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Philosophical Reflections

The Problem of Temporality in the Literary Framework of Nicholas of Cusa's *De pace fidei*

Jason Aleksander[1]

Abstract: This paper explores Nicholas of Cusa's framing of the *De pace fidei* as a dialogue taking place *in caelo rationis*. On the one hand, this framing allows Nicholas of Cusa to argue that all religious rites presuppose the truth of a single, unified faith and so temporally manifest divine logos in a way accommodated to the historically unique conventions of different political communities. On the other hand, at the end of the *De pace fidei*, the interlocutors in the heavenly dialogue are enjoined to return to earth and lead their countrymen in a gradual conversion to the acceptance of rites which would explicitly acknowledge the metaphysically presupposed transcendent unity of all true faiths. In light of these two aspects of the literary framing of the *De pace fidei*, the question that motivates this paper concerns the extent to which the understanding of history subtending Cusanus' temporal political aims is consistent with the understanding of history grounded in his metaphysical presupposition that there is *una religio in omni diversitate rituum*. In addressing this question, I shall argue that the literary strategy of the *De pace fidei* sacrifices Nicholas of Cusa's apologetic doctrinal aims insofar as the text creates an allegorical space in which the tension between its literal and figurative dimensions assigns to its readers the task of choosing their own orientations to the significance of history as a foundation for future action.

Keywords: Nicholas of Cusa, Cusanus, *De pace fidei*, interreligious dialogue, religious diversity

Nicholas of Cusa's explicit aim in the *De pace fidei* is to argue for the thesis that, by means of interreligious dialogue, "a single easy harmony could be found and through it a lasting peace established by appropriate and true means" between the diverse religions of the world.[2] However, the "appropriate and true means"

[1] The author would like to thank Donald Duclow, Michael Bathgate, and Thomas Thorp for their helpful input on this paper.

[2] § 1.1. Unless otherwise noted, all translations of the *De pace fidei* are from the text provided in Biechler and Bond 1990. Latin references are to *Nicolai de Cusa Opera omnia iussu et auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Heigelbergensis ad codicum fidem edita* as reproduced by the Cusanus Portal of the Institute for Cusanus Research at the University of Trier (http://www.cusanus-portal.de/). Chapter and section references for all works follow those of the *Opera omnia*. In this case, Biechler and Bond's translation is derived from the last two clauses of the following sentence: *Accidit ut post dies aliquot, forte ex diuturna continuata mediatione, visio quaedam eidem zeloso manifestaretur, ex qua elicuit quod paucorum*

that Nicholas has in mind seem to be qualified by his explicit admission that only those who are "vigorous in intellect" would be able to understand that "there is one religion and worship, which is presupposed in all the diversity of rites." (§ 6.16)[3] Therefore, Nicholas also seems to admit that the "single easy harmony" can be achieved only under the condition that there are, among the diverse religions of the world, enlightened rulers or prophets who recognize, encourage, and participate in dialogue. And, moreover, it would only be under the peaceful conditions established by these enlightened rulers and prophets that there would also be good reason for the hope that reason might (eventually) win out such that "all diversity of religions will be led to one orthodox faith." (§ 3.8)[4]

Despite the fact that Nicholas explicitly articulates these qualifications regarding the potential practical benefits of interreligious dialogue, a good deal of recent attention on the *De pace fidei* nevertheless focuses either on assessing Nicholas' understanding of the practicality of achieving peace through an appeal to the fundamental unity of faith underlying all religions or on the coherence between his apparent ecumenism and the text's apologetic ambitions on behalf of Christian theology.[5] Taken in aggregate, then, it would be fair to say that these recent studies tend to be focused on the ramifications of Nicholas' explicit attempts to reconcile his own presuppositions that, on the one hand, all temporal religious rites are equally accurate (or equally inaccurate) manifestations of the one true faith underlying them all and his insistence that, on the other hand, some specific rites – e.g., baptism and communion – are so intimately associated with the one transcendently unified faith that these specific rites are not merely optional but are, rather, required for entrance into the one true faith.

Consequently, the manuductive process by which the representatives of other communities (especially those representing Islam and Judaism) are led to agreement with the Word and its apostolic representatives provokes suspicion. For instance, even leaving aside Nicholas' record as a papal legate,[6] it is difficult to square Nicholas' apparent ecumenism with the fact that the imagined discourse of the *De pace fidei* denies the representative of Judaism the one thing that every other participant achieves. For, when the Jewish interlocutor is depicted as reluctant to acknowledge and accept the mystery of Incarnation, the

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sapientum omnium talium ediversitatum quae in religionibus per orbem observantur peritia pollentium unam posse facilem quondam concordantiam reperiri, ac per eam in religione perpetuam pacem convenienti ac veraci medio constitui.

[3] *Una est igitur religio et cultus omnium intellectu vigentium, quae in omni diversitate rituum praesupponitur*.

[4] *…perducetur omnis religionum diversitas in unam fidem orthodoxam*. In relation to the rhetorical strategies of the *De pace fidei* and other works, see especially the discussions of Nicholas' reliance on a conception of the ecumenical methods of "manuduction" (leading by the hand) and *interpretatio pia* in Biechler 1991, Biechler 2004, and Bakos 2011.

[5] See, for instance, Bakos 2011, Costigliolo 2012, Euler 1990, Helander 1993, and Levy et al. 2014.

[6] For a discussion of Nicholas' legatine decrees against Jews, see Izbicki 2004.

Persian points out that "it will be more difficult to bring the Jews than others to this belief for they admit nothing expressly about Christ." Even more telling, to this remark, Peter simply responds:

> [T]hey have all these things in their scriptures about Christ; but following the literal sense they [refuse] to understand (*intelligere nolunt*). Nevertheless, this resistance of the Jews will not impede concord. For they are few and will not be able by arms to disturb the whole world. (§ 12.41, my emendation)[7]

Indeed, it is precisely problematic passages such as this that make the dialogue seem so relevant to contemporary interests in the possibilities for and obstacles to interreligious dialogue. Therefore, even though Nicholas' own reflections on the potential practical efficacy of interreligious dialogue for bringing about peace are explicitly qualified in the ways I have identified above, I do believe that the recent scholarly attention on these troubling dimensions of the dialogue is merited. Nevertheless, attending to the qualifications that Nicholas offers in his own text suggests that there are other avenues that are worth exploring in the study of the *De pace fidei*.

To be specific, in this essay, I do not intend to focus on either the extrinsic arguments of the *De pace fidei*, nor even why I think a reasonable person can only conclude that Nicholas' insistence – assuming that it is even correct to interpret him as insisting on this – that peace can be achieved through a kind of manuductive interreligious dialogue modeled on the *De pace fidei* should provoke suspicion. Instead, I intend to call attention to the philosophical significance of the literary framework of the dialogue. That is, rather than treat the text as if its most important philosophical insights can be located in its recommendations for producing peace between religions in the temporal world or in its apologetic intentions on behalf of Christian theology, I intend to focus on the philosophical significance of Nicholas' literary framework – a framework that itself seems to presuppose only that "faith" is the product of a tension between the extrinsic meaning of revealed doctrine(s) and the human being's imaginative capacity to unfold meaning from mere doctrine.

In this vein, it is important to note at the outset that the opening sentences of Nicholas of Cusa's *De pace fidei* frame the entire text by indicating that it was occasioned by a particular event in human history, the fall of Constantinople in 1453:

> After the brutal deeds recently committed by the Turkish ruler at Constantinople were reported to a certain man, who had once seen the sites of

[7] *PERSA: "…Erit tamen difficilius Iudaeos ad huius credulitatem conducere quam alios, quoniam ipsi de Christo nihil per expressum admittunt." PETRUS: "Habent in suis scripturis de Christo illa omnia; sed litteralem sensum sequentes intelligere nolunt. Haec tamen Iudaeorum resistentia non impediet concordiam. Pauci enum sunt et turbare universum mundum armis non poterunt."* It is in light of this comment in particular that I have argued in other contexts (Aikin and Aleksander 2013 and Aleksander 2014) that Nicholas' anti-Jewish sentiments constitute a betrayal of his own apologetic strategy in the *De pace fidei*.

> those regions, he was inflamed by a zeal for God; with many sighs he implored the Creator of all things that in his mercy he restrain the persecution, raging more than ever because of different religious rites. (§ 1.1)[8]

Yet while the reader of the *De pace fidei* is initially encouraged to think of the work as a response to that specific historical event, Nicholas quickly moves on to reframe the rest of the dialogue by taking it out of the temporal realm altogether. Immediately following the lamentation we have just read, Nicholas begins to construct a literary space in which he offers an imagined discussion that takes place at an "intellectual height" (*intellectualem altitudinem*, § 1.2) – or, as he puts it later, in "the heaven of reason" (*in caelo rationis*, § 19.68) – between the Incarnate Word (Verbum / *Logos*[9]) or Peter or Paul and seventeen (identified) "eminent men of this world" (*viri graviores mundi huius*, § 3.9) representing diverse provincial customs. In all, the seventeen representatives with speaking parts include: a Greek, an Italian, an Arab, an Indian, a Chaldean, a Jew, a Scythian, a Frenchman, a Persian, a Syrian, a Spaniard, a German, a Tartar, an Armenian, a Bohemian, an Englishman, and, although he is only given one sentence in the entire *De pace fidei*, a Turk (see § 4.47). Moreover, just as the opening of the dialogue emphasizes this literary framework, so, too, does the abrupt ending to the dialogue; for, at the end of the dialogue, these seventeen representatives of the world's diverse religions are commanded by the King of kings to return to the temporal world "and lead the nations to the unity of true worship" and to "come together in Jerusalem as to a common center and accept one faith in the name of all." (§ 19.68)[10]

To see why this literary framing of the *De pace fidei* is worth our attention, let me begin, then, with a few questions to help highlight its peculiarity. In the first place, I think we should wonder: to what point or points in history are these interlocutors commanded to return at the end of the dialogue? While the text is clear enough about the *geographic* locations from which each interlocutor is drawn and to which each is therefore returned, the question of the *historical* periods from whence they come is curiously and conspicuously ambiguous. Indeed, the first human interlocutor identified in the *De pace fidei* is described as

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[8] *Fuit ex hiis, quae apud Constantinopolim proxime saevissime acta per Turkorum regem divulgabantur, quidam vir zelo Dei accensus, qui loca illarum regionum aliquando viderat, ut pluribus gemitibus oraret omnium creatorem quod persecutionem, quae ob diversum ritum religionum plus solito saevit, sua pietate moderaretur*.

[9] In *De pace fidei*, Nicholas typically signifies Christ with *Verbum*. But in § 10.27, for instance, Nicholas makes explicit the notion that, in this sense, *Verbum* should be understood as identical to *Logos*: "Reason, which is the *Logos* or Word, emanates from that which speaks it so that when the Omnipotent speaks the Word, those things which are enfolded in the Word are made in reality…" (*ratio autem quae <logos> seo verbum, a proferente emanate ut, cum Omnipotens Verbum profert, facta sint ea in re quae in Verbo complicantur*).

[10] *Et mandatum est per Regem regum ut sapientes redeant et ad unitatem veri cultus nationes inducant… et deinde cum plena omnium potestate in Iherusalem quasi ad centrum commune confluent et omnium nominicus unam fidem acceptant.*

being "older than the others and apparently a Greek" (*prae ceteris senior et, ut apparuit, Graecus*, § 4.10). Is it not tempting to assume that this Greek is raptured from ancient Athens, led to the conclusion that wisdom is one and whole, and then returned, not to Constantinople of 1453, but to the Athens of some ancient past? In fact, if the reference to Eusebius near the end of the dialogue (§ 19.68) can be taken as any indication, perhaps we are even encouraged to imagine – almost as if in a science fiction movie involving some form of time travel – that what *was* responsible for the historical introduction of a *prisca theologica* in ancient Orphic and Platonic sources – i.e., of a *preperatio evangelica* – *is* this very conversation that is occasioned by the response of the King of kings to the lamentations of both Nicholas of Cusa himself in 1453 as well as those expressed by the archangel whom Nicholas' pilgrim saw in a vision occasioned by his zealous meditation – and, perhaps occasioned, too, by our own lamentations today (and those of indefinitely many who are still to come in this world). In other words, the ambiguity of the historical origins of the text's interlocutors suggest that it should be possible to imagine them to be representatives from various diverse times and places such that they are as equally likely to include a Jewish representative from Jerusalem of either 70 CE or 1453 CE (when, as Nicholas' depiction of Peter would have it, "Jews [were] few and unable to trouble the world by force of arms") as an Arab (whether Christian or Muslim) from Gaza of 2014.

But, especially since this reading does seem to treat the *De pace fidei* as a science fiction novel, I feel that I owe a justification that can establish that I am not practicing a form of interpretive alchemy. It is therefore worth reflecting on the first three chapters of the dialogue in a little more detail. As I have already noted, the *De pace fidei* begins by describing a man who, having heard reports of the fall of Constantinople, beseeches God to intervene in the conflict. We are told that this man, over the course of prolonged meditation, came to recognize that, by attending to what is held in common by the wise men who exemplify devotion to the rites of specific communities, an underlying harmony can be found through which can be made possible a perpetual peace in the temporal world. Thus, the narrator says that he decided to set down the vision that led to this conclusion so that this insight could be shared with others.

It is here that Nicholas indicates that his pilgrim had been taken up to an intellectual height where he witnessed a conversation between the King of heaven and earth and angelic messengers bearing laments from every part of the world before the full assembly of saints. Perhaps we are also encouraged to think that the pilgrim who was carried up to this heaven was even included as a participant in the dialogue, for, like the pilgrim himself, the other participants in the dialogue are described as existing in this heaven *quasi in extasim rapti* – that is, *as if* raptured into ecstasy (§ 3.9). In any case, as I have already suggested, the identification of distinct geographical locations might also function as temporal markers in the literary framework of the *De pace fidei*. Accordingly, it seems

tempting to suppose that the angels, at this juncture in the text, are delivering laments from *various* specific places *and* times in the world to a heavenly court in which the conversation must unfold through an *intemporale tempus* – to borrow an expression that Nicholas frequently uses in his later work, the *De aequalitate* of 1459.

There are several points that compel this interpretation. First, it seems safe to assume that the fact that the angels deliver their laments before the full assembly of saints acknowledges that this heaven of reason is one that enfolds within itself the completion or fulfillment of the temporal world (I will offer a justification for this point below). Second, we are told that these angels – or intellectual powers – had been established by the King of the universe *from the beginning* over each of the worldly provinces and over each of the religious sects. Third, when we turn to the supplication of the archangel, Nicholas seems to be suggesting that the lament that is offered for the fall of Constantinople can be treated as a single specific expression of the same generic lament for human fallenness that the archangel offers, for the archangel does not refer to the specific event of the fall of Constantinople – or to any specific event – but instead points out that "it is a characteristic of the earthly human condition that a longstanding custom which is taken as having become nature is defended as truth. Thus not insignificant dissensions occur when each community prefers its faith to another." (§ 1.4)[11] Moreover, the King of heaven's response to this lamentation is similarly generalizable rather than tied in any specific way to the events of 1453. In fact, the reply is brief as well as general; the King of kings simply reminds the heavenly company that because human beings "walk in accordance with the conditions of the sensible life… and not in accordance with the intellectual inner man" (§ 2.7)[12] it was necessary to provide prophets to help rectify human will but that, when these failed, it was also necessary to send into the world the Word through which he had also created the world. This Word, we are told, was "clothed with humanity so that at least in this way he might illuminate the docile man having a most free choice and so that he might see that he should walk not according to the outward man but according to the inner man." (§ 2.7)[13]

[11] *Habet autem hoc humana terrena condicio quod longa consuetudo, quae in naturam transisse accipitur, pro veritate defenditur. Sic eveniunt non parvae dissensiones, quando quaelibet communitas suam fidem alteri praefert.*

[12] *Ambulans secundum condiciones vitae sensibilis… et non secundum intellectualem interiorem hominem.*

[13] *Quod induit humanitate, ut sic saltem hominem docilem liberrimi arbitrii illuminaret, et videret non secundum exteriorem sed interiorem hominem ambulandum, si aliquando reverti speraret ad immortalis vitae dulcedinem.* Strangely, this doesn't answer the archangel's request for clarification about why human beings are misled. Recall that the archangel has pointed out that human beings are misled by taking mere signs of the truth for the real thing. The King of heaven's response is that he sent prophets and the Incarnate Word to rectify this failure. But of course, this is somewhat circular since it is only by mistaking belief in the mere extrinsic

In light of these observations, the explicit temporal markers in the dialogue should rightly seem more puzzling than they might otherwise. From the reader's perspective, God's response to the lamentation seems to stand at the present moment looking back upon the past and in preparation for the unfolding of a future. But, as I have already noted, there does not seem to be any compelling reason to assume that it is, in fact, 1453 in the dialogue's imagined discourse in the heaven of reason. Or, rather, perhaps it is more accurate to say that it would not seem to violate the spirit of the text to allow that it might be, simultaneously, 399 BCE, 1453 CE, *and* 2014 CE in the heaven of reason. Indeed, since the temporal world is, for Nicholas, the image of the eternal, and since all things, both temporal and eternal, are enfolded *in* and unfolded *through* the Incarnate Word, each place and event in the temporal world is present in the eternal from which it is unfolded. Hence the past, present, and future are images through which the Word manifests itself to the human intellect – they are, as Nicholas puts it in the *De ludo globi*, measuring instruments created by the rational soul for the purposes of describing and understanding the world.[14] But that these events unfold through the immutable divine intellect and can each also be measured by an *arche* and an *eschaton* of their own unique unfoldings is emphasized by the King of king's final response to the archangel's lament: "Since these things have been done, what is it that could have been done and was not?" (§ 2.7)

In other words, unless we imagine that the answer to the King of king's apparently rhetorical question is that something else should have been done that was not done, then we are led, I think, to the conclusion that the dialogue that subsequently transpires between the Word and the raptured representatives of specific communities is offered as an imagined conversation between representatives of *both* different regions and times in whom a single wisdom is contracted and hidden from view by the very diversity of rites that distinguish them *as* representatives of these different times and places. If so, however, then far from suggesting that this interreligious dialogue in the heaven of reason will help resolve the specific crisis of 1453, the *De pace fidei* occasions mainly the recognition that the distortion of human will that occurs when longstanding custom is taken as having become nature and is defended as truth is a pervasive, probably ineliminable feature of human existence, for it is through signs that we identify meaning, but it is also our attachment to these signs that distorts our will in making use of the meanings that we find.

The forgoing literary analysis ought to be enough to raise the question about the philosophical significance of the literary framework of the *De pace*

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signs of the one true faith as faith itself that people seem to go wrong, so how is it that supplying prophets is supposed to prevent this from happening?

[14] See especially *De ludo globi* II, § 94. For a discussion of the *De ludo globi*'s philosophy of time, see Duclow and Wikström 2011 and Duclow's forthcoming "Tempus – Aeternitas – Perpetuum 'Eternal Time': Nicholas of Cusa on World, Time and Eternity."

fidei. However, before I offer my own conclusion about the possible philosophical ramifications of this analysis, I would like to offer a caveat of sorts. I hope I have not given the impression that I believe Nicholas was not deeply troubled by the events of 1453. And I certainly do not intend to argue that the literary aspects of the *De pace fidei* indicate that Nicholas was entirely unconcerned with practical questions about how to bring about peace between parties thrown into conflicts with each other that are occasioned by or, at least, catalyzed by each party's investment in its own unique rites and beliefs. In fact, I happen to believe that Nicholas *did* intend for the *De pace fidei* to persuade its Christian readers to take a more moderate tone and different approach to the problem raised by what most of his European contemporaries regarded as a grave threat to their particular way of life. We have, for instance, the evidence of Nicholas' epistolary communication with Juan de Segovia in which it seems fairly clear that Nicholas did believe that a method of manuduction could serve as a *practical* and *expedient* means of achieving peace – even though we must acknowledge, I think, that Nicholas in no way suggests that the specific methods one should employ ought to be modeled on the conversation that is depicted in the *De pace fidei*.[15]

Nevertheless, I think I have made a case for the claim that the question of how to create and sustain interreligious dialogue is not, after all, the most philosophically significant question raised by the *De pace fidei.* Indeed, even were I to grant that Nicholas *did* intend a practical political outcome in writing the *De pace fidei*, it seems to me that any such intention is constantly subverted by the ambiguities and paradoxes introduced by the literary framework in which the text offers itself for interpretation. In short, even if these literary puzzles do not undermine one's confidence in overt claims of the text about the practical efficacy of interreligious dialogue, they do, I contend, make possible a different kind of practical outcome – one that is more fundamental to Nicholas' philosophy and theology than even the concern for temporal peace. This other practical aim, I would argue, is to accomplish the activation of human will by placing the reader's intellect in a state of suspension. By abducting the reader from a state of present belief and carrying the reader as a fellow pilgrim into an allegorical space in which there is a tension between the literal and figurative dimensions of

[15] In response to a letter from Juan de Segovia in 1454 laying out both *practical* and theological reasons why dialogue rather than force would be the most effective way of dealing with the reality of contemporary conflicts with Muslims (especially Turks), Nicholas replied telling his interlocutor about his own *De pace fidei*, and, as James Biechler has pointed out, also offered "enthusiastic support" and suggested "a practical addition to Segovia's proposal" that recommended that the Christian side of any interreligious conferences "be placed in the hands of influential laymen rather than priests because, he said, the Turks would prefer these." (Biechler 1991, p. 200) Excerpts from Juan de Segovia's letter and Nicholas' full response can be found in *De pace fidei cum epistula ad Ioannem de Segobia*, vol. 7 of the *Opera omnia* of Nicholas of Cusa. For a summary of the chapter headings of his letter to Nicholas of Cusa, see also Housley 1996, 144-47. For further discussion of Juan de Segovia's part in this, see Wolf 2014.

the text, Nicholas renders the reader's intellect over to the need to *choose* a future direction for its attention. In this respect, the imaginative space of the *De pace fidei* converts mere belief in doctrine – nothing but a present and contracted manifestation of truth – into an active *experience* as an occasion for the exercise of free choice.[16] Or, put differently, the imaginative space of the *De pace fidei* sacrifices the certainty of revealed doctrines in order to make possible a turning – a conversion – of will and intellect together toward a faith that might best be described as a variety of learned ignorance. Indeed, it is in this respect that Nicholas' text might be better understood as offering a rich philosophical reason for its readers to be modest and moderate in their ecumenical ambitions, for the text does not so much give us a model for how to have conversations with others as it does offer us a reason to be wary of the veracity of our own doctrines (and so, too, to be wary of the text's own apologetic bent). Thus an interpretation of the *intemporale tempus* in which the conversation of the *De pace fidei* is imagined to occur gives an occasion for its readers to practice the kind of self-mastery that is recommended in one of Nicholas' earlier works, *De filiatione Dei* (1445) – and so I will close with this quotation from that work:

> We who aspire unto being God's sons are admonished not to cling to sensible objects, which are symbolic signs of the true, but rather, because of our infirmity, to use these objects – without any polluting adherence thereto – in the following manner: as if through them the Teacher-of-truth were speaking to us and as if they were books containing the expression of His mind. And, in that case, we will contemplate intellectual things in and through sensible things; and we will ascend [contemplatively], by means of a certain disproportional parallelism, from transitory and insubstantial temporal things, whose being is in constant flux, unto eternal things, where all succession is caught up into the abiding permanency of rest. And we will have leisure for the contemplation of that true, just, and joyous life. We will be free from all pollution (which draws us downward), so that with ardent desire for learning more of God, and being free from this world, we can enter into that life by attaining mastery.[17]

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[16] Indeed, although it does not mitigate Nicholas' anti-Judaism, it does explain the presence of the "villain" in the text – the Jew, Peter says, refuses to give up the literal meaning (see § 15.53). Thus, the figure of the Jew within the *De pace fidei* refuses to practice the right form of reading and therefore mimics the fall of man by relinquishing the opportunity to exercise free will in response to the interpretive demands required for faith. (Ironically, Nicholas adduces from his own characterization of Jewish stubbornness – evinced, one supposes, by reports of Jewish acts of *Kiddush HaShem* – the conclusion that Jews at least implicitly believe in the possibility of individual immortality.)

