In the Sphere of the Personal: New Perspectives in the Philosophy of Persons

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Foreword

Personalism has deep roots both in India and in the Western world. In the West its roots lie in the theological controversies in Christianity. There the word ‘person’ came into use when speaking of the three persons of the Trinity. Soon it was used when speaking of individual humans created by God and, bearing God's image, acquiring a dignity not possessed by any other creature. As thought continued and Western science developed, the theological understanding of nature and persons was deeply undercut. It was in this context that Personalism formed to combat what became known as Impersonalism. The latter presented itself in two forms, a substructure such as materialism, as in the hands of Samuel Alexander, or a superstructure, such as Absolute Being or God whose nature manifests itself in all found within it and to which all else, including persons, is subordinated. Spinoza’s thought is a case in point. Over a period of time, grand metaphysical systems lost their appeal, and philosophers became influenced by scientific developments in brain sciences and mental health, in language studies, and political developments that subordinate persons and their freedom to the state, as in totalitarian systems. Such developments also called for rethinking the nature of the person.

Since the formation of the International Forum on Persons, philosophers have presented a plethora of papers, whose central focus has been to defeat Impersonalism in all its forms, and to gain a clearer understanding of persons. Those papers have come from many fields of study, including Philosophy, Political Science, Linguistics, Psychology, and Physics. In this book, we find a wide range of topics, similar to previous meetings of the International Forum. Occasionally, a paper appears that attempts a new formulation of a classic aspect of Personalism. Such a case is Burgos’ search for a full epistemology, which he believes has not been done by Personalists in any thoroughgoing manner. He references Borden Parker Bowne’s Personalism and ignores A Theory of

Thought and Knowledge, which is a full account of Personalist epistemology, deeply influenced by Kant. Burgos, on the other hand, is building within Thomism and ultimately Aristotle. From that perspective,he provides a new formulation, and is to be congratulated. Regarding a new formulation of persons, Richard Prust continues to develop a theory rooted in resolve. Thus, making an original contribution. These strengths are offset by the omission of transhumanism, and global bioethics. Obviously, no conference can cover all topics, and we can hope that in future conferences, many more of significant contemporary importance will be addressed.

Thomas O. Buford

Biographical notes on the contributors

Rolf Ahlers, a native of Germany, has attended Drew, Princeton, Hamburg and Heidelberg Universities. He has done post-doctoral work at Munich and Princeton universities on government grants. He has taught at a variety of universities in Germany and in the United States. Professor Ahlers has concentrated on German Idealism during the last thirty years, participating in many specialized groups on Fichte, Reinhold and Hegel. He lectured widely at Rome, Munich, Berlin, Toulouse, Vancouver, Montreal, Boston and other cities. He has published four books and many articles and reviews. He is retired since 2010 and working on a new book and several articles and reviews.

Brian J. Buckley is a Lecturer in the Philosophy Department and Director of Pre-Law Advising at Santa Clara University. His research interests chiefly concern the political, moral, and legal aspects of what is owed to persons. This includes primarily questions of justice (procedural and substantive), the rule of law, and the common good. He wrote both a Master's thesis and Doctoral dissertation on moral issues concerning personhood.

Juan Manuel Burgos specializes in anthropology and personalism. He works as Full Professor at the University San Pablo CEU (Madrid). He is the Founder (2003) and President of the Spanish Association of Personalism, the Asociación Iberoamericana de Personalismo (2011) and the academic journal of personalist philosophy "Quién" (2015). He has developed the theory of Modern Ontological Personalism. He has been a guest professor and has delivered papers at conferences in Oxford, USA, Poland, Mexico, Sweden, Argentina, Chile, Colombia and many other countries. He has published many papers and books, such as *Antropología: una guía para la existencia* (5ª ed.), *Repensar la naturaleza humana*,

Introducción al personalismo (to be published by CUA Press) and *La experiencia integral*. Some of his books have been translated into Polish and Portuguese. His thought is already being developed by Beauregard, Bermeo, Rocha and others.

Robert F. DeVall, Jr. lives in Kutztown, Pennsylvania with his wife Louise and their four children. He received his B.A. in Philosophy from Kutztown University and his M.A. in Philosophy from West Chester University. His M.A. thesis, "Historicism and its Discontents", concerns Giambattista Vico's influence on the philosophy of history of both Hegel and Marx, and argues that Vico's idea, "eternal history", explains the course of history better than the linear views of Hegel and Marx.

Robert G. Fiedler received an MA in philosophy from Southern Illinois University in August of 2015. Following graduation, and against his better judgment, he moved to Galesburg, Illinois with his wife and two cats. Currently, Robert spends his time as a word-farmer, though this past season all of his crops have died. His wife supports him on her lucrative high school art teacher's salary, for which he is very grateful. He hopes that next year the crops will be better, so that perhaps he may eat (by) his words.

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Myron Moses Jackson is Visiting Professor of Philosophy at Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids, MI. With a real passion for teaching and interdisciplinary research, he enjoys eclectic scholarly engagement. His current work relies on the process philosophy of A. N. Whitehead to investigate the civilizational aims of entertainment, both metaphysically and aesthetically, to cultivate

peace, truth, beauty, art, and adventure among human societies. Another focus deals with the interaction and difference between human and computational selfhood. In another life he would take up journalism, as a food critic and op-ed writer, following the scoop wherever it may lead.

Denis Larrivee has been an assistant Professor of Neuroscience at Cornell University Medical College, New York City, and a visiting Professor in the Department of Biology at Purdue University. He is a former fellow of Yale University Medical School Departments of Opthalmology and Biological Sciences. His current affiliations include a Visiting Scholar appointment at Loyola University, Chicago, the International Association of Catholic Bioethicists, and the International Neuroethics Society. He is the author of 30 publications and one book on neuroscience and neuroethics.

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Philippe-Edner Marius is a Legislative Aide in the Senate of the State of New York. He earned his Baccalaureate degree in Anthropology from the City College of New York in 2012. Thereafter, he earned his Master's degree in Public Policy from the Department of Public Policy at the Central European University, Budapest, specializing in Higher Education Policy and Management. His academic and intellectual interests are at the intersection of Existentialism, Public Policy and Anthropology.

Carol J. Moeller received her PhD in Philosophy from the University of Pittsburgh in 1998, as well as Doctoral certificates in Women's Studies and in Cultural Studies. She did her BA at Oberlin College. She was a Greenwall Fellow in Bioethics and Health Policy at Johns Hopkins and Georgetown Universities (01-03). Since 1997 she has taught at Moravian College in Bethlehem, PA, specializing in social justice.

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Richard C. Prust lives in Chapel Hill, NC, where he putters away at a book on personal identity in moral and legal reasoning. He is active in the International Forum on Persons. Before retiring, he taught philosophy at St. Andrews University in North Carolina. His book, *Wholeness: the Character Logic of Christian Belief*, is published by Rodopi Press.

Mark C. R. Smith teaches philosophy at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. He did his doctoral work in the philosophy of mathematics, and has published work in that field, as well as on epistemology and Descartes's philosophy. Mark teaches a range of subjects, including philosophy of mathematics, metaphysics, epistemology, and Descartes.

