COSMOPOLITAN LOVE AND INDIVIDUALITY

Ethical Engagement beyond Culture

NIGEL RAPPORT

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For love of Callum and Emilie, and of Elizabeth

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Preface

There is a quotation from Primo Levi that stays with me: "It is intolerable that a man should be assessed not for what he is but because of the group to which he happens to be assigned" (1996a: x). The writing of this book is (once again) a kind of rejoinder. It is not to be tolerated that human beings, any human being, should find themselves in a situation where definition and evaluation are being made on the basis not of their intrinsic humanity and essential individuality but due to their being assigned to a collective class, a category, a type. These assignations or ascriptions are fictions. By "fiction" I mean a symbolic construction that may have cultural validity—it has currency in a particular community or is traditional to a culture—but is not true *ontologically*: it does not pertain to the nature of that person's identity as a human being, an individual being. The classification is an imposition, extraneous, "fictional," whose deleterious consequences can be a deep and long lasting, unto death. In Ernest Gellner's summation: "We are all human and should treat each other decently and with respect. Don't take more specific classifications seriously" (1993b: 3).

Other declarations have also seemed foundational. From Avishai Margalit: "Being human is a feature, not a relation. Being human is not dependent in any way on what anyone thinks of you, or how anyone treats you" (1996: 124). From Iris Murdoch: "Love is the perception of individuals. (…). Love is the imaginative recognition of, that is respect for, this otherness" (1999: 215–6). And from Emmanuel Levinas: "Human love, the work of a being absolutely singular," also "opens up" that singularity: it is the "revelation" of "ipseity" (1993: 57–8). This book looks to love as a mechanism of emancipation from the fictions of cultural things and relations. "Loving recognition" is urged as a civil practice that enshrines the individuality of identity and transcends category thinking: the way in which identities are typically collectivized and

homogenized, and things and relations typically essentialized. Loving recognition enshrines our "being human" (Margalit), and eschews more "specificatory" classifications (ethnicity, nationality, religiosity, class, caste) (Gellner). Love may "discover the reality of the individual Other" (Murdoch), "revealing its singularity" (Levinas). The book proposes love as a civic virtue, and loving recognition as a possibly universal form of ethical engagement and inclusion.

The book is a "philosophical anthropology," in that it combines an orientation toward the human condition, its nature, and its moral due, drawn from first principles, together with a social-scientific or empirical methodology. The chain of argument moves between theory and ethnography, between propositions and attempts to assess the validity of those propositions empirically. The book is also a quest. Can a proposal for love as a universal civic virtue be made to seem persuasive, viable? Can love give rise to a form of social interaction and social integration that is true to the individuality of anyone? This is a philosophical anthropology in which a quest for the conditions of moral human engagement is conducted with attention being paid to the mundane characteristics of social exchange.

The quest is personal as much as social. How might I assure *for myself* a loving recognition of the individual Other, transcend *my own* uncivil proclivities to see the world stereotypically, categorially: in terms of "allies" and "foes," those "with me" and "for me" and those "against"? (The choice of Felix Nussbaum's *Camp Synagogue 1941* as cover illustration for the book reflects a purely personal sense of appositeness: how a deathly image might resonate with the need for loving recognition.)

Acknowledgments

positive about the project of the book from the beginning, and for seeing it through so efficiently and personably.

Part I

PROPOSING LOVE, QUERYING LOVE

Chapter 1

Love as an Answer?

Aldous Huxley stated: "From solitude in the womb we emerge into solitude among our fellows, and return again to solitude within the grave. We pass our lives in the attempt to mitigate that solitude, but propinquity is never fusion" (1953: 170). If we take Huxley's observation to be a true description—the individual essence of the human condition—then how best to imagine a moral society? It might be one where the ontological nature of our individuality is *recognized* as truth, and where each human being has the right to lead an individual life in fulfillment of their solitudinous capacities and personal desires.

A moral society respects human beings as individual forms of life, unique—and precious as such. A moral society is one where human culture—the symbolic construction of a world and classification of its objects and relations—does not misconstrue human individuality, fictionalize its nature and character, by forcing humanity into the shape of merely conventional classes and labels: "British," "Jewish," "working class," "heterosexual"; also "patriotic," "perverse," "pure," "lazy," "pious," "feminine," "modest," and "kind." These are categories of symbolic sameness and collective belonging (of nationality, ethnicity, religion, class, gender, and other) that would define and subsume according to extraneous and "accidental" criteria.