[17] *Admonemur nos, qui ad filiationem dei aspiramus, non inhaerere sensibilibus, quae sunt aenigmatica signa veri, sed ipsis ob infirmitatem nostram absque adhaesione coinquinationis ita uti, quasi per ipsa nobis loquatur magister veritatis et libri sint mentis eius expressionem continentes. Et tunc in sensibilibus contemplabimur intellectualia et ascendemus quadam improportionali comparatione de transitoriis et fluidis temporalibus, quorum esse est in instabili fluxu, ad aeterna, ubi rapta est omnis successio in fixam quietis permanentiam, et vacabimus circa speculationem verae, iustae et gaudiosae vitae separantes nos ab omni inquinamento deorsum se trahente, ut possimus cum ardenti desiderio studii circa ipsum eam ipsam vitam*

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Equality, Fairness, and Responsibility in an Unequal World

Thom Brooks

Abstract: Severe poverty is a major global problem about risk and inequality. What, if any, is the relationship between equality, fairness and responsibility in an unequal world? I argue for four conclusions. The first is the moral urgency of severe poverty. We have too many global neighbours that exist in a state of emergency and whose suffering is intolerable. The second is that severe poverty is a problem concerning global injustice that is relevant, but not restricted, to questions about responsibility. If none were responsible, this does not eliminate all compelling claims to provide assistance. The third is that severe poverty represents an inequality too far; it is a condition of extremity with denial of basic needs. The fourth is that there is a need for an approach that captures all relevant cases – and the capabilities approach and the connection theory of remedial responsibilities are highlighted as having special promise.

Keywords: equality, fairness, global justice, responsibility, severe poverty

1. Introduction

Inequality is found in several different varieties. Each has significance although not always a case of injustice. It is not an injustice that we are unequal in our abilities to entertain or solve complex scientific puzzles, but there may be injustice where the lack of such abilities brings starvation or worse. Severe poverty is a variety of inequality that represents injustice. Fellow human beings that suffer in this condition exist in a state of emergency. The statistics are alarming in their scale and they call for action. About half the world's population lives in conditions of severe poverty. The World Bank estimates that 46% of humanity subsist on less than about $2 per day. Those below this threshold fall almost 45% beneath it. Severe poverty exposes people to major risks to their future health and livelihoods: for example, one-third of all human deaths have poverty-related causes, or about 50,000 people each day including 34,000 children under the age of five (see Pogge 2002, 2; Pogge 2007, 2). Severe poverty is a major global problem about risk and inequality.

Of course, the considerations raised here have an international dimension rather than a domestic focus. What, if any, is the relationship between equality, fairness and responsibility in an unequal world? These issues are complex and I cannot do full justice to illuminating all of the important relevant considerations.

Nevertheless, I will draw attention to some remarks about this subject that interest me and I hope help contribute to wider discussions on this topic.

2. Negative Duties and Severe Poverty

One popular view is that 'we' (or 'we, the citizens of affluent democratic societies') have a negative duty to end severe poverty. The view claims that severe poverty is a grave wrong for which we are responsible. This position is exemplified in the writings of Thomas Pogge. He argues that affluent societies knowingly, foreseeably, and avoidably maintain a global order that perpetuates severe poverty through protectionism and international monetary bodies like the IMF and World Bank (Pogge 2002). Affluent societies dictate the terms on which societies with severe poverty must often accept. We, the citizens of affluent democratic societies, share responsibility for this global state of affairs because we elect leaders who choose to maintain this global order. One conclusion is that voters should more actively support candidates who endorse a less exploitative international system.

A second conclusion of greater concern for me here is that we have responsibility for the maintenance of severe poverty elsewhere. The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* states that:

> Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care... Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized (*UDHR*, Articles 25 and 28).

A global order that perpetuates severe poverty might represent a breach of human rights; it would deny the right to an adequate standard of living on any measure and prevent individuals from satisfying their most basic needs.

This view has attracted widespread support, but it has received criticisms as well. Many colleagues, and perhaps most of my students, accept the need for action in ending severe poverty while rejecting the argument that they share some significant responsibility for the continued existence of severe poverty found today. I note this reservation but without an interest in taking sides.

The argument about any negative duties to others in severe poverty captures something compelling about responsibility for global inequalities. If we were responsible for the creation of severe poverty elsewhere, then this provides a strong reason for us to end our responsibility and end severe poverty if we are able. So the issue is not about whether we should end severe poverty if we are responsible for it, but rather whether we are sufficiently responsible for severe poverty.

3. Positive Duties and Severe Poverty

This leads us to a further consideration: should we have a duty to end severe poverty if we were not responsible? If so, then we might be able to sidestep the issue of our responsibility. The classic argument for this view is expressed by Peter Singer in his famous essay 'Famine, Affluence, and Morality' (1972). His argumentative strategy is familiar to most academic philosophers: the use of a hypothetical situation meant to confirm intuitive evidence in favour of a specific view about justice. Singer asks us to imagine that we find a child drowning in a shallow pond. Rescuing the child will require our getting wet, perhaps damaging our clothing, and possible inconvenience. Singer believes our intuitions confirm that we should rescue the child in this case. This view is encapsulated in what we might call 'the assistance principle':

> if it is in our power to prevent something bad from happening, without thereby sacrificing anything of comparable moral importance, we ought, morally, to do it (Singer 1972, 388).

The assistance principle focuses on relative moral weights. We weigh the moral costs to ourselves if we do act against the moral costs to the child if we did not act. Singer argues that the moral costs to the child are higher if we did not act – and this measurement supports our saving the child. Note that we should save the drowning child notwithstanding how the child came to start drowning: we should rescue the child regardless of the circumstances leading to this need for rescue. This is often characterized as our having a positive duty to rescue. We rescue where we can and irrespective of whether we are responsible for the situation of need.

Singer's example is meant to confirm something important about justice and any duties to assist others, namely, the general irrelevance of desert, identity, and distance. This is not a claim about their complete irrelevance, but something else. It may be relevant that you are far from me, but only where distance forbids me an opportunity to provide some means of rescue. It is not the distance between us that matters *per se*; it is whether there are available opportunities to provide assistance that matters most on this view. Perhaps I bear no responsibility for the severe poverty endured by a stranger in a distant land. If it were possible for me to provide assistance in some form, then I have a positive duty to do so where the moral costs to me in acting are less than the moral costs to others should I fail to act. If the sacrifice of enjoying the purchase of a new electric guitar would provide funds that might save a life elsewhere, then my sacrifice is almost trivial in comparison to the suffering it would help avoid or prevent. If I am able to contribute to severe poverty relief, then it is morally unimportant whether I am responsible for it, who you are, and how far away you live all things considered.

Many students are compelled by this second view about justice. They are convinced that they have some positive duty to save the lives they can if they are

able to do so (see Singer 2009). But this acceptance is far from universal. A repeated concern is that responsibility can matter. Perhaps severe poverty is an unjust condition of inequality that should end. Why should the burdens for this important task rest only on the shoulders of those who grieve at this suffering?

4. Unified Conceptions

Let me briefly summarise the discussion thus far. Severe poverty is a condition of extreme inequality. We have surveyed two opposing views leading to a similar conclusion on different grounds. The first view is that we have a negative duty to end severe poverty because we are responsible in some way for it. The second view argues that we have a positive duty to end severe poverty where the moral cost to ourselves in acting is less than the moral cost to others from our inaction. Both views make the case for ending severe poverty based upon a view about justice although they disagree on how this should be understood. They want us to choose between ending severe poverty because of our moral responsibility or rather in recognition of relative moral costs.

We are not at a crossroads and there is a 'third way'. I now draw attention to two proposals that illuminate how we might address positive and negative duties. The first is the connection theory of remedial responsibility developed by David Miller (2007). The idea of remedial responsibility is simple; its presentation as a connection theory is more complex. Remedial responsibilities are our responsibilities to remedy severe poverty as understood here. Miller understands severe poverty to be a condition of an emergency. The main problem is not to convince ourselves *that* we should act to end severe poverty, but rather *who* should act. He accepts that Pogge and Singer each address important considerations. Miller's concern is that each offers an incomplete account. Thus, perhaps Pogge is correct to claim that there are global institutions responsible for at least some severe poverty today. Miller claims that it remains true that not every case of severe poverty is attributable to these institutions. One example is the tsunami of 2004 estimated to have killed more than 250,000 people in over a dozen countries and trigger a major humanitarian catastrophe. The fact that not all severe poverty is the responsibility of human behaviour does not render its problems less urgent. Responsibility may play an important role although not the only one. Singer may be correct that we should act from a moral duty to do what we can to end severe poverty, but fail to appreciate that our moral duties may be unequal.

Miller argues for a connection theory to help us determine who has responsibilities to remedy those in most need. He provides a useful list of six different connections. These relate to the causal and/or moral responsibility for the situation, whether another polity shares in some form of community with another in need, and whether a polity has the capacity to assist. We consider the relative set of connections polities have to another in need and consider their weight. No connection is claimed to have any special priority over others

although this wrongly assumes we might ever hold a polity remedially responsible to address problems it lacks the capacity to perform (see Brooks 2011 and Brooks 2014). So we must first consider all polities in light of their potential capacity and those that possess this feature are then considered by the strength of any further connections. The fact any polity *may* provide rescue does not require that it *must* do so. Some may have stronger connections to particular cases and, thus, possess greater remedial responsibilities to act. Negative duties, such as the moral responsibility for contributing to severe poverty, and positive duties, such as the moral responsibility to act where possible, both capture something important and best understood in a coherent, unified account such as this.

A second unified proposal is the capabilities approach championed most prominently by Amartya Sen (1999) and Martha Nussbaum (2000, 2011). The capabilities approach is a freedom-based account (Brooks 2012). It addresses the capabilities each individual should possess guaranteed by the state. A capability is the ability to do or be. It is meant to highlight a fundamental distinction concerning freedom and justice. The classic example is the difference between someone fasting and another starving. Their difference is captured by the capability someone fasting has to choose to fast and the starving person's lacking capability to choose this situation. Both may have similar actual functionings – for example, both may not have eaten for the same time period – but only one has choice. Moreover, this is a choice about something fundamental to human flourishing, namely, bodily health. Nussbaum provides us with a list of capabilities, including life, bodily health, bodily integrity, practical reason, and the social bases of self-respect amongst others (see Nussbaum 2000, 78-80; Nussbaum 2011, 33-34). She argues that the state should guarantee some threshold of capability satisfaction for all. Individuals may choose against exercising certain capabilities, but it should remain their right to choose on these matters of fundamental human concern.

The capabilities approach illuminates a different perspective on severe poverty. The latter is problematic for far more reasons than a condition of hunger which the capabilities approach helps clarify. Severe poverty threatens bodily health and even lives, but also denies other essential freedoms such as our abilities to exercise our imagination and control our environment. The pursuit of higher learning has often been closed to those living hand-to-mouth and not because the latter lack intellectual ability; severe poverty damages our lives physically, intellectually, and worse. The capabilities approach helps us better perceive these often overlooked features essential to our satisfactorily addressing this problem.

Furthermore, the capabilities approach speaks to views of both positive and negative duties. It is an injustice where anyone is not guaranteed a life above some social minimum of capability enjoyment. The fact that someone is beneath this threshold is cause enough for action. But there are responsibilities as well,

including those of our political state, to guarantee all lives have access to at least a minimal threshold of capabilities. All severe poverty represents a failure to secure living standards above a satisfactory capability threshold. There is a duty to remove this failure and improve standards. But some may have a greater role to play than others institutionally and perhaps individually. The capabilities approach then can address different kinds of duties from within a unified account of justice.

There is much more that can and should be said about unified accounts provided by Miller, Sen, and Nussbaum (see Brooks 2015). My aim is merely suggestive and to draw attention to how we might bring together positive and negative duties into a single and coherent view of justice. Its attractiveness is the ability to address more cases of severe poverty than if merely supporting one side or the other.

5. Conclusion

So where does this brief discussion leave us? The first is the moral urgency of severe poverty. We have too many global neighbours that exist in a state of emergency and whose suffering is intolerable. The second is that severe poverty is a problem concerning global injustice that is relevant, but not restricted, to questions about responsibility. If none were responsible, this does not eliminate all compelling claims to provide assistance. The third is that severe poverty represents an inequality too far; it is a condition of extremity with denial of basic needs. The fourth is that there is a need for an approach that captures all relevant cases: I have merely suggested that unified accounts – whether a connection theory or the capabilities approach – has special promise.

Whatever else is understood by equality, fairness, and responsibility in global perspective, severe poverty represents an inequality too far and it pushes us to consider fair procedures to determine any responsibilities for each of us to provide remedy. Eradicating severe poverty does not make us angels and it is one of many moral challenges we face together. But it would be a surefooted step in a better direction we should accept.

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Explorations in Humanities

Cognitive and Identitarian Aspects in Jean Rhys' Fiction[1]

Cristina-Georgiana Voicu

Abstract: From *Gnõthi seautón* ('Know Thyself') to cognitive theories of the self there has been a long time, but the paradigm has almost remained the same. This article proposes a reconsideration of their rediscovery filtered through Jean Rhys' post-colonial sensitivity. Between the 'core self' and its iridescent, exotic edges, broadly speaking, the thoroughly analyzed facets of cultural identity interpose.

Keywords: Jean Rhys, self, identity, cultural memory

I

Jean Rhys' fiction seeks to circumscribe to a cultural paradigm that mirrors the search for a cultural identity so specific to postcolonial socio-cultural aspects. The writer is therefore representative for the cultural phenomenon generated by colonialism, and in turn by decolonization. By this writer's work, who emigrated from his native country (Dominica Island, part of Windward Archipelago of Caribbean) towards the former imperial metropolis, the postcolonial literature becomes thus part of the British culture.

Taking into consideration the various cultural locations that inscribe themselves into the postcolonial literary geography, the use of "postcolonial literatures" is more adequate. The topics of Jean Rhys' discourse focuses on the consequences of the colonial experience on the self-consciousness of the colonial society: de-territorializing from an original cultural matrix, marginality, subaltern, disorientation in terms of belonging, identitarian split caused by the existence of two cultures and by the clash reality of intercultural hybridization; the necessity of negotiating an interstitial space of identifying and assuming a hybrid identity. These leading topics for Rhys' discourse are the research framework of the present study.

The core idea is to discuss the way in which the 'Self' and 'Other' interferes and interact in Jean Rhys' fiction. This comes along with the main objective that of highlighting the concepts of cultural identity, de-territorialization and hybridity. Therefore, by applying the theory of cultural hybridization as a

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mirror-space of the identitarian dynamics to Jean Rhys' fiction is an opportunity to demonstrate that postcolonial identity necessarily becomes a hybrid of two cultures, having a destruction through adaptation as its basis, not a total, metaphysical destruction, but a dialectical one (the colonizers destroyed, annihilated but they also retrieved from the ancient culture viable elements, hence the tetrad: take over, adaptation, promotion, development).

Using such hybridity theory as a conceptual framework, the paradigm which reflects the looking for a cultural identity is so specific to postcolonial literature. Jean Rhys carries out an examination of the relationship between hybrid identities, self and otherness and of several situations of existential ambivalence that work on the border between sign (colonial difference) and symbol (imperial authority) thus bringing to the fore issues as cultural hybridization, otherness, racism and colonialism in the context of transcending cultural boundaries. On the one hand, the racial and Creole identities existing within the postcolonial society are identified, being analyzed from an integrated perspective, both textual and cultural, and focusing on the identitarian fabric of the Rhysian text.

On the other hand, hybridity is seen as a metaphor of mixture, by which cultures are presented as if 'flowing' together (in the same way body fluids do), hence the existence of a 'fluid identity.' Recognizing that hybridity (cultural, especially) is paradoxical, in its essence, and that only an ambivalent attitude may comprise its contradictory wholeness led us to emphasize the concepts of racial identity, ethnicity and masculinity and how they contributed to rediscover those aspects specific to the Caribbean culture existing in Jean Rhys' fiction.

The study of identitarian phenomenon is related both to the notion of exteriority (out-thereness) and interiority (in-hereness) of the self in terms of neighborhood identity, detachment, distance, alienation, depersonalization, self-hyperbolization, self-centeredness etc.), concepts which in the case of Jean Rhys manifests itself by characters' refusing to allow the outside world to get close to their self. Focusing on the self and on corporeity by extension is not accidental, our interest being supported both by the capacity of the autobiographic self of revealing itself and especially by imposing a subject that seeks itself and who analyses its anxieties in relation to itself and reality, fully assuming the alterity. Thus, by each cognitive narration, the real self seeks to understand the relationship between being and non-being. Therefore, the use of the personal pronoun in the first person from the Jean Rhys' writings by the homodiegetic through narrative marks the point of articulation between the existing system and the repeatable language and the existence of the self as a unique and unrepeatable person in appropriate social and historical circumstances. In other words, the act of creating itself is not an option but an obligation: we must create ourselves because the self is not given, as Mikhail Bakhtin states that our self "has no alibi in existence." (Bakhtin 1981, 360) Jean Rhys thus lies on the border between cultures and mentalities, synthesizing elements in her creation of two

cultural heritages – original and adopted – so the spiritual elements of East and West merge in the hybrid space of a universal humanism, into a representation of the human condition that transcends the conventional barriers of nationality, race, and ethnicity. For Rhys, the post-imperial period has a double meaning. On the one hand, her characters, regardless of nationality, live the historical experience at the intersection between the colonizer and the colonized, and are often affected by uprooted feelings of social marginality, amid which they try to redefine their identity. From this perspective, we can consider that she shares the theme of de-territorialization (spatial, psychological, social or identitarian) as well as the hybridity specific to the postcolonial self and the human condition in its historical becoming, which justifies the inclusion of her novels to the critical objective of this research.

The idea that, in fact, culture is a postcolonial hybrid is attractive because it derives directly from the concept of de-territorialization, meaning that the more intense traffic between cultures brought by the colonization process suggests that the missing link between culture and place is accompanied by the mixing of the cultural rooted practices, producing new forms of culture, both hybrid and complex. Therefore, we propose the term "de-territorialization" in a broad sense, including to capture what Garcia Canclini called the "loss of the natural relationship" between culture and the geographical and social territories" (Canclini 1995). So, in terms of cultural experience, what becomes important is how this widening of the social relations affects its real place. The familiar nature of cultural backgrounds, including Jean Rhys's characters that normally move, hiddens the influences of social forces and processes. In other words, the protagonists continue to be at 'home,' in which most often the familiar features are not unique only to that place, and they are no part of its organic development, but they are, rather, features that were 'placed in' that place by remote forces. In this regard, the 'dis-location' experience from the postcolonial society is not an experience of alienation, but of cultural identity ambivalence.

On the one hand, hybridity may include a space between two pure areas; on the other hand, it can be understood as a sine-qua-non condition of the human cultures, which do not contain areas of purity, as processes of transculturality constantly take place (mutual cultural borrowings). Moreover, the concept of 'hybrid culture' can be useful to understand the type of the unique cultural identity that emerged within the 'transnational cultural space.' Therefore, Jean Rhys proposes a hybrid analysis seen as a metaphor and in close relation to the cultural changes analysis suggested by de-territorialization, this perspective emphasizing the alienating, individualized and contractual aspect of the 'non-places' in the sense that the French anthropologist Marc Augé described them: "If the place can be defined as relational, historical and concerned with identity, then a space which can not be defined as relational, historical and concerned with identity will be a non-place…" (Augé 1995, 63) Moreover, he

gives the example of the "anthropological place" (a place that provides identity and cultural memory). The concept of de-territorialization, therefore, surprises the novelty of the changing place – both its positive and negative traits – without succumbing to the temptation to interpret it as a simple depletion or dissolution of cultural interaction. In this sense, the inherent ambivalence of de-territorialization deepens, the concept being applied within the 'lived experience' of Jean Rhys' characters.

II

The undertaken analysis combines the perspectives and theoretical categories of the postcolonial and cultural criticism with the hermeneutic approach based on text, which is part of the practical and thematic criticism tradition.

From a general-theoretical perspective, in a concentrically critical step, Rhys aims to demonstrate both the belief in the concept of hybridization as space mirrors of the expression and identity formation, as well as the cultural boundaries variability, the opposition self / otherness, authenticity / fiction, trans-textuality, and the relevance of an integrated approach to multiple cultural identities as an encountering and negotiation space between writer, reader and work.