…and on the Editors

James Beauregard is a Lecturer in the psychology doctoral program at Rivier University, Nashua, New Hampshire. He teaches courses in Neuropsychology, Aging and the Biological Bases of Behaviour. He is also a Clinical Neuropsychologist with 20 years experience working with individuals with dementia and their families. He earned his graduate degrees at Northeastern University, Boston. His research interests include Neuroethics and Personalist philosophy in both the British and Continental traditions, including the intersection of these two fields in understanding person-

hood. He is a member of the British Personalist Forum, and the International Neuroethics Society.

Simon Smith is the editor of *Appraisal,* journal of the British Personalist Forum. Many years ago, he fled the University of Sussex clutching a DPhil in trembling hands. Having taught Philosophy at the University of Southampton in the UK and the Modern College of Business and Science in Oman, he now belongs, body and soul, to the Open Research team at the University of Surrey. There, he works tirelessly to subvert the behemoth of scholarly publishing and dreams of a world of free scholarly communication. Buried deep in the Surrey Downs, he occasionally pursues a more perfect alignment of science and religion through the diverse forms of personal analogy at work in modern physics and modern metaphysics.

Introduction

The articles in this collection were originally presented at the 13th International Conference on Persons, held at Boston University in August 2015. This biennial event, founded in 1989 by Thomas O. Buford and Charles Conti, attracts a host of international scholars, both venerable and aspiring. It is widely regarded as the premier event for those whose research concerns the philosophical tradition known as "Personalism."

That tradition is, perhaps, best known today in its American and European manifestations, although there remains a small but fiercely defended stronghold in Britain. In America, the Boston School is well represented by Borden Parker Bowne, Edgar Sheffield Brightman, and its most famous student, Martin Luther King Jr. In Europe, the crop is somewhat more diverse, ranging as it does, transcontinentally, from Emmanuel Mounier's Paris to Max Scheler's Munich, before heading eastwards to Karol Wojtyla's Lublin. Britain, meanwhile, has its champions in the likes of John Macmurray, Austin Marsden Farrer, and Michael Polanyi. While the concept "person" lies close to the heart of the Abrahamic religions and the philosophies which continue to grow out of them, Personalism is by no means an exclusively Western development. Its roots are also found in the Hindu traditions of India,[1] as well as the Confucian and Buddhist philosophies of China and Japan.

The ties that bind these disparate intellectual cultures may appear very loose indeed. There is little, if any, methodological or doctrinal consensus among them. Writing in the early 1940s, Jacques Maritain, would find himself confronted by, "[n]ot a personalist doctrine, but personalist aspirations…." "There are," he observed, "at least, a dozen personalist doctrines."[2] Not a great deal has changed since then. Nevertheless, those aspirations are shaped by the desire to respond, and respond vigorously, to the impersonal and depersonalising forces perceived to be at work in

philosophy and theology, and, most recently, the natural and political sciences. Their common aim is to place persons at the heart of these discourses, to defend the idea that persons are the metaphysical, epistemological, and moral "bottom line;" in the words of Thomas Buford, "the supreme value and the key to the measuring of reality."[3] Evidently, then, how one thinks about persons can shape the very foundations of our thought; a good thing too, since "personhood" has become the first and most fundamental concern of the twenty-first century. With increasing urgency, it cuts across the academic scene, from philosophy and theology to the hard sciences and everything in between. Beyond academe, it raises its head in the worlds of medicine and healthcare, social welfare, and social justice; often ignored, its presence can still be felt in the political and economic winds that continue to thrash, especially, at the poor and the vulnerable.

The authors in this collection do not simply reflect upon such things, they put them to work on a range of philosophical problems, both classical and contemporary. Personal identity, the nature and meaning of "personhood" and of reality figure large, as might be expected. Alongside them, stand the very current concerns of neuroethics and social justice. Our author's perspectives, too, are many and varied, offering insights into the central debates of other philosophical traditions, such as the Cartesian, the Kantian, and the Hegelian.

For readers unfamiliar with the Personalist tradition, a word of explanation is doubtless in order. To usher in the philosophical feast that is to follow, therefore, we should like to offer a few reflections on what we regard as the more important factors motivating Personalist thinkers.

Given the degree of diversity within the tradition, the reader might be forgiven for wondering what value Personalism may have for those whose intellectual upbringing has taken place elsewhere. What, in short, will they gain from it?

One answer may be found in the aspirations to which Maritain refers, aspirations that clearly unite those dedicated to what is, you

may be assured, a "pearl of great price." Of these, the one that does so most steadfastly is the need to resist reductivism in all its forms. By temperament and training, Personalists are profoundly averse to any thought or practice that seeks to limit our understanding and, in consequence, the actual nature of persons. By contrast, they aim to construct the richest and deepest description of "personhood." For many, this elevates Personalism far above the merely theoretical, endowing the tradition with a keenly pragmatic edge, which keeps it in the vanguard of social and political activism.[4] Such notions are, as the reader will discover, of considerable importance to the authors in this volume.

In pursuing those ends, both practical and theoretical, a different conception of persons is required; one not held hostage to common physical, psychological, and spiritual constraints. Selves must slip between the bars erected by the habits of thought, seeking, instead, the ampliatory and amplificatory mechanisms that embody a psychodynamic account of themselves. The very bold might slip the leash of modern materialist dogma altogether, follow a theological path in search of higher forms of dialectics: spirit returned unto spirit, personality engaged in its own infinite extensions.

Whether or not the authors in this collection would agree wholeheartedly with such high falutin' suggestions, they would, we hope, concur with their general direction. It, or something like it, certainly seems to be implied by those who address themselves to questions of morality and social justice. Most obvious, perhaps, is Brian Buckley's treatment of punishment and redemption below. For redemption to be meaningful, in the secular or spiritual sense, there must be greater possibilities open to us than standard social, psychological, and metaphysical determinations would allow.

This may be why no official Personalist Doctrine can be devised. Doctrines can be limiting; they set the rails on which thought runs, determine what counts as evidence and explanation. So much, of course, is true of all theoretical frameworks, including those erected by Personalists. Hence, there is always the risk that,

while pointing out the mote in another's eye, we may miss the lumberyard lodged in our own. Being part of so rich and diverse a tradition, however, enables most Personalists to retain a high degree of sensitivity to such things.

If official doctrines can be limiting, definitions may prove even more so. In devising them, the tendency to determine precisely what is meant by a construct, how it should be correctly used and understood, is undeniably strong. Definitions seem, to our mind at least, almost *designed* to set a construct in aspic. It is certainly true that philosophers, perhaps more than others, are easily tempted to fasten upon them, though it be always in the name of clarity and accuracy; in stasis there is much comfort for the human soul. Such may be the comfort of the idle and the shallow, however; definitions, like labels and other forms of jargon, frequently discourage careful thought. And, after all, the tendency to oversimplify its materials doubtless is, as William James trenchantly remarked, an occupational hazard of the theorizing mind.[5]

But perhaps we are being too hard on the *ancein dictionaire*, particularly given the well-documented phenomenon of semantic shift. For a century or more, morphologists and other social scientists – not to mention the occasional philosopher – have been pointing out this phenomenon, along with the inherent flexibility of language it denotes. In light of that, it might seem capricious, even wilfully cryptic, to talk against definitions in this way.