There is the grave danger that a cultural system of symbolic classification fails to respect the individuality of human being; indeed, that the construction fictionalizes that identity and that life in a pernicious way: imagining it to be a version of what is already known, and a version of a collectivity. Individuality is misconstrued according to the happenstance, the accident, of what locally, traditionally, and normatively has been the culture of defining and structuring a social world. This does not truly accommodate how that individuality might, in its solitude, deploy its innate human capacities and author an identity; it fails to respect the "mystery" that each individual life

must retain. Cultural symbology presents a potential threat to human ontology: to the individual determination of worldviews and life-projects that reflect an individual creativity, fulfill an individual capacity, and so gratify an individual life.

But how might such a society be achieved? It is, after all, by way of conventional and collective classes and labels that ordinarily, and globally, human social life is organized. We deal habitually and normatively with the complexity, the size, the transitoriness, the agonism—and the very inscrutability—of human populations and human beings by thinking in cultural categories. We come to depend on knowing fellow human beings precisely as "British," "Jewish," and "feminine"; "friend," "spouse," and "kin," and so on. I shall make the argument that love might play the foundational social-structural role of recognizing the absolute distinctiveness of the individual Other and affording the Other the space to come into its own. There *is* a classification here—"individual," "human"—but not one that extends beyond an ontological reality into an arbitrary one of cultural fictions. The individual remains simply a human Other: "Anyone" (Rapport 2012). Love, I shall say, might function as that civic virtue whereby Anyone is universally recognized and respected.

I propose a particular understanding of love. Love as a civic virtue is conceived of as a complex of behaviors that comprises an *emotional attraction to an Other*, a *rational discernment of the individual specificity of the Other*, and *respectful engagement with that otherness*. Love might extend an affective care toward Anyone such that a potentially universal social integration is effected, and any and every human being is accorded a place, an equal place, on the basis purely of their (inscrutable, solitudinous) individual nature. Illuminating this complex of behaviors, its key elements and how they combine, is the book's work ("quest").

Just as I take as an ontological given Aldous Huxley's description of the solitudinous nature of human consciousness—as something essentially tied to a distinct individual embodiment—I take it that the relatively short period of a bodily life is the extent of that consciousness. According to scientific understandings, that individual consciousness terminates at death and there is nothing after; there exists one occasion for an individual life to fulfill its innate human capacities for self-gratification. A moral society recognizes that preciousness—uniqueness and finiteness—and does its best to administer to it respectfully, safeguarding the opportunities for self-expression.

"Preciousness" may also be a name for the natural desire of a life to care for itself, respect itself. Leonard Woolf, in an autobiographical piece of writing, recounted a formative episode from his childhood when he was asked to destroy three new-born puppies. As the blind and vulnerable forms began to

struggle for their lives against being drowned, Woolf suddenly appreciated that here were individual beings, each in possession of an "I." Each was a subject with a distinct and distinctive point of view—"a particle indestructible except by death"—and each puppy fought death (1969: 21). "It felt horrible to drown that 'I'," Woolf concluded: was not the "I"-ness of each puppy commensurate to his own? The moment was an epiphany, motivating Woolf to make a recognition of individuality a lifelong practice: his life would continue to answer to the "I" in the drowning puppies (1969: 48). *Sub specie aeternitatis* such individuality—"ipseity," in philosophical parlance—may not seem largely significant, but on a personal level it must be overriding.

At the same time, Woolf appreciated that this could not be approached naively:

> What is so difficult to understand and feel is that all other human beings, that even the chicken, the pig, the dew bedabbled hare, each and all have a precisely similar "I" with the same feelings of personal pleasure and pain. (1969: 19)

Historically, indeed, it had been more often the norm that individual lives were regarded and treated as anonymous members of classes and castes, as "impersonally classified pegs" in a rigid social structure (1969: 19). Meanwhile, human credulousness was huge and seemingly unquenchable. How else to account for the horrors, misery, and barbarism that humanity had inflicted on itself in the recent twentieth century: two world wars that had seen the undermining of human civilization, with communal madness, savagery, and stupidity spreading globally. "Civilization" Woolf wished to define as those times and places of liberty, equality, and fraternity, including sociopolitical recognition of "the consciousness of universal individuality and the right of everyone to be treated as an individual, a free fellow-human being" (1969: 19). Personally, he could not but feel anger and disgust for the cruelty, injustice, and intolerance involved in individuals becoming merely ciphers: "pawns or pegs or puppets" in negation of the "I" (1969: 28). To recognize that every human being was an individual as you were, with an "I" as you had, must surely be to realize what death, persecution, and pain might mean for this "I", and to abhor any tyrannous "barbarism" in its regard.