Using a theoretical approach and a critical summary, combining the perspectives in postcolonial theory, psychoanalysis and narratology with the tools of hermeneutics and deconstruction, we argue that Jean Rhys's work can be subsumed under a poetics of cultural identity and hybridity. Moreover, the complexity of its ontological and epistemological representation involves an interdisciplinary approach that blends a literary interpretive approach to social, anthropological, cultural and historical perspectives.

Hybridity as an identitarian fractality, self-de-territorialization, followed by re-territorialization and metissage, etc) is rather an experience that escapes to incorporation (where the cultural hegemons restructures the subaltern cultures following their own self image).

Jean Rhys pays a special emphasis on the de-territorialization, separation and metamorphosing and creolization, starting from a psychological exploration of the relationship between the identity of the self and the identity of the other, thus the dichotomic relationship between self and alterity being established.

Taking into account the centrality of identity and alterity topic in Jean Rhys' fiction concerned by the complex mechanisms of the cultural identity construction and of the image of the self in all its aspects (national, ethnic, racial and cultural identity), our argument is supported by the psychoanalytical approach. The processes involved in self-becoming and in the self-image are relevant and interpreted with respect to Freud's theories and post-Freudian critics, especially Lacan.

III

The historical dislocation or de-territorialization, followed by re-territorialization generates a consciousness of uprootedness, which the postcolonial text dissects it in all its hypostases: the inadequacy and negation of its own identity; spatial or social alienation; feeling of marginalization; the escapist endeavour of the self to migrate towards the center of the imperial world; geographical dislocation and relocation; the identitarian and cultural disorientation of the immigrant; the feeling of uprootedness and the confusion of 'home;' inter- and intra-cultural conflicts; the conscious of difference and the image of alterity; minority identity; the avatars of the diasporic condition and the difficulty of self-adaptation to the new culture.

The consciousness of identitarian hybridity is cristalized through an exercise of internalizing the relationship between identity and alterity seen as an action to get to and to face the Other or Him/Herself, first on a cultural level, then as a projection at a cognitive level. The space where identities and alterities are born and function is the place where the Other must be seen as a necessary negation of a primary identity – cultural or psychical.

The postcolonial text is thus an approach of a historical and cultural recovering of the self-consciousness of the colonial society, often within the dramatic context of the national liberation movements, of decolonization challenges and self-government, as well as of defining its own identity on the background of a history labeled by the epistemological and cultural hybridizations of the colonialist project. In other words, the experience of postcoloniality places the individual between the reality of a space and of an undesirable identity, often perceived as peripheral and the fantasy of a space and ideal identity imagine and located in the center of the world: the imperial metropolis.

The consciousness of marginality, of the subaltern or of the minority condition is associated with an experience counterbalanced by the utopian image of the imperial center and of the Western civilization. The migration thus becomes a utopia of liberation and of becoming, of identity purification within the ideal space of the European civilization. The avatars of uprootedness become the facets of the same experience of alienation, dominated by the image of a 'home' always situated somewhere else. In Jean Rhys' fiction the aporetic experience of this reality is finally filtrated through the lenses of the self hybridity, of the reconciliation between perfection and imperfection, considered as an essential resort of the individual's becoming.

Taking into account the construction of cultural identity, the status of the self in Jean Rhys' fiction is reconsidered in terms of holism and fragmentarism. In the postcolonial literature, the self implies an individualist structure, pointed by the irreconcilable break towards the Other. Thus, the consciousness of alterity stirs into the self/Rhysian character a feeling of anguish and doubt, hence the necessary self escape and the quartering in a present which can offer only the

illusion of self-recovering. In this way, the fractal self rebuilds the holistic dimension of the existente, integrating its presence into a *constantly* fluid. Thus, the awareness of otherness as difference causes in Jean Rhys's self/character anguish and uncertainty, hence the necessary run itself and dwelling into a present which can only give the illusion of identity recovery. In this respect, the self is less an individual and more a *knot of relationships,* hence the *identitarian fractality.* The relationship between individual and socio-cultural space is thus sketched in its dual, hybrid hypostasis. Also, the self brings into discusión the complementary notion of fragmentarism, seen as a way of ontological structuring: the inherness of the Fracman hus becomes a huge puzzle of fragments imploseively updated, as the ontological detail regresively discovers an Other as complex as the previous one. This hypostasis of the self is found especially in Jean Rhys' fiction, where the narrator-character personajul-narator meditates on the fractal structure of the self and upon its place within the whole fractal system.

The images through which the feeling of de-territorialization and the cultural and identitarian hypostaseis of hybridity in the colonial space are emphasized. Rhys watches the colonial history as an alteration of the colonial subaltern's self-consciousness, described as the victim of several social dislocations. The social alienation of the self is represented as an uncertainty of 'home,' frequently symbolized by the metaphor of home in various hypostases: absence, privation, provisional, or as an ideal place of self-fulfillment.

It is very important to mention that, in Jean Rhys' fiction, the experience and the colonial hystory consequences are explored at the level of defining the self, which tries to go beyong the consciousness of a marginal existence and identity, by the immersion into the imperial culture or the fantasy of migrating towards the metropolis. Besides the endemic feeling of de-territorialization and marginality, the cultural mimesis is considered to be a fundamental agent in forging the self-image/the Creole identity of the colonial subject, frequently leading to extreme phenomena of acculturation or depersonalization.

The migration towards the center of the Western World is seen not only as a false mirage, a new 'shipwreck' of identity and self-consciousness, but also as a challenge by which the individual can discover a balanced space between two cultures, both the original and the metropolis.

On the other hand, the characters of Rhys' novels wear masks, they cannot reach the other, because they are haunted by an ectoplasmic identity. This is due to the permanent struggle that results from the attempt of the being-for-it to become being-in-itself. This shows that these are in fact some diasporic identities that spread from the struggle between the real self and the image imponed by the others.

IV

To conclude, we can say that in the author's fictional universe, the cultural identity is represented as a general human experience that transcends the specific conditionalities different to the geographical, historical and cultural contexts. Beyond the spatial and temporal boundaries of postcoloniality, cultural identity is treated as a phenomenon that defines the essential human condition and results in a perpetual search of an ideal area for anchoring or relocating the individual and collective identity. Jean Rhys's fictional discourse found itself between 'the anxiety of authorship' and 'the anxiety of influence' displays in fact the postcoloniality as an era of uprooting and migration in which the concept of national ownership is diluted by the image of a 'home' ambiguous located at the boundary between a myth of origins and a myth of becoming. The relationship between the individual and socio-cultural space is thus shaped in a dual hybrid position. Living in a present of indeterminacy, the cultural identity of Jean Rhys's characters transforms itself into a sum of pieces, puzzles which no longer form a convergent whole. The intertext is thus becoming not a process of writing, but a fractal ontological principle that generates the transformation of 'the text as texts' in 'texts as existence.' More than this, Marc Augé, in his book *A Sense of the Other*, states that "the individual is, by definition, composite: the relationship stays at the basis of identity. Alterity and identity are indestructible related, not only within the social systems, but also in the already known definition of the individual as part of these systems." (Augé 1995, 105)

The construction of identity in Jean Rhys's work is represented by the same dichotomist movement between the marginal identity and the identification with a human ideal designed either by the hegemonic discourse or metropolitan culture or by the dominant ideology. The identification with a pattern of cultural authenticity, of racial, ethnic, or national purism is presented as a purely destructive cultural projection, leading to the creation of a static universe in opposition to the diversity of human feelings and aspirations.[2]

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[2] The extended version of the ideas exposed here was published in an Open Access Book entitled *Exploring Cultural Identities in Jean Rhys' Fiction* by Walter De Gruyter Inc. Publisher, Berlin, Germany in June 2014. For further details, please follow this link: http://www.degruyter.com/view/product/246960?format=G.

Inquiries in Political Theory

The Human Security Paradigm and Cosmopolitan Democracy[1]

Andreea Iancu

Abstract: This paper discusses the relation between the human security paradigm and the cosmopolitan democracy scenario as models for humanizing and changing the current international system and transforming it in a global security and development system centered on the individual rather than on the nation state. The main idea for which I argue is that the human security paradigm and the changes it determined in international relations (especially through the responsibility to protect principle) are compatible with the cosmopolitan democracy scenario for changing and transforming the current international system.

Keywords: human security, responsibility to protect, cosmopolitan democracy, sovereignty as responsibility

Introduction

This paper discusses the relation between the human security paradigm and the cosmopolitan democracy scenario as models for humanizing or changing the current international system and transforming it in a global political, security and development system centered on the individual rather than on the nation state. Excepting the introduction, the paper is structured in 3 main sections. The first two sections shortly describe the human security paradigm, the responsibility to protect principle, as the main operational principle of this paradigm, and, respectively, the cosmopolitan democracy model. The third section highlights the main shared attributes (and implications) of the human security paradigm and the cosmopolitan democracy model in order to show that the human security paradigm, the responsibility to protect principle, and the changes they determined in international relations are compatible with the cosmopolitan democratic scenario for changing and transforming the current international system.

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The Human Security Paradigm and Responsibility to Protect Principle

The human security paradigm can be described, in short, as the rhetoric that encompasses and promotes the right of all people, regardless of the national boundaries, to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair. It has mainly two major concerns: to enlarge the freedom of choice for the worldwide individuals, and to ensure their development in a secure environment. As highlighted in the 1994 Human Development Report, the human security paradigm is built on solidarity principles and tries to ensure for the worldwide individuals a participatory existence, in the spirit of human worth and dignity (UNDP 1994, 22-3). The paradigm redefines the concept of *security* in order to include extensively the "concerns of ordinary people (…) which symbolize protection from the threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression and environmental hazards" (UNDP 1994, 22). So, human security is conceptualized as "the right of all people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair" (United Nations 2004), or, more commonly, as the "freedom from fear and freedom from want" in the context of human dignity. As such, as used in the human security paradigm, *human security* is a very large and complex concept, incorporating (and not being limited to) economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security or political security. The concept encompasses participation in the public sphere, personal integrity, autonomy, control over personal life, well-being, or human dignity, which means that numerous state and non-state correlated issues can affect the human security. (Landman 2006, 14). This makes the human security paradigm the meeting and intersecting point of many issues, like security, governance and politics, or social and economic development (Beebe and Kaldor 2010, 159).

The main operational principle of the human security paradigm is the responsibility to protect principle (R2P or RtoP). The principle is one whose implementation is meant to ensure the protection and security of all worldwide citizens. As stated in the "Responsibility to Protect 2001" Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty Report, the principle has three fundamental pillars: (i) the state responsibility implies protection responsibilities; (ii) every state has the primary responsibility to protect the people on its territory; and (iii) the international community has a residual responsibility to step in if states are unable or unwilling to protect the people on their territory (ICISS 2001). This definition establishes a double-edged-sword responsibility of the state, within and beyond its borders. In addition, the report also mentions that, under this principle, the state and the international community has as main pillars of action not only the "responsibility to react," but also the "responsibility to prevent," and the "responsibility to rebuild" in case of intervention (ICISS 2001, 17). This principle was institutionalized at the World Summit in 2005. The United Nations (UN) took the responsibility, in the name of the international community, to protect all the

citizens of the world. The article 139 of the World Summit Outcome in 2005 stated the engagement of the international community to protect the entire humanity. This article mentions the engagement of the international community for preventing genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing and also, that it is ready to take all the necessary steps to accomplish this desiderate.

Though, the R2P principle is not a revolutionary idea. It is built on the classic just war doctrine, being structured on the principles of right intention, just cause, last resort, proportionality, the question of evidence and right authority in cases of interventions, when states fail to meet the responsibility to protect their population. The R2P principle represents an extended form of *ius gentium* and the responsibility towards the governed, specifications that were embedded from the start in the UN Charter (Weiss and Thakur 2010, 310). In this conjuncture, *ius cogens* and the *customary law* include the principle of the non-use of force, the only explicit exception being the article 51 of the UN Charter.

The Cosmopolitan Democracy Project

As resumed by Daniele Archibugi, one of its leading proponents, the main aim of the cosmopolitan democracy project is to increase the accountability, transparency and legitimacy at a global level by introducing democracy within every state, between states, and create global or cosmopolitan democracy (Archibugi 2004, 438-442). Cosmopolitan democracy, its defenders are arguing, is the only ethical and viable „method of global governance on the benefit of mankind" (Archibugi 2008, xvi).

As a global governance model, cosmopolitan democracy is defined as multilayered governance, grounded on the principles of democracy, democratic justice, peace, rule of law and human rights. As for the form of organization, the model of the cosmopolitan democracy stands between the federalist and the confederal model, keeping a moderate centralization of power. The cosmopolitan democracy approach rejects the idea of a global government, because it could degenerate in forms of totalitarianism. So, the cosmopolitan democracy scenario rejects the formation of a global cosmopolitan institution with the ultimate authoritative function, as defended in other cosmopolitan governance proposals (Archibugi 2008, 86).

The cosmopolitan democracy model is a project that aims to develop democracy at different levels of governance. These levels are dependent of each other and should be pursued simultaneously, although each needs distinct procedures (Archibugi 2008, 110). In order to achieve cosmopolitan democracy, there should be created a voluntary and appealable alliance of governments, meta-governmental institutions, NGOs, international organizations and transnational corporations that would share coercive power and create rules for judicial control, with an outstanding emphasis on global (civil) society. A highly

important entity in the cosmopolitan democracy project is global (civil) community, a transnational entity that will counterpoise the current global democratic deficit and can create bottom-up pressure for the implementation of the individual-centered principles and for (gradually) achieving world (cosmopolitan) citizenship (Archibugi 2008).

In the cosmopolitan democracy model, the nation state loses its centrality as actor of international relations. This model both integrates and limits the functions and responsibilities of the state, transferring some of them to the institutions that focus on the citizens of the world, who have, besides the national citizenship, the cosmopolitan citizenship (Archibugi 2008, 103). However, the cosmopolitan democracy logic does not cancel the national citizenship, the national boundaries or the national sovereignty, but only limits them in order to empower the citizen, to ensure the respect for human rights and to assure the accountability of the layered-decision making process (Held 1995, 118).

In the cosmopolitan democracy project, the global actors are to be subjects of the jurisdiction of an International Court, whose decisions and sanctions take effect within the national level. At the core of the global cosmopolitan organization is, among others, the control over the use of force and the principle of non-violence (Archibugi 2008, 88). Military force is used only as a last resort when the driving principles are attacked and it needs the legitimization of the institution of global citizens (Archibugi 2008, 105).

The Human Security Paradigm and Cosmopolitan Democracy

As I already mentioned, the main point of this article is that the human security paradigm and the changes it determined in international relations (especially through the responsibility to protect principle) are compatible with the cosmopolitan democratic scenario for changing and transforming the current international system. This is especially because the human security paradigm shares some key 'cosmopolitan' premises, aims, principles and implications.

The cosmopolitan democracy model is grounded in the natural law theory and the inter-related cosmopolitan ethics assuming that the individual belongs to a moral global community, that human being is of central importance, that each individual is of equal moral worth, and that social and political institutions are obliged to protect the dignity of each individual (Coates 2001, 90). The cosmopolitan democratic law is based on Kant's cosmopolitan law and the principle of universal hospitality, which transcends the borders of the national state and entails the protection of freedom and autonomy of all (Held 1995, 228). As Held (2009, 537) highlights, the idea of responsibility "for the satisfaction of the basic human needs, that all human beings require equal moral respect and concern" is a prerequisite and also the main foundation of the cosmopolitan democratic principles. Likewise, the human security paradigm is grounded in the natural law theory, the cosmopolitan ethical principles, and the universal

individual rights doctrine. The R2P principle is grounded on the universal legal obligations under the human rights, the humanitarian laws and the human protection declarations and encompasses human security as one of its core concepts (Bădescu 2011, 40). This commitment has an evident ethical origin, being related to the cosmopolitan ideas of equality and moral principles that apply to all people. Due to the universal human rights doctrine, states, as members of the international community, have the responsibility to protect not only their own citizens, but also the citizens of the world. Like the cosmopolitan democracy model, the human security paradigm insists on the idea that individuals, regardless of their citizenship, location, and identity ought to be made secure from a range of fears, threats, and deprivations (Franceschet 2006, 31). Moreover, the human security principles entail the idea that the security of the individuals all over the world is a matter of common concern and, consequently, a shared responsibility (Tigerstrom 2007, 72). These ideas are synthesized in the responsibility to protect principle and find their justification in the same ethical principles that ground the cosmopolitan democracy scenario.

The cosmopolitan project relies on the principle of proportionality mentioning that it should never be done something that would cause more harm than it saves (Doyle 2011, 77-79). This corresponds with the just cause threshold and with the precautionary principles that are clearly stated in the founding document of the responsibility to protect principle. Although cosmopolitan democracy aims to a global democratic order based on peace, it is not a utopian model that excludes the possibility of violations of the global principles. In this case, the cosmopolitan democracy admits that there could be cases when the use of force is necessary. The legitimized military intervention would be used in the same conditions as the R2P principle. All the precautionary principles of the R2P and the necessity of a just cause are included in the cosmopolitan democracy ethics, in the global law that would govern its order. Thus, if the democratic peace theory and the desire of the cosmopolitan democracy to implement democracy within and between states are taken into consideration, it can be assumed that the use of military intervention would be limited.

In the cosmopolitan democracy scenario, states failing to protect the fundamental rights of the world citizens do not have the right to be free from intervention. All states have a duty to protect and to intervene, if an intervention is necessary, to provide subsistence needs for all human beings (Doyle 2011, 77-79). Like the cosmopolitan democracy model, the human security paradigm and its reification, the responsibility to protect principle, also challenge the sacrosanct principle of non-intervention (Tigerstrom 2007, 80) that guided, within the Westphalian order, the process of maintaining worldwide peace (Reisman 1990, 872). At the intersection of the human security paradigm and the responsibility to protect principle, in the post-Westphalian world, states enjoy "sovereignty as responsibility," which means that they have the right of non-interference only as long as they respect the fundamental rights of their

citizens (Bellamy, Williams and Griffin 2010, 13). When this threshold is overpassed and the states fail to ensure the security of their citizens, the international community is obliged to act according to the responsibility to protect doctrine. So, both the human security paradigm and the responsibility to protect principle are overpassing and challenge the traditional concepts of the Westphalian world, sovereignty and core statehood, conceptualizing an incipient cosmopolitan core of the new global dynamics.

The new concept of sovereignty, sovereignty as responsibility, implies three functions of the state: firstly, the state is responsible of the safety, lives and welfare of its citizens; secondly, the state is responsible internally, to its citizens, and externally, to the UN; thirdly, this principle institutionalizes the fact that the states are responsible for their "commission and omission" actions (ICISS 2001, 13). The „sovereignty as responsibility" principle relates to the universal right to hospitality, as presented by Kant and reiterated in the cosmopolitan democracy scenario (Weiss and Thakur 2010, 313-4), and can easily be interpreted as a step towards the institutionalization of the cosmopolitan outlook. Although the international community is divided in the debate around the right to intervention, the UN started to design the new form of sovereignty, described as well as 'liberal sovereignty,' which is one of the core principles of the cosmopolitan democracy model of governance. In the report on the responsibility to protect it is also stressed that "the issue is not the right to intervene of any state, but the responsibility to protect of *every* state" (United Nations 2004, 56). The R2P principle bounds every state of the world in a mechanism that focuses on the individual. This entails that the R2P is at least compatible with the cosmopolitan democracy project, if not quite a revolutionary step favoring its implementation. In fact, the R2P principle can be described as institutionalizing the cosmopolitan principle of a duty to protect all the citizens of the world (Dower 2010, 12). As I already stressed, the R2P is a principle whose implementation is meant to ensure the protection and security of all the citizens of the world. It implies that states are obliged to respect the universal human rights that are imposed by universal moral duties.

These observations raise some very interesting questions: are we entitled to interpret the current changes in the international system determined by the human security paradigm (especially through the responsibility to protect principle) as a step towards cosmopolitan democracy as a global political form of organization? Could the R2P have a spillover effect and accelerate the process through a more concentrate global governance system that could take the form of cosmopolitan democracy? I think that the right answer to these questions is affirmative. However, I am aware that for proving my assertion more than I highlighted in this article is needed. Of special importance in this sense is proving that a cosmopolitan democratic model of global governance is both desirable and, crucially, feasible. In other words, in order to prove my assertion I must show that the critics of cosmopolitan democracy are wrong when they

argue that it is "utopian in the sense of illusory – impossible of realization under realistically foreseeable conditions" (Keohane 2006, 77). Unfortunately, I will not accomplish this very complex task here.[2] I am committed, however, to approach it in one of my future papers.

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[2] Some key points in answering this critique of cosmopolitan democracy can be found in Archibugi 2008.

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Social Science Investigations

Remigration, Identity, and Adjustment[1]

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Abstract: Migration generates well-being for individuals and communities, but the pursuit of well-being is not without risks. Tens of thousands of Romanian children are affected by the migration of their parents, others have to cope with the effects of their own migration. Should migrants have difficulties adjusting when returning "home"? Is readjustment even possible for all remigrants, without support? The article aims to present some issues that the remigrants are confronted with when trying to readjust to their communities of origin. The article shows how readjustment is influenced by the social image, which in turn influences the social support for their adjustment and subsequent development.

Keywords: remigration, identity, adjustment, social image, social support

Seen as a positive aspect generating advantages for the individual, for the country of origin and for the country of destination (a „triple win"), migration or labor mobility, as it is has been referred to by the European Union institutions, has been supported through a complex legal framework and a variety of active measures (funding programs for facilitating employment abroad, ensuring the access to benefits deriving from legal employment throughout the Union, developing the capacity of institutions in charge of tackling exploitation or cross-border organized crime etc.). Migration is associated with well-being, and in order to access that well-being, sometimes risks need to be taken.

Today's society is a risk society. As Ulrich Beck showed, risk is only generated by activities which produce well-being. The more extensive the production of well-being, the more extensive the „production" of risks. Of great importance, Beck warned, are the ways in which unforeseen risks (hazards) are prevented, minimized and removed (Beck 2009).

