 6.

system, half congeries of cultural orientation—improved pragmatism intersected with restrained thunder—which so far has become visible?<sup>19</sup>

Lacking reliable evidence, one can only play with possibilities and historical analogies, and arrive at one's own decision on which of the currently active tendencies most needs to be supported. It seems to me that Lithuania cannot become either a Holland or an Ireland. But if its national claims are resolved, it might move halfway in the direction of present day Belgium. It seems oddly misplaced in the Balto-Scandinavian community of the future, and more at home (but also less challenged to grow) in an East-Central Europe heavily weighted by Poland. One conclusion seems well-founded: the formation of a distinctive collective style has been the major cultural achievement of the second Lithuanian revival. To possess it has been advantageous in the earlier stages of the process, for it may even have helped to keep potentially explosive political emotions in balance.

But a heavy reliance on ritualism may cease to be advantageous in the coming stages of national revival, when the task will be that of sober, reliable work and persistent reality testing. In this stage, one is led to expect that Estonia will set the pace for the Baltics.

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<sup>19</sup> Another internal tension has been captured by Saulius Saltenis "I want to achieve lofty moral standards. But I also need sensation." "Tales of Northern Athens," *Moscow News*, November 4-11, 1990, 16.

## **Acknowledgement**

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Dr. Bronius Kuzmickas served as Second Vice-President during the period of negotiations with the USSR which achieved the independence of his people and helped to lead it into the first years of freedom. The other scholars have worked creatively to build an ancient nation anew. The present work bears witness to their love of country and to their genius in its service.

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