Leonard Woolf was in his late eighties when he published his autobiography, and his perception and expression can seem quaint: simplistic, naïve, ethnocentric. But I share his impassioned concern, and I want to deploy his conceptions of "humane civilization" and the "barbarism" against which it struggles. My intention is to discover that "civilized" mode whereby the individuality of fellow human beings, their ipseity, might be universally recognized. This mode is grounded in epiphanies such as Woolf's. A "civil society" is a kind of routinization of those "moments of vision" where one *sees*

the individual Other and transcends conventional classifications, categories, and labels—understanding these to be delimiting fictions. One recognizes the individuality of the human beings with whom one engages and acts civilly on this recognition. Every human being is an "I", and worthy of respect on the basis of that precious and finite individuality alone.

"Moments of vision" is a phrase of Thomas Hardy's: there are moments of vision "whose magic penetrates like a dart" (1917: 1). Love is such a moment, I shall argue, that originates in a look. The look is desirous: one is attracted to the indubitable individuality of another human body, a forceful, emotional engagement. One is motivated to *see*: not what one expects to see or should see, what one conventionally and habitually sees, but what is before one's eyes. An individual human Other, a life. The attraction is not necessarily a lustful one, and the individual Other is not necessarily an interlocutor. One is very possibly espying human strangers, and possibly at a distance (since life in modern society entails being with strangers to a significant extent). Nor does one expect or even wish to lessen that distance; and yet, even *against* one's proclivities, one's habits, one's norms, one is forcefully drawn to recognizing and admitting another's individuality. There is the face, the smile, the word, the gesture, the movement, of an individual human being. One is drawn to them, motivated to recognize them, *as* the individual that they are quite independent of the cultural categories one would otherwise assume them to occupy: indeed, in contradistinction to this categorization, one is motivated to recognize the Other, their individuality, in contravention to how one would ordinarily inhabit that social environment and classify its contents. The look of love implies a kind of epiphany.

　　Not only is the moment of (loving) vision such that one recognizes the individuality of the human Other, but one would respect it, and have it respected. Albeit that the loving look may be fleeting, unerotic, from afar, one is motivated to engage with that individual life, to have a care for its safe passage and security. Having responded desirously to a human embodied identity (as distinct from a purported cultural class) one also desires that the integrity of that individual life be retained: that it fulfills itself *as* itself and *for* itself. A feeling of care has been engaged, even a sense of responsibility. One has a care that that life is let be: given the space to develop on its own terms; along a trajectory that is of its own determination. The "beloved" may remain a stranger but they are a *human*, *individual* stranger, and one would practice a certain civility toward that life, wish for others to do so too, and even work toward that end.

　　Love as a civic virtue promises that a human, species-wide individuality supervenes upon the fictions of conventional cultural symbolizations in all "civil" practice, and that Anyone is recognized in their unique, finite, and

precious embodiment. Jacques Derrida privileges these elements in his own assertion: "Love means an affirmative desire towards the Other: to respect the Other, to pay attention to the Other, not to destroy the otherness of the Other" (2008). I place a faith in love because of the motivating force that it engenders. Loving recognition is, I contend, a natural response to individual human otherness—to really looking, really seeing—and it is a universal human capability. How might the look of love be universally admitted, valued, and practiced? How might the epiphany of the moment of vision be routinized, as a foundational institution in civil society?

Chapter 2

An Anthropology of Love

It was the claim of Arthur Schopenhauer (1903: 218) that "universal compassion" for one's fellow beings was "the only guarantee of morality." (Such identification must extend to the "co-suffering" of animals: "he who is cruel to animals cannot be a good man.") Echoing Schopenhauer's call, Amos Oz, the novelist, has more recently urged that "emotional bonds are the essence of the social structure" (1975: 115). And again, political scientist Graham Smith would insist that a key aspect of political solidarity, even in contemporary societies of such large scale, entails people *feeling* something for their state: "a structure held together and animated by bonds between person and person," affective bonds that draw persons together and keep them mutually involved (2011: 5).