The migration wave which started in Eastern Europe after 1989 generated a multitude of opportunities as well as problems, some unforeseen or underestimated, both by the migrants themselves and by the Governments. In their pursuit of happiness nobody is exempt from risks: the communities or their members – adults or children. But the phenomena involved in this process are "objective, within the logic of transition from one type of civilization to another" (Miftode 2006, 4), representing a constitutive part in the evolution of societies.

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The particular case of the Romanian transition (which included many outcomes born from the newly discovered freedom of movement) was not spared from both positive and negative effects.

Although the subject of mobility for labor is not new in Romania, particularly after 1989, when most studies on the phenomenon were conducted, its effects on the "children left behind" and the readjustment issues that the migrant families and children go through when returning home are approached less.

Estimates such as that of UNICEF and Alternative Sociale showed that in 2008, in Romania, there were over 350.000 children with one or both parents working abroad (approximately 126.000 were separated from both parents) (UNICEF and Alternative Sociale, 2008). Although they showed figures much below the ones from the independent researches, official data still depicted a situation of worrying dimensions.

Another research (Luca et al. 2012), using statistics from the Romanian Ministry of Education, concluded on the existence of a reflux of migrants related to labor migration. Over 21.000 children, returning from Italy and Spain, applied to be reinstated in the Romanian education system between 2008-2012, after having spent at least 6 months abroad. The study estimated that, in fact, the total number of remigrant[2] children exceeded 33.000 (Luca et al. 2012).

In his "Foreword" to the study *The Remigration of Romanian Children: 2008-2012*, Șerban Ionescu explains: "the freedom to travel in Europe, in the entire world, to work abroad, something which the Romanian people could benefit from starting with December 1989, is a right of an extraordinary value, and yet (…) changes, even the positive ones, may have unexpected and sometimes harmful effects." (Luca et al 2012, 5) Against all expectations of an easy reintegration in a familiar cultural, social, educational context, a significant part of these children (20-30%) presented a significant/high risk of developing disorders from the prosocial spectrum (such as emotional, conduct disorders, hyperactivity/inattention or peer relationship difficulties). Almost 30% of the children participating in the study had been "left behind" (the children had spent a period of time when they were not in the care of their parents) prior to the family reunification abroad. In the case of these children three contexts overlap, each of them involving major risks with regards to development: the first separation ("children left behind"), the emigration and the remigration (Luca et al. 2012, 26).

The study conducted by Alternative Sociale showed that, between 2008-2012, the number of children returning was of approximately 4000 children per year, with a peak in 2009, when over 7000 children returned home. The study also estimated that, on a short and medium term, the number of children "with

[2] Remigrant children are children which have spent a period of time abroad with the purpose of living there (as opposed to going on vacation) (Luca et al. 2012).

serious emotional and psychological issues caused by un-assisted migration will grow" with 1200-1400 children per year (Luca et al. 2012, 13).

Social image and readjustment

As shown before, a phenomenon which overlapped with the situation of children separated from their parents working abroad was the remigration of children. Seeing migration as an opportunity for development (access to better schools, learning a new language, developing a broader vision of the world or family members living together), and as a solution for averting or at least mitigating possible risks (when caregivers from the country of origin were no longer effective in exerting their authority, when the psychological effects of separation took their toll on the children etc.), many parents decided to take their children along. At some point and for a variety of reasons – economic difficulties, adjustment issues, decision of the family to return to the country of origin – the children remigrated (sometimes with, sometimes without their parents). In many cases (20-30%) this solution is actually generating other problems in the country of origin, the most challenging being those related to readjustment and social reintegration. These problems concern not only the children and their parents but also the communities that they are returning to.

The way in which the individual relates to the group (but also the way in which the group treats the individual) affects the level and quality of his/her participation to the life of the respective group. Is the community interested in the returning members? Are they seen as having a positive influence, or as bringing a contribution to the wellbeing of its members? Is the community aware of the positives and of the negatives of the situation of the remigrant children? Is the community willing to make the necessary effort to facilitate their adjustment and integration? These are questions that need to be answered before considering policies for the integration of remigrants.

The opinions on this subject seem to be divided, at least in theory. There may be a "social polarization in communities affected by external migration, between families of migrants, increasingly rich (…) and the families of non-migrants, poor or getting poorer. Psychologically, a reaction of non-migrants against migrants appeared, the latter being labeled and devalued" (Miftode 2006, 4). At the same time, the non-migrants know how dependent they are on the money the migrant workers send home.

The study *The Remigration of Romanian Children: 2008-2012* showed that the factors which, according to the remigrant children, had a positive influence on their adjustment are mainly individual (being accustomed to the life in Romania, trust in their own strength, ability to seek help, courage, capacity to make decisions, responsibility, luck), followed by family (care and help) and community factors (colleagues, teachers, neighbors). When referring to factors which made adjustment difficult or even impossible, children also named individual factors (having got used to the life abroad, having forgotten the

Romanian lifestyle, lack of confidence, lack of ability to ask for help, lack of courage, lack of capacity to make their own decisions etc.), followed by community factors (lack of support from friends, from colleagues and teachers) and family factors (overburdening, insufficient parental support, absence of parents etc.) (Luca et al. 2012).

The image of the family about the community of origin is influenced by the way in which the two entities related to each other when the family decided to migrate. The quality of the rapport between the family and the society or the community of origin (the level of integration, cooperation, trust etc.) influences the individuals' capacity to readjust when returning (Miftode, 2006).

Social identity and social image

The adjustment of the individual depends on a multitude of internal and external factors. A central concept in approaching the adjustment of remigrant children and their families is "identity." The relevance of the concept is given by its importance in the analysis of the individual's capacity to adjust (who needs to "determine" who he/she is in order to exist and to function) and when discussing the link between the individual and the environment that he or she already belongs to or aims to belong to. "Identity" is central when discussing another important concept, that of "resilience," which draws from what the individual "is," "has," and "can."[3]

The environment investigated in this article is the community, defined by three important dimensions: the geographical dimension (neighborhood, social interactions in a given space), the behavioral dimension (acts of will and practical action), and the identity dimension (on territorial as well as on non-territorial criteria – age, gender, ethnicity, religion – Gavriluţă 2003, 548-549). All these dimensions are relevant in a discussion on migration, in the context in which remigrants go through changes that are geographical, behavioral and identity related.

In the context of migration, "identity" is a "classic" issue, and the greatest danger concerning the adjustment of migrants is an "identity crisis." (Mahovscaia 2007)

[3] The concept of 'resilience' is still a matter of debate, and a unique and universally accepted definition of resilience is not available. There is, however, an agreement on two essential aspects: firstly, resilience characterizes a person who lived or still lives a traumatic event or a chronic adversity and makes the proof of a good adjustment (which may mean different things depending on his/her age and his/her socio-cultural environment), and secondly, resilience is the result of an interactive process involving a person, his/her family, and environment (Ionescu 2011). Specialists usually differentiate between "natural resilience" (built on individual characteristics and on intrafamilial interactions) and "assisted" resilience (developed with the support of mental health professionals) (Ionescu 2011). Resilience depends on internal factors (genes, temperament, attitude, motivation) and on external factors (relations with the members of the community, level of well-being, cultural and political elements) (Luca et al., 2012)

The problem of the identity of individuals and groups is approached by a series of theories (the social identity theory – Tajfel and Turner 1979, the social identification theory – Turner et al. 1987) that provide models explaining the relations between the individuals and the ”social worlds that they live in.” ”Identity is not something which belongs to the individual, like a set of traits, but something resulting from the interaction with the environment, when cultural elements are activated, allowing the individual to comply with the behavior norms of the group. The way in which the individual is seen by the others in the particular social context becomes a major determinant in defining his identity.” (Avanza and Laferté 2005)

According to Stephen Reicher ”social identity places an accent on dynamics, on change, on the context and on the contents of social categories as well as on the role of culture and of history in building social categories.” (cf. Markova 2007, 221-222; see Reicher 2004) “Cultural, societal, institutional, environmental, and symbolic factors play a part in the sense of identity and identification that individuals experience.” (Joffe 2007, 198).

The francophone literature nuances the concept of ”identity” on the basis of, among others, locus, defining it through the complementary concepts of ”social image,” “affiliation,” and “identification” (Avanza and Laferté 2005, 140). None of these concepts overlap perfectly with the concept of “identity,” but they complement each other.

“Affiliation” is internal, even though it depends on the individual’s socialization, on his or her relation with a group. It is a definition of the self, an attempt to internalize attributes, images belonging to the social institutions that the individual participates to (Avanza and Laferté 2005).

“Identification” is external, it involves a process and not a state. It is continuously re-invented and redefined (Avanza and Laferte 2005) and includes any “social action where the identity attribution is external, exerted on an individual, within a social institution, based on a coded technique.” (Avanza and Laferté 2005, 140-142) “Identification” is therefore bureaucratic, technical.

The concept of “social image,” placed outside the individual as well, refers to social productions (discourses, symbols or other representations), belonging to a certain space (a certain community, society) and to a certain moment (Avanza and Laferté 2005). These involve labels that are sometimes accepted by an individual or a group. Based on the quality of these labels (positive, appreciative or negative, destructive) the individual or the group adapts, integrates, or quite the opposite, lives their own drama. In some situations the subjects of these productions refuse the label imposed and fight stereotypes, trying to impose their own image – through education or conflict.

Claude Levi-Strauss sees “identity” as a “virtual home that we need to refer to in order to explain certain things, which do not have a real existence.” (Levi-Strauss 1977) As a consequence, “identity” is not seen as finality, it is not a process, it is a source or a reference.

"Identity" is important. At the same time "the fight with regards to the ethnic or regional identity – in other words with regards to properties (stigmas or signs) associated with the place of origin and with its associated durable consequences, such as the accent – are a particular case of the diverse fights for classifications, the monopole of the power to make people see and believe, to know and acknowledge, to impose the legitimate definition of the division of the social world and, thus, to make or undo groups." (Bourdieu 1992)

The social image and the readjustment of remigrants

The concept of "social image" has a special relevance in explaining social phenomena and developing intervention models.

As shown before, "social image" is not a static concept, it is not limited exclusively to recording perceptions of particular situations, produced at a certain moment or period. The "social image" is actively manifesting itself through its products, whether positions (discourses) or symbols which have the capacity to influence the crystallization of the identity and the functionality of the individual or of the group targeted (particularly in the case when they are vulnerable, such as the case of migrants or of children).

"Social image" is a way of interaction between the individual and the dominant group or between the individual and the community in which he or she tries to integrate. In the case of children, this interaction is even stronger because, according to Lev. S. Vygotsky, social interaction plays a fundamental role in their process of cognitive development: "every function in the child's … development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first between people (interpsychological), and then inside the child (intrapsychological)." (Vygotsky 1978, 57) "Identity implies family and cultural roots, but also self-acknowledgement through own social image and through the others' feedback. (…) The problems related to individual and cultural identity are in the center of the difficulties encountered by the immigrant adolescent, particularly by that who has lived in the country of immigration from a young age." (Marcelli 2003, 503-509)

The interaction of the individual with the community must not be regarded unidirectionally, in the sense that it is only the community who influences the individual (although the individual's attitudes are determined both by the personal convictions and the interpersonal network of communications and contacts) (Liu and László 2007, 95). The participation or the presence of an individual in a community is influenced by the social status of the latter. In today's world, characterized by an increasing access to transnational opportunities, in the context of the multiplication of (and increased access to) models for achieving life goals, the replacement of a society which does not offer what the individual desires with another one, perceived as more advantageous, is a real and practical alternative option. The very survival of the weaker community is seriously put to the test (Şerban 2013). A relevant

example is the migration of highly qualified Romanian medical personnel or of construction workers after 1989. At the opposite end is the situation of the IT professionals who found in Romania an ideal framework for professional and personal growth.

The "social image" influences both the individual and the community. A reciprocal positive image is the ideal situation, because it provides the premise for building "social support". At the opposite end, a negative "social image" may be identified as a major cause for adjustment difficulties, due to lack of "social support." Just as damaging is a neutral "social image" ("I don't care/I am not interested" or "I do not know" type of attitude).

Following the "social support" approach, the theoretical models that explain the process are based on two important dimensions: a structural dimension (which includes the support network and the frequency of social interactions) and a functional dimension (which includes the emotional component – emotional support, empathy and the instrumental component – the practical support, including charity and social, medical or legal services). Although both dimensions are important, the functional one provides better predictors (the quality of relations) about "social support" than the structural one (the quantity of relations) (Joyce 2010, 58-59).

Among the factors that affect the "social image," and often the "social support," language is particularly relevant. In the case of remigrants the language may be characterized by a different accent than the one of the community of origin, through improper use of certain words or through the substitution of certain words from the native language with words from the language of the country of migration. These types of elements constitute (superficial) means of identification of a person as belonging or not to the majority group, respectively as belonging to a minority group (Joyce 2010, Nash 1996, 58). In the case of remigrants, language is a "familiar" means and cause for labeling (the Romanian remigrant is called "foreigner" in Italy and "Italian" in Romania).

A study on the reintegration of Irish remigrants showed that the relationship between them and the members of the community is contradictory (Ni Laoire 2008). They are expected to have no problem reintegrating into the Irish society but at the same time they are regarded as not being true Irishmen, particularly when they are not born in Ireland (Ni Laoire 2008). Irish remigrants speak always of their belonging to the community of origin, about the family left in the country, but they are aware that they do not belong to that space, remaining fixated between two worlds. On one hand they have strong connections with the space of origin (they are *insiders*) but on the other their identity is marked by their migration experience, which affects negatively their integration (they are also *outsiders*) (Ni Laoire 2007, 341). The vulnerable individuals and groups, particularly the ones that see themselves as outsiders, may have difficulties in feeling that they belong to the community, and,

consequently, difficulties in developing and implementing integration plans. The fact that they are Irish is not enough, their identity has to be acknowledged by the community of origin (the *significant others*) before they are assimilated (Joyce 2010, 64).

In the case of Romanian remigrants, belonging to the community of origin is something to be proud of, when, while abroad, they do not wish to be integrated in the community of migration. When they return home they always make comparisons with the society from the country of migration, which they consider to be superior and which they value, although, when they speak of the reasons for remigration, they mention the superior quality of the Romanian education system (Luca et al. 2012).

The economic contribution of migrants to the well-being of the members of the community of origin is undeniable, both from the perspective of the central administration (all Romanian Governments, for instance, recognized the importance of the billions of euro sent home by migrant workers in balancing the Romanian economy) and from a local perspective (the migrants invest in the local economy, particularly through acquisition of services, or goods but also have a contribution in the cultural development of the communities). The return into the community of origin, often economically motivated (Luca et al. 2012), may be associated with a perception of failure, which can generate a negative label and may affect the social image of remigrants.

The cultural capital – the language, including the accent, the behavior, the clothes etc. as ”surface pointers” (Joyce 2010, Nash 1996, 24-25) – is an attribute which may represent a social advantage or disadvantage (Joyce 2010, 66). In the case of Romanian migrants the clothing style of the country of migration may represent an advantage if they are valued or employed in the community of origin. Such pointers may also be interpreted as a resistance to integrate or as an aggression by the members of the community of origin, leading to a situation in which the cultural capital is a barrier and a factor destabilizing the social support.

The study conducted by Alternative Sociale indicates other factors which influence the social image of remigrants and implicitly their adaptation (Luca et al. 2012). Even the attempts performed by the communities of remigrants with the purpose of maintaining their ethnic identity may have negative influences on their capacity to adjust when they return home. The form of “Irishness” of the migrants differs from the original one, it is a “diasporic Irishness” (Joyce 2010, 68). The study on the situation of Romanian children conducted by Alternative Sociale indicates that the presence of a strong Romanian community in the country of migration facilitates the readjustment to the community of origin. However, the positive effect of this factor decreases with the increase of the period of time spent abroad (the percentage of children who experience adjustment difficulties is significantly higher among the group of children who have spent more than 3 years abroad).

An assumption supported, apparently, by common sense is that remigrants should not have adjustment difficulties or that these difficulties should be minor, negligible, because in their case the cultural elements of the community of origin (such as language) are already well-known. This assumption is shared by the community and the remigrants themselves (Gaw 2000, Mooradian 2004). In reality, when individuals return to their community of origin, especially after having spent a long time abroad they discover that "home" is not the same well-known place and that even the family and friends have changed (Luca et al. 2012). A "reverse cultural shock" takes place, after which, according to several studies (Adler 1981, Storti 2001, Uehara 1986) the process of adjustment is more difficult than the one following the "initial cultural shock" (the shock that the remigrants felt when they arrived in the foreign country). Despite this observation, the "reverse cultural shock" is less approached than the "initial culture shock" (Adler 1981, Mooradian 2004). Moreover, those who successfully adapted to another culture (those who overcame the initial shock of adapting to the country of migration) have the most difficulties when having to adapt home (Koester 1984, Mooradian 2004). Usually, migrants go through a process of preparation for the shock of a new culture (by acquiring information about the country in general and about the community in particular); such a stage usually does not exist when they return in the community of origin. In this context, the social support is essential in facilitating their adjustment (all the more so in the case of remigrant children), but the likelihood of this support being provided is affected by the image of this group, which is perceived as needing it much less than other vulnerable groups (especially if there are other groups of migrants in that particular community).

The reverse cultural shock (defined as a set of psychological and social traits related to the adjustment to the community of origin after a period of time spent abroad – Uehara 1986) is also known as the readjusting, the reacculturating, reassimilating or re-entry shock (Mooradian 2004). It is believed to follow certain patterns, which have been described by various theorists. One such model has been developed by Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) – some of the first to study the reverse cultural shock as part of the adjustment process. The model included a graphical representation of the process, a curve under the shape of the letter "W" (in fact, an extension of a previous representation of the process of adjustment which only included the adjustment to the initial cultural shock, a process illustrated under the shape of the letter "U" – by Lysgaard 1955). The model includes 8 stages that the remigrant goes through. The first four refer to the initial migration: The "Honeymoon," the "Crisis," the "Recovery," the "Adjustment." The last four are basically the same but they refer to the return. The "Honeymoon" at home may take a few weeks, when the remigrant is happy to find familiar people and places; the second stage is the "Crisis" at home, when life begins to set, when doubts related to the decision to return appear, along with the first issues

related to the redefinition of identity (including physical and psychological manifestations: anxiety, alienation, sleep problems etc.). During this stage, which lasts two to three months (Adler 1981), most remigrants resist adjustment; the "Recovery" (at home) includes the physical and psychological adjustment – the remigrants begin to feel "at home," but cultural differences persist; the fourth stage is the "Adjustment" (at home), when the remigrants no longer feel the desire to go back to the country they returned from. They tend to focus on the future and achieve a balanced vision of life (Storti 2001).

Other theorists include another important moment, the preparation of the return, when remigrants prepare the logistics of the return and say their "good byes." This stage may take from a few weeks to a few months (Adler 1981).

The very fact that remigrants use the term "home" seems to generate problems. "Home" is a safe space, both physically and emotionally. Here things and relationships are predictable, feelings such as trust and belonging predominate (Mooradian 2004). In actuality, the community of origin does not always maintain such characteristics, or quite the opposite; the migrant has to notice the changes that have taken place and to get used to new norms, customs and demands. And these things take time. Time is an essential component in the process of readjustment, and researchers (Storti 2001) underline the longitudinal character of the process of readjustment to the reverse cultural shock.

In conclusion

The readjustment of remigrants is a difficult, stressful, and usually underestimated process (as shown before, it actually takes longer for remigrants to adapt to their community of origin than it takes to adjust to a foreign community). Readjustment is very much tied to the concept of "identity" (because the "social support" is influenced by the "social image"). The changes related to identity are an essential part of the migrant's experience. Whether we relate to the influence of the culture from the country of migration, or we refer to the influence of the community of origin before and after migration, the individual will eventually identify with both cultures, at the same time or successively (Gaw 2000, Mooradian 2004).

Emigration and remigration are stressful life situations that remigrants, including children, need to overcome. In order to adjust, individuals must have or must develop certain capacities. Some individuals are more capable than others to overcome the difficulties related to remigration. Only 70 to 80 percent of the Romanian remigrant children manage to adjust. Others need support to develop adjustment capacities. In order to reduce the risk of negative effects and support their reintegration, they must be helped by the communities of origin through efficient methods in stimulating the resilience process (Luca et al. 2012). The process needs to include the dismantling of the myth of "easy adjustment" as well as concrete integration policies and programs. The way in which the

environment (be it the family, or in the larger context, the community, represented by its members and its institutions) answers to the need for development of the individuals affects in a positive or negative manner the remigrants' capacity to adjust, producing short, medium and even long term effects.

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Implicit Theories of Morality, Personality, and Contextual Factors in Moral Appraisal[1]

Ana-Maria Hojbotă

Abstract: This article explores the implicit theories of morality, or the conceptions regarding the patterns of stability, continuity and change in moral dispositions, both in lay and academic discourses. The controversies surrounding these conceptions and the fragmentation of the models and perspectives in metaethics and moral psychology endangers the pursuit of adequate operationalizations of morally relevant constructs. The current debate between situationists, who deny that character is an useful concept for understanding human behavior, which is better explained by contextual factors (Doris 1998; Harman 1998) and dispositionists, who advocate the cross-situational stability of traits, is also present in the lay discourse, through the existence of competing commonsense ontological assumptions regarding the mutability or alterability of moral features, namely the implicit theories perspective (Chiu, Dweck, Tong, and Fu 1997). These personal theories are the primary suspects in the affective and cognitive reactions to transgressions: the type of attended information in formulating evaluative judgments, the calibration of moral responsibility and blameworthiness, the assignment of retribution or reparatory recommendations to transgressors. In the second part of the study we attempt to advance toward a more fine-grained inspection of these lay beliefs, arguing that the construct of implicit theories of morality, as it is currently treated and measured, tends to be restrictive and oversimplifying.