In fact, few Personalists would disagree with those clever and cunning linguists who map the ebb and flow of meaning within and across languages. That is precisely why they are so often chary of any attempt to draw the noose of definition too tightly around the neck of our concept "person." More precisely, they are suspicious of the theory of language this practice denotes. Certainly, most would brook no truck with the alternative, that substantival philosophy of language which demands a logically watertight conformity of word to world and *vice versa*. That, in truth, is what we fear lies behind the desire to pin down our concepts once and for

all: the hope that by rigidly determining the one, it will be possible to rigidly determine the other.

Dubbed by J. L. Austin with the Latin tag, *unum nomen, unum nominatum*,[6] this grinding hangover from the heady days of Cartesian Realism is one from which Western philosophy has never quite recovered.[7] The belief that for each word, there is a perfectly corresponding thing, and only one thing per thing named, was the fatal flaw in Logical Positivism and British Empiricism in general. Having passed the cup to the next generation of scholars, the old Russellian school left much modern philosophy and, what is infinitely worse, the modern sciences still laboring under the burden of this poisoned premise.[8]

Evidently, however, as we have been shown many times before, our definitions and descriptions cannot be limited as logical empiricism demands. They cannot be circumscribed in such a way as to foreclose on our understanding and use of a construct or, more importantly, on the reality we seek to understand by its application. In short, the correlation between word and world cannot be made logically watertight. The most obvious reason for this, Friedrich Waismann would call the "open ended-ness" or "essential incompleteness" of our descriptions and definitions.[9] We may delineate our terms for the practical purposes of particular enquiry, that is, but we cannot do so *a priori*. We cannot, because sooner or later experience will catch us unawares; once sat upon by that capacious *a posteriori*, our constructs will never be the same again. Indeed, we may rely on it, as Michael Polanyi observed. Any description, and perhaps most especially scientific description, will prove its accuracy (and value), not in its immediate validation, but by manifesting in an "indeterminate range of yet unknown and perhaps yet unthinkable consequences."[10] Likewise, that which our descriptions and definitions tell us is real, *is* real because it can be expected to "reveal itself indeterminately in the future." "[F]act," as Austin wittily quipped, is always "richer than diction."[11]

Notably, Waismann takes us beyond this simple empirical principle. It is not just experience which refuses to be captured and caged by our concepts; the very concepts we use to understand, to make sense of experience are always ready to take flight. In Waismann's particular idiom, this is *Porosität der Begriffe*, the "open texture" of language.[12] Our definitions and descriptions are inherently "porous;" they cannot be sealed off, made "watertight," to prevent meaning "leaking out," or new meanings "leaking in."[13] Leakage is really only problematic, of course, when we forget that the limits we draw around our concepts are not set by God or the Natural Order. They are set by our field of enquiry and the direction we pursue within it. In forgetting so, we foolishly convince ourselves that the furrows we plough across the field are the only legitimate furrows there are.[14]

Like any other philosopher, the Personalist, must, as T. S. Eliot said, continually "wrestle with words and meaning."[15] That scuffle may not be quite as intolerable as the poet imagined, however. For the Personalist is not without her allies. In the likes of Austin and Waismann she will find a philosophy of language that, although not exactly designed for the purpose, is nevertheless very well-suited to her particular requirements. By working with the grain of language and intelligent exploration, rather than against it, we are reminded that we cannot prescribe what will count as evidence for the presence of persons, nor preordain how our seemingly stable constructs might need moulding that we may recognize them.

At its simplest, the difficulty we are attempting to describe is, as Don Marquis suggests, one of scope.[16] Once we begin to define the scope of our principal categories and constructs, we run the very real risk of including either too much or too little. In some fields of enquiry, such risks may be trifling. What's more, they are evidently not symmetrical. Even here, where our category is "person," the dangers of having a scope large enough to include, for example, a number of non-human animals, are, perhaps, not very serious.[17] What is likely to worry us far more is a lurch in the other direction, towards exclusion. Here, the consequences may be dire indeed, as Carol Moeller, Philippe-Edner Marius, and Lawrence Nelson are

keen to remind us.[18] The question they press upon us is of vital importance, and not only to Personalists. Who might justly demand whatever moral and metaphysical protection our category "person" might offer? How shall we judge? Perhaps we should draw up some such list of characteristics as proposed by Michael Allen Fox, decide according to whether we encounter in others "critical self-awareness; the ability to manipulate complex concepts and to use a sophisticated language."[19] Do so and a great many of our nearest and dearest might be ruled out of bounds. If we are honest, we might even admit that, on occasion, we ourselves would not be guaranteed to qualify. Besides, most normal people would regard the idea of ticking off items on a moral and metaphysical checklist absurd if not actually offensive; even some philosophers might balk at the idea.

In the Western philosophical tradition, reason has commonly been judged the defining characteristic, indeed, the very essence, of persons. Once again, assuming that "reason" is no mere abstraction, no empty concept, we are bound, it seems, to face the most serious scoping problems, particularly with regard to infants and those suffering from neurological, or psycho-social impairments. But there is another, more worrisome philosophical tendency at work here. Fortunately, the Personalist's nose is a peculiarly sensitive instrument, ever on the alert for a sulphurous whiff of the reductive, the materialist, and the flatly *im*personal. (Here, however, we may be forced to reassess our views in light of Rolf Ahler's chapter below.)[20] By placing undue, or worse, *exclusive* emphasis on reason we are left with a philosophical psychology too thin to be of lasting benefit in our search for self-knowledge, but quite sufficient to be of lasting damage. This is, perhaps, particularly obvious in the field of moral philosophy. Few, remotely sane, people would accept the utilitarian's substitution of cost/benefit analysis – presumed by some to be the acme of rational thought – for genuine ethics. There are those who would, when faced with suffering, poverty, and the concomitant demand for charity, advise a decrease in the surplus population. To them, we might reply, in proper Dickensian style, "Will you decide what men shall live, what men shall

die? …O God! to hear the insect on the leaf pronouncing on the too much life among his hungry brothers in the dust!"[21] So much is "wicked cant" we know; what of the other, who keeps divine company on the flip side of this coin? As with any philosophical field in the Western tradition, few would deny *his* profound influence on Personalism; for example, in the keenly felt obligation to treat one another, not as objects, but as personal others. We should not overstate that influence, however; any moral system predicated on pure reason will, by virtue of its fundamentally *im*personal nature, be unworkable for persons. Shall I, for instance, inform my wife that I intend to keep my promises to her, not out of affection or fidelity, but out of duty to the moral law within? Shall I tell her that to do otherwise would fail the test of universalizability, committing me to willing a contradiction and setting my face against reason itself? Not likely. Such humbug would, no doubt, be met with the very shortest of shrifts. Here too, Dickens has a word of warning for the wise: he who dedicates himself exclusively to his duty is liable to meet with a very bad end indeed.[22] A degree of critical self-awareness or, more pertinently, quite crucial *other*-awareness might prevent pure reason having its head and landing us in considerable trouble.

