

December 2017 Request to University of Lugano: Comitato Etico (for Cases 11 and 12)

-----Original Message-----

From: Boas Erez [mailto:boas.erez@usi.ch]
Sent: Wednesday, December 06, 2017 4:13 AM
To: Dougherty, Michael <dougherm@ohiodominican.edu>
Cc: federica.de.rossa@usi.ch; andrea.rocci@usi.ch
Subject: Re: Application for Comitato Etico dell'USI

Dear Professor Dougherty,

I thank you for your message, which we shall treat with the necessary attention.

Sincerely,

Boas EREZ

Rector

Da: Dougherty, Michael <dougherm@ohiodominican.edu>
Inviato: lunedì, 4 dicembre 2017 16:10:15
A: De Rossa Gisimundo Federica; Ivan.Cherpillod@unil.ch; Pedroli Andrea; Cerutti Davide; Martinoli Piero; Erez Boas; Rocci Andrea; Erez Boas
Cc: Dougherty, Michael
Oggetto: RE: Application for Comitato Etico dell'USI

Dear Prof. De Rossa Gisimundo and Members of the Comitato Etico dell'USI:

I have attached to this email in PDF format my application for a review of suspected scientific misconduct. The attached application contains a cover letter with my formal request for an investigation as well as the documentation of suspected scientific misconduct. I leave to your discretion whether my application should be seen as a supplement to the first investigation conducted by the Comitato Etico in accord with the Committee's instructions to me in the email of March 8, 2016.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to hearing from the Committee.

Sincerely,

Michael Dougherty

Michael V. Dougherty, Ph.D.
Sr. Ruth Caspar Chair in Philosophy
Professor of Philosophy
Ohio Dominican University
1216 Sunbury Road
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(614) 251-4680
dougherm@ohiodominican.edu<mailto:dougherm@ohiodominican.edu>

From: Federica De Rossa [mailto:federica.de.rossa@usi.ch]
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2016 4:30 PM
To: Dougherty, Michael <dougherm@ohiodominican.edu>; Ivan.Cherpillod@unil.ch
Cc: Andrea Pedroli <andrea.pedroli@usi.ch>; Davide Cerutti <davide.cerutti@usi.ch>; piero.martinoli@usi.ch; Dougherty, Michael <dougherm@ohiodominican.edu>
Subject: R: Application for Comitato Etico dell'USI



December 4, 2017

Comitato Etico dell'USI
c/o Istituto di Diritto dell'USI
att. Dr. Federica De Rossa Gisimundo
Via G. Buffi 13
6900 Lugano, Switzerland
federica.de.rossa@usi.ch

Dear Prof. De Rossa Gisimundo and Members of the Comitato Etico dell'USI:

I am writing to request that the Comitato Etico investigate two additional cases of suspected scientific misconduct for articles appearing in print under the name of Prof. Peter Schulz of the Faculty of Communication Sciences at Università della Svizzera italiana. I seek the university's support for published statements of retraction for these two articles:

Case A: Peter Schulz, "Subjectivity from a Semiotic Point of View," in *Nordic-Baltic Summer Institute for Semiotic and Structural Studies, Part IV. Ecosemiotics: Studies in Environmental Semiosis, Semiotics of the Biocybernetic Bodies, Human / Too Human / Post Human*, edited by Eero Tarasti, Richard Littlefield, Lotta Rossi, Maija Rossi (International Semiotics Institute, 2001): 149-159.

Case B: Peter J. Schulz, "Subjectivity before and after Badiou," *Subject Matters: A Journal of Communications and the Self* 1, No. 2 (2004): 67-81.

These two articles are currently promoted on the USI website as part of the University's research output ([Case A](#); [Case B](#)). I make my application in accord with the understanding that the Comitato Etico "is responsible for all reports concerning suspected cases of plagiarism or any other scientific misconduct by staff and faculty."¹ I also note that the Faculty of Communication Sciences promotes the view that one is "guilty of plagiarism when he/she submits a piece of written work containing one or more portions copied or closely paraphrased from an unidentified original, without acknowledging the source or formally quoting."² Included with this letter of application are the retraction requests sent to the editors and publishers for Cases A and B, along with documentation highlighting the verbatim and near-verbatim overlap of text.

The total number of published corrections to be issued by editors and publishers for works appearing under the name of Prof. Schulz currently stands at **10** (four retractions, three errata, and three corrigenda).

These two new cases involve the apparent undocumented appropriation of the words of Pope John Paul II (Karol Wojtyła), Sir Anthony Kenny, Charles Taylor, among others. I ask the Comitato Etico for a determination of whether academic plagiarism has been committed, in light of the University's stated

¹ <https://search.usi.ch/en/organizational-units/379/ethics-committee>

² <http://www.com.usi.ch/regolamento-studi-com-2008-en-39555.pdf>

definition of plagiarism and scientific misconduct, and for support for the correction of the scholarly record through published retractions in accord with the norms of scientific integrity.

I believe the Comitato Etico is aware of at least one of these two new cases, as the Deputy University Secretary at London Metropolitan University reports that earlier this year the materials for Case B were submitted to Prof. Andrea Rocci, Dean of the Faculty of Communication Sciences at USI.

Earlier this year, the research integrity office at University of Amsterdam (UvA) completed its investigation into three articles co-authored by Prof. Schulz and Prof. Meuffels, and it concluded with mandated published corrections for two of them. (UvA was unable to come to a conclusion regarding the remaining article when the suspected victim – a graduate student – decline to participate in the investigation.) I believe the final report by UvA has been shared with the Comitato Etico after its finalization of its conclusion earlier this year. Of the two mandated corrections, one has appeared in print already, and the other is currently in press.

The work of UvA supplements the earlier work by the research integrity officer at Virginia Tech (VT), who examined three articles co-authored by Prof. Schulz and Prof. Nakamoto. In the VT report, which was forwarded to the Comitato Etico, the research integrity officer determined that “substantial plagiarism has occurred that extends beyond reasonable repetition of common statements, that there is misrepresentation of who has done the research stated in these articles, there is a lack of proper citations, and there is extensive use of other’s statements verbatim.”

The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) also investigated three articles that were published under grant NRP 46 Implants and Transplants (4046-58627) with Prof. Schulz as the first author of record. Of these three, one has been retracted, a second received an erratum in *Swiss Medical Weekly*, and the third (to my knowledge) is currently unresolved. A *Forschungsrat* at SNSF served as an unnamed source for a curious article about the matter that appeared in [Neue Zürcher Zeitung](#) earlier this year.

Thank you for your commitment to scientific integrity. If you could kindly acknowledge that my application and request have been safely received, I would be grateful.

Respectfully,



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To: federica.de.rossa@usi.ch; piero.martinoli@usi.ch; davide.cerutti@usi.ch; andrea.pedroli@usi.ch; boas.erez@usi.ch; Ivan.Cherpillod@unil.ch; andrea.rocci@usi.ch

Comitato Etico – Confidential



April 12, 2017

Prof. Dario Martinelli
Director
International Semiotics Institute
Professor
Kaunas University of Technology
Faculty of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities
A. Mickevičiaus 37, LT-44244
Kaunas, Lithuania

Dear Prof. Martinelli:

We, whose signatures are below, are the current instructor and students with the Honors Program at Ohio Dominican University (USA) in a course titled *HON 379: Critical Research and Writing*. The purpose of this upper-level Honors course is to consider scholarly research from the point of view of justice.

We have observed that a chapter appearing in a volume published by the International Semiotics Institute appears to fall short of adequate citation practices. It is:

Peter Schulz, "Subjectivity from a Semiotic Point of View," in *Nordic-Baltic Summer Institute for Semiotic and Structural Studies, Part IV. Ecosemiotics: Studies in Environmental Semiosis, Semiotics of the Biocybernetic Bodies, Human / Too Human / Post Human*, edited by Eero Tarasti, Richard Littlefield, Lotta Rossi, Maija Rossi (International Semiotics Institute, 2001): 149-159.