An anthropologist might initially be skeptical of these assertions, however. Whether "social structure" is understood in its Anglo-Saxon variant as the overt laws and customs by which social life is organized and policed, or in its Continental variant as the unconscious organization of the mind by which different cultures impart particular classifications of the world, social structure as being of its essence emotional—as against normative or cognitive—is a foreign notion. Emotion is more likely to be regarded as determined by particular social structures and cultural matrices that determinative of them (cf. Lutz and Abu-Lughod 1990; Wulff 2007). Notwithstanding, let us imagine that the likes of Schopenhauer, Oz, and Smith are correct, and that love might be imagined as a socially consequential and culturally transcendent—and politically efficacious—kind of emotional and compassionate engagement.

I take my cue from Ernest Gellner's urging of social anthropologists to undertake what he called an "adequate," post-Enlightenment appraisal of the human condition. Transcultural scientific knowledge offers a "liberation from want and tyranny," Gellner (1993a: 54) prompted, no longer at the

mercy of the particularities of cultural convention and caprice. May not a universal morality, equally beyond the arbitrariness of cultural traditions and their vested interests, be formulated, however difficult to effect? "Mobility, egalitarianism and free choice of identity have better prospects in the modern world than they had in the past," Gellner observed (1993b: 3, 1995: 8), but "our predicament" is still to work out "the social options of our affluent and disenchanted condition." Is it not our responsibility to turn a "scientific" eye, disciplined in knowledge that pertains to the ontologies of the human condition, to how, morally, human beings should accommodate one another? Hence, love as a humanitarian ethos of cosmopolitan engagement, of universal relevance, and possible universal reach. Love as an affective recognition of another human being—any Other, Anyone—*as* human, *as* a sentient individual "I".

I also take my cue from Gregory Bateson's (1959: 296) assessment that anthropology—the study of *anthropos*, of humanity—is a fundamentally non-specialist "interdisciplinary discipline"; and from Clifford Geertz's (1983: 21) claim that anthropology was "born omniform" and that only through exercising a license to blur genres and poach intellectual expertise may anthropology hope to encompass the complexities of human being. A proposal concerning the possible practical efficacy of love as public virtue is "interdisciplinary" in this way, "omniform" in the insights it would corral.

To sample the academic literature on love, moreover, is to find an array of very different topics and versions: self-love, Platonic, romantic, courtly, ethical, humanitarian, religious, spiritual, mystical, sexual, parental, filial, sibling, marital, mutual, and warring love. One finds love of fellow creatures, but also love of an idea, a memory, a house, a homeland, a football club music, and food. Sociologist John Lee (1988) suggests that love breaks down into a set of types:

- *Eros*: a powerful attraction born of desire;
- *Storge*: an affection developing slowly over time;
- *Pragma*: a search for compatible qualities in others;
- *Philia*: a mutual friendliness and familiar attachment;
- *Mania*: prey to possessive jealousy, an obsessive preoccupation;
- *Ludus*: playing the field and refusing single devotions;
- *Agape*: a selfless, altruistic, patient, gentle, even dutiful, giving.

Love is a "polythetic" concept, Rodney Needham (1975) offers, for we must assume no single or essential common element among love's different expressions but rather a set of phenomena whose features variously overlap, possessing at best a "family of resemblances" (Wittgenstein 1953). Love is a "promiscuous concept," Pnina Werbner (2017: 169) quips.