Evidently, there is much missing from the confirmed rationalist's moralising, and the psychology it implies, not least the element of emotion. Emotions, we have been schooled to suppose, contaminate our judgements; they lead us from the straight and narrow path of reason into the dark woods where lurks preference, partiality, and every kind of prejudice. Such de-personalising propaganda has no place in a proper understanding of persons, however. It is not remotely true that emotions are necessarily either anti- or irrational. Certainly, our feelings *can* be, as Macmurray puts it, "unreal;" that is to say, they may not harmonise well with the circumstances arousing them.[23] Mortal dread in the presence of ordinary house spiders is probably irrational; hence we dub it a phobia. We assume here that the phrase "ordinary house spiders" excludes those species capable of causing death. Should, however, one's experience routinely include the Brazilian Hunts-

man or those legendary fellows that live under Australian lavatory seats, then a degree of fear would not, one may suppose, be out of place.

More importantly, passion and preference cannot be denied their place in our judgements; so much, William James eloquently demonstrated in "The Will to Believe."[24] The most hard-hearted of Kantians must care about his duty if he is to follow it. And not only the philosopher, but also the scientist, as Michael Polanyi reminds us: she too will be driven in her search for knowledge by her *desire* for it, her *interest* in her field, her *love* of her research.[25] It is to be doubted whether anyone could undertake the years of gruelling work involved in scholarly research without a profound emotional attachment, both to the process and the subject matter. The sacrifices are great, one must want the results very badly indeed. Otherwise put, Hume was quite correct when he dubbed reason the "slave of passion," for reason alone does not move us to action.[26] What's more, the neurosciences appear to be catching up with James and Polanyi. Evidence suggests that, when those parts of the neural network concerned with emotions are damaged, the ability to make sensible and intelligent judgements is likewise impaired.[27]

Feelings and emotions are a crucial element of our philosophical psychology; we exile them from our talk and thought about persons at our peril. In neither case, however, do we rely on feeling alone. What matters most of all, perhaps, is the pragmatic effect, what we *do about* our emotions; for, as Austin Farrer observed, "the doing, not the feeling, is the empirical test"[28] of peril and preference and everything in between. "[T]he doing," too, is the test of our understanding of persons; indeed, action, personal action, will provide the empirical key to our conception of "personhood."

Perhaps the safest course, for philosophers at least, would be to avoid creating divisions and difficulties where none exist and, like Farrer, strive to keep "heart and head in dynamic balance."[29]

As the old saw goes, a picture paints a thousand words; and the "word-picture" is no exception. Anyone with the remotest sensitivity to language knows full well that there is truth in the poetic im-

age. If we are to follow Farrer's example, then we must have a head and a heart to balance. If, that is, "the doing" and not "the feeling" is to tell the tale, persons must have the wherewithal *to do*; they must be equipped with the apparatus of physical activity. What, after all, could they *do* without it? Very little, as Stuart Hampshire averred. Since it is unlikely that, *sans* physicality, one could distinguish oneself from anything else, it is difficult to imagine how one would go about identifying oneself *as a self* at all.[30]

For Personalists, as with thinkers in other fields, bodily instantiation holds a special place in their conversations. It is, of course, vitally important to moral thinking, including that undertaken within these pages. It is difficult to imagine what point or purpose ethics might have if our actions made no practical impact on others.[31] Equally, as Juan Manuel Burgos suggests, below, embodiment is an integral element of a sound epistemology.[32] As one might expect, however, the precise nature of the connection between persons and their physicality remains moot. Some, like R. T. Allen, resist the slightest hint of entailment relations; and, perhaps for the Christian philosopher, one can perfectly well understand why.[33] Others appear to draw the connection tighter, insisting that the "human person is totally unthinkable without the body."[34]

We should be wary of drawing the connection *too* tight, however, lest we over-strain the logic of "personhood" and open the way to the very depersonalising forces we set out to combat. We expect too much of our bodily encounters when we demand they deliver, unerringly and with absolute certainty, the person hopefully embodied. Such certainty is not the province of our empirical or experiential encounters. A single contrary instance and the entire construct is undone.

In short, the connection described by the term "embodiment" need not, indeed *cannot*, be logically necessary. At best, the inference is only presuppositional; that is, not *necessary* but *adequate*. An encounter with a body presupposes the presence of a personal agent: the doer of the deed. Likewise, an encounter with persons presupposes an experience of personal acts bodied forth in some-

way. Each one, person and embodiment, is the minimum condition needed to make sense of the other.[35]

Besides the risk of defaulting on the logic of "personhood," any attempt to make watertight the inference from body to person raises the spectre of a still more pernicious form of reductivism. If our primary experience is of the body, then the empirically minded will doubtless want to know what need have we of any inference to the personal at all. "The body is… the physical, organic or material dimension of the person. My hands, my feet, my heart have a measure, a volume profile and a size;" so Burgos reminds us; and who would deny it? Why, then, those empirical minds will wonder, must we complicate matters with these additional and, apparently unnecessary, metaphysical entities? Is the physicality we have before us not sufficient? It is, after all, the only thing we have any hope of getting into our objective sights. Should we, at this point, attempt to separate personality from the body, the empirical operation will be all the easier. Suspected of trying to raise the ghost of Descartes' ego-isolationism, we shall find ourselves ridiculed for our superstition; or at least, in the words of one who appreciated his ghost stories, invited to save up our nursery tales for a season or two and frighten our cook-maids at the appropriate time.[36]

Once upon a time, the next step might have been that philosophical behaviourism, which P. F. Strawson described as a kind of inverted or paradoxical Cartesianism: "a dualism of one subject – the body – and one non-subject."[37] Dubbing it the "no ownership doctrine of the self,"[38] Strawson's response went straight to the heart of the matter. The philosophical behaviourist, or no-ownership *doctrinaire*, is in no position to explain either what personal pronouns are for or how they came about. They cannot, in short, tell us what the word "your" is doing in the phrase "your acts." And they cannot claim that such phrases are simply meaningless; ask whether it is *your* cup of tea, *your* turn to do the washing up, *your* fault that the dog ate my Spanish teacher, and we all know perfectly well what is meant. Ownership is inquired about and, in the end, assigned, not to a body, nor any other physical object, but to the person instantiated thereby.

Today, of course, the sciences dominate both popular and scholarly discussion of such matters. Under the circumstances, philosophical behaviourism is unlikely to be the obvious port of call it once was. Modern empiricists appear to have learned an important theological lesson; our prating of machine-dwelling ghosts aside, it seems that Personalism, like theism, "adds nothing to naturalism." Quite so, comes the reply, and let that be an end to it.[39]

Must the Personalist surrender the ground so easily then? Given the fact that the materialist case is itself hardly intelligible, perhaps not. Here too, there is a kind of Cartesianism at work, a dualism of one subject and one non-subject. In this instance, however, the subject is not the body but the materialist herself, while the non-subject is the whole vast sweep of creation. In other words, the materialist must, if she is serious, suppose herself to be a subject, a personal agent, of precisely the kind which she denies exists. This is a direct consequence of her (alleged) materialism and the concomitant denial of personality. For if creation is made up exclusively of physical forces impacting on one another then so too is the personal agency which seeks to describe creation exclusively in terms of physical forces; if personal agency is an illusion, then so too is the personal agency that tells us so. To mitigate the risk of self-contradiction, the materialist must discount herself from the list of things constituted exclusively by physical forces, that is, from the world.