The chapter appears to consist substantively of texts pieced together from various authors without quotation marks, either with inadequate attribution or no attribution at all. The document accompanying this letter highlights select passages from the article that are taken verbatim or near verbatim from works by other authors.

As the document makes evident, the fundamental problem is that readers of the chapter have no way of knowing that sentences and paragraphs that appear to be written by Prof. Schulz are in fact verbatim and near-verbatim extracts from other authors. A range of citation problems appear to plague the chapter; even when at times the original sources are listed in the bibliography and referenced with an in-text citation, in the absence of quotation marks the reader has no way of knowing that the sentences are verbatim the work of authors other than Prof. Schulz.

For significant portions of the article, the writings of Pope John Paul II, Anthony Kenny, and Calvin Schrag appear in the article, and no reference to their work is given anywhere in the chapter. We believe that these three undocumented sources in particular constitute the core of the article.

We ask you to consider whether the conditions of academic plagiarism have been met on the basis of this evidence of suspected plagiarism.

We believe that the publication of this chapter may constitute a serious breach of publication integrity. Its inclusion within the repository of published works creates a situation where credit may be due to those original authors whose books and articles have apparently been misappropriated.

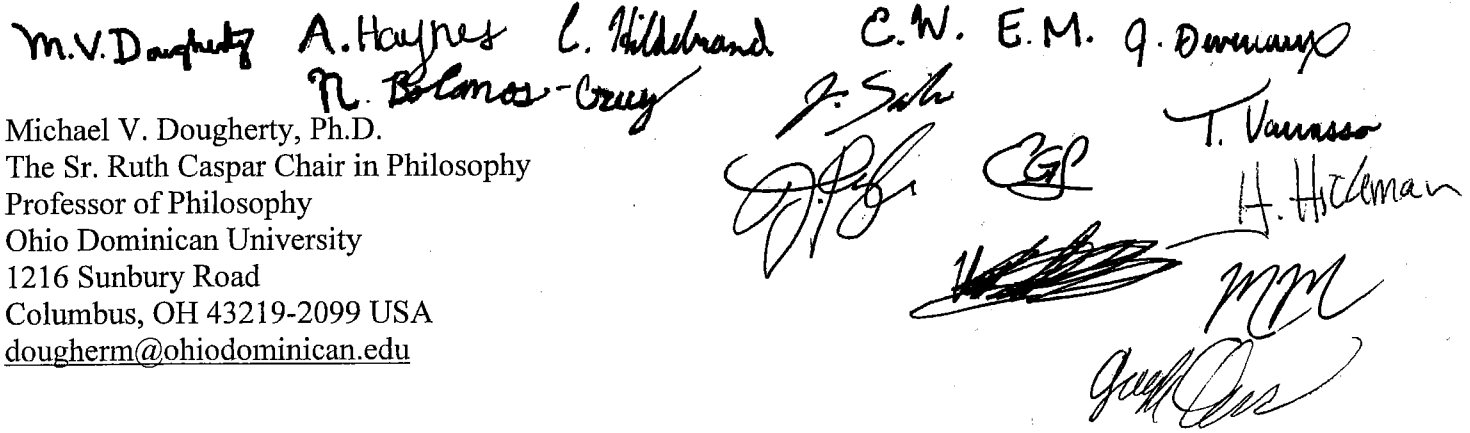
For these reasons, we are writing to request that the International Semiotics Institute issue an online statement of retraction of the chapter for plagiarism, if the enclosed evidence is considered to be sufficient. In doing so, ISI will be following the best practices for correcting the scholarly record in this digital age. As we understand it, other corrections of the scholarly record for 9 other works by Prof. Schulz have appeared (or will shortly appear) by editors and publishers on the basis of inadequate citation practices.

While we understand that this is a delicate matter, we are convinced that publication integrity and high reputation of the International Semiotics Institute in the world of learning require a correction of the scholarly record whenever plagiarism has been demonstrated.

We should note that we have no relationship with Prof. Schulz; we have never met, corresponded with, nor seen him. There is nothing personal in our request for the correction of the scholarly record. In our view, any unretracted plagiarized articles contaminate the scholarly record in various ways: they deny genuine authors the credit they deserve for their discoveries, they distort the genealogy of ideas, and they corrupt the bequest of human knowledge passed on to the next generation of students and researchers.

Thank you for taking up this matter, and we look forward to hearing your reply. For future correspondence, please consider Prof. Dougherty (dougherm@ohiodominican.edu) to be the notifier in this case.

Sincerely,



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PETER SCHULZ

Subjectivity from a Semiotic Point of View

1. Preliminary Remarks

I would like to say something here about the concept of subjectivity from a semiotic point of view. Of course I am not the first to deal with this problem. Though subjectivity has received little attention by semioticians in the past, this situation has changed dramatically in the last decade. It is now by no means unusual to find articles or entire monographs dealing with subjectivity, written in English, French or other European languages. An interest in subjectivity in semiotics is no longer an eccentricity; one might even say that it has recently become fashionable. Semiotics involves the study of signification, but signification cannot be isolated from the human subject who produces and is defined by it. So if the topic needs no apology, some preliminary remarks on the sense of this ambiguous term might nevertheless be helpful.

Among linguists the notion of *subjectivity* concerns the expression of self and the representation of a speaker's – or, more generally, a locutionary agent's – perspective or point of view in discourse (cf. Stein & Wright 1995). Among other professional students of language, the word *subject* and its derivative *subjectivity* tend to evoke a grammatical association: subject as distinct from direct object, for example. In some contexts, *subjectivity* contrasts with objectivity in suggesting something "soft", unverifiable, even suspicious. The notion of subjectivity plays various roles in European languages (Lyons 1982: 101). While the English "subjectivity" has recently acquired a somewhat pejorative connotation, by virtue of its opposition with a positivistic interpretation of "objectivity", the French "subjectivité" and the German

Silverman
p. 3

Finegan
p. 1

Lyons,
p. 101

"Subjektivität" do not necessarily carry this negative connotation of unreliability and failure to correspond with the facts.

Lecerclé 19

Lecerclé
p. 95

Since Benveniste elaborated this distinction in a series of articles (1956, 1958, 1959, 1963), the French School of linguistics has focused on the dichotomy of *sujet de l'énoncé* / *sujet de l'énonciation*, where the grammatical subject, as bearer of subjecthood, is sharply distinguished from the speaker, as bearer of subjectivity. That this dichotomy is needed is beyond doubt. The grammatical subject is the subject that occupies a place in a sentence, and that either does things or has things done to it. This becomes interesting when the position of the grammatical subject is filled by the first-person singular pronoun, "I". What does the I-sayer say in saying "I"? Could it be identified with the Cartesian subject? Here, the noun *subjectivity* denotes the property of being what in the modern, post-Cartesian, philosophical tradition is called a subject of consciousness or a thinking subject. This is the property of being what Descartes himself referred to as a *res cogitans* and identified, as others have done, with the self or the ego.

Lecerclé
p. 1

Lyons
p. 11

Alongside this philosophical sense of "subjectivity", to which I shall return, the term can also mean "the quality or condition of viewing things exclusively through the medium of one's own mind or individuality" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). For example, in talking about films or novels we often employ such expressions as "from our point of view". This is one way to introduce subjectivity. Subjectivity in this case has to do with our special way of "perceiving" and also, perhaps, with "feeling". In this way we refer to someone's perception. For it is clear that the term is not used to describe primarily what the film is about – a particular character, topic or theme – but rather, to explain how the film presents itself to us.