Keywords: implicit theories, folk conceptions of morality, situationism, dispositionism

Introduction

Research on the sources of variability regarding the attribution of moral traits and the views on moral character, either implicit or explicit, cannot be complete, nor entirely legitimate without situating the different perspectives into corresponding philosophical frames. Research in social psychology on person perception, more specifically, on implicit theories of morality (Chiu, Dweck, Tong, and Fu 1997; Dweck 1991; Dweck, Chiu, and Hong 1995; Miller, Burgoon, and Hall 2007), and on essentialist beliefs (Haslam, Bastian, Bain, and Kashima

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2006) reveals that people generally tend to be oriented either towards a situational, contextual view of moral conduct, or a more trait-based vision of morality. This strand of research has been generally conducted without paying attention to philosophical accounts that discuss concepts such as character, human nature, traits, virtues, vices and the complicated relation between the individual and environment. This isolated approach led to a weak psychological account of moral lay thinking and to an inflation of terms and concepts from the moral domain.

Bridging the domains of personality, person perception and moral psychology, these theories are important for all three directions of research, bringing light upon the consistency of moral behavior, on how people interpret morally relevant situations and make assumptions about the people they observe and how identity builds on these types of mechanisms.

Spontaneous or analytical descriptive statements of character, explanations and predictions of future behavior are filtered by these interpretative lenses that some authors call implicit or naïve theories. They are supposed to calibrate the amount of blame, responsibility and the valence of normative judgments regarding human behaviors. Before discussing the implications of each perspective, we will first inspect the main philosophical accounts that diverge on the legitimacy and explanatory power of character traits and of situations. The fragmentation of the models describing the nature of human morality points to the inherent complexity of the phenomena. There is considerable variability in the views of the lay thinker, which points to the difficulties faced by the scholars in the field of morality. Confronted with the atomization of perspectives, models and operational definitions, the novices in this field may be discouraged when they approach the issue of moral evaluative judgments.

Based on the suggestions offered by the philosophical literature and the debates that emerged in psychology, we propose a way in which the understanding of implicit theories of morality could be improved, arguing for a more accurate measurement of moral theories and conceptions. We extend Dweck's model of implicit theories applied to morality in a few critical ways: a) by discussing the nature of moral trait attributions, as an automatic, pervasive process that inform all the rational and unconscious operations in behavior evaluation; b) by suggesting that the approach of moral traits should take into account the valence of these traits, since they activate different representational information; c) by segregating the incremental-entity dichotomy into further dimensions, relating to two sets of distinct but associated phenomena: the opposition between processes of consolidation and those related to degradation of character traits; distinguishing among morally blameworthy and praiseworthy changes in behavior, virtues and character strengths, on the one hand, and bad habits or vices on the other hand.

The Moralistic Instinct. The Pervasiveness of Moral Attribution

"The only difference between the saint and the sinner is that every saint has a past, and every sinner has a future." Oscar Wilde's popular quote could be understood as an indication of the human tendency towards evaluating people based on character labels. It also depicts the relativity of these traits in describing persons and predicting a future moral conduct. This kind of dichotomous thinking, however, seems to be especially appealing for the human mind. People need to believe in saints or sinners, heroes or villains, and their mind seems to be automatically attuned to identifying antagonists, be they scapegoats or saviors, tendencies that are well reflected in the vast majority of cultural products. Wilde's words also point to the inherent complexity of assessing moral behavior and self-regulation, a feature which discouraged eminent psychologists from approaching the issue, such as the founding father of personality psychology, Gordon Allport (1937). Allport overtly expressed a view according to which morality cannot be a suitable object of psychological inquiry. Without adhering to this kind of skepticism, we approach this domain acknowledging the lack of consensus, incomplete explanatory models and paradoxical findings.

Some philosophers attempted to reject the magnetic appeal of reductionist virtue-based conceptions as those suggested by Wilde's words. For instance, Christine Korsgaard mockingly labels the "good dog" view of the moral person in contrast to the similarly popular prototype of the "reformed miserable sinner." According to Korsgaard, the "good dog" view of the virtuous agent as an individual equipped with "desires and inclinations" that "have been so perfectly trained that he always does what he ought to do spontaneously and with tail-wagging cheerfulness and enthusiasm" (Korsgaard 2009, 3) contrasts the second view, according to which the individual continuously faces "unruly desires in order to conform to the demands of duty" (Korsgaard 2009, 3). These two views are both theoretically sterile and methodologically inoperable and illustrate the inherent tendencies and limitations of folk epistemology, in an area where humans seem to be innately equipped with the necessary assessment tools for discerning "good dogs" from bad ones. Although rudimentary, these evaluative tools show high sensitivity to a variety of factors, prioritizing egotistical and evaluative motivations over epistemic ones.

Since the onset of the cognitivist revolution, social psychologists discuss the tendency to attach moral intentions, emotions and moral character traits, even to inanimate objects. For instance, Heider and Simmel's experiment from 1944 asked subjects to describe geometrical shapes that executed successive movements, in an attempt to present "situations and activity without the face" (Heider and Simmel 1944, 244). A large triangle, a small triangle and a circle moved in various directions during the 2½ min film presented to the participants. Subjects were asked to describe the figures as if they were persons (e.g. "What kind of person is the big triangle?"). Although providing various

scenarios for the displayed scenes, participants judged the "characters" of geometrical shapes "with great uniformity" (Heider and Simmel 1944, 248), either as aggressive, bad-tempered, troublesome or as mean, in the case of the big triangle, or heroic and courageous, as the small triangle was frequently depicted.

This tendency to make normative (right/wrong) or axiological (good/bad) judgments is supposed to evolve very early in the course of ontogenetic development, prior to the development of language. This was illustrated by a study conducted by Hamlin, Wynn and Bloom (2007). In this experiment, toddlers of six and ten months watched a series of visual scenarios. They designed a set of simple scenes, where the main characters were "interpreted" by large wood shapes with large googly eyes, struggling to climb up a hill. Other shapes either supported and helped the climber, or trumped his climbing efforts, throwing them down. When the experiment ended, the toddlers reached for the helpers, indicating a significantly greater preference for them than for the hinderers. The authors concluded that the preference for pro-social actors is universal and innate, and manifests itself prior to the acquisition of language or higher-order reasoning. These studies indicate that people readily form impressions of the objects they observe and that these impressions are mainly translated in characterial terms:

> The capacity to evaluate individuals by their social actions may also serve as a foundation for a developing system of moral cognition. Plainly, many aspects of a full-fledged moral system are beyond the preverbal infant. Yet the ability to judge differentially those who perform positive and negative social acts may form an essential basis for any system that will eventually contain more abstract concepts of right or wrong. The social evaluations we have observed in our young subjects have (at least) one crucial component of genuine moral judgments: they do not stem from infants' won experiences with the actors involved. Our subjects had no previous history with our characters, nor did they themselves experience any consequences of these characters' actions. Their evaluations were made on the basis of witnessed interactions between unknown individuals: the infant, as an unaffected, unrelated (and therefore unbiased) third party, is nonetheless rendering a judgment about the value of a social act (Hamlin, Wynn, and Bloom 2007, 558-559).

The authors maintain that this basic evaluative competence is based upon the fact that people constantly need to "make accurate decisions about who is friend and who is foe, who is an appropriate social partner and who is not" (Hamlin, Wynn, and Bloom 2007, 557). This tendency towards automatic moral evaluation is comprehensively discussed by Jonathan Haidt in his explorations on self-righteousness.

Jonathan Haidt is the proponent of a multidimensional notion of morality, as an evaluative "organ" with six kinds of different receptors, called moral foundations. He describes a propensity that looks like an obsession for "self-righteousness," a tendency that, in his opinion, provided human species with the

possibility of forming cooperative groups but also led to one of the human nature's greatest flaw, the tendency of people to become hypocrites, convinced of their own virtue. This approach is best developed in his latest and controversial book, *The Righteous Mind. Why Good People Are Divided by Religion and Politics*, where he claims that human nature is not only intrinsically moral, but also highly moralistic, in other words, has a natural tendency to be critical, self-righteous, and judgmental. Thus, righteousness becomes a central feature of the human thinking, especially about social objects. Explaining its etymology, Haidt shows that the term comes from the Hebrew term *Tzedek* that refers to God's moral evaluation of people. This divine act of judgment, specific to the creator, is regarded as harsh, but also inherently just. The word applies to the way people reflect on the acts of others, including the meaning of intransigence and impartiality.

This universal tendency is also expressed by other authors, who maintain that human beings have an embedded tool of moral assessment that evolved to accurately detect and deter potential enemies, or persons that could act in ways that could be leaving intentional harm upon them. Some authors maintain that all ethical decisions can be seen as character-related: "the basic judgments in ethics are judgments about character," a view that has been gradually gaining currency (Statman 1997, 7). This tendency makes sense in an evolutionary framework.

> People who cause harm intentionally are, in general, far more dangerous than people who cause harm accidentally, and therefore is more important to deter them (Greene 2013).

Intentionality thus becomes a central feature of this evaluative moral module. Joshua Greene points also to the fact that naïve moral epistemology, which is inherently dominated by this disposition towards self-righteousness, can be conceived as coherentist rather than foundationalist (Greene 2013). People rarely tend to judge the morality of an action in isolation, based on the proof regarding intentionality and blame alone, and the temptation to appeal to character judgments is overtly recognized and sometimes actively controlled. For instance, in some legal contexts, jurors are not provided evidence regarding the record of the defendant in order to avoid biased evaluation. We further discuss to what extent people endorse this dichotomous pattern and thinking about character, its adequacy and other issues related to naïve moral thinking.

Saints and sinners, situationists and dispositionists

While there is growing evidence that the morphology of folk moral psychology, at least in Western contexts, tends to be trait-based, it is not clear how lay people conceptualize the direction and depth of the changes that orient the development of moral character. It is this specific type of views on behavioral modification that vary from skeptical to more melioristic positions, that we are

expecting to affect positions regarding the allocation and punishment, and the shape of educational and remedial interventions.

In their paper "Sinning Saints and Saintly Sinners: The Paradox of Moral Self-Regulation," Sachdeva, Iliev and Medin (2009) pointed that many moral as well as immoral behaviors stem from people's attempts at finding the balance between competing forces, stressing that rather than labeling people as either sinners or saints, a more accurate view would be to say that people are frequently swinging between "sinning saint" and "saintly sinner" states. This inherent duality is also metaphorically expressed in an expression proposed by Phillip Zimbardo, "the Lucifer effect," largely discussed in his homonymous book. Zimbardo seems to embrace a compromise view of the human nature, proposing a model of "situated character transformations," that aims to push the reader further away from "the comfortable separation of Your Good and Faultless Side from Their Evil and Wicked Side" (Zimbardo 2007, 3). This account resembles more recent accounts in social psychology that sanctions absolute, isolated evaluations of people's behavior, stemming only from universal principles, and disregarding the context. Such a model, the socio-relational model of morality (Rai and Fiske 2011), indicates that all moral practices and motives are contextualized and that behaviors can be judged either as moral or immoral depending on the perspective from which they are interpreted.

But unlike the fair to mild, quotidian or "normal" transgressions or deviations from normality described by Sachdeva, Iliev and Medin (2009), Zimbardo embarks on a more grim analysis of character, advocating what he calls three psychological truths:

> First, the world is filled with both good and evil – was, is, will always be. Second, the barrier between good and evil is permeable and nebulous. And third, it is possible for angels to become devils and, perhaps more difficult to conceive, for devils to become angels (Sachdeva, Iliev, and Medin, 2009, 3).

However, although it might invite to more mystification of the issues brought under scrutiny, we read Zimbardo's observations as pleas for achieving more clarity and cultivating a more nuanced view of the human nature than what commonsense, religion or even some scholars usually advert. For instance, the author states that this kind of reasoning in which evil is essentialized and "becomes an entity, a quality that is inherent in some people and not in others" (Zimbardo 2007, 6) may be dangerous for various reasons, such as: "upholding a Good-Evil dichotomy also takes 'good people' off the responsibility hook" (Zimbardo 2007, 6). Zimbardo illustrates this by resorting to Stanley Milgram's experiment at Yale University and his own Stanford prison experiment, where researchers who recruited psychologically healthy, randomly selected subjects, showed how, when facing certain situations, people are capable of terrible things.

This idea was earlier argued and analyzed through the lens of Greek philosophy and tragedy by Martha Nussmaum in *The Fragility of Goodness*,

where she argued that "goodness of character makes the good life tolerably stable in the face of the world. But this stability is not limitless. There is a real gap between being good and living well; uncontrolled happening can step into this gap, impeding the good state of character from finding its proper fulfillment in action." (Nussbaum 1986, 334). Nussbaum tries to argue in this book how goodness can be protected from the pull of these "uncontrolled happenings."

Creating laboratory settings for this kind of "uncontrolled happenings" has become the systematic tool of investigation in social experimental psychology. Most of these investigations actively advocate against the idea of cross-situational consistency of moral behavior and for a sensitivity of human conduct to contextual factors that makes, on the one hand, the goal of judging the moral status of human beings futile, and on the other, the concepts of moral trait or virtue scientifically inoperant.

The tendency to see people in terms of good or bad is more accentuated in some cultures, professions or contexts and there is a long ongoing debate in philosophy regarding the legitimacy of using the notions of traits and characters. Some defenders of situationism, such as Harman (1999), propose that folk moral psychology is a character trait-based one, resembling virtue ethics. The ubiquitous presence of saint, sinners and villains in the lay discourse shows that traits are appealing not only in isolation, but also as typologies of moral characters that reflect the idea of exceptionality. Also, these scholars are overtly denouncing the plausibility of character as a valid construct with explanatory and predictive power, and consider it a reified, social construct (also see Alfano 2013; Doris 2002; Harman 1999).

Both Zimbardo and Nussbaum point to the importance of situational factors, which were, according to the situationists, ignored by generations of psychologists unilaterally concerned with measuring and ascribing static diagnoses (Alfano 2013; Doris 2002; Harman 1999). The criticism mirror the prior Anscombe's (1958) accusations targeting the defenders of Kantianism and utilitarianism, whom he blamed for externalizing the grounds of human morality into norms and contexts. Aretaic ethics develops a dispositional and elitist view on moral excellence (in Latin: "virtus," in Greek: "arete"). Aristotle best reflected this view in the following passage from his *Nicomachean Ethics*:

> anyone can get angry – that is easy – or give or spend money; but to do this to the right person, to the right extent, at the right time, with the right aim, and in the right way, that is not for everyone, nor is it easy; that is why goodness is both rare and laudable and noble (Aristotle, NE 2.9, 1109 a26-29).

Ethical behavior is seen as resulting from displaying such virtues that, according to Artisotle, can be learned and developed into habits. Anscombe (1958) claimed that modern philosophical accounts, namely the two perspectives mentioned above, eliminated or derogated the Greek moralist's idea of virtue, because they insist on principles, and seek to reveal the sources and contents of norms, duties,

laws and obligations, rather than to investigate those traits and habits people should cultivate in order to live a good life.

Anscombe's provocative assumptions stirred the spirits both in psychology and philosophy and generated more questions on how these issues should be addressed. At the same time with the rising popularity of experimental social psychology, concerned with finding the mediating and moderating situational factors for moral conduct, Aristotle's virtue ethics gained renewed interest in psychological research and practice with the advent of positive psychology. For instance, the most notable and used model is the one comprehensively presented in Peterson and Seligman's *Character Strengths and Virtues* (Peterson and Seligman 2004). The model reflects recent trends in personology and personality psychology, more specifically the increasing adherence to dimensional models. The categories, including strengths and virtues, are organized along a six-units dimensional model of "moral excellence" or virtues (wisdom and knowledge, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence), based on historical surveys, and further divided into twenty four character strengths (e.g. bravery, kindness, and perseverance), which are considered to be intrinsically valued, trait-like, and endorsed by societal norms and institutions. Although virtues may be absent in some individuals, they are

> perhaps grounded in biology through an evolutionary process that selected for these aspects of excellence as means of solving important tasks necessary for the survival of the species (Peterson and Seligman 2004, 13).

In the introduction to this "manual of sanities" (a label borrowed from Easterbrook 2001, 23), the authors clearly state that they "believe that good character can be cultivated, but to do so, we need conceptual and empirical tools to craft and evaluate interventions" (Peterson and Seligman 2004, 3), thus expressing their adherence to the traditional perspective introduced by Aristotle, virtue ethics.

From the situationist side, John Doris argues that good character should buffer against situational forces that threaten the occurrence of trait-relevant behaviors. His understanding of dispositionism supposes this almost universal capacity of traits to ward off unflattering reactions within "uncontrolled happenings," as Nussbaum called these situations:

> When a person has a robust trait, they can be confidently expected to display trait-relevant behavior across a wide variety of trait-relevant situations, even when some or all these situations are not optimally conducive to such behavior (Doris 2002, 18).

Doris' critique of stability and globalism is based on the low consistency of the correlations, the marked impact of situational factors on behavior that "undermines the attribution of robust traits" (Doris 2002, 64) and the low correlations between personality measures and behavioral observations. In addition to this, Doris also discusses the ideographical, biographical accounts

that point to the phenomenon of trait disintegration. Besides the various criticisms that could be brought to these studies' validity of results, the argument proposed by Doris against virtue ethics does not hold, since Aristotle does not advocate an all-encompassing stability of virtue and does not deny the vulnerability of human conduct to "unobtrusive situational factors."

In a volume dedicated to defending the situationist perspective, Alfano (2013) restates the majority of this view's claims in the light of recent research. He argues that the assumptions of virtue ethics, according to which traits are stable, have trans-situational consistency, explanatory/diagnostic, and predictive potential are mostly invalidated by the experimental accounts that reveal the sensibility of human judgments and action to contextual factors, such as moods and states induced by various means, including the administration of hormones and neurotransmitters (serotonin, oxytocin), or environmental sounds and smells. The illusion of traitedness is generated, according to Alfano, by the fact that the attribution), function as self-fulfilling prophecies for the evaluated person. The mere fact of trait-labelling, enable that people's evaluation create and promote artificial traits or "factitious virtues," which are different from the virtues as they are understood by neo-Aristotelian supporters, because these artificially created virtues require social reinforcement and do not possess autonomous motivational force over their owner.

Some authors stress that such polemics surrounding virtue ethics are artificial. Kupperman (2009) gave a convincing demonstration on why situationism cannot base its claims against the existence of genuine virtues on the results of recent social psychology experiments. The appeal to studies that indicate the sensibility of moral behavior to exterior influences does not automatically function as an argument against the traits approach or against the merits of virtue ethics, but certainly motivate psychologists to gather more evidence for stability, to find other means to clarify and establish the validity of the construct. The problem is complicated by the fact that situationists tend to defend a perspective of virtues that does not necessarily reflects its founding fathers:

> the character traits conceived of and debunked by situationist social psychological studies have very little to do with character as it is conceived of in traditional virtue ethics (Kamtekar and Rachana 2004, 460).

Acknowledging individual differences in moral dispositions (character traits or strengths, virtues and vices, sensitivities and weaknesses) does not say anything about their modifiability. In the light of the situationist rejection of dispositions, one can also easily disregard efforts aimed at enhancing moral behavior and strengthening of moral traits, an endeavor mostly advertised by positive psychology.

More recent integrative models of moral personality attempt to integrate the tensions between understanding the dispositional bases of moral traits, such as altruism (Carlos et al 2009). and virtues, such as gratitude (Emmons 2009).

This trend of research argues that personality can be properly and comprehensively described as

> (1) an individual's unique variation on the general evolutionary design for human nature, expressed as a developing pattern of (2) dispositional traits, (3) characteristic adaptations, and (4) self-defining life narratives, complexly and differentially situated in (5) culture and social context (McAdams 2009, 12).

In other words, any approach of moral personality has to take into account three levels: dispositional traits – the heritable, longitudinally stable aspect, adaptations (that offer more subtle, contextualized explanation of behavior, integrating moral goals and schemas), and life stories, or how people conceive the good life and attribute meaning to negative life events.

The research reviewed above suggests that human beings are predisposed to implicit, automatic evaluations of actions and offer factual descriptions of their past and predictions of their future behaviors as well. Thus, the ability to evaluate the predisposition of someone to do the good or right thing and to identify someone's moral strengths and shortcomings is primary. Prior to selecting and applying moral principles to the current situation or making utilitarian judgments, people are first evaluating others and themselves in relation to some aspiring models of what they consider defining for a moral and good person. Unfortunately, there is great variability in these conceptions, variability that is also visible in the academic definitions of the issue. Psychology and philosophy still struggle to provide sound conceptions of "personality and motivational structure it expects of morally mature individuals." (Flanagan 1991, 35)

Returning to our central question, we must say we are not concerned with finding the best explanatory model for moral behavior and dispositions. We don't ask whether people are accurate in their conceptions about moral character (of course, we cannot ignore the fact that it is difficult to establish provisory accuracy in the absence of a wide agreement between scholars). Instead, we will focus on how people think of moral personality. People are intuitive virtue ethicists and, most often, the way they define prototypes of moral excellence and virtues, is self-serving. We agree with DeSteno and Valdesolo (2011), who, when discussing the malleability of character, argue that:

> Character is the currency we employ to make judgments about people – to determine who is good and who is flawed, who is worthy and who is not, who is saved and who is damned (DeSteno and Valdesolo 2011, 6).

We intend to discuss the dimensionality and realism of these commonsense frames of reasoning. Our aim is to examine where lay people situate in relation to these "theoretical" dichotomies. Our main investigation tool is the construct of implicit theories. However, to do so, we need to make sure we operate with a valid and sufficiently well-defined construct. The first step in construct validation is providing consensual definitions for constructs. This

requires a parallel examination of the contents of implicit theories of moral characteristics, but also of the empirical evidence related to moral features themselves, as it may be found in mainstream psychological accounts. At this moment, trait-based models emerging in the virtue-ethics tradition provide a rather weak support for the idea of moral traits.

The Role of Character Traits and Situations in Commonsense Understandings of Morality

The idea of moral behavior as stemming from a set of dispositional features is characteristic for at least two accounts that dominate the modern psychological discourse: dispositionism and situationism. Dispositionism allows a working definition of moral characteristics, while situationism, although it does not deny their role and functionality at the lay discourse level, it denies their legitimacy in the field of scientific inquiry.