The difficulties which beset the resulting "god's eye view" are many and notorious; not least, of course, it offers the inquirer a view from no place in space or time, from nowhere at all, in fact.[40] In effect, the materialist hasn't eliminated personal agency as she supposes; she has merely removed it from the system of nature. By doing so, materialism transforms personal agency and the meaningfulness of its actions into an epiphenomenon. And epiphenomenalism, Farrer reminds us, is a blind alley: it refutes the question to which it is supposed to be an answer. Indeed, epiphenomenalism "counters the whole assumption of logical study, by denying that meaning governs the formation of discourse."[41] Meaningful

discourse cannot be a mere supervenient quality of physical forces colliding. If it were, we would have no notion of the personality that the materialist denies. Otherwise put, the meaning of the materialist claim cannot be a mere by-product of the sounds and symbols in which it is expressed. Deny this, said Farrer, and we are "maintaining a paradox." That, if we may be so bold, is an understatement. Given that the materialist leaves us unable to explain ourselves or anything else, "outright self-contradiction" might be more appropriate.

Indeed, the very scientific thinking which seeks to explain how we came to be the kind of creatures we are is fatally undermined by such a view. Take evolutionary biology, for example: Homo sapiens are understood to be a product of natural, evolutionary forces. Conceived as an epiphenomenon, the personal agency which describes those forces is isolated from them, it does not belong to this evolving world. Under the circumstances, personality can have no "survival value," no "natural utility." Without "natural utility," however, neither is there natural explanation. Since personal agency adds nothing to our evolutionary development, it can only be a "treat" bestowed upon us by evolution, a notion which explicitly contradicts the whole science of evolution. "Survival values," Farrer pointed out, "flourish in an impersonal world; but we must personify Nature with a vengeance, before we can begin to think that anything is more likely to happen because it is a treat."

If, as it seems personification is the order of the day, perhaps personality itself is a gift from someone else; perhaps that is the real lesson of evolutionary biology.

The upshot of this is, echoing Strawson, that the materialist, like the behaviourist, cannot explain the meaning and function of personal pronouns, no more than she can explain the personal activity which constitutes her own explorations and explanations.

This does not, of course, mean that we deny the immense value and importance of scientific description; we should not wish to be thought so hidebound as that. We merely note the limitations of

such descriptions and so avoid restricting our analysis and understanding of persons. We should not, after all, wish to find ourselves in the position of one who says "of a machine whose function one does not appreciate, that all it does is to generate a little heat by friction."[42] Such a view is, as G. C. Stead remarked, "understandable, but may be misleading. It will not do to say that a roulette-wheel is really a kind of stove."

If the tenor of our observations thus far has seemed negative, this is, perhaps, not entirely surprising. Our aim has been to show the anti-reductive ambitions that motivate much Personalist thought and, in doing so, offer the reader some sense of its role as a badly needed corrective to much modern thinking. In Feuerbachian vein, one function of Personalism may be to act as a therapeutic to the objectifying and depersonalising tendencies of Western philosophy and theology.[43] Nevertheless, perhaps it is time we offered something more positive in the way of person-talk, something more constructive, for that too is a frequent characteristic of Personalism. Our aim, when we foregather, is not – or not entirely – to beat one another about the head and neck with our philosophies; it is to learn from one another.

To briefly recap, then, Personalists commonly reject the notion that persons may be understood as pure reason, sheer *noesis*; no more, for that matter, than they can be pure spirit. (It is worth remembering that the bumptious reasoning entailed by inflationary transcendence makes for quite as bad philosophy as any reductivism.) We have said that the bodily is a vital dimension of personhood, "the first manifestation of the person;"[44] equally, we stand shoulder to shoulder with Burgos when he tells us that personal embodiment cannot be merely physical. Otherwise put, the importance of the bodily to our self-conceptions cannot be due to its sheer materiality any more than to its mere solidity.[45]

The notion of "body," pure and simple, a physical thing with which we are presented, remains inert and, therefore, unable to supply a robust criterion of identity. Our knowledge of what it is would depend entirely on how it appears, how we perceive it. But

appearances are not reliable, as everyone knows. We have all seen far too many car chases on television and planets being destroyed in the cinema to fall for that. Fortunately, the body is not inert matter, as those still unaccountably wedded to Newton's billiard room physics would have us believe. Like everything else in the universe, our bodies are made up of interpenetrating patterns of energy or activity; the interplay of forces which constitutes the cosmos, constitutes us likewise. Carl Sagan was right, "[t]he cosmos *is*… within us; we *are* made of star-stuff."[46] So much, Einstein told us a century ago, a cosmic shift in thinking, which both Whitehead and Farrer eagerly appropriated in their development of a modern (anti-metaphysical) metaphysics. The crucial difference of course, is that the patterns of activity which constitute our bodies are not *only* physical, i.e. causal; they are also, and most importantly, personal, i.e. intentional.

We have already suggested that action will be essential to our understanding of "personhood." That is, action in the proper sense, the full and personal sense: acts owned and authored; acts intended, deliberately executed; acts that carry those intentions and deliberations, that carry *meaning*, just as these words, this communicative act, carries meaning. Such acts, indeed, are the primary manifestation of "personhood." For, in personal action, we find the much coveted criterion of identity. It is by their acts that we learn to distinguish our friends from statues and shop manikins, not to mention evil twins and even more evil robot replicants.

Persons are known by their fruits, by what they do, both to others and to themselves. I may come to know both *that* you are a person (as opposed to an evil robot doppelganger) and what kind of person you are by the ways in which you choose to interact with me. Will it be constructive and creative or destructive and depersonalising? Equally, I come to know myself in the same way, through those same interactions. It is, of course, a commonplace that personalities are shaped and molded by others in their environment; but just as important are the ways in which that personality expresses itself, so appropriates its environment. I may, for

example, regard myself as the very soul of warmth and generosity, a fellow who's guiding light is peace and goodwill to all living creatures. However, should I once begin to reflect on my habit of kicking stray dogs and shoving elderly ladies in front of moving cars, I will be forced to acknowledge the inaccuracy of my self-assessment, the dire limitations of my self-knowledge.

More important than my own reflections, however, are the self-reflections that others offer me; not just how I act, but how my actions are understood, recognised, responded to, these are the vital clues to my identity.

Our actions, that is, are ordinarily public, performed for an audience. Whether we appreciate it or not, this carries an obligation to reckon with the impact we have on others. If we are sensitive, we think *before* we act, anticipating consequences in the hopes of learning a lesson the easy way. We *may* listen to ourselves before speaking or, more commonly, reprise our actions through what Charles Conti describes as our "moral 'playback' function."[47] Registering aftershock in the face of the other, I seek to make amends, to reinterpret and resubmit my actions for further review. I hope, in short, to qualify my intentions, so mitigate unintended effects. These are the lessons we re-invest in our self-enactments. In so doing, as Conti elegantly puts it, "[w]e gather the rosebuds of experience so as to remove the thorns of further disgrace." We live our lives in the garden of other people's hearts and so must learn to watch where we put our big, flat feet. In future, I shall intend my act-consequences with greater care. By acts of oversight and overseeing, we reveal ourselves, our true nature; more, we *become* the selves we hope to be: "[w]e perform our being as we experience it." Philosophically speaking, we participate in the transformative dialectics of self and other; passing ourselves through the mirror of some other, we embark upon the development of our own selves.