Branagan
p. 1

There is a derived meaning of this sense of "subjectivity". Dealing with films or literature we may distinguish between what is told by the story and the telling of a story. Every kind of narrative text in a broad sense could be analyzed

from the angles of what is spoken of, told, seen, and heard, as well as from the point of view of a character inside the text. In this derived sense, subjectivity refers to the narration given by a character in the narrative. Subjectivity here refers to the perceptual context of every utterance within the text, whether the utterance is explicit or implicit. Thus we find subjectivity in every narration, each level of which implicates a subject that is not necessarily identical to the author of the narration (it could also be a fictional subject). Here I do not consider this coincidence of meaning between the "subjectivity" of the author as well as of the subject of narration as the condition of viewing things exclusively through the medium of one's own individuality.

p. 2

2. The Emphatic, the Reflexive, and the Substantive "Self"

Let me now address "subjectivity" in terms of how it concerns the mind or the consciousness of oneself with respect to the world. Subjectivity from this point of view seems to deal with what Thomas Sebeok defines as the "semiotic self":

"The notion 'semiotic self' registers and emphasizes the fact that an animate [sic] is capable of absorbing information from its environment if and only if it possesses the corresponding key, or code. There must exist an internalized system of signposts to provide a map to the actual configuration of events. Therefore, 'self' can be adequately grasped only with the concepts and terminology of the doctrine of signs. Another way of formulating this fact is that while living entities are, in one commonly recognized sense, open systems, their permeable boundaries permitting certain sorts of energy-matter flow or information transmissions to penetrate them, they are at the same time closed systems, in the sense that they make choices and evaluate impulses, that is to say, in their semantic aspect." (Sebeok 1989: viii)

The last part of Sebeok's statement seems especially interesting. How can we avoid the contradiction one may see here between the semiotic self as both an open and closed system? Although this description of the self seems to be a nicely precise point of departure for semiotic studies on subjectivity, it might be helpful to complete this description with a few remarks, in order to avoid difficulties with the concept of self. It could even be objected that the self in semiotics is a mythical entity. To deal with this objection, we first have to realize that there is a rather clear idea of the meaning of "self", if we consider the intuitively obvious distinction between the emphatic and reflexive senses of the term (cf. Kemmer 1995). The emphatic sense of "self" focuses attention on a particular participant, as the following sentences indicate:

Kemmler
p. 56

- (1) I *myself* won't participate.
- (2) I wanted Marco *himself* to tell me.

On formal grounds, the emphatic sense of self is always stressed to some degree. Moreover, the emphatic "self" has the function of identifying a referent that is salient in the discourse, in contrast to other, potential referents that are just mentioned or might be mentioned.

p. 66

The reflexive uses of "self", however, are necessarily unstressed, as the following examples show:

p. 56

- (1) The old horse heaved *himself* out of the mud.
- (2) In those seventeen days he had earned *himself* more fame than in twenty years at the bar.

p. 63

Sometimes there occurs a certain misunderstanding of the reflexive pronoun "self", especially if it is used in a "philosophical" sense. We find this,

for example, in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which gives one meaning of the word "self" as follows: "That which in a person is really and intrinsically he (in contradistinction to what is adventitious); the ego (often identified with the soul or mind as opposed to the body); a permanent subject of successive and varying states of consciousness".

At one level, I would argue that this conception of the self constitutes a misunderstanding of the reflexive pronoun. To ask what kind of substance my "self" is, is like asking what the characteristic of "ownness" is, an attribute which my own property has in addition to being mine. When, outside philosophical reflections, I talk about myself, I am simply talking about the human being, Peter Schulz, and my self is nothing other than myself. In some way it is a philosophical muddle to allow the space which differentiates "my self" from "myself" to generate the illusion of a mysterious metaphysical entity distinct from, but obscurely linked to, the human being who is talking to someone.

Kenny, p. 4

→
N.B. "Anthony Kenny"
replaced with "Peter
Schulz"

The grammatical error which is the essence of the theory of the self may seem obvious when it is pointed out. But it is by no means easy to give an accurate account of the logic, or deep grammar, of the words "I" and "myself". It will not do, for instance, to say simply that "I" is the word each of us uses to refer to himself, a pronoun which, when it occurs in sentences, is synonymous with the name of the utterer of the sentence. This is not difficult to show. Julius Caesar, in his *Commentaries*, regularly described his own actions in the third person, using the name "Caesar". Let us imagine a language in which there were no first person pronouns, and in which everyone talked about themselves by using their own names. We can ask whether everything we can say in English can also be said in this language. The answer is clearly no. If Caesar wishes to deny that he is Caesar, then in English he can tell the lie, "I am not Caesar". In the special language no similar option is open to him. "Caesar is not Caesar" doesn't work, and neither does "the person who is speaking to you is not

p. 5

Caesar", because in the special language, that sentence if spoken by Caesar is equivalent to the English sentence, "The person who is speaking to you is not I". The truth is that "I" does not refer to the person who utters it in the same way in which a proper name refers to its bearer, and neither does "myself". (That does not mean that these words refer to something else, say, myself.)

Kenny,
p. 6,
p. 7

I shall not pursue the grammatical issues further here. Certainly, the belief in a self is in one sense a grammatical error, which has different roots. One of these roots is the notion of the self in Cartesian scepticism. Descartes, in his *Meditationes*, convinces himself that he can doubt whether he has a body. He then goes on to argue, "I can doubt whether I have a body; but I cannot doubt whether I exist; for what is this I which is doubting?" The "I" must refer to something of which his body is part, and hence to something which is not a part of the human being Descartes. The Cartesian ego is a substance whose essence is pure thought; it is the mind, or *res cogitans*. This is the self in the second of the philosophical senses identified by the *Oxford English Dictionary*, "the ego identified with the soul or mind as opposed to the body".

It is well known that Peirce, too, criticized this conception of the Cartesian self (cf. Colapietro 1989; Singer 1984; Bernstein 1971; Thompson 1953). His critique of Descartes and of the prevailing Cartesianism of modern philosophy denied that we have the powers of introspection, of thinking without signs. All knowledge of the internal world is derived from hypothetical inferences drawn from knowledge of external facts. Peirce tells us that reality is accessible to man because man himself is a sign. This is one of Peirce's most radical assertions, and it is also one of his most important. Man – and by "man" Peirce means that which is constitutive of the human subject – does not only know the world through language; he is himself the product of language.

Silverman,
p. 17, 18

There exists another misguided contributory to of the notion of self. It is found in empiricist philosophy, and it derives from a particular conception of introspection. The empiricist self is, by definition, essentially the subject of

Kenny,
p. 12,
p. 14

inner sensation. The self is the eye of inner vision, the ear of inner hearing, etc. The self, as inner subject, can clearly not be discovered by the outer senses, which perceive only the visible, audible, tangible exterior of things. But can it be discovered by the inner sense either? It is well known that Hume failed to locate the self. For empiricism, the self is an unobjectifiable subject, just as the eye is an invisible organ.

p. 15

p. 16

3. *Subjectivity and the Irreducible in the Human being*

Pope John Paul II /
Wojtyla, p. 209

Let me now come to the closing part of my reflections, which will be less analytical and more constructive. My point of departure is a well known text in Émile Benveniste's *Problems in General Linguistics*. Benveniste has already suggested a sense of subjectivity, which seems to me a promising point of departure for the description of "subjectivity" from a semiotic point of view:

Schrag, p. 122

It is in and through language that man constitutes himself as a *subject*, because language alone establishes the concept of "ego" in reality, in its reality which is that of the being. [...]

The "subjectivity" we are discussing here is the capacity of the speaker to posit himself as "subject". It is defined not by the feeling which everyone experiences of being himself ... but as the psychic unity that transcends the totality of the actual experiences it assembles and that makes the permanence of the consciousness. Now we hold that that "subjectivity", whether it is placed in phenomenology or in psychology, as one may wish, is only the emergence in the being of a fundamental property of language. "Ego" is he who says "ego". (Benveniste 1971: 224)

N.B.: the quotation
preserves Schrag's
omission of italics

Schrag
p. 123

In this rather dense passage there are several things to be considered. Firstly, when Benveniste claims that "'Ego' is he who says 'ego'" he does not mean that the "I" is the causal result of a speech act. "I" is an index, an indicator that points to and makes manifest the "who" of the saying. The "I" as the one who is speaking is implicated in the saying. Secondly, in the sentence "'Ego' is he who says 'ego'", Benveniste underscores the word "says". This may indicate that saying is not only vocalization, the physiological process of uttering sounds; nor is it simply the execution of an individual speech act. It is the saying of something by someone. This "someone" is certainly the speaking subject, not in the idealistic sense of the pure presence of consciousness, but the subject immersed in the density of the life of "praxis" in the Aristotelian sense. So by the use of the pronoun "I" the idea of being a subject is formed: The speaking subject – the only one who can refer to himself as "I" – primarily manifests the idea of his existence.