Among all the competing perspectives in moral psychology, we favor the socio-cognitive perspective of personality, which operates with cognitive-affective units or modules of mental representations that are not context-dependent, but are sensitive to certain enabling environmental stimuli. These include self-schemas, beliefs, construal of psychological and social phenomena and situations, hierarchically organized personal goals, expectations and values, self-regulatory skills and competences (Shoda, Tiernan, and Michel 2002). These models organize and provide integrative and complex accounts of trait domains, saving moral psychology from the oversimplifying trait approach and also from the tyranny of situation.

Folk moral judgments are based on a system of norms endorsed by the perceivers and on their assumptions and beliefs about people's capacities, which prove to be sophisticated and resilient (Guglielmo, Monroe, and Malle 2009). These judgments are often influenced by specific cultural, widespread beliefs regarding either theories of the world and how justice is established, or the psychological constitution of moral agents. People also differ in their assumptions regarding the fairness of the world. For instance, people who believe that "what goes around, comes around" endorse the just-world fallacy, meaning that they consider that actions are always attracting morally fitting consequences that are dictated by a superior moral force that establishes this balance (Furnham 2003). A related belief, immanent justice reasoning (for a review, see Callan, Sutton, Harvey, and Dawtry 2014) endorses a desert-based view according to which a person's fortunate or unfortunate outcomes are causally connected to that individual's prior moral behavior ("You reap what you sow"). According to this conception, a person's moral conduct, either governed by virtue or by chance, will be sooner or later sanctioned by external, immanent forces.

What individuals think of what, who and how is moral is important for at least two reasons. On the one hand, moral ideals can be extracted and inferred

from moral definitions. People hold certain prototypes of moral personality, as Lapsley and Lasky (2001) showed. Secondly, Osswald, Greitemeyer, Fischer and Frey (2010) indicate that traits are not only descriptive, inert entities, but indicated that their activation influences behavior.

As already pointed out, people have a sensitive moral compass that tends to be calibrated by the type of situation and influenced by the fact that the person is the also the agent or just observer. Studies on social perception indicate that people think in terms of traits, which manifest robustly across situations (Jones 1990; Ross and Nisbett 1991). Based on the reviewed empirical research, Doris (2002) maintains that character attributions are generally "undercontextualized and overconfident" (Doris 2002, 97).

This, however, tends to vary from a culture to another (Church, Ortiz, Katigbak, Avdeyeva, Emerson, Vargas, and Ibanez 2003; Doris 2002). Independence and interdependence or individualism and collectivism are supposed to influence the structure of these types of beliefs and claims:

> The Western conception of the person as a bounded, unique or less integrated and cognitive universe, a dynamic center of awareness, emotional, judgment and action organized into a distinctive whole and set contrastively both against other such wholes and against its social and natural background is, however incorrigible it may seem to us, a rather peculiar idea in the context of the world's cultures. (Geertz 1984, 126).

Applied to the moral domain, this could be reflected as the degree to which people believe in human moral perfectibility, how flexible the capacity to overcome habits and vices is, what can be accounted as an acceptable deviation from morality and to what degree responsibility is shared.

Nevertheless, there is not only significant intercultural, but also great interpersonal variability regarding how people decide who, how and when is good or bad, what are the sources of normativity upon which their judgments rely, or how they conceive moral traits, namely their features (innateness, stability, educability, globality) and also their contents ("one person's 'integrity' is another person's 'stubbornness,' [and one person's] 'honesty' in expressing your true feelings' is another person's 'insensitivity to the feelings of others'" (Kohlberg and Mayer 1972, 479).

Meindl and Graham (2014) call this variability 'lay moral disagreement' and identify three forms in which disagreement manifests. The first two reflect interpersonal and intercultural variability in the way behavior and traits occur in moral judgments: the degree to which people find traits and actions as morally relevant and the possibility of attaching moral valence to actions and behavior (Graham, Haidt, Koleva, Motyl, Iyer, Wojcik, and Ditto 2013). The third lay moral disagreement is situated at the interface between naive and scientific formulations and it refers to the way traits and behaviors are invested with moral relevance.

Meindl and Graham (2014) find it important to begin the study of morality at this last level and recommend to their fellow scholars to pretest the measures that operationalize their research variables. The results presented by the two authors unfortunately indicate that lay participants do not share the conception of researchers regarding the moral prototypicality of traits or specific behaviors. The authors provide results of their own surveys indicating which attributes and acts enjoy wide-spread agreement regarding their inclusion in the area of morality (e.g. fairness), and which traits and behaviors are rather low in inter-rater consistency and thus, are problematic operationalizations of morality and need to be avoided (e.g. cooperativeness, helpfulness). Other studies show that there is also great inter-individual variability regarding meta-ethical aspects, such as the degree to which laypersons employ moral relativism in their evaluations (Gill 2009; Sarkissian, Park, Tien, Wright, and Knobe 2012).

A class of folk constructions that we take special interest in refers to the beliefs in the stable versus incremental nature of character. There are two different views: one sees human nature as constant and stable (entity theory); the other endorses a more malleable view on character (incremental theory). People who endorse entity theories tend to understand outcomes of actions in terms of traits, while incremental theorists appeal to psychological mediators, situational factors, contextual relations that may have led to the outcome**.**

Lay/Implicit Theories of Social Categories. The Special Case of Moral Constructs

The consistency aspect of the concept of moral disposition is notoriously disputed and complex. People's beliefs on what is moral differ in regards to how they allocate importance to personal in addition to contextual factors in interpreting the rightness of actions. Essentialist lay beliefs understand social entities (e.g. race) as rigid entities, with fixed, immutable and discrete features that are usually thought as innate, hardwired aspects with biological bases (Bastian and Haslam 2006; Williams and Eberhardt 2008). The literature on essentialist beliefs converged towards the conclusion that these types of lay theories can lead to specific, negative social categorization processes, such as stereotypes and prejudice (Levy, Stroessner, and Dweck 1998; Plaks, Stroessner, Dweck, and Sherman 2001), perpetuation of beliefs that manifest as grounds for system justification of inequalities (Keller 2005; Verkuyten 2003; Williams and Eberhardt 2008), and other related phenomena, such as dehumanization of out-group members (Leyens et al. 2000).

This rigid type of processing is sensitive to manipulations, and can be easily activated (Williams and Eberhardt 2008). Its reduction positively influences creativity (Tadmor, Chao. Hong, and Polzer 2013). When interrupted and replaced with fluid processing styles of social categories, it lead to the adoption of more broad, inclusive and flexible representations of the social entities (Slepian, Weisbuch, Pauker, Bastian, and Ambady 2013). The latter

study, drawing on the embodied cognition paradigm, shows that simply executing fluid movements leads to less rigid processing styles, in contrast to essentialist thinking. This is applied mostly to large social categories (members of social, racial or ethnic groups) and, as Slepian and colleagues attempted to show (2013), there are few reasons to believe that these influences on processing styles also affect specific contents describing different types of personality features (person-level essentialism). Other factors, such as the socio-economic context, determine the types of theories people endorse. For instance, data from Chen, Chiu and Chan (2009) indicate that in contexts with reduced workforce mobility, people adopt more rigid views of the world.

Judging the intrapersonal and interpersonal variability of moral traits is crucial, since this evaluation serves diverse functions. Among others, the most important are the task of inferring fairness/justice and ensuring reciprocity in interactions (Baumard, Andre, and Sperber 2013; Lerner and Miller, 1978), the need for control (Kay, Gaucher, McGregor, and Nash 2010), and the need to maintain social ties (Haidt and Graham 2009). Theories regarding regularities of moral conduct are important because of their motivational and epistemic functions. These theories influence moral evaluation, as it is reflected by a research result that indicates the saliency of morally relevant concepts over moral neutral stimuli (Gantman and Van Bavel 2014); also, moral construal determines evaluation that is faster, tends to be more extreme and to lead to universal prescriptions than do non-moral evaluations of the same actions, for instance, the pragmatic and hedonic consequences (Van Bavel, Packer, Haas, and Cunningham 2012). Moral decision making can be approached, as some authors indicate, with different mindsets (Tetlock 2002). Mindsets are domain specific, but, as already stated, they are usually organized in a coherent fashion and interact with several contextual and intrapersonal variables.

Implicit Theories of Morality and Ascription of Moral Responsibility and Blameworthiness

Folk psychology is described as functioning analogously to scientific thinking, especially when it comes to describing, explaining and predicting mental states and actions (Gopnik and Wellman 1992). This perspective is best described by metaphors such as intuitive statistician or intuitive scientist, a popular representation at the dawn of the cognitivist era (Heider 1958; Kelley 1967). However, evidence regarding the vulnerability of human attribution and other person perception processes to numerous cognitive biases leads some researchers to the conclusion that this view is not just exaggerated, but inaccurate (Knobe 2010). The experimental philosopher argues that even if the set of epistemic competencies of the lay psychologist would be considered basically complete, their efficiency is affected by several factors, which disqualifies this knowledge compared with scientific cognition. Unlike academic thought, lay epistemics is characterized by many conceptual overlaps and

entanglements that contrasts the before-mentioned view of the intuitive scientist. For instance, several classes of intuitions are considered to be skewed by moral judgments (Knobe 2010). In contrast to the "theory theory" perspective, which describes persons as lay scientists, who rely on a thorough analysis of facts prior to reaching evaluations and decisions, Knobe suggests that all judgments are influenced by an instant, intuitive, moral evaluation of the action. In other words, people's attempts at understanding the world are infused by this pervasive tendency toward moral judgment, which is done automatically and unconsciously:

> Even the processes that look most "scientific" actually take moral considerations into account. It seems that we are moralizing creatures through and through (Knobe 2010, 328).

This view echoes Haidt's (2012) position that when it comes to moral reasoning, people spend most of their time in rationalizing their intuitions or finding post-hoc justification of their decisions. This effort shows internal organization and most of the views people hold about the nature of the social world, personality and their own configuration of traits or their self-concepts are in general coherently structured (Chiu, Dweck, Tong, and Fu 1997).

When commonsense views of character are discussed in the situationist/dispositionist debate, a central issue regards the dynamics of moral behavior, or the degree to which people form, hold and endorse characteriological representations both of themselves and of others. The discussion of these theories seems to affect people's evaluations in different ways, as the research seems to reveal.

Responses to transgressions, namely culpability judgments are differently influenced by the dominant implicit theory. Entity theories describe moral behavior as reliant on stable, unchangeable traits or properties of individuals (Dweck, Chiu, and Hong 1995). In contrast, incremental theorists hold a more process-oriented view, seeing moral conduct as more malleable, and more dynamic. They claim that they achieve more accurate verdicts because they consider data and formulate more "objective" verdicts, by collecting data from multiple sources and about more diverse aspects of the case (Gervey, Chiu, Hong, and Dweck 1999). This study shows that when making attributions, entity theorists rely on internal concepts and drag conclusions from a limited amount of information (singular or very few instances); incremental theorists, on the other hand, reach their decisions by relating behavior to the situation and attend information regarding goals, reasons, transitory states, and circumstances. Also, entity theorists evaluate transgressions more harshly and propose more punitive measures. Thus, Gervey and his collaborators (1999) indicate that when evaluating responsibility, entity theorists rely to a greater degree on dispositional information about the reputation of the target. Some authors provided evidence that not only cognitive (priority over data, types of information processing, inferences, ways of reaching decisions and formulating

predictions), but also affective reactions to transgressions differentiates entity and incremental theorists, with the first being more prone to experience disposition-related emotions. For instance, Miller, Burgoon and Hall (2007) reveal that entity theorists report righteous anger and moral indignation (and other attribute related emotions), in contrast to incrementalists, who display anger and disgust, which are related to acts and specific events. Gervey, Chiu, Hong, and Dweck (1999) also underlined that entity theorists are pulled towards deciding and imposing punishment and retribution. They are motivated by vengeance more than incremental theorists, who are mainly motivated by restorative philosophies, corrective measures, education and rehabilitation. More, Chiu, Dweck, Tong, and Fu (1997) show that entity theorists are primarily motivated by conservative concerns, focused on the preservation of the status quo, while incrementalists are driven by change and social progress. These orientations, in turn, are expected to affect the priority given to specific types of information and influence decision processes related to assignment of culpability and punishment. For instance, Wurthmann (2013) describes his results on the association between implicit theories and duties versus rights-based morality, indicating that entity theorists prioritize duties and obligations as a basic frame of understanding morality, while incremental theorists endorse a rights-based perspective and consider upholding human rights as the central axis for moral evaluation. This conclusion has been reached after observing that entity theorists show a high moral awareness of violations of duties, while incremental theorists are more sensitive to violations of rights.

Franc and Tong (2014) showed that implicit theories moderated the adoption of a more transactional view of moral conduct. More specifically, entity theorists were more predisposed to praise their own future behaviors after recalling morally good or bad personal behavior, in contrast to incremental theorists, who did not display this pattern of over-glorification; in comparison, the tendency to believe in the malleability of moral character was associated to a lower tendency to commend morally praiseworthy prospective actions. Both studies indicate an underlying feature of entity theorists: the predisposition towards self-presentational concerns and strategies.

The Problem with Dweck's Model. Thinking About Traits in Positive and Negative Terms

In this section we will argue the importance of re-examining the construct of implicit theories, applied to the domain of moral conduct. Despite the accumulated evidence on the predictive power of implicit theories, other studies find no effects of implicit theories about human character evaluations, decisions and moral behavior of participants (e.g. Jessen 2014). The natural dichotomy of moral traits is an aspect that has been ignored in this research strand. People operate with concrete, either positive or negative traits, not with abstract, inert constructs (as psychological traits are treated in psychology). They employ

labels that function as moral mandates for praise or correction. Unlike other phenomena studied with this methodology (intelligence, giftedness, wisdom or willpower), the morality dimension, seen as a personal set of features, holds a peculiar kind of characteristic, the fact that lay thinking automatically attaches a valence to its descriptive terms.

The distinction between positive and negative traits or character dimensions has direct effect on the way entity and incremental theories are defined and measured. Since moral traits are conceived both on a negative (vices, moral flaws, negative traits of character) and on a positive (virtues, strengths of character) axis, the processes behind their understanding and inference could be different. These aspects can co-occur and interact, sometimes in a puzzling way for the classic personality psychology that emphasize stability and internal coherence. They need clear distinctions and workable, sensitive models. Proverbs and sayings regarding either the static or the dynamic nature of character tend to cover into both negative and positive aspects, and this double orientation tends to be influenced by cultural and religious beliefs. Entity beliefs that are expressed in folk constructions, such as: "Character is easier kept than recovered," "The wolf changes only his coat – not his character," "A leopard cannot change its spots," "Like a fence, character cannot be strengthened by whitewash," "Once a thief, always a thief" or "Give a dog a bad name and hang him." Incremental statements can be found in proverbs, covering both positive and negative aspects, including various views, such as the possibility to change for good ("It's never too late to turn over a new leaf"), and also for the bad (as in the biblical passage: "Your character can be corrupted by bad company" (1 Corinthians 15:33), and the possibility to build virtues and the self-sustaining nature of virtues ("Blood is inherited; character is earned," "Jade requires chiseling before becoming a gem," "Virtue is its own reward"). We are, at this point, interested in how the geography of the character and the mechanics of moral behavior take form in people's representations, and less concerned with the accuracy of these statements.

In this section, we will analyze some conceptual ambiguities and methodological flaws we found in Dweck and colleagues' model of implicit theories of morality. A first task in employing this model would be to separate the contents of the two alternative types of theories, in order to avoid confusion and obtain empirically testable predictions. Although the results of Dweck's team seem to be promising, at least in respect to the degree to which these theories tend to bias evaluations and generate more emotionally infused reactions, they have been less appealing to researchers in the field of morality. This could be generated by their questionable content and construct validity, mostly stemming from ambiguously defined conceptual dimensions.

We acknowledge that this model is not intended as an all-encompassing model of traits. When applied to the moral domain, which is, as we have discussed until now, dominated by some seemingly unresolvable controversies,

Dweck's conceptualization becomes oversimplifying. When Chiu, Dweck, Tong, and Fu measure the degree to which people believe that character can be shaped, starting from the premise that individuals conceive characters either as fixed, or as fluid, malleable, they allow people to apply various personal definitions of character.

Keeping in mind Meindl and Graham's (2013) concept of lay moral disagreement and Kohlberg's (1972) view about the variability of understanding morality traits, we believe that, in absence of other clarifications, these items cannot provide workable results. The reason why moral valence is neglected is not clear. The items used to measure implicit theories do not necessarily express the view of the educability and malleability of positive moral traits, as incremental views intend, but they may very well depict a belief in what Zimbardo referred to as the subtle and gradual dehumanization of people or the incremental nature of evil. As Aquinas put it, "the evil of mutable spirits [i.e., human beings] arises from the evil choice itself, and that evil diminishes and corrupts the goodness of nature". Chiu, Dweck, Tong, and Fu (1997) obtained a composite measure subtracted from the scores on the implicit theories of morality and of the world. Based on this, they decided to categorize the study participants, a decision that contaminates the validity of this study. This decision has been assumed and perpetuated by other researchers using this methodology.

Although Chiu, Dweck, Tong, and Fu define incremental theorists as those who "believe that these factors can be shaped, cultivated, or improved" (Chiu, Dweck, Tong, and Fu 1997, 924), the way they assign subjects to this category is problematic. They chose to use only items that reflect an entity view of people's morality ("A person's moral character is very basic and cannot be changed very much") and decided that low scorers automatically endorse the alternative view. Despite this bipolar structure, they claimed that the construct is "unidimensional and defined by a unitary idea" (Chiu, Dweck, Tong, and Fu 1997, 925), a feature that they considered it justifies their decision to exclude items depicting incremental theories in the survey. This decision was based on the claim that, in the pilot studies, incremental items proved to be compelling for respondents, offering a skewed distribution. However, these items are imprecise ("The basic moral characteristic of a person can be changed significantly, no matter who this person is;" "Even the most basic moral qualities of a person can be changed") and require adjusting their contents with more specific terms, referring to various components of human character.

Based on these considerations, we propose a revision of the content validity of the concept of "implicit theories of morality." We intend to refine its dimensionality by introducing the items that were dispelled based on psychometric reasons but which invalidate all the claims regarding the assignment of subjects into entity and incrementalist theories. As already stated, the concepts of character and traits are disputed and fragmented. Even when used in their traditional sense in psychology, namely as diagnostic tools, they

have some common feature: they are multifaceted and charged with moral valence.

This dichotomy comprised in the evaluative representations of character attributes is not adequately caught by the description and measures of implicit theories (as proposed by Chiu Dweck, Tong, and Fu 1997), whose generality avoids the evaluative aspect, and offers thus incomplete and ambiguous descriptions of the central traits. The items are the following three: *A person's moral character is something very basic about them, and it can't be changed much; Whether a person is responsible or sincere or not is deeply ingrained in their personality. It cannot be changed very much;* and *There is not much that can be done to change a person's moral traits.* Usually, participants are asked to indicate their agreement on a 6-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 - very strongly agree, to 6 - very strongly disagree). The questions force the respondents to fit all these aspects in a presumably all-encompassing notion of moral attributes, and this choice implicitly suggests that trait-related properties are similar for all the involved dimensions, either positive or negative. As Zimbardo pointed out, incrementalism can be applied to the development of "evil" traits, negative habits or vices and the first and third items can be interpreted in either the positive or the negative direction of the moral compass. Also, items the first two items cover more aspects, specific to the facets of the characteriological view, including innateness of good and bad moral features, educability or, on the contrary, dissolubility of virtues.

In other words, intra-individual variability and contextual sensitivity of traits (cross-situational flexibility) are forcibly treated equally, as a consequence of the wording of items. Another problem of this instrument comes from the authors' decision to eliminate the items tapping the incremental views. Chiu, Dweck, Tong, and Fu (1997) and Gervey, Chiu, Hong, and Dweck (1999) argue that the items are socially desirable and maintain that disagreement with an entity theory automatically can be interpreted as an endorsement of the incremental theory. The authors do not provide convincing reasons for discharging incremental view related items and we suspect that their choice was based on the need to offer the same type of measure as those already applied to other descriptors (e.g. intelligence, creativity, wisdom). Thus, the concept and its corresponding cognitive measure should have a more veridical reference and precise content, without forcing into the same assessment diverging or even contradictory evaluative information.

The separation between "good" and "bad" positive traits and between virtues and vices is necessary and cannot be ignored. The controversial semantics of the items just discussed calls for a refinement of the methodology used for implicit theories of morality. We propose the segregation of information representations on two categories or trait domains: strengths vs. weaknesses or virtues vs. vices. When subjects read the item "*A person's moral character is something very basic about them, and it can't be changed much",* some might

think of virtues, while others could have vices in mind. The concept of character is multifaceted and includes sets of traits, motives and competencies, such as self-control, willpower, adherence to moral desires, values and principles, consistency, and integrity. Some moral judgments, behaviors or attitudes rely on traits governed by spontaneous processes, while other are more deliberative in nature, and thus are characterized by variable amounts of fixedness or educability.

Furthermore, if all these types can be conceptualized as modifiable or buildable, the same incremental principle can be applied to vices but it doesn't have to vary in a similar way. In addition to that, once acquired, the virtue or vice can be viewed as stable or degradable and we suspect again that this is not necessarily due to the fact that they show the same properties or follow similar principles. From this point of view, the incremental and entity principles are contrary but not necessarily contradictory. They can be logically, but not necessarily psychologically incompatible and this dissociation has to do more with the complexity of the moral character than with the limits of human rationality. This calls for building a more refined set of measures of implicit theories of morality that reflect the complexity of the domain. People can endorse items from both categories (logically incompatible), holding in mind different dimensions of character. For instance, they can consider self-control or empathy as a fixed entities, while considering expertise in moral judgment, or values as malleable aspects.

The one-dimensional model of implicit theories is too restrictive for understanding moral concepts and traits. Taking valence into account is crucial. We do not intend to prove that some traits are normatively blameworthy and other praiseworthy, but that they are charged with good/bad, positive/negative representational content.