In locating our criterion identity, we begin to see the full import of Robert Spaemann's words; the central question of his *Persons: The Difference Between "Someone" and "Something"* is not "*What* is a person?" but "*Who* is a person?"[48]

At first blush, the answer seems obvious. Surely, I have it, if not actually *at* my fingertips, then just beyond them. To identify a person, I need only point to whoever is sitting next to me on the train or on the other side of the dinner table. If such ill-mannered behaviour does not satisfy, we might adopt a mode more figurative and "point" to you, the reader, by referring to you here and now. Implied in this act of communication is the presupposition that you are a person like me; some*one* sufficiently well-equipped to reciprocate with whatever it is that makes a person a person; at the very least, some reflective and self-reflective capacity.

But in answering that apparently trivial question, how many more profound ones suddenly arise? How do I *know* you are a person? For that matter, how do I know *I* am one? *If* I am a person, how did I get to be one in the first place? These are the questions we are beginning to ask when we ask "who is a person?" From the little acorn of one, seemingly simple question, a profoundly important metaphysical, moral, and existential oak tree grows. Profoundly important because it concerns much more than the ways in which we understand ourselves; it concerns the ways in which we become the selves we are.

Taking the first question, "how do I *know* you are a person?", those who would insist upon isolated interiority for the *real* subject, the utterly unknown "I" at the centre of our selves, have no answer to give.[49] (Out of respect for Mark Smith's reappraisal of Descartes, below, it seems only fair to leave the French philosopher out of it, at least until the reader has had the opportunity to judge for him or herself.) Others have attempted to throw an analogical bridge across the gap between self and other. Of course, one might be very wary indeed of crossing so insubstantial a structure. After all, how can we be sure that there will be anything on the other side? Our bridge might prove to be, as James Joyce quipped, nothing but a pier, and a very short pier at that.[50] Unfortunately, the evidence of another *inside* can only be judged by *external* criteria. I know *you* are a person *like me* because you behave *like me*: you appear to be like me, therefore you *are* like me. Evi-

dently, the conclusion does not follow at all and we are left facing, once again, the brainless bio-mechanical brute of behaviorism.

Surely, this will not do. The sceptic who questions the efficacy of the analogy may have a point, as far as he goes; but once he has reached the end of this "disappointed bridge," he has nowhere to go. Perhaps he has asked the wrong question. Perhaps the question is not "how do we know that the analogy applies?" but "where did the analogy come from in the first place?"

Shifting the inflection, let us reappraise our first question. How *do* I know you are a person? And that raises the second: for that matter, how do I know that *I* am one? In other words, if I know what persons are like from my own case, then I must ask where my own case comes from.

Logically minded readers will surely point out that we know the answer to that perfectly well. The likes of Strawson and Wittgenstein long ago revealed to us the primary conditions for self-identification within those who taught us how to do it and what it means. Another puzzle for the hardened materialist: not only must she exile herself from the universe of merely physical forces; it seems she must also exile all those who taught her. The very language in which she frames her scientific scepticism is a legacy of those who taught her how to speak and, insofar as she does, how to think. Thus, the argument *from* analogy is really an argument *back to* those who taught us how to be persons in the first place.

There is, of course, more to life than logic. Let us heed Farrer's timely reminder instead: "[i]t is not as though we believed in our neighbour's personality *because* logical philosophers are able to exhibit the self-contradiction involved in denying it."[51] Indeed not. Other persons are not a puzzle to be solved by rational or scientific minds. They are a practical matter; and an urgent one too, given that, from our very first breath, we are entirely dependent upon them. In Macmurray's words, we are "'adapted'…to being unadapted," that is, "'adapted' to a complete dependence" on others.[52] Farrer (who was a student of Macmurray's at Balliol) concurred, adding, "[f]rom first infancy our elders loved us, played us, served

us and talked us into knowing them." To such, literally, personifying transactions we are very well "adapted," perfectly so. We are, as Macmurray says, "made to be cared for;" and cared for we must be if we are to survive.

From this, it follows that there is really no need for arguments and analogies to the other hidden away inside. For those who "talked us into knowing them" permeate and saturate our every experience of personhood. By their grace and gift do we become the persons we are. Deny the transformative transactions embodied by those gifts and we embrace, not reasonable doubt, but stultifying scepticism; we are, not persons, only "mindless imbeciles…innocent of all communication."

Most of us, fortunately, do not remain either innocent or utterly dependent on others for very long. The parents of teenage children might disagree vehemently with the second half of this suggestion; however, even they must admit that it usually takes a child only a few, short years to master the basics. Efforts to learn how to walk and talk and think usually bear at least some fruit before a child is five years old. Getting food from a plate into one's mouth without spreading it all over one's face appears to take a little longer, as anyone who has eaten with a philosopher may attest. Growing older, the content of these dialectical transactions inevitably changes, just as the people who join us in them inevitably change. In their essentials, however, in their shape and structure, the dialectic pursues the same fundamental course.[53] Others continue to contribute to our development throughout our lives, if we are clever enough to allow them to. They teach us about ourselves and our world and, perhaps most importantly, how to learn about ourselves and our world. Many are those who have, at one time or another, left their mark on your editors' philosophical and personal development.

Most exciting, perhaps, in being taught to participate in our own development, we are simultaneously taught how to participate in the development of others. This marks the most significant shift in the psychodynamic interplay of personhood: our active

appropriation and embodiment of it. Creative participation in the becoming of others: quite possibly the acme of personal acts. Indeed, what could be more characteristically personal? For some, it is the meaning of "personhood" itself. For others, such as Buford, despite appearing to be innate, it is, in fact, our "second nature;"[54] second and better. And in such creative participations we find a healthy and constructive philosophical psychology, one by which persons may understand themselves and their world in all its richness and depth. It is a way of thinking and talking about persons that does not rely on those psychologies incapable of expressing themselves in except in the most antediluvian of polarities: matter and (non)spirit; mind and body; perhaps worst of all, us and them. Ultimately, that is why we shall resist to the last ditch reductivism in all its forms, materialist, rationalist, economic, and political.

Finally, and at very, very long last, it is in an effort to honour that philosophical psychology that your editors offer their profound thanks to all those who have been involved in this volume. To our authors, of course; and to those who work tirelessly to ensure that the International Conference on Persons continues to be a place where such creative participations and everyone who undertakes them can blossom, we are grateful.

And that, dear reader, is all the song we have to sing.

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Chapter 1

Personal Identity With and Without Monotheism

Richard C. Prust

Historically, identity as an individual person is a creature of western monotheism; and since we no longer appeal to monotheism explicitly in moral and legal reasoning, the practice of identifying persons (rather than identifying vital somebodies) has become suspect for people who think systematically about human behavior. This poses a problem for societies that purport to be person-respecting, particularly because identifying persons is crucial in moral and legal reasoning. Accordingly, in the interests of defending the judgments we make about persons as *reasonable* we are obliged either to defend a monotheistic grounding for identity or provide a reasonable account of identifying persons on a non-monotheistic basis. In this essay I propose to do both. With or without monotheism, I will try to show that it makes sense to identify persons as *individual characters of resolve*. What belief in monotheism contributes, and what seems to be unavailable on other grounds, is a basis for believing in *moral integrity*, in its conceivability, its actuality, and its attainability. Without that belief, the actual being of persons gets systematically diminished in a variety of ways, three of which I will discuss: first, without belief in the attainability of moral integrity, it becomes riskier to trust others; second, without that belief, calling another person by name evokes only the presence of his compromised active being; and third, without that belief, what persons do has less historical importance.