Cola-
pietro,
p. 33

What is most important in the present context is the fact that the speaking subject, embodied in the life of praxis, is not situated beyond the boundaries of semiotic inquiry. The passage of the "Ego" seems to be important since it could be understood as an indicator of the primordial uniqueness of the human being, and thus for the basic irreducibility of the human being to the natural world. This assumption forms the basis of understanding the human being as a *person*. Traditional Aristotelian anthropology was based on the definition of *anthropos zoon noetikon (homo est animal rationale)*. This definition fulfills Aristotle's requirements for defining the species (human being) through its proximate genus (living being) and the feature that distinguishes the given species in that genus (endowed with reason). At the same time, however, the definition is constructed in such a way that it excludes – at least at first glance – the possibility of accentuating the irreducible in the human being. In this definition the human being is mainly an object, one of the objects in the world to which the human being visibly and physically belongs. In this

Pope
John
Paul II /
Wojtyla
p. 211,
210

perspective, objectivity was connected with the general assumption of the reducibility of the human being. The term *subjectivity*, on the other hand, proclaims that the human being's proper essence cannot be reduced and explained by the proximate genus and specific difference. In other words: Subjectivity is a synonym for the irreducible in the human being.

If it is correct to assume that subjectivity mainly concerns that which can be called the irreducible element in the human being, there are some consequences as well as further questions, which I briefly mention:

- (i) "Subjectivity", in the sense of the irreducible element in the human being, could be a plausible explanation of why the term "subjectivity" is often used in the sense of "individuality".
- (ii) The irreducible element should be understood as something which is present and is an hypothesis which works implicitly within the subject, who cannot objectivize it, although it does emerge in personal experience. Following from this point the question arises, In what kind of *praxis* does the subject experience itself as irreducible to the surrounding world? Is the process of semiosis, as Peirce has described it, a special kind of this human praxis?
- (iii) The irreducible element of the human being does not, however, mean anything that isolates the human being, nor that makes it impossible to recognize someone other than oneself.

Schrag,
p. 125

The last point reminds us again of the passage from Benveniste, in the sense that the subject is implicated not as an isolated speaking subject but as a subject whose mode of being in discourse is essentially that of being able to speak with other subjects. In the saying of "I", the indexical posture of "I" is dialectically bonded with the posture of "you" as the one being addressed. I as speaker emerge in the presence of you as hearer. In other words and less

Schrag,
p. 125

metaphorically: the speaking subject – the only one who can refer to himself as "I" – primarily manifests the idea of existence. And this idea is not confined to an individual (personal) experience: If I refer to myself with the pronoun "I" and then you refer to yourself with the same pronoun – it means that I and you have something in common; we have the same existential status. Given that you can refer to yourself by the same pronoun "I", by means of which I also refer to myself, it follows that we both are recognized as subjects – as persons with the same existential status. Thus the idea of being a subject acquires an objective meaning: the acknowledgement of a common experience. So the indexicality of "I" as speaker achieves sense only in relation to "you" as hearer. But this brings us to another topic: the issue of subjectivity and intersubjectivity from a semiotic point of view.

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ISI CONGRESS PAPERS

NORDIC-BALTIC SUMMER INSTITUTE FOR SEMIOTIC
AND STRUCTURAL STUDIES PART IV
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ECOSEMIOTICS:
STUDIES IN ENVIRONMENTAL SEMIOSIS,
SEMIOTICS OF THE BIOCYBERNETIC BODIES,
HUMAN/ TOO HUMAN/ POST-HUMAN,

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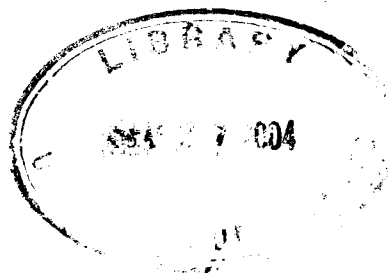
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Peter Schulz, "Subjectivity from a Semiotic Point of View," in *Ecosemiotics: Studies in Environmental Semiosis, Semiotics of the Biocybernetic Bodies, Human / Too Human / Post Human*, Nordic-Baltic Summer Institute for Semiotic and Structural Studies, Part IV, edited by Eero Tarasti, Richard Littlefield, Lotta Rossi, Maija Ross (Imatra: International Semiotics Institute, 2001): 149-159, at 153-154.

Anthony Kenny, *The Self. The Aquinas Lecture, 1988* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 1988), 4-7.

in a misunderstanding of the reflexive pronoun. To ask what kind of substance my "self" is, is like asking what the characteristic of "ownness" is, an attribute which my own property has in addition to being mine. When, outside philosophical reflections, I talk about myself, I am simply talking about the human being, Peter Schulz, and my self is nothing other than myself. In some way it is a philosophical muddle to allow the space which differentiates "my self" from "myself" to generate the illusion of a mysterious metaphysical entity distinct from, but obscurely linked to, the human being who is talking to someone. The grammatical error which is the essence of the theory of the self may seem obvious when it is pointed out. But it is by no means easy to give an accurate account of the logic, or deep grammar, of the words "I" and "myself". It will not do, for instance, to say simply that "I" is the word each of us uses to refer to himself, a pronoun which, when it occurs in sentences, is synonymous with the name of the utterer of the sentence. This is not difficult to show. Julius Caesar, in his *Commentaries*, regularly described his own actions in the third person, using the name "Caesar". Let us imagine a language in which there were no first person pronouns, and in which everyone talked about themselves by using their own names. We can ask whether everything we can say in English can also be said in this language. The answer is clearly no. If Caesar wishes to deny that he is Caesar, then in English he can tell the lie, "I am not Caesar". In the special language no similar option is open to him. "Caesar is not Caesar" doesn't work, and neither does "the person who is speaking to you is not Caesar", because in the special language, that sentence if spoken by Caesar is equivalent to the English sentence, "The person who is speaking to you is not I". The truth is that "I" does not refer to the person who utters it in the same way in which a proper name refers to its bearer, and neither does "myself". (That does not mean that these words refer to something else, say, myself.) I shall not pursue the grammatical issues further here. Certainly, the belief in a self is in one sense a grammatical error, which has different roots. One of these roots is the notion of the self in Cartesian scepticism. Descartes, in his *Meditationes*, convinces himself that he can doubt whether he has a body. He then goes on to argue, "I can doubt whether I have a body; but I cannot doubt whether I exist; for what is this I which is doubting?" The "I" must refer to something of

in a misunderstanding of the reflexive pronoun. To ask what kind of substance my self is is like asking what the characteristic of ownness is which my own property has in addition to being mine. When, outside philosophy, I talk about myself, I am simply talking about the human being, Anthony Kenny, and my self is nothing other than myself. It is a philosophical muddle to allow the space which differentiates "my self" from "myself" to generate the illusion of a mysterious metaphysical entity distinct from, but obscurely linked to, the human being who is talking to you. The grammatical error which is the essence of the theory of the self may be in a manner obvious when it is pointed out. But it is an error which is by no means easy to correct; that is to say, it is by no means easy to give an accurate account of the logic, or deep grammar, of the words "I" and "myself." It will not do, for instance, to say simply that "I" is the word each of us uses to refer to himself, a pronoun which when it occurs in sentences, is synonymous with the name of the utterer of the sentence. This is not difficult to show. Julius Caesar, in his *Commentaries*, regularly described his own actions in the third person, using the name "Caesar" [...]. There might be a language, call it Caesarian, in which there were no first person pronouns, and in which everyone talked about themselves by using their own names. We can ask whether everything we can say in English can also be said in Caesarian. The answer is clearly no. If Caesar wishes to deny that he is Caesar [...], then in English he can tell the lie, "I am not Caesar." In Caesarian no similar option is open to him. "Caesar is not Caesar" will not do the trick. Nor will "the person who is speaking to you is not Caesar." For in Caesarian that sentence in Caesar's mouth is equivalent to the English sentence, "The person who is speaking to you is not I." The truth is that "I" does not refer to the person who utters it in the way in which a proper name refers to its bearer. Neither does "myself." This does not mean that these words refer to something else, say, my self [...]. I do not intend to pursue further the grammatical issues explored earlier. For though the belief in a self is in one sense a grammatical error, it is a deep error and one which is not generated by mistaken grammar alone. The error has a number of different roots: [...] root of the notion of the self is Cartesian scepticism. Descartes, in his *Meditationes*, convinces himself that he can doubt whether the world exists, and whether he has a body. He then goes on to argue, "I can doubt whether I have a body; but I cannot doubt whether I exist; for what is this I which is doubting? The "I" must refer to something of