We agree with Schwarz and Sharpe's (2010) argument that traits are not inherently good or bad, with the exception of wisdom, which allows the individual to decide how to act in particular circumstances. As in the case of wisdom, other authors describe "moral expertise" as the set of abilities that allow the accurate apprehension of moral situations, the capacity to reach the adequate solution and also to carry the appropriate act, that ultimately is defining for one's self-concept and becomes embedded in the person's moral identity (Husley and Hamson 2014; Narvaez and Lapsley 2005). Husley and Hamson (2014) develop a model that starts from the Thomistic concept of habitus that represents the idea that acting on moral beliefs consolidates these beliefs and that further increases the likelihood of acting according to them. These habits are dispositions towards patterns of feeling and acting, according to a certain moral identity, or to strive towards these moral goals or ideals. Taking into account the automaticity (often interpreted by moral psychologists as intuitive nature) of moral evaluation, the authors claim that this process is similar to the formation of habits.

Lay moral disagreement indicates that the same behavior can be interpreted as indicative of a positive or negative trait, as a function of the context, of the perceiver's beliefs and of induced mindsets. Thus, another step is to supplement the instrument with a scale that could measure whether people, as intuitive ethicists, are, in the terms of a classical debate in analytic moral philosophy, particularists or generalists. Are they recognizing universal, defensible and fundamental moral principles, in an Aristotelian and Kantian sense, or on the contrary, disregard them, as particularists do (Dancy 1983; McDowell 1979; McNaughton 1988). According to the latter view, moral behavior is judged only in relation to specific situations. Moral evaluation cannot be based on standards and procedures, a position that entails that moral pedagogy cannot rely on codes of ethics, but only on the practical experience of the individual.

As particularists regard principles as „crutches that a morally sensitive person would not require, and indeed the use of such crutches might even lead us into moral error" (Dancy 2004), some psychologists draw attention to the risk of treating moral traits in an isolated, decontextualized fashion. Positive or negative traits can have both positive and negative outcomes in different contexts, either cultural or interpersonal (McNulty and Fincham 2012). McNulty and Fincham (2012) underline that the degree to which a behavior or display of a trait is conceived as right or wrong, good or bad, syntonic or dystonic, depends on its situational appropriateness. In an attempt to bring attention to the dangers of positive psychology's enthusiasm to build positive traits indiscriminately, as Lyubomirsky (2012) says, they argue "that forgiveness and optimism can have both beneficial and adverse consequences, depending on the context." (Lyubomirsky 2012, 574). However, we believe that people attach two types of evaluative valence to trait labels or lay moral concepts: on the one hand, an intrinsic quality, which is trans-situational and can be an inclination to either good or bad, right or wrong behavior) and a more flexible component, that takes into account the situational adequacy of trait-relevant or trait-diagnostic behaviors, that can have different meanings, from a situation to another. An argument for this property of moral traits is Lapsley and Lasky's (2001) study on moral prototypes. They identified a list of character-central (e.g. kind, sincere, and loyal) and character-peripheral traits (lucky, energetic, and independent) of the moral prototypes, generated by their participants. The peripheral traits could be more sensitive to the situational prioritization of moral concerns, thus gaining or losing diagnosticity and moral "currency."

Other studies provide evidence that theories of morality can function incrementally and be subjected to ontogenetic progress. In an early study, Heyman and Dweck (1998) point to the fact that 7-8 years old children have the tendency to see character as more stable than other aspects of personality, such as ability-related dimensions. However, incrementality seems to be differently related to good or positive and bad traits. Children have a tendency to display

developmental optimism, as Lockhart, Chang and Story (2002) showed. From early development stages, children have a propensity to view positive features, both physical and psychological (including moral traits) as invariant, while the negative ones are considered susceptible to gradual fading or even dissolution. In other words, developmental optimism refers to a tendency to believe that physical and moral features are subjected to influences that restores them toward more positive states. Newman, Bloom and Knobe (2014) show that people attach a fundamentally positive quality to all essential features, in the sense that vicious or bad elements are seen as transient, ephemeral, since virtues are considered the „true nature" or essence of things, or true selves. Subjects in the series of studies conducted by Newman and colleagues (2014) were asked to rate situations in which people underwent behavioral changes from good to bad and from bad to good. For each type of change, they were asked to rate whether this modification was a reflection of their true self, and the degree to which it reflected the "true to the deepest, most essential aspects of (the agent's) being" (Newman, Bloom, and Knobe 2014, 204). The data suggest that morally good or praiseworthy behavioral modifications were generally considered as inherent to the true nature of people: "deep inside every individual there is a 'true self' motivating him or her to behave in ways that are virtuous" (Newman, Bloom, and Knobe 2014, 212).

Another argument for the segregation of good and bad character traits comes from studies that have shown that people do not process positive and negative character traits similarly. For instance, Fosatti and colleagues (2004) indicate that processing negative traits prompts more brain activation than processing positive descriptors. They suggest that the recollection of negative stimuli is more important than that of positive stimuli as a survival mechanism.

Another possibility that could be explored is whether not only the valence, but the specific content of moral traits, are sources in variations of incrementality judgments. For instance, it is possible that different traits, such as the ones described by moral foundations model (MFT), with the following six aspects: care/harm for others, fairness/cheating, justice, liberty/oppression, loyalty/betrayal, authority/subversion sanctity/degradation (Haidt, Graham, and Joseph 2009), could be conceived by lay perceivers as following different internal rules of functioning, as the authors of the model advocate that they rely on distinct psychological systems. The authors of the MFT model have consistently shown that liberals, for instance, do not recognize all these dimensions as relevant to the moral domain (for more details, see Haidt 2012). Given the variability of what counts as moral or not, due to cultural, interpersonal and sometimes intrapersonal (DeScioli, Massenkoff, Shaw, Petersen and Kurzban, 2014 show that self-interest can dictate endorsement of moral principles) differences, maybe more refined measurement of the implicit theories should be designed and employed in further studies.

If our proposal and attached arguments are correct, then positive and negative traits should be judged differently in terms of modifiability, stability or educability. It is plausible to find low or lacking correlations between the ascriptions of the principle of incremental change in moral character, when separating positive or negative features.

The authors of the model argue that the theories are implicit, tacit, but can be elicited by direct questions (Dweck 1999). However, this recommendation runs a risk repeatedly revealed in experimental philosophy, a field that aspires to compensate the habit of armchair philosophers "to place their own intuitions into the mouths of the folk in a way that supports their own position – neglecting to verify whether their intuitions agree with what the majority of non-philosophers actually think" (Nahmias, Morris, Nadelhoffer, and Turner 2005, 562). At the same time, there is also a parallel effect, given by the poor collaboration between psychologists and ethicists that leads to a poor grasping of concepts. There is also the practice of adapting models from one area to another, oversimplifying a complex domain such as moral appraisal. So, researchers need to take a closer look to the content and dimensionality of this supposedly "unidimensional and defined by a unitary idea" construct of implicit theories applied to the domain of morality (Chiu, Dweck, Tong, and Fu 1997, 925). We think we need a new model of scales that takes into account the differences between the incremental nature of positive and negative traits, in both positive (the dissolution of vices and the building or strengthening the virtues) and negative direction (evolution of undesirable habits and behaviors and the degradation of virtues). Revising the theoretical validity of the concept is important. This could be made first by extracting emic definitions of good/bad traits, virtues or vices from lay subjects and then the specification of the model. We expect to discover various ways in which the concept unfolds on lay discourse, for instance: innateness or genetic determinism of good traits, character strengths and habits, innateness of the proneness towards immoral behavior, malleability or educability of virtues, instability or degradability of virtues (reversibility), controllability of vices or character flaws (dispersibility), and the incremental nature of vices. These new measures will be related to specific criteria (evaluation of the predictions people make based on present evaluation, that is, how lay people estimate the patterns of change and stability, on both positive and negative evaluative dimensions).

The conceptual and methodological solution to these issues could lead to a more accurate understanding of how people think of the organization and dynamics of moral features in individuals and groups. We also hope to bring light upon some of the inconsistent findings regarding the determinants and consequences of implicit theories.

Implications of the Study of Implicit Theories of Morality

Our question is related to how people think about traits that they so readily employ in everyday interactions and to what extent moral traits are permeable to external factors. At this point, we are neither interested in debunking the components and constraints that affect naïve moral psychology, nor in evaluating their accuracy. We only approach folk conceptions of morality with the attitude reflected in the following description of the relationship between scientific knowledge and folk conceptions of the world:

> whatever may be learned about folk science will have no relevance to the pursuit of naturalistic inquiry into the topics that folk science addresses in its own way (Chomsky 1994, 14).

This direction of research will ultimately inform the question of *how we make moral judgments*, and also the answer to *how we could improve our judgments*. Uncovering the processes of "judging" saints, heroes, sinners or villains and the specific enablers of the drifts from the sinning saint to the saintly sinner state and the reverse has several implications for social cognition and also for moral education.

First we need to explore the literature on moral judgments on how thinking about how morality and moral traits operate within the person affect the shape of moral cognitions and even behavior. Secondly, we need to test whether moral reasoning is malleable and whether folk or naive psychologies are responsive and permeable to new information. We could do this by changing the valence or the intensity of assessments of responsibility, biasing them towards more positivity, or, on the contrary, towards more negativity. Recognizing and correcting biases in moral folk psychology is crucial and would have an impact on many practical domains where moral judgments are inherent, such as justice or governance. This is similar to Harman's recommendations regarding physics:

> Ordinary untrained physical intuitions are often in error. (…) This means, among other things, that bombardiers need to be trained to go against their own physical intuitions. (Harman 1999, 315).

Debiasing lay perceivers or reducing the distortions brought by implicit person theories could ultimately become a goal of an understudied area in moral psychology.

Some progresses have been made in this direction. Yeager, Trzesniewski and Dweck (2013) implemented an intervention which reduces the consequences of bullying and victimization. They attempted to shape adolescents' perceptions regarding the person's potential to change. The majority of adolescents endorse entity theories and have a tendency to categorize people into typologies such as victims, aggressors, winners or losers (Yeager and Miu 2011; Yeager, Trzesniewqski, Tirri, Nikelainen, and Dweck 2011). Entity theorists were oriented toward vengeance (in other words they

prepare a hostile, aggressive answer for the transgressor, are more inclined to make hostile attributions), while incremental theorists are more inclined to choose prosocial, educational solutions (Yeager, Miu, Powers and Dweck 2013). Interventions described by these authors reduced hostile reactions and promoted more prosocial responses to norm violations.

As we have already noted, empirical approaches in moral psychology cannot be discussed independently of some central philosophical conceptual debates. Thus, analyzing the naive conceptualizations of character would be difficult without discussing the ontological status of traits or the components of moral character (how we ought to think about character). Although we are interested in the form and contexts of implicit theories of morality, not necessarily their accuracy, sophistication and elaboration, we are optimistic that philosophically informed empirical approaches of folk morality can benefit both areas of research. For instance, the debate between situationists and dispositionists may shed light on whether the instruments employed for measuring implicit theories of personality are accurate. One of the most often critique of situationism is that it mistakes the philosophical concept of virtue to a different view of character traits. According to this view, traits are rigid, associated with habitual or stereotypical patterns of behavior, ignoring the reflective, incremental quality of virtue. Other problems arise from the poor definitions that philosophers attach to their concepts: for instance, are these traits features of normal, psychologically healthy persons or are they ideals, prototypes of heroes, saints or other virtuous people.

Research should also explore whether the evaluative valences of traits are stable and whether this proposed dichotomy (on the axiological dimension – good/ bad or on the normative one – appropriate/ inappropriate or right/wrong) stand the empirical test. Previous research focused on convergent validation of implicit theories, and on their predictive validity. There are scarce attempts at finding suitable criteria for demonstrating that responses on the items designed to measure implicit theories of morality relate to the actual tendency toward making dispositional inferences. These new measures will be related to criteria such as evaluation of the predictions people make based on present evaluation, how lay people estimate the patterns of change and stability, on both positive and negative evaluative dimensions. Also, the issue of temporal stability is inadequately explored. Several state manipulations or primes indicate high sensitivity of the aspects but do not say much about the chronic resilience of the implicit theories. We believe that all these issues merits further theoretical debate and experimentation from philosophers and psychologists interested in both person perception, justice reasoning and moral appraisal.

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The Dynamics of the Roles of Aggressor and Victim in Bullying and Cyberbullying: A Challenge for the Resilient Development of Students[1]

Ana-Nicoleta Huluba Grigore

Abstract: The diversification of the current types of bullying among students due to the appearance of a new type of school violence, cyberbullying, has led to a series of reevaluations regarding the definition of school violence and the risks that are likely to appear in the education and development of students. The present paper offers a comparative analysis of the roles of the students involved in bullying and those of the students involved in cyberbullying. In the manifestation of the bullying behavior, students move easily from "being an aggressor face to face" to committing similar aggressions in the cyber environment. Meanwhile, traditional victims have new opportunities of expression via technologically mediated devices. Thus, in the current context, the game of violence among students creates much higher risks of developing long-term negative psychological consequences. However, students can also acquire effective ways of managing this problem, generating some positive consequences for their resilient development.

Keywords: bullying, cyberbullying, resilience, traditional aggressor, cyber aggressor, victimization

1. A New Form of Violence among Students: Cyberbullying

Current research on the topic of school violence shows the diversification of the forms of deviant behavior in the school environment as a result of their propagation in the virtual environment. Even if new acts of violence do not occur in the school yard, they represent forms of school violence because they have students as behavioral actors. Thus, aggressors have on hand a wider variety of harassment types, facilitated by technological resources, through which they can harm others. According to Menesini and Spiel (2012), the incidence of cyberbullying among students reaches the threshold of 10%. Most of the research on violence among students underestimates the actual number of students involved in cyber harassment. This underestimation is mainly the result

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of certain methodological limitations, respectively the use of broad spectrum items in the evaluation (Gradinger et al. 2010). Because cyberbullying has a much shorter history than traditional bullying, students are not sufficiently informed about its forms. Therefore, when asked about cyber violence, they tend to say either that they are not involved or that they are not aware of these types of behavior. However, when the evaluation targets specific behaviors, students identify a high percentage of these behaviors as being part of their conduct and of the conduct of their colleagues. Starting from this factual reality, the researchers of the harassment phenomenon in the school environment draw attention to the need for better information and popularization of what cyberbullying is, how it manifests and how we can defend ourselves from it (Ackers 2012).

Whether it takes place face to face or in the virtual environment, harassment among students implies the same development of a hostile behavior, repeatedly, with the purpose of harming a schoolmate. The relevance of the repetition of the phenomenon in time was recognized from the moment when traditional harassment was defined. As also recorded by Langos (2012), the unique expression of an act of harassment in the virtual environment can be replicated countless times. It is sufficient for a compromising picture to get into the online environment in order for the victim to suffer for an indeterminate period of time. The study performed by Smith et al. (2008) has indicated that approximately one third of the cases of cyber harassment were of short duration (up to about a month), but a quarter of them continued over an extended period of time (several months or even years). Even a single and brief experience as a victim of cyber harassment can have severe effects, given the wide audience that some technological channels may have. Thus, the intimidation image/video, respectively the distribution of abusive images of the victim in a group of friends, can have a devastating impact on the victim, sometimes more powerful than in case of traditional aggression.

The psychological consequences are similar, although there are differences in the specific forms of virtual harassment: more subtle, often anonymous, with an indirect contact between the victim and the aggressor. The victims of cyberbullying report low self esteem, feelings of solitude, disillusionment, lack of trust in people, in extreme cases leading even to harming themselves, just like the victims of bullying (Šléglová and Černá 2011). Regardless the form of aggression in which they are involved, victims feel grief, anger, sadness, fear, loneliness, frustration, invasion of privacy, irritation, hurt, depression (Patchin and Hinduja 2006), emotions that lead to an unhealthy lifestyle, of a poor quality, with negative effects in all areas of life. Ortega et al. (2009) have emphasized less significant emotional consequences in the case of cyberbullying, in comparison with bullying, although many emotional answers overlap. This result could be explained by the specificity of the *face to face* interaction, when victims have more emotional information about the

aggressors. Victims could better *read* the intentions of the aggressor and this aspect might affect their emotional answer as related to the aggression.

Comparing the impact of the situations generated by the traditional bullying and by cyberbullying, Smith et al. (2008) found that the photographs and videos, as well as phone calls, were perceived as being less harmful than the exposure to traditional harassment. Web pages and aggressions using text messages were considered by students to be as harmful as the traditional forms of bullying, while attacks via chat or email were perceived as being less harmful in comparison to bullying.

Virtual aggressors take advantage of the lack of real visibility, and the traditional imbalance of power can easily be overturned by technological means. Findings of educational practice show that some traditional victims of school harassment seek to rebalance their power status in front of the aggressor by appealing to the power of cyber resources. However, the hypothesis which argues that the status of aggressor or victim tends to remain in the virtual environment also exists. This was confirmed by a series of empirical research works (see Hinduja and Patchin 2012) that conclude that when it comes to bullying and cyberbullying we address the same populations of students for which these forms of violence coexist. Also, practice emphasizes the gender differences in what concerns the manifestations of the types of violence. The boys are champions, especially when talking about acts of direct violence.

An analysis, however brief, of cyberbullying reveals a number of differentiating characteristics compared to traditional bullying, which is why it is necessary to study it as a distinct phenomenon in relation to what is generically named violence among students.

2. The Aggressor and the Victim in School Bullying

School practice shows that boys are more prone to aggressiveness and more exposed to aggression than girls. The reports of acts of violence have as protagonists especially boys, accustomed to physical harassment. On the other hand, girls often resort to more subtle and indirect ways of harassment, for instance defamation, spreading rumors and manipulating friendship relationships. However, harassment using non-physical means, through words in particular appears to be the most common form of harassment.

Many results of research on this topic show that boys are more often aggressors in what concerns school violence and their victims are both boys and girls. More than 50% of the aggressed girls reported that they have been aggressed mainly by boys, another 15-20% say that they have been aggressed by boys as well as by girls. In case of boys, on the other hand, the vast majority, more than 80%, are aggressed mainly by boys. In short, boys are more often victims but also authors of aggressions. It is proved that the relations between boys are much tougher and more aggressive than those between girls (Olweus 1997). These differences have both biological roots as well as social and cultural

ones. Also, the fact that the transformation process in victim or aggressor is a long-term one, sometimes lasting for years, should be kept in mind (Olweus 1997).

The data collected so far clearly suggests that the personality features or the typical reaction patterns, in combination with physical strength or weakness in the case of boys, are important for the emergence and evolution of these behaviors in the school environment. At the same time, the environmental factors such as attitude, routine and behavior of important adults play a major role in determining the extent to which problems will manifest on a larger scale (Olweus 1997). The reaction pattern to violence offered by adults, as well as their involvement in managing the conflicts reported by children, are important in stopping or perpetuating violence in the educational environment.

The analysis carried out by Harcey (2007) shows that the victim may present the following characteristics: symptoms of depression, suicidal thoughts, feelings of loneliness, low self-esteem, anxiety, mental health problems, eating disorders, low popularity, and difficult sociability.

Some of these characteristics have most likely contributed in reaching the status of victims of aggression. At the same time, it is obvious that repeated harassment of colleagues must have increased considerably their uncertainty and evaluation, usually negative. Therefore, some of these characteristics are both causes as well as consequences of aggression. Also, there is a smaller number of victims, provocative victims or aggressive victims, victims which are characterized by a combination of the two reaction patterns, the anxious and the aggressive patterns. These students often have trouble concentrating and may struggle with reading and writing difficulties. They often behave in ways that can cause irritation and tension around them. Some of these students may be characterized as being hyperactive, their behavior being provocative in relation to the majority of colleagues, resulting in negative reactions from most of the class (Olweus 1997).

The most common type of aggressors usually have some of the following features, according to the analysis made by Harcey (2007): symptoms of depression, suicidal experience, mental health problems, eating disorders, substance abuse, deviation from norms (elements that span both in the criminal area and in the academic field), have friends that are aggressors and that are older and stronger, they make friends easily, they start dating from an young age and reach to an advanced level of the relationship, from a sociological and physical perspective are aggressive with their dates, have authoritative parents that are not receptive and supportive, there is a weak communication between the parents and the child, the lack of a role model in life, they come from a though environment, have suffered abuses when children, weak academic accomplishments, mediocre school adjustment, weak connection with school.

First of all, aggressors have a pressing need for power and dominance; they seem to enjoy holding control and the submission of others. Second of all,

taking into account the family conditions in which many of them were raised, it is natural to assume that they have developed a certain degree of hostility towards the environment. Such feelings and impulses can make them feel satisfaction by harming and causing suffering to others. Finally, there is clearly a favorable component for their behavior, which brings them benefits: aggressors may even come to compel the victims to provide them various goods or services (Olweus 1997). Furthermore, an aggressive behavior is in some cases considered to be a form of social prestige. When more students commonly engage in behaviors of intimidation of another student certain social/psychological mechanisms that occur within the group may appear. Some have been discussed in detail by Olweus (1997, 2001), the most significant being: social contagion; the decrease of control or inhibitions against aggressive tendencies; diffusion of responsibility; progressive cognitive changes in what concerns the perception of the aggression of the victim. All these mechanisms can contribute to the explanation of the fact that some students that are usually non-aggressive can eventually participate in various acts of aggression.

3. The Aggressor and the Victim in School Cyberbullying

Cyber harassment is similar to indirect intimidation, thus one may state that girls are more involved, although the technological aspect is more suited for boys.

Ybarra and Mitchell (2004) and Raskauskas and Stoltz (2007) have not discovered significant differences from a biological point of view for the aggressors and victims in cyberbullying. However, it has been found that girls are often the victims of cyber harassment. No differences of a biological type were recorded in the cases where the identity of the aggressors has been known, these being both boys and girls.

Smith et al. (2008) show in a qualitative study that cyber aggressors took part in the aggression *for fun*, not to show strength in front of colleagues, so they used technology instead of face to face confrontation. "Just for fun" is the expression often used by students in order to rationally explain why they bully others. To the extent to which that might be true, it raises the question of why some students think it would be fun to intimidate others. In cyber harassment, the culprit does not see directly, most of the time, the reaction of the victim; this may reduce gratification for students who enjoy seeing pain inflicted on others, but can also reduce any inhibition for the inflicted pain due to the lack of empathy to the suffering. The culprit can get equal rewards by spreading their abusive actions (photos or films), thus amusing those of the gang and building a broad audience involved in cyber harassment.