Few who attended the International Conference on Persons in Boston will think me presumptuous for insisting that there must

be a reasonable way to identify persons. But we are also aware that "personal identity" is thought to be an incoherent conceit by many. The reigning consensus seems to be that there is no rational way to determine the being of a "person." At very least that means there is no rational way to determine which of somebody's actions are actions for which he takes personal responsibility. As far as I know, no British analytic account of identity has proven useful for moral or legal purposes and continental thinkers celebrate the contingency of meaning in a way that makes any claim about identity, personal or impersonal, naïve.

But these ways of dismissing personal identity share a faulty assumption that, for anyone interested in moral and legal reasoning, should seem suspect from the start. They all take on the challenge of identifying a person as one of determining what set of *experiences* properly counts as his. What should make us suspicious about this assumption is that in legal and moral matters the range of a person's *experiences* is less relevant to who he is than the range of *actions* for which he bears personal responsibility. In forensic matters we identify persons according to what they do, not what they experience; specifically, I would argue, we identify and judge them *as characters of resolute action*.

When we re-frame the challenge of identifying a person as one of characterizing somebody's acts instead of categorizing his experiences, I believe we make the notion of personal identity not only coherent but relevant to forensic purposes. (Indeed, I would argue – though I cannot do so here – that characterizing somebody's resolve does the only thing necessary in those contexts: it determines the range of somebody's personal responsibility.)

Identifying a person by characterizing somebody's agency rather than by delimiting his experience can only make sense if our characterization somehow covers a multitude of actions. After all, as a person you are an individual, but you are not presently sitting there *simply* as a hearer or a reader of this paper. *Who* you are also includes an ongoing range of engagements, projects and relationships. You could, I am sure, rattle off dozens of undertakings that

you have begun in the past but have not yet completed. All of them are part of who you presently are, all of them elements in your active presence. Accordingly, any characterization able to identify you personally would have to have implicit in it at least some of the items on your present-tense list. This poses a formal question: how can a set of characterizations depicting somebody's present actions (plural) conceivably characterize an individual (singular) agent.

The answer becomes evident when we consider what such a list of your undertakings, however complete, would *not* convey about you. The old way of trying to distinguish a person as a set of experiences would presumably allow for a "list" of his experiences to stand as his personal identity, but it is easy to see that a mere list of your actions would not tell us who you are. There must also be something adverbially true of your actions if they are to sustain your personhood: they must be manifestly projected *to accommodate one another*. You are, after all, using your imagination to steer a course in which the various things you are doing are projected so as to allow for their mutual accommodation; in short you are forming *resolve*.

The imaginative act of forming resolve involves something like making up a story, a story of how our actions going forward are going to resolve our intentional life. Our aim in narrating our undertakings, however sketchily, is to draw them into coordination, into narrative coherence. That seems to be what enables the multiplicity of somebody's intentions to enjoy the unity required for personal individuality. As a purely practical matter, since we are multi-intentioned agents (there being multiple items on our list of present undertakings) it is reasonable to think that our being is actualized most when we achieve the most comprehensive resolution we can imagine. Our most self-actualizing personal story – our most intention-satisfying life – is the one that best coordinates our intentional life as a whole. That makes each of us the protagonist of a course of resolve that promises to integrate him better than any of the alternatives he can imagine.

I realize this is an extremely austere and underdeveloped account of personal identity but it is enough for our purposes here. In identifying a person as the present character of somebody's resolve we have what we need to determine which of his actions count as his for moral and legal purposes: *a person's actions are all and only the actions determined in character by his resolve*. In any case, that is the understanding of personal identity this analysis depends upon so I hope it gains plausibility for you as our discussion proceeds.

I said earlier that what distinguishes a monotheist's from a non-monotheist's understanding of personal identity is that the former determines the possibility that anyone can (conceivably) have moral integrity. Integrity would take the form of a *complete* resolution of somebody's intentional life. For that integrity to be *moral* integrity, it would have to be the case that in leading her life of integrity she always accords with the best interests of the persons she interacts with.

I suggested earlier that this notion of moral integrity emerged in the West in the context of monotheistic stories and that this fact makes it suspect in the eyes of many people who try to understand human behavior. But it would be premature to give up on it because of where it came from without seeing what it meant formally in that context. Polytheism proves formally antithetical to individuality (as a character of resolve) because the presence of multiple gods each of whom has a claim on somebody puts him under incompatible obligations. That precludes a singularity of intentional bearing from emerging in the way he projects his intentional life. When a protagonist of an ancient tragedy steps forth from the chorus as a pretender to identifiable character he is always dissolved, ritually torn apart as an agent and sacrificed on the altar of Dionysus.

Monotheism, in contrast, imposes one consistent and coherent obligation, that of pursuing God's agenda in the world. In its founding texts the stories about individual characters of resolve emerged in stories about people coordinating their lives in a di-

vine-human partnership. The matrix of human individuality as a character of action was contextualized in this partnership, so persons can only be narratively identified as bearing a relationship between personal stories.

To get clarity on why persons are intrinsically relational, we need to notice how human personal-resolve stories are related to the divine Story in which God's action was characterized. There are three features of that relationship that are important for understanding the meaning of moral integrity.

First, among monotheistic Storytellers, *anybody* could be resolved as a person in partnership with God.

Second, to be in partnership with God means to be *wholly* resolved, resolved in such a way that no part of one's intentional life moves in discord with any other. It is interesting to note that in the dawn of personal individuality, which is to say in the dawn of Storytelling (and storytelling), the individual human person partnering with God was the corporate person Israel. Wholeness in that first human person's intentional life meant coordination among the tribes and classes who made up Israel. When Israel the corporate person was obedient in her partnership with God, she was whole/holy in her corporate life: the poor were taken care of, hospitality was practiced, the tribes cooperated, the rituals were pure, etc. When she became disobedient she disintegrated: falling in battle, suffering under corrupt kings and wayward priests, enduring strife between rich and poor, etc. But – and this is the crucial point for our purposes – the possibility of a return to whole/holiness was always present, even in her periods of disobedience and disintegration. Or, more formally put, it was understood to be implicit in Israel's present narrative possibilities that she could return to advancing the Story and be made whole as a people again.

Later in Israel's history and still later in the Christian Storytelling that developed out of it, personal integrity was actualized in two ways, as the complete coordination of somebody's intentional

life, typically spoken of as "grace," and as communal integrity, a "fellowship of believers."

This brings us to the third birthmark of personhood: these two modes of integrity, the personal and the inter-personal, *can only be actualized together*. That is to say, persons who emerged in monotheistic stories as whole/holy also emerged as interpersonally healthy. Assuming that healthy relationships constitute moral ones, monotheistically identified persons enjoy (as part of what it means for them to be a person) the hope of actualizing moral integrity with others. To put the matter negatively, persons are identified in a way that makes it inconceivable for a person of integrity to exploit others.