<p>which his body is not part, and hence to something which is not a part of the human being Descartes. The Cartesian ego is a substance whose essence is pure thought; it is the mind, or <i>res cogitans</i>. This is the self in the second of the philosophical senses identified by the <i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>, “the ego identified with the soul or mind as opposed to the body”.</p>	<p>which his body is no part, and hence to something which is no more than a part of the human being Descartes. The Cartesian ego is a substance whose essence is pure thought, the mind, or <i>res cogitans</i>. This is the self in the second of the philosophical senses identified by the O.E.D. “the ego identified with the soul or mind as opposed to the body.”</p>
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<p>Peter Schulz, “Subjectivity from a Semiotic Point of View,” in <i>Eosemiotics: Studies in Environmental Semiosis, Semiotics of the Biocybernetic Bodies, Human / Too Human / Post Human</i>, Nordic-Baltic Summer Institute for Semiotic and Structural Studies, Part IV, edited by Eero Tarasti, Richard Littlefield, Lotta Rossi, Maija Rossi (Imatra: International Semiotics Institute, 2001): 149-159, at 156-157.</p>	<p>Pope John Paul II / Karol Wojtyla, “Subjectivity and the Irreducible in the Human Being,” in <i>Person and Community: Selected Essays</i>, trans. Theresa Sandok (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), 209-217.</p>	
<p>the primordial uniqueness of the human being, and thus for the basic irreducibility of the human being to the natural world. This assumption forms the basis of understanding the human being as a person. Traditional Aristotelian anthropology was based on the definition <i>o anthropos zoon noetikon</i> (<i>homo est animal rationale</i>). This definition fulfills Aristotle's requirements for defining the species (human being) through its proximate genus (living being) and the feature that distinguishes the given species in that genus (endowed with reason). At the same time, however, the definition is constructed in such a way that it excludes – at least at first glance – the possibility of accentuating the irreducible in the human being. In this definition the human being is mainly an object, one of the objects in the world to which the human being visibly and physically belongs. In this perspective, objectivity was connected with the general assumption of the reducibility of the human being. The term subjectivity, on the other hand, proclaims that the human being's proper essence cannot be reduced and explained by the proximate genus and specific difference. In other words: Subjectivity is a synonym for the irreducible in the human being.</p>	<p>the primordial uniqueness of the human being, and thus in the basic irreducibility of the human being to the natural world [...]. This belief stands at the basis of understanding the human being as a person [...]. // Traditional Aristotelian anthropology was based, as we know, on the definition <i>o anthropos zoon noetikon</i>, <i>homo est animal rationale</i>. This definition fulfills Aristotle's requirements for defining the species (human being) through its proximate genus (living being) and the feature that distinguishes the given species in that genus (endowed with reason). At the same time, however, the definition is constructed in such a way that it excludes—when taken simply and directly—the possibility of accentuating the irreducible in the human being. // In [...] the definition <i>homo est animal rationale</i>, the human being was mainly an object, one of the objects in the world to which the human being visibly and physically belongs. Objectivity in this sense was connected with the general assumption of the reducibility of the human being. Subjectivity, on the other hand, is, as it were, a term proclaiming that the human being's proper essence cannot be totally reduced to and explained by the proximate genus and specific difference. Subjectivity is, then, a kind of synonym for the irreducible in the human being.</p>	<p>John Paul II / Wojtyla, 211</p> <p>John Paul II / Wojtyla, 210</p> <p>John Paul II / Wojtyla, 211</p>

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March 29, 2017

Prof. Jon Baldwin, Editor
Prof. Nick Haeffner, Editor
Prof. Wendy Wheeler, Editor
Subject Matters
London Metropolitan University
41-47 Commercial Rd
Whitechapel, London
E1 1LA, UK

Dear Prof. Baldwin, Dear Prof. Haeffner, Dear Prof. Wheeler:

I have observed that an article appearing in a journal published by London Metropolitan University appears to fall short of adequate citation practices. It is:

Peter J. Schulz, "Subjectivity before and after Badiou," *Subject Matters: A Journal of Communications and the Self* 1, No. 2 (2004): 67-81.

The first page of the article indicates that the copyright is held by London Metropolitan University, and the article is currently advertised on the university website on its own landing page.¹ The article appears to consist substantively of texts pieced together from various authors without quotation marks, either with inadequate or no attribution. The document accompanying this letter highlights select passages from the article that are taken verbatim or near verbatim from works by other authors.

As the document makes evident, the fundamental problem is that readers of the article have no way of knowing that sentences and paragraphs that appear to be written by Prof. Schulz are in fact verbatim and near-verbatim extracts from other authors, including Prof. Charles Taylor (McGill University, CA), Prof. Thomas K. Carr (University of Mount Union, USA), and Prof. Paul Santilli (Sienna College, USA).

I ask you to consider whether the conditions of academic plagiarism have been met on the basis of this evidence of suspected plagiarism, in accordance with London Metropolitan University's stated position that "research misconduct can take many forms" including "plagiarism: using other people's material without giving proper credit."²

I believe that the publication of this article constitutes a serious breach of publication integrity. Its inclusion within the repository of published works creates a situation where credit is due to those original authors whose works apparently have been misappropriated.

¹ <http://archive.londonmet.ac.uk/jcamd/index.cfm%3F7A453084-DE71-BF44-89E5-CB3B946E1957.html>

² <http://student.londonmet.ac.uk/media/london-metropolitan-university/london-met-documents/professional-service-departments/research-office/policies-/The-Concordat-To-Support-Research-Integrity.pdf>

For these reasons, I am writing to request that London Metropolitan University place a clear online statement of retraction of the article for suspected plagiarism on the abovementioned online landing page for the article. In doing so, the university will be following the best practices for correcting the scholarly record in this digital age. It appears that the journal is not publishing new issues; nevertheless, as issues of the journal are part of the scholarly record and currently belong to libraries worldwide, a correction of the scholarly record on the landing page of the article would repair the situation. I also request that labels indicating the retraction be sent to libraries that possess the print version of *Subject Matters* in their respective collections, in accordance with the best practices for correcting the scholarly record. To date, 9 corrections of the scholarly record for other works by Prof. Schulz have appeared or will shortly appear by editors and publishers on the basis of inadequate citation practices.

Additionally, there is a second article involving Prof. Schulz in the same issue of *Subject Matters*, and I ask whether you, as editors, would consider whether it should also be retracted:

“Response to Peter Schulz,” *Subject Matters: A Journal of Communications and the Self* 1, no. 2 (2004): 83-89.

This article appears at first glance to be a round-table discussion where Prof. Schulz expounds upon the preceding article. The four other participants seem unaware that words that appear to be Prof. Schulz’s in the preceding article are those of Prof. Taylor, Prof. Carr, and Prof. Santilli. One of the examples explicitly discussed by Prof. Schulz – both in the original article and in the round-table discussion – is an unreferenced borrowing from Prof. Taylor. The three participants of the round table give the appearance of believing that they are discussing an original work by Prof. Schulz. I ask that you consider publishing a statement of retraction also for this second article on its London Metropolitan University landing page.³

While I understand that this is a delicate matter, I am convinced that publication integrity and high reputation of London Metropolitan University the world of learning require a correction of the scholarly record. I ask you to consider, after the examination of the evidence of suspected plagiarism, whether the situation requires the abovementioned remedies to correct the scholarly record.