Some victims think that anonymity worsens the impact, but most of them feel that it is similar to the impact of traditional intimidation, while some think it has a lighter impact, because one is not physically hurt and one can prevent the actions of cyber harassment. Students have expressed their pessimism about the

possibility of preventing cyber harassment. This pessimism may be justified by the improbability for the intimidation to be annihilated. It was found that 5.5% of students said that they had been victims of the online environment, while 4.8% admitted they were virtual aggressors (Smith et al. 2008).

Virtual aggression consists of the relational dynamics of at least two well-defined positions: the aggressor and the victim. Its communication channels, instantaneity and lack of face to face contact, bring with them differentiating characteristics for cyberbullying (Smith et al. 2008). According to these authors, communication between the aggressor and the victim may be manifested in a variant continued in time and space. The author is often anonymous and the acts of cyberbullying always have an indirect nature, mediated by the technological resource.

The status of victim of harassment has a dynamic during the development stages of the student, decreasing significantly from 12 to 17 years old, according to Ortega et al. (2009). In what concerns virtual aggression, it has been found that the highest frequency of the behavior is manifested around the age of 14. The explanation for this phenomenon could be related to the fact that during teenage years (14-15 years old) courtship and dating begin. Contemporary adolescent socialization appears to include the widespread use of technology, particularly mobile phones and the internet.

The results obtained by Ortega et al. (2009) showed that the most common emotional response is rage; however, a significant number of victims were emotionally strong enough to declare that cyber attacks did not bother them. This finding can be interpreted in relation to the perceived emotional distance when a technological resource mediates the interaction or when the aggressor is unknown. The perception of anonymity may be interpreted as an element that protects victims of that disturbing social feeling.

In what concerns the biological gender (Barrett, et al. 2000 and Mestre, et al. 2006 apud. Ortega et al. 2009) it was found that women, more than men, said that they felt a number of negative emotions concerning the different types of attack. These results could be related to the finding that women show a greater level of accuracy in perceiving and understanding emotions. Also, they give a greater importance to social contacts; they invest emotionally in them, even when they are technologically mediated. It is also possible that men are not willing to admit that victimization affects them emotionally. The severity of the victimization was associated with different emotional consequences. The victims that have been severely affected by different types of aggression reported feelings of: embarrassment, stress, anger, depression and loneliness.

Bullying and cyberbullying produce similar emotional profiles, although specific differences are recorded. This overlap of the emotional consequences shows the similarity and the coexistence of the two phenomena in the lives of students.

4. Role Changing

The dynamic of the roles of aggressor and victim in bullying and cyberbullying has led to a series of research concerning the adoption, overlapping or exclusion of the possible statuses for the involved students. In what follows, we will analyze some conclusive results that will highlight the movement of students in these roles.

Ybarra and Mitchell (2004) investigated online harassment among users aged between 10 and 17 years old from the USA. 15% of students from the sample were online harassers, 51% of the online harassers were also traditional victims and 20% were cyber victims. These results emphasize an extensive overlap of the online harassment with traditional victimization and of the online harassment coexistence with the traditional victimization.

Slonje and Smith (2008) analyzed the coexistence of traditional victimization and harassment in the cyber environment. Subtracting the percentage of victims of cyber type from the number of victims of global type, 9% of the students were traditional victims. Of these, 10% were cyber harassers.

Raskauskas and Stoltz (2007) surveyed the relationship between electronic harassment, traditional harassment, electronic victimization and traditional victimization and analyzed if being a traditional harasser or victim anticipates the same status in the electronic environment also, and if being a traditional victim anticipated being a cyber harasser. Their analysis indicated that the harasser and victim statuses are maintained in the electronic environment also, almost all cyber harassers were traditional harassers and almost all cyber victims were traditional victims.

Kowalski, Limber, and Agatston (2008) have emphasized the connections between traditional harassment, cyber harassment, traditional victimization and cyber victimization in 3767 students from grades 6-8 from the USA. Based on student responses 21% have been identified as victims, 13% as harassers, 18% as harassers-victims and 48% as uninvolved students. Among harassers-victims of traditional violence a large percentage of cyber victims (36%) and cyber harasser (23%) were identified.

Gradinger et al. (2010) found that only some students are exclusively cyber victims. In turn, the majority of cyber victims were also traditional victims. These results emphasize the convergent character of the traditional and cyber forms of victimization. Moreover, the results obtained by Gradinger et al. (2010) show that the coexistence patterns are even more complex. Surprisingly, students were either traditional harassers-victims, or mixed harassers-victims. Few students that were harassers-victims manifesting themselves only in the cyber space have been found.

Research (Ybarra and Mitchell, 2004; Raskauskas and Stoltz, 2007; Slonje and Smith, 2008; Kowalski, Limber, and Agatston, 2008; Gradinger et al., 2010) shows that in the school environment there is a great movement of students

between the roles of aggressor and victim in traditional and cyber forms. The synthesis of research on the dynamics of the roles in bullying and cyberbullying shows that these forms of harassment coexist among pupils. We cannot speak of exclusive categories of students involved as aggressor or victim, exclusively in a form of harassment or another. Although there is the possibility for a traditional status to change into another, a cyber one, apparently the roles played in bullying are also kept in cyberbullying.

5. Controversies, Consequences, Discussions

The extension of violence among students is a warning signal to the leaders of the educational environment, in the context in which negative psychological consequences on the medium and long term for students involved in any form of harassment have been proved to exist. The study of these new types of aggressive behavior, of the dynamics of roles in the face to face and virtual socialization and of the emotional profiles of the involved students should contribute to the anti-violence strategy promoted in school. The educational policy against violence has as secondary objective to form life skills that necessary to approach every day challenges as well as resilient development in the future among students.

The intense research of the current forms of violence in the educational environment contributed to the finding of some paradoxical positive consequences of this phenomenon, important in the resilient development of students. Thus, Šléglová and Černá (2011) note that cyberbullying determined students to outline a cognitive prototype of the aggressor, subsequently used in different social situations that may fall into the category of risk situation. Thus, students can prevent interaction with people that they do not consider to be reliable. Also, it has been stated (Šléglová and Černá 2011) that the cyberbullying that takes place among students has increased the level of caution in using digital resources, especially those that are risky. If the entering on the market of technological devices, of the internet and of the mobile telephony has aroused a great deal of enthusiasm, especially among young people, now they understand that behind the attractiveness and usefulness of these resources risks that are to be treated with caution also exist.

In order to manage cyber harassment, students tried to adopt particular strategies determined by a number of individual factors as educational prevention and intervention policies in this area are still not firmly outlined and were not promoted enough in the school environment. Thus, students particularly adopt a defensive attitude in what concern technology. Whether they use pseudonyms or other means to protect their identity, students realize that the virtual environment is not always safe and that they need to take precaution measures against possible specific risks. Šléglová and Černá (2011) also note other recorded methods in the management of cyberbullying: dealing with the cyber aggressor when his identity was found, and seeking support from

colleagues or adults in order to solve the problem. However, practice shows that these strategies sometimes do not work (for instance, using online pseudonyms) and sometimes cannot be used (for instance, looking for support from adults). Therefore, prevention policies must focus on informing students about how to protect themselves in the virtual environment but also on adult training in the management of this phenomenon.

Olweus (2012) noted that it is unnecessary to approach cyberbullying in particular because the current prevention and intervention programs for traditional violence among students also take into account this form of manifestation. He also argued that cyber harassment is a phenomenon of a large scale, the number of acts of cyberbullying stagnating in recent years, and emphasized at the same time that students that are faced with this kind of harassment usually experience the others also. Although his expertise and arguments are powerful, there are some discussions that attack his position.

Smith (2012) believes that the understatement of cyberbullying in Olweus's vision is due to the implications regarding his popular anti-bullying program, in which great resources have been invested during the last years and which should be rethought. Smith (2012) agrees that the incidence of cyberbullying is small compared to bullying. These phenomena almost cannot be taken separately. Although during the last years the phenomenon of face to face violence stagnates, cyber harassment has increased. Smith (2012) believes that, in order to talk about cyberbullying, a theoretical collaboration from many fields (psychology, pedagogy, law, computer science and technical sciences) is necessary. He also believes that cyberbullying exceeds by far the school context, being hard to find a space in which its negative effects cannot occur. This researcher shows that the definition of the concept of cyberbullying shifts from the definition of bullying, so that new programs and prevention and intervention strategies must be considered. In his conception, cyberbullying is a form of indirect harassment, which can be anonymous. The aggressor does not see the reaction of the victim, so his desire to display power cannot be highlighted, but one must insist on his purpose to harm the victim. The audience that a victim of cyberbullying can have is much higher than in the case of traditional violence. Witnesses have the possibility to be with the victim when attacked, with the aggressor when committing the offense or anywhere else in the virtual space. Thus, in the case of cyberbullying also, intervention strategies should include witnesses (the largest category of students involved) to this behavior among those who can be trained to fight against the spread of this phenomenon.

It has already been shown that in the case of cyberbullying not using new technologically mediated devices or the lack of experience in traditional violence do not protect the potential cyber victims (Lacherza and Conti 2013). Anyone can be attacked in the online environment, victimization could be transmitted by other users through which the harassment action takes effect and reaches the victim. Many research studies attest the quality of the school climate as a first

protective factor before the onset of cyber harassment (Bayar and Uçanok 2012). Thus, even if we cannot prevent the multitude of forms of aggression that can occur in the virtual environment, one of the objectives of the resilient development from the point of view of this scourge remains the consolidation of the school climate quality and of the positive relationships between students. Cyberbullying is equally present in most industrialized countries (Vazsonyi et al. 2012), representing an unfortunate consequence of the technological progress. In such a context, victims may adopt a zero tolerance attitude to harassment; they can face the aggressor or seek support from colleagues and teachers.

In order to deal with it, we have on hand a variety of examples of good practices adopted by the developed countries, which ultimately rely on the human being's return to his or her natural social features, to authentic communication, to the strengthening of relationships between peers and the abandonment of unhealthy habits.

6. Conclusions

Although traditional forms of aggressions still prevail in schools, the development of technology accelerates the assault of cyber attacks in students' lives. In cyberbullying, the differences of gender, age or role (aggressor, victim or witness) are insignificant or can easily be violated by technological opportunities, like anonymity. At the same time, the roles played by the students in bullying are adopted in the cyber space social behavior. This phenomenon penetrates the social area of nowadays student's life. The consequences of virtual aggressions go beyond the school perimeter, becoming very dangerous for the student's development. A single act of virtual aggression may lead to extreme consequences for the victim. The conclusions of previous research urges the people responsible with school safety, in order to avoid the growth of the number of students reporting victimization and to support the development of prevention and intervention skills in the case of cyberbullying. The implication of students in cyberbullying and bullying constitutes a very common behavior in nowadays educational context, as the previous studies show. The two types of schools violence need to be analyzed independently, but also in their interdependence in order to be understood in their entirety.

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REVIEWS

Cristina-Georgiana Voicu, *Exploring Cultural Identities in Jean Rhys' Fiction*, Walter De Gruyter, Berlin, 2014.
Website: http://www.degruyter.com/view/product/246960?format=G

In a world where the last stage of the decadent postmodernity interferes with the initial period of trans-modernism, Cristina Voicu proposes a complex type topic concerning *cultural identity*, within a fictional context, applied to the creation of the Dominican writer Jean Rhys. In the extensive theoretical introduction, "Identity in the Postcolonial Paradigm," which occupies nearly a third of the volume, comprising seven different chapters, including "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," "Types of Cultural Identity," "Hybridity versus Cultural Alterity," "Caribbean Cultural Creolization," the author starts with the basic lines (etymological, for instance) to subtle comments surprising the relationship between diaspora and hybridity, for example, considering the kind of genetic of the identity constructs and invoking famous names like Anthony Smith, Stuart Hall, William Connolly, Robert Young, Frantz Fanon, Paul Gilroy, and many others. The main thesis from which it starts is to identify the postcolonial cultures as hybrid, fragmented due to the geo-social process beyond, in the broad sense of the word, implying the de-territorialization of those cultures, together with their protean becoming as well as their trans-culturalization. Here, C. Voicu insists on fractal identities, i.e. on those almost metonymic fictional aspects, which preserve the whole, while dissociating the notional pairs such as: margin versus center or master versus slave, continuing with little shades related to super-syncreticism and hyper-hybridity.

On one hand, it outlines the subtle idea of *exoticism* in a contiguous relationship with the concept of (cultural) *otherness*, the image of the "Black Atlantic" as a defining symbol of such literature, of Jean Rhys, who the author deals with in detail. The exotic show of this novelist merges the power of marginality seduction that paradoxically takes, positive characteristics, therefore a "strategic exoticism." On the other hand, it refers to the conceptual couple *exploration-taking,* by which the sense of any individual's identity is determined to a large extent by the exploration and assumptions on which the individual makes in respect of certain personal and social traits. Such demarcations take place in the analysis on the main writings of Jean Rhys: *Wide Sargasso Sea, Voyage in the Dark, Good Morning, Midnight, After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie, Tigers are Better-Looking* thoroughly and profoundly interpreted. Moreover, the author examines the presence of the mirror used by the female character, as an instrument of duplication, and at the same time, the link between identity and alterity in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, meaning the continuation of a deep self-reflection. In the chapters on Etnocentrism and Eurocentrism, there

are some implications of racism, and then a variety of cultural relativism is pursued. In addition, in the chapter "Ethnicity, Identity, Masculinity," the masculine overwhelms the colonial representation, when the womanhood is frequently inserted in the post-colonial paradigms; therefore, the identity crisis of the mid-twentieth century is the only option of the fictional and non-fictional characters from the literature. This leads to a kaleidoscopic identification with the genuine self, up to a point, at the narrative level, and to the intertextuality, at the level of the text itself. In *Voyage in the Dark,* the author notices that the main character, Anna, takes refuge in a world dominated by illusion produced by alcohol, to circumvent the real world, on the one hand, and create a new, distorted, but more authentic for the character's world, thus illustrating the need for integration in the English society, and the resistance to it, on the other. Therefore, eloquent or recurrent expressions such: The girl I saw was myself yet not quite myself" or the obsessive words such as "too much" on the extra light, on the life of the Caribbean region, achieve the tenuous distinction line between *idio and alter*, which can lead, in another sense, to a serious schizoid state or just to a simple ambivalence.

The critical study of Cristina Voicu could have also been called, *In Search* of *Identity* because the approach mainly focuses on identifying the particles of the self to all these characters, generally female, together with the clotting of a singular portrait that should expose the special features of the artistic discourse supported by Jean Rhys. The mixture of races, the strangeness of the names, the mix of the specific sounds and colors build the Caribbean imaginary and the legends circulating in this space are frequently mixed with the realistic writing notes: "To conclude, Jean Rhys insists on literary allusions, multi-focality and on various facets of the same reality, which stands for the disconnected form of the narrative structure, and the casual reference to the intertextual relationships of her stories." A relevant observation is that on the writer's pre-texts inducing the configuration of the text itself, such as letters and book excerpts, overheard conversations and gossip and the multi-subject perspective, which includes the alternative focus on the inner states of various characters. Memory as the dominant lens, sometimes convex, sometimes concave, usually augments the feelings of all who use it. Sometimes the use of adverbs (*never, always, sometimes*) manages to capture the seriousness and levity feelings invested in the middle of the narrative. Finally, the insinuation of *madness* seen as a supra-character melted in verbal clichés or in deconstructivist pictures of some rooms, is a poignant look into the meaning and significance of these books as the performed hermeneutics indirectly warns us. In this contextualization, Charles Sanders Pierce's semiotics comes to mediate some relations between showing and telling, or presentation and mediated narration, or mimesis and diegesis in Jean Rhys' fiction, which may be at the limit of the short story and novel ("The frequent repetition of 'laugh' and 'smile' will be analyzed in a selection of extracts from *Wide Sargasso Sea*, in which these items occur under different

types of laughter. Thus, a linguistic sign, which appears to signify a new order, turns out to identify the power structures of the novel"). The symbolism of dreams is another decryption key of the facts, and especially of the characters' thoughts involved in the epic progress. In the chapter "Power-textualization" the force lines of the argument in terms of the condition of exile and self-exiled protagonists are drawn – "Living in a world almost totally isolated from any human contact, the women in Jean Rhys' short stories persistently refuse to abandon their stubborn freedom from social ties. They suffer from their exiled condition yet they refuse to belong as if theywere doomed never to be at home wherever they went."

In fact, in this respect, we might speak of undermining the *exotic* category in favor of the indoor confinement, almost ignoring the lush, overwhelming (outside) nature, the reader ultimately assisting to a kind of *endotic* diction, i.e. to reverberations of the repressed contemplation. Thus, sometimes, the autobiographical pact is not followed, the labyrinthine impression of the characters' psychology being permanently emphasized. In the precious final conclusions, C. Voicu states that "In the Caribbean world, Rhys suggests that memory is malleable and imagination is influential," in other words, the extensive colonial space alter somewhat the insular inside time and, paraphrasing, the self becomes important for the Caribbean identity, because of the previous slavery, of the racial métisage and créolisation, all the characters' traits being contaminated of different cultural and racial shades, more intense than in the common European vision. It is remarkable that the author is dealing with a literary niche area concerning the Caribbean writings which always arouse the reader's interest, and she aims in detail at the ambivalence of the narrative structures specific to Jean Rhys, of the hybrid books of short stories, which seem to reach everyone, but which challenge us to further reflect on the fundamental phrase meaning (from *Wide Sargasso Sea*) – "There is always the other side, always."

Amalia-Florentina Drăgulănescu

Cristina-Georgiana Voicu, *Exploring Cultural Identities in Jean Rhys' Fiction*, Walter De Gruyter, Berlin, 2014.
Website: http://www.degruyter.com/view/product/246960?format=G

Jean Rhys is an author of intense interest and in *Exploring Cultural Identities in Jean Rhys' Fiction*, Cristina-Georgiana Voicu examines her oeuvre from a rigorous perspective grounded in contemporary critical theory. Jean Rhys (1890, island of Dominica – 1979, Exeter, United Kingdom), the offspring of a Welsh doctor and a third generation creole mother, had a tumultuous life marked by three mercurial marriages, periods of alcoholism, hand-to-mouth poverty, prostitution, and rage. Thought to be dead but merely living in obscurity, she was rediscovered when her masterpiece, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, was published in 1966. She was hailed as one of the finest and most original writers of the century.

Voicu applies critical concepts that embrace both the life and texts of Jean Rhys and analyze how both are extraordinarily interrelated. These include creolization, doubling, hybridity, alterity, colonialism, and fractal identities among others. Voicu posits that in order to understand the Caribbean self it is important to analyze Creolization between the Caribbean and Europe. "It is quite clear that the ambivalence of cultural identity in Rhys' novels is to be found in the cultural Creolization occurring among overlapping and conflicting Caribbean boundaries, histories and identities." She makes effective use of Seymour Chapman's diagram of narrative structure (*Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*, 1978) which begins with the real author and then the implied author and after a series of analytic steps emerges with the implied audience and finally the real audience. In the case of more conventional writers both the author and the fictional persona might be thought of as experiencing exile and return from exile. Voicu cogently describes how Rhys' fiction and reality both expose a homelessness existing between culture, between histories. Belonging nowhere. Voicu demonstrates that in the novels she analyzes the fractal identities are "broken, irregular, fragmented, grainy, ramified, strange, tangled, wrinkled." Voicu uses the concept of hybridity cogently both as the expression of simultaneous cultural identities and as the existential anxiety that arises from estrangement. For Voicu both Rhys' life and fiction contain "in nuce the idea of mixture, combination, fusion, mélange. The metaphor of hybridity, in which cultures are seen as 'floating together,' leads to the existence of a 'fluid identity.'" Moreover, Voicu analyzes the "relationship between cultural hybridity and alterity: the creation of a transcultural diasporic hybridity ('shifting homeland' and 'travelling identities'), from within the 'contact zone,' produced by the colonizing process… It is a view that deals with borders, the overlaps, and the in-between places, between two or

more cultures." For the epigraph of her scholarly analysis she selects the perfect quote: "There is always the other side, always." — Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*

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Call for Papers
Special Issue:
The Sustainable Development Goals

Guest editors:

- Stefan Cibian, Visiting Professor, Department of Political Science, Babes-Bolyai University, (stefan.cibian@gmail.com);
- Ana-Maria Lebada, Adviser on Post-2015 Agenda, Permanent Mission of Romania to the United Nations, (lebada.anamaria@gmail.com);
- Thomas Pogge, Leitner Professor of Philosophy and International Affairs, Yale University (thomas.pogge@yale.edu).

Two cross-cutting debates about development are preoccupying officials, academics and civil society groups in the middle of this decade. One concerns the evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), due to expire at the end of 2015. Some describe them as the most successful poverty eradication effort ever, others as a fraud or abysmal failure. The other debate is about the formulation of the MDGs' successors, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to be adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2015 and meant to guide development efforts until 2030. What goals, targets and indicators should be included in the final document? Who should be involved in the drafting process and how?

Symposion is inviting contributions that enrich the ongoing debates on the SDGs and related concepts, theories, policies, methodologies and practice. This special issue aims to illuminate the conceptual, institutional, systemic and procedural frameworks underpinning the new goals. The number of SDGs proposed, 17, constitutes a substantial increase from the 8 MDGs and will pose a serious challenge to the international community. At the same time, the expansion of areas covered by the proposed SDGs invites critical reflection. The participation of a wide web of local, national, and international organizations, both in the implementation of the MDGs and in the preparatory process of the SDGs, reflects a rich fabric of stakeholders and of policy choices and practices. How responsive is the process through which the SDGs are shaped to the current global realities, to the local realities of developing countries and to the experience with the MDGs? What are the structural implications of adopting such goals and what are the institutional preconditions for achieving them? What would an effective monitoring and accountability mechanism for the SDGs look

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like? How do the SDGs differ from the MDGs, and what impact might these differences have? How do the SDGs fit into the broader UN post-2015 development agenda? What are the major challenges to their implementation? We welcome interdisciplinary work addressing these and related questions.

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Please submit your manuscripts electronically by the 1st of June 2015 to symposion.journal@yahoo.com. Authors will receive an e-mail confirming the submission. All subsequent correspondence with the authors will be by e-mail. When a paper is co-authored, one author should be identified as the corresponding author.

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