Now then, if I am right in seeing the notion of an individual person as the offshoot of monotheistic Storytelling and moral integrity as hard-baked into monotheistically-identified persons, then a loss of belief in monotheism threatens people's confidence in the human possibility of moral integrity. One could greet such news with a shrug. Why should it matter whether moral integrity is understood to be within a person's narrative possibilities? In the remainder of this essay I want to suggest several ways it does. If moral integrity drops out as a human possibility, first, it becomes riskier to trust people, second, calling them by name is drained of moral meaning, and, third, there is diminished historical significance for what we do.

Consider first the matter of trusting people. On what grounds should I trust you? Surely part of the answer is the very nature of healthy interactions. Even the most impersonal of them has a fiduciary component in as much (barring the unforeseen) we have to trust those we interact with to persist with us until we finish doing what we are doing. Of course when an interaction is personal there is normally more at stake since the betrayal of personal trust inflicts more damage to the betrayed party. This is actual damage since part of his intentional life will have been rendered unsatisfied and, at least for the present, unsatisfiable. That is why when one partner breaks trust the other typically feels "crushed," "let

down," "brought low," "depressed" and "deflated," all these terms recording an active awareness of being diminished in the range of movement characterized by one's resolve.

With so much at stake we learn to be careful about trusting people. We ponder whether we know somebody well enough to vouch for his stability and we reflect on previous interactions to consider whether they all manifest his good will toward us. But our risk assessment depends on something else too. It depends on whether we have to allow for the fact that someday he might *have* to exploit us for the sake of his own greatest self-actualization.

Imagine a situation where Jones, Smith's long-time friend, asks Smith for a large un-secured loan to help him build a retirement home in a far-away country with no extradition treaties. Smith has known Jones long enough to be confident that he bears him good will and sincerely intends to pay him back. But would it be reasonable for Smith to trust that Jones will always remain loyal?

If Smith cannot assume that moral integrity is possible for Jones – whether because the idea just doesn't make sense to him or because he thinks it's a wistful conceit – then he has to allow for the possibility that someday Jones, in order to sustain his own greatest intentional satisfaction, may *have* to be disloyal. Even if Jones has been a faithful friend for years, not only does that not guarantee he won't have to betray Smith someday, it isn't even a very strong reason for believing that he won't. It being a natural obligation for any multi-intentioned agent to project his action in the most intention-satisfying way, no personal obligation could conceivably stand in his way if Jones found it expedient to renege on the loan and turn their relationship unhealthy. And if that happened, Smith could hardly blame him. As a self-actualizing character of resolve himself, he knows he would do the same or more if his greatest intentional satisfaction required it.

But if Smith was confident in the ever-present possibility of Jones's moral integrity, confident that Jones's path to greatest self-actualization could never require him to turn his relationship with Smith unhealthy, the basis for trust would be enhanced. The risk

does not entirely dissipate since it is always possible for Jones to fail to grasp his best interests and betray Smith out of bad judgment. But Smith can be confident that Jones will never *have* to do so in order to achieve the most satisfying resolution for his intentional life. If moral integrity is every person's narrative possibility then treachery can never determine his most satisfying course.

The second way a loss of belief in moral integrity would diminish us personally has to do with the way we use a person's name. To be addressed by name, even impersonally, is to be initiated into an interaction. ("Listen to me, Jay! "The doctor will see you now, Kay." "Take a seat, Bea." "Hey, You, get off my lawn.") It is to be invited to move in some course of action the addresser has in mind (like lending an attentive ear, taking a seat, rising and following, or fleeing never to return).

When an interaction is impersonal (like the examples here), it engages the parties in a discrete and immediate undertaking but presumably nothing more. When it is personal, it represents two courses of resolve engaging one another.

Consider, in this frame of reference, how the possibility of personal integrity affects the way we initiate personal interactions. According to the monotheistic construction of personhood, every person has the capacity (which is to say the narrative capacity) to lead a life of wholeness and relational health. That means that for every person there is a character of resolve, distinctively hers, wherein this holy/whole/interactively healthy life could be actualized thereby constituting her greatest self-actualization. Accordingly, when a believer in moral integrity addresses another person by name he addresses him not only as a story that patches together his compromised life but as a distinctive character of moral integrity that also signifies his present possibility.

This duplexity in what a personal name names has been made explicit in various ways throughout the reign of biblical monotheism. We hear it in the second names of characters called by God for a particular task (Abram/Abraham, Simon/Peter), in the "Christian" name people are baptized with when it reflects a saintly life, a

Storied character perhaps or a peculiar virtue of faith. We hear it in the Pauline and Augustinian descriptions of our present being as *simul justus et peccator*.

This evocation of a person's possible integrity, which rings in the addressing of another by name, falls away when one becomes skeptical about moral integrity. Then one neither hears nor gives voice to any summons to actualize some more momentous present possibility. To put it in Luther's terms, being "called" by name can no longer mean being summoned to a "vocation."

Many today would insist that this ship has already sailed, that whatever historical grounding this practice may have had, it has been largely abandoned. But I would contend that the evocative force of calling another by his personal name is by no means dead in present-day sensibilities. We "appeal" to one another in a special, moral way when we appeal by name. Think of all the people who report that Mom always called them by their nicknames except when they were in trouble. They heard a summons to moral behavior loud and clear.

Finally, without belief in moral integrity the historical significance of what a person does would be systematically diminished. We have hinted at how personal partnerships represent the character of one person's resolve inflecting another's movements interactively. This of course can be for good or ill; the inflection can enhance or deplete the other's success. But there is another dimension in which the character of somebody's resolve actualizes moments of intentional satisfaction beyond itself and that is in the lives of successors who have found their narrative capacities enhanced because of what they did. When people say that the legacy of Martin Luther King "lives on" they are saying that his resolve continues to characterize some of what people do now. King doesn't just "live on in their memories." His resolve continues to coordinate their movement, their way of doing things, in certain venues. That is why celebrants of his life memorialize him by doing something King-like on MLK Day. King's life (i.e., King) can thus be said to have personal historical importance according to how his

character of resolve inflects the character of our contemporaries' actions for their good.

One thing more needs to be noted about the meaning King's action had for him. Because it was predicated on the telling of a Story it was predicated on the possibility of moral integrity. King's shorthand version of that divine Story of achieving moral integrity was that "the arc of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice." We should not lose sight of the fact that the accomplishment of that "bending toward justice" puts King's work and the work of people who work in his name into the context of a transcendent accomplishment of moral integrity, what monotheism recognizes as a divine accomplishment, the accomplishment the Character of Resolve they call "God." Without being able to frame their life by that agenda, human lives can find historical import only on a more modest and mundane scale. Lacking in the ultimate significance of the arc-bending accomplishment King had in mind, they could not dwell its transcending moment. Thus, for want of this blessing they are diminished.

I have been arguing that people naturally strive to self-identify as an individual character of resolve, i.e., as a person, because that is the most effective way to self-actualize for any multi-intentioned agent. Whether integrating one's life in the most intention-satisfying way always takes a healthy turn with others is a matter we can judge for ourselves. Furthermore, I have tried to show that it is important to do so: if we determine that moral integrity is possible we can trust one another more completely, be morally evocative in addressing one another by name, and take comfort in an ultimate significance for at least some of what we do.

PAGES MISSING

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