I should note that I have no relationship with Prof. Schulz; I have never met, corresponded with, nor seen him. There is nothing personal in my requests for corrections of the scholarly record. In my view, unretracted deficient articles contaminate the scholarly record in various ways: they deny genuine authors the credit they deserve for their discoveries, they distort the genealogy of ideas, and they corrupt the bequest of human knowledge passed on to the next generation of students and researchers. I make my requests for the sake of maintaining integrity in the world of learning.

Thank you for taking up this matter, and I look forward to hearing your reply.

Sincerely,



Michael V. Dougherty

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³ <http://archive.londonmet.ac.uk/jcamd/index.cfm%3F7A4C8B02-09E3-2A38-6F33-AD4205B5D08B.html>

Subjectivity before and after Badiou

Peter Schulz
University of Lugano

Introduction

The title of my paper indicates already that I will try to avoid speaking about details of Badiou's work. Instead, I will put his *Ethics* in the tradition of other thinkers on subjectivity, asking how he takes up important issues which stem from this tradition. In this light, Badiou's *Ethics* is a fascinating book and, at the same time I would call it a courageous book, in particular because it aims to reconsider the question of the human *as subject*. 'Subject' and 'subjectivity', taken in its modern sense as an autonomous, free agent has been, of course, challenged by postmodernism. We have all heard about the death of the subject. In what follows I shall attempt to interrogate the draft of Badiou's concept of the subject. I shall try to make clear how, according to Badiou, the subject in its root meaning of 'some-one who is *subjected* to an enduring event', is a subject of 'becoming'.

Badiou's critique of the ethic of human rights

It comes as little surprise that Badiou's concept of subject and subjectivity is deeply rooted in his own concept of ethics. Not only modern concepts of subjectivity have been developed against the background of an ethical framework (for instance, Kant - to this point I will come back later on). In what Badiou is arguing against the modern concept of ethics, I want to distinguish two main claims. (1) First of all, according to Badiou, human rights are not "a body of self-evident principles capable of cementing a global consensus" (p. 10). That is to say: human rights do not possess any unquestionable fundament, and, consequently, they cannot impose themselves strongly. I want to understand this claim in the following way: referring to human rights, one should always consider that he or she refers to something which rightly might be contested, argued against. Human rights might be considered as a kind of what the Greeks have called an *endoxa*, some agreement among people without any strength to impose that agreement onto another group of people. I do not want to discuss this claim further, also because it seems to be rather plausible.

Highlighted text overlaps with:

Paul C. Santilli, "Badiou's Ethic of the Truth Event"
World Congress of The International Society for Universal Dialogue,
Pyrgos, Greece, May 18-22, 2003 (<https://www.scribd.com/doc/99670787/Radical-Evil>)

Santilli,
p. 4

Let me immediately come to the next, more challenging, claim we find in Badiou's *Ethics*: (2) that human rights are usually defended by referring to that which Badiou calls a "general" or "universal" human Subject. Of course, we are immediately able to identify the source of this claim, namely Kant's ethics or his attempt to define modern ethics by the strategy of 'universalisation'. For Badiou, this must be challenged. The main argument he provides for his own challenge to ethics, then, is that "Ethics is conceived here both as an a priori ability to discern Evil [...] Good is what intervenes visibly against an Evil that is identifiable a priori" (p. 8). Nowhere is this point of Badiou better demonstrated than in the predominant language of human rights and liberal notions of procedural justice. This, says Badiou, is really a language of evil rather than a language of good. Indeed, it is quite easy in such a scenario to name the violations of rights: rape, murder, lies, manipulation of opinion, and so forth. But the Good cannot be named in and for itself. This is exactly the point which Badiou terms the paradigmatic evil, "radical evil", which he scathingly rejects as a kind of modern "ethical ideology" of human rights.

Badiou identifies and castigates the concept of 'radical evil' and he does so for three reasons:

- First, it turns man into a victim, a "suffering beast", an "emaciated, dying body", which equates "man with his animal substructure", while denying him his subjectivity and his immortality (p. 11). According to Badiou human beings transcend the condition of being mere animal life to the extent that they express something more than their abject suffering, mortality and shame: "For this 'living being' is contemptible, and he will indeed be held in contempt." Efforts which have been made in the name of 'human rights' taint those who suffer from famine, disease, and cruel oppression with the pathetic passivity of victimization and deny them their full humanity as beings of thought, intention, and transcendence - in short as 'Immortals'.
- Secondly, Badiou states that exponents of the human rights justify their ideology by a most devastating sophistry: every effort to unite people around a positive idea of the Good turns sooner or later into totalitarian nightmare. From the standpoint of the ideology of human rights there does not exist any source from which man will draw the "strength to be the immortal he is" (p. 14).
- Finally, the fantastic linkage of particular crimes with the horrifying paradigms of absolute ('radical') evil presents ethics from "thinking the

Schulz: 'presents'
Santilli: 'prevents'

singularity of situations as such". All victims become the same victim; all tyrants are compared with Hitler. One demonic figure rolls into the next in the "axis of evil" and obscures the real needs of real individuals. As an example, Badiou cites the doctor who is caught up in an official medical bureaucracy that sets out categories of illness and abstract "rights" to health care, but who has "no difficulty accepting the fact that this particular person is not treated at the hospital" (p. 15). Against the coloration of abstract rights and totalitarian evils, Badiou pleads for an ethics of "singular situations".

Badiou's critique of the ideological framework of the ethics of human rights leads him to introduce and define the ethic of truth. It is within this, his ethic of truth, that we find and might discuss also his concept of subjectivity. To understand this we need first to ask about the meaning of truth and its relation to ethics for Badiou.

The Ethic of Truth

According to Badiou, truth has to be considered at the background of an event that breaks into the order of being and understanding, interrupting and changing the "normal" and ordinary way of being. This "truth-that-happens" (Santilli 2003:5) might occur in the main domains of human life such as in politics (e.g. the French and Chinese Cultural Revolutions), in science (Grothendieck's creation of Topos theory), in arts (Haydn's classicism or Schoenberg's twelve-tone compositions) or in ordinary human relation (falling in love, e.g. Héloïse and Abélard), to take some of the examples cited by Badiou. Corresponding to these main domains there exist - according to Badiou - four fundamental subjective 'types': political, scientific, artistic, and amorous [*amoureux*] (p.28). In his previous book *Saint Paul et la fondation de l'universalisme* (1997), Badiou had already introduced his concept of truth as a fidelity to an event: Saint Paul articulates Christ's resurrection as an intrusion of a traumatic and scandalous Truth which revolutionizes the world and transforms human beings who are faithful to this event into new (wo)men. Now, in his *Ethics*, he renders this concept more precisely, bringing together truth as the unique requirement for becoming a subject. The idea of truth as a subject-making, breakthrough event might be described as something which previously enters into the circumstances:

It is thus an immanent break. 'Immanent' because a truth proceeds in the situation, and nowhere else - there is no heaven of truths. 'Break' because what enables the truth-process - the event - meant nothing according to the prevailing language and established knowledge of the situation (pp. 43-43).

From this concept of truth as an immanent break, Badiou derives his ethics. Ethics is constituted by "the principle that enables the continuation of a truth-process" (p. 44), and consists fundamentally in a single imperative: "Do all that you can to persevere in that which exceeds your perseverance. Persevere in the interruption. Seize in your being that which has seized and broken you" (p. 47). This single imperative Badiou calls the principle of consistency or fidelity to fidelity. It is exactly by means of this principle that anybody is allowed to become a subject: "I call 'subject' the bearer [*le support*] of a fidelity, the one who bears a process of truth. The subject, therefore, in no way pre-exists the process. He is absolutely nonexistent in the situation 'before' the event. We might say that the process of truth *induces* a subject." (p. 43). Precisely, speaking, Badiou's concept of subject, then, is that of an *ethical* subject: it is one who experiences a split in his or her being between the mundane, self-interested situations of life and the extraordinary disinterested spirit of truth and who is able to sustain this split in all its tension, without giving up one side or on the other. The subject's primary obligation is to remain faithful to the transformative event and to the particular finite situations to which it applies (without terrorizing those who do not subscribe to it).

Sources of Badiou's concept of Subjectivity

Before I assess Badiou's theory of subject and subjectivity, let me first address the basic points of the tradition which are present in an explicit or implicit way in his text. This will help us to sharpen the view of Badiou's own ethics as well as his concept of subjectivity. Although several other sources are easily recognizable, I shall concentrate in the following on three principal references, one of them expressly mentioned by Badiou, namely Emmanuel Lévinas. Both of the other references are only briefly mentioned; nevertheless, I wish to refer to them here since they at least elaborate something which is very close to Badiou's idea of subjectivity. The first is Plato and his existential concept of truth, the other is Martin Heidegger and his distinction between the 'man' and the true 'self'.

a) Lévinas' 'ethics of the other'

First of all, Badiou's discussion of Emanuel Lévinas' 'ethics of the other' is obviously an important and explicit point of reference. Badiou shows the utmost respect for the thinking of Levinas and his 'ethics of difference' or 'ethics of the other'. Lévinas' ethics displaces the privilege of the subject through the operation of the alterity of the

face. And, as Badiou rightly puts it, we find in Lévinas' ethics a "radical, primary opening to the Other" as "ontologically anterior to the construction of identity".

Lévinas proposes a whole series of phenomenological themes for testing and exploring the originality of the Other, at the centre of which lies the theme of the face, of the singular giving [donation] of the Other 'in person', through his fleshly epiphany, which does not test mimetic recognition (the Other as 'similar', identical to me), but, on the contrary, is that from which I experience myself ethically as 'pledged' to the appearing of the Other, and subordinated in my being to this pledge (pp. 19-20).

In comparison to Lévinas's thoughts, the contemporary, "postmodern" ethics of difference, multiculturalism, and of tolerance - all of which Badiou thinks derive from the kind of configuration of the other proposed by Lévinas - are trivial, with "neither force nor truth." What makes Lévinas profound, according to Badiou, is that radical alterity, which appears in the "face" and speech of the other, attests to an "Altogether-Other" or God: "There can be no ethics without God the ineffable" (p. 22). And,

Without the supposition of an epiphany of the infinite in the expression of the other, shaking me from my comfortable complacency, any contemporary ethics of difference, otherness, or multiculturalism becomes "pious discourse without piety [...] and a cultural sociology preached, in line with the new-style sermons (p.23).

If there is no absolute Difference, then all there is are differences between human beings, "the infinite and self-evident multiplicity of humankind, an obvious fact, without particular ethical value or interest for thought" (p. 26).

For Badiou there is no God and no Altogether-Other behind the infinite multiplicity and alterity in the human race, and consequently no way to found an ethic on recognition of the other.¹ Therefore he cannot follow Lévinas in annulling Greek philosophy in favour of a religiously grounded ethics. Moreover, besides the question of whether the fundament of Lévinas' ethics can be so neatly identified with the God of Judaism as Badiou states, his critique of Lévinas is quite remarkable for another point. He writes: "To put it crudely: Lévinas's enterprise serves to remind us, with extraordinary insistence, that every effort to turn ethics into the principle of thought and action is essentially religious" (p. 23). As we have already mentioned, Badiou, instead of founding an ethics on thought and action, will look for his ethics in the encounter with a true event, that he designates as a revelation of the Same, in keeping

Highlighted text overlaps with:
 Thomas K. Carr, "Only A God Can Save Us,"
First Things 55 August/September 1995 57-62,
 at 59-60.

of significance also because the concept itself includes necessarily a subject for whom something is *becoming* an event. The large stone which falls on the road is not an event, but it might become such an event if right in this moment I am travelling on the road and, consequently, the stone hinders my progression and prevents me from achieving my foregoing goal. Of course, Badiou also introduces the event as something which happens for someone; but he does not mention, nor does he seem to consider, the fact that it is by means of certain purposes of human's agency that something which happens becomes an event. In neglecting purposes of human agency neglects his considerations of the subject, and hence the matter of the quality of subjectivity. Consequently it remains unclear in what the change from *some-one* to a *subject* actually consists. The last point will become still more clear if, in the following we refer to another traditional distinction which might be considered as a source of Badiou's ethics: Martin Heidegger's notion of "man" and the "true self".

c) Heidegger's distinction between the 'man' and the true 'self'.

Let us now come to the next central thesis of Badiou which runs as follows: in the very sense of the term "subject" lies the fact that only by means of an event somebody becomes him or herself. Before this event happens, one is considered as 'some-one', not yet a subject. Now, let me briefly compare this description with Heidegger's distinction between the 'man' and the 'true or authentic self' (Heidegger 1927: § 27). 'Man' is a German expression for the generic subject – the "they" whose beliefs and behaviours make up the "average everydayness" of human existence. The essence of human nature, proclaims Heidegger in a phrase later exploited by Sartre, is always a product of existence, of being-in-the-world, which is to say the public world of societal norms and rituals. This "publicness," this "being-with-one-another," may be essential to the societal fabric, but it has devastating consequences for human nature as such. For in our "thrownness" into the 'groupthink' of society we come to exist not on our own terms but on those of what Heidegger calls "das Man". As such, most of us thus naturally "fall" into this tempered mode of existence, prefer and are even happy not to think for ourselves, but to follow, instead, the routines and fashions of those around us.

What Heidegger has in mind with his distinction between the 'authentic self' and the 'man' might be described in other terms as the difference between an authentic or inauthentic way of living. Authentic living, according to Heidegger, consists in the fundamental realization that "truth" exists not in the people and institutions among which we are thrown, but is in us as beings who are faithful to our own existence. For

Heidegger, famously, truth is *aletheia*, the Greek a-privative signifying the "un-" as in "un-coveredness" or "un-concealment,"; this entails that truth is an "event" which happens "when something is presented to us as it really is, without any concealment or distortion." The accent rides on the "to us," meaning that "the locus of truth is not the proposition", but the *Dasein*. Truth is thus not the correspondence of propositions to what is the case, as it has been traditionally conceived, but is inextricably linked to human existence as a whole. But it is not just any *Dasein* which can, in a facile way, clear space for truth's disclosure. It must be an authentic expression of human being, of human being in its freedom from 'das Man'. In Heidegger's phrasing, "to forego normal choice and to adopt those offered me by the world or other people" is the essence of "in-authenticity." As we said already previously, inauthentic *Dasein* is most at home in the world of rules, rituals, and conventions that disburdens existence of its personal responsibility for choice. In such a world, "everyone is the other and no one himself".

How then must we act to recover the authentic self we have lost by living in the world of the other? According to Heidegger the therapy is simple: we must turn from living by the other's rules and habits and project a world of particular significance to ourselves. True Heideggerian selves emerge in their authenticity only on the basis of the continual possibility of recovering themselves from being lost in the world of things that are of no concern, and of creating worlds of meaning around those things that are.

Now, despite several crucial differences between Heidegger's existential philosophy in *Being and Time* and Badiou's ethics, there are two claims to which both might be compared. The first point concerns the idea of truth as truth-process where "truth" cannot be reduced to any particular proposition, but rather refers to the way the subject is involved and engaged in a difference in his own life. For both authors, it is by a *process* of truth that a change from an inauthentic life to an authentic self takes place. The second point which both authors claim is the distinction between authentic or inauthentic ways of living. In both authors the concept of truth is formalised to an extent that it does not allow any kind of verifying of what has been called 'true'. As to Heidegger, he identifies in *Being and Time* the concept of truth with "Erschlossenheit" ("Disclosure", Heidegger 1927: § 44) without referring to the point whether truth in the sense of disclosure could also be verified. The proper sense of 'truth' – which includes questions as how to give reasons for a truth and how to justify it – remains completely unsettled. Something similar is to be found also in Badiou's *ethic of truth*. "I shall call 'truth' (a truth)", Badiou writes, "the real process of a fidelity to an event: that which this fidelity produces in the situation" (p. 42); and, later on, he adds:

Highlighted text overlaps with: Charles Taylor, "The Person," in *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, ed. Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, Steven Lukes (Cambridge University Press, 1985): 257-281.

"Essentially, a truth is the material course traced, within the situation, by the eventual supplementation. It is thus an *immanent break*." (p. 42) Since Badiou refers to the truth only insofar as an event causes a fidelity, he not only jumps over the preceding consideration of why a certain event should concern a subject and should be of importance *for* somebody; moreover, he "immunises" the process of a fidelity to an event towards the question of its own truth. This becomes even clearer if we see how Badiou introduces a juxtaposition of opinions as representations without truth on the one hand and, on the other, 'truth' as something which happens to a specific person.

According to Badiou, opinion is "without an ounce of truth" (p. 51), it is "beneath the true and the false, precisely because its sole office is to be communicable. What arises from a truth-process, by contrast, cannot be communicated ... In all that concerns truths, there must be an *encounter*" (p. 51). Now, if we understand the word "reasonable" or "rational" in its traditional and colloquial sense as the ability to justify statements,⁴ we cannot consider Badiou's description of the truth as anything other than an attempt to magically extricate reason from human existence. Beside the fact of whether an event is communicable or not, it must be, nevertheless, understandable as an event which takes place for a specific subject, and it does so due to some relation to this person. Necessarily, this relation includes the person's capacity to verify whether the event is something good and significant for himself or not – *how* it relates to him or her.

This brings us to the second point, the distinction between an authentic or inauthentic way of living, which we will just briefly introduce by raising some questions. According to Badiou, what makes the subject become an authentic self stems from his/her fidelity to an event. However, it is by no means clear which event constitutes which 'good' for which people. Some events, for instance the French revolution to which Badiou refers, might have changed somebody into a 'true' subject. What, then, was its significance for all the people who had been killed due to the rationale of the same event? Who is actually going to define something that happens as an event to which people should be in fidelity? Moreover, the overwhelming question of the unity of subjects, the fact that they will live together, seems to depend entirely on a (political) decision about which event should be accounted *as* an event.

Subjectivity after Badiou

In what follows I shall try to recap briefly, pointing out the lacunae in Badiou's *Ethics* in respect of the concept of subjectivity. My argument was that Badiou 'abolishes' the

subject insofar as he is not concerned about pressing matters which might allow an accurate description of the human's existence *as* subject. Introducing the 'event' as a central category of ethics as well as the factor which renders some-one a subject, necessarily entails at least two points: (1) the relation of the event to human agency; (2) how this event is able to effect the process of changing some-one into a (true) subject. As to the latter, what is needed is at least a description of consciousness or self-awareness.

Let me try to clarify the first point. What usually is involved in our concept of a subject is a human with purposes, desires, aversions, and so forth. More precisely, we should consider to be a subject *in the full sense* as somebody who at least has a sense of her/himself as an agent, a being which can thus make plans for their own life, one who also holds values in virtue of which different plans seem better or worse, and who is capable of choosing between them. Moreover, we think that the crucial factor underlying this package of capacities typical of a person is consciousness, also consciousness of self. 257

As far as we refer to human agency we have to add that in the human case the purposes of acting are somehow intrinsic. Attributing intrinsic purpose to an agent, we are not saying that that person is the 'free agent' criticized by postmodernism; we are simply saying that something has certain significance for him/her. 'Real' agents can thus be described by this term, as beings for whom things can have significance; and this is what differentiates them from other animals or from artefacts. Now, if significance is a mark of agents, it is also a highly general term that refers not only to agents' purposes, but also to the way their desires, aspirations, feelings, aversions, emotions represent different ways in which things have significance for them. Obviously, we might also use another term instead of 'significance', for instance saying that an agent is a being to whom things matter. 258

Let me now address "subjectivity" as far as it concerns the mind or the consciousness of oneself with respect to the world. The general conception of any person contains a certain reflexive element. A person is an agent who has an understanding of self as an agent, and can make plans for his/her own life; this kind of reflexivity cannot be attributed to animals. But this capacity should not be seen simply as consisting in superior powers of representation: that some animals can only be aware of the objects that surround them immediately, while human animals also have the ability to represent themselves, as well as future states of self and world. This does not seem to be the crucial difference. Rather what seems important about a person's conception of self is that it incorporates a range of significances which have no analogue with non- 260

Taylor's example of "dog" has been changed to "animal" three times. 261

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person agents. For it is not just that we are aware of ourselves as agents that distinguishes us from animals, it is more that we have a sense of certain standards which apply to us as self-aware agents. As such agents, human beings are able to make life-plans, hold values, choose. This doesn't mean that they can represent to themselves different life plans, consider different options and evaluate whether different possibilities are more or less valuable. If human beings are aware of the significance feature, what is striking about being a person is not simply consciousness in the sense of the power to form inner representations. Rather we should say that consciousness goes along with a transformation of the significances subjects live by; and this leads to a view of a man as a self-interpreting animal (cf. Taylor 1989).

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Now, it is due to the description of human agency that we also understand what an event is about for a specific subject. To become engaged in a specific event – what kind of event it might ever be – requires a prior consideration of why such a happening might concern the subject. What is interesting in Badiou's formulation of the central category of an event which might change the way somebody is living, is that an event – take, for instance, Badiou's example of falling in love – might represent exactly a significance of a radically different kind than simply any kind of representation of usual things. The self-awareness involved with some event is not just a matter of an independent significance which is now brought within our ken; it is rather a significance bound up with our being self-aware beings, that is, subjects. The same goes for that whole host of emotions which are qualified by a reflective sense of their importance in our lives. In other words, we have to understand the consciousness of subjects not just as a state in consciousness in the sense of the power to form representations of self and world, but much more as the onset of a range of significances which are essentially those of self-aware agents. These significances might stem from events in different areas of human life such as science or politics.

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However, what is still needed in order to become clearer about human subjectivity is to understand how certain events might relate to a subject. To deal with this, one approach might be to discuss whether there are basic and common needs of all subjects to which certain events refer and will have a significant impact.

Notes

¹ Peter Hallward, the English translator of Badiou's book, writes in his introduction: "In what will probably be the most startling sentence of the book for many Anglo-American readers, he [Badiou] insists: 'All ethical predication based on recognition of the other should be purely and simply abandoned.'" (Badiou 2002: xv).

² *Symp.* 210e-211c. Among Plato's ethical writing one would usually be expected to refer to other dialogues as for example the *Politeia*. However, here we are not going to present a detailed discussion of Plato's 'good' to

which Badiou refers, rather we will compare the idea of the event which is capable of changing human life 'for

"cf. Taylor 1989" is a confer to the book *Sources of the Self*, but the paragraphs and sentences overlap with Taylor's 1985 chapter "The Person," in *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, ed. Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, Steven Lukes (Cambridge University Press, 1985): 257-281.

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Subjectivity before and after Badiou

Peter Schulz, University of Lugano

Introduction

The title of my paper indicates already that I will try to avoid speaking about details of Badiou's work. Instead, I will put his *Ethics* in the tradition of other thinkers on subjectivity, asking how he takes up important issues which stem from this tradition. In this light, Badiou's *Ethics* is a fascinating book and, at the same time I would call it a courageous book, in particular because it aims to reconsider the question of the human *as subject*. 'Subject' and 'subjectivity', taken in its modern sense as an autonomous, free agent has been, of course, challenged by postmodernism. We have all heard about the death of the subject. In what follows I shall attempt to interrogate the draft of Badiou's concept of the subject. I shall try to make clear how, according to Badiou, the subject in its root meaning of 'some-one who is *subjected* to an enduring event', is a subject of 'becoming'.

Badiou's critique of the ethic of human rights

It comes as little surprise that Badiou's concept of subject and subjectivity is deeply rooted in his own concept of ethics. Not only modern concepts of subjectivity have been developed against the background of an ethical framework (for instance, Kant - to this point I will come back later on). [\[Read more\]](#).

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Subjectivity, before and after Badiou.

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