Hence the diverse phenomenology attributed to love. For Stephen Mitchell (2002), for instance, love is a search for home, for an anchor and attachment. Love seeks out stability, security, continuity, and control. Desire, on the other hand, invites adventure, surrender, and the new: a search for what we lack or have disowned, for what lies beyond the border. Passion arises in the tension between our reality and the fantasy of our desire. Hence the human conundrum: balancing love against desire. And hence the endemic risk: coming to hate what we love. For Irving Singer, contrastively, love is a "spontaneous gift" as against a "conditioned response" or something "elicited by goodness" in a beloved Other (2009: 52). Love's chief features are "appraisal" and "bestowal," Singer elaborates. To appraise lovingly is to recognize value: to bestow is to establish a relationship with what is positively valued and maintain an appreciative attitude. A loving relationship thus becomes a mutual projection of affect which enhances the value of both parties. Or again, according to Robert Sternberg (1988), love is a triangulation between three independent behaviors: being intimate (communing, sharing, mutually caring, bonding), being passionate (desiring, enjoying, esteeming, focusing), and being committed (supporting, determining to sustain). High and low registers of these three behavioral components mean eight possible "versions" of love being engaged in: from "non-love" (low intimacy, low commitment, low passion), through "infatuated love," "empty love," "fatuous love," "liking," "romantic love," "compassionate love," to "complete love" (high intimacy, high commitment, high passion). While for Nathaniel Branden, finally, to love is to see clearly, to know an Other as a whole, and to be distinguished from infatuation, which is only seeing a part of another and reacting to that part as if holistic. A loving vision is joyous: knowing "joy in the existence of the loved object, joy in proximity, and joy in interaction or involvement" (Branden 1988: 220). Emotionally attracted to the beloved, the lover evaluates their intentions positively, wishes to be near them, and for that closeness to endure.

In this busy, promiscuous, and assertive environment, "love" is not an easy word to use afresh. "Love is all around," in popular culture even more than in academic: "Can't help falling in love!"; "Can't buy me love!"; "Love the one you're with!"; "I love my baby 'cos she does good sculptures, yeah!" It is not easy to stake out a terrain for the word that is not overshadowed by its clichéd propinquity. I have weighed up the possibilities of using another term entirely: "compassion," "sympathy," "solicitude," "kindliness," "respect," "appreciation," "regard," "civility," "fraternity." ("Civic friendship," philosopher Mark Vernon (2005: 2) has offered as a revivifying description of modern democracy based on mutual concern for individual citizens' well-being, irrespective of their different sociocultural networks.) I have stuck with "love," however, and would take advantage of its "polytheticality"

and "promiscuity." I am arguing for a particular understanding of love, as I have said, one that incorporates *attraction*, *recognition*, and *respect*: love as an engaged, attentive care for individual human beings. I do not aim for an essential definition, nor to exclude the validity of other usages, or to hierarchicalize these. My focus is on the feasibility of positing love as a civic virtue: a complex of behaviors that includes attraction to, recognition of, and care for, the irreducibility individuality of human life, and one that might be deployed as a generalized form of social inclusiveness and solidarity, integrating all in a liberal society.

Anthropological interventions regarding love have often seen fit to re-state a "culturalist" argument concerning historical contingency and particularity. Love is understood as an "enculturated" practice of the socialized and "habituated" body. At the 2009 meeting of the Group for Debates in Anthropological Theory, for example, the motion was successfully carried that "the anthropological fixation with reciprocity leaves no room for love." Love was not a useful analytical, theoretical or heuristic tool, it was agreed, for neither in its phenomenology nor its social life did it transcend culture, ethnicity, religion, nationality, or class. In Jeanette Edwards's summation, love should not be "mawkishly" read as a universal good, a pure motive or gift, nor even as a necessarily interior experience of the individual, something unbidden and overwhelming; it could not be of central concern in anthropology because of its ethnographic (Western) specificity (Venkatesan et al. 2011: 213–4).

   Other anthropological writings in this vein include Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1985) not finding love among mothers in a Brazilian underclass community whose children suffer from a high infant mortality rate; and Lila Abu-Lughod (1990) warning against seeing love among the Awlad 'Ali Bedouins of Egypt in terms of Western ideologies of individual authenticity. (To express the "immodest sentiments of 'love'" for the Bedouin, Abu-Lughod explicates, is to risk an individual's respectability and moral worth, to "subvert" the social order of solidary patrilineal kin groups and "defiant of those whose interests are served by this order" [Abu-Lughod 1990: 34–5].) While Stephen Kidd (2007) does find love among the Enxet of Paraguay, it is a strictly habituated local practice: who and how to love, who to hate and visit anger upon, these are taught elements in Enxet culture. Essentially, "love" is a synonym for sociability: sharing produce and possessions locally, speaking and thinking well of other co-habitants and spending time with them. "Love" can only be said to exist in these manifest actions. Alfred Gell (2011), again, recounts how the Umeda of Papua New Guinea have no word for "love," nor recourse to love as a motive or a basis for recognized relationships. Love can never be something "known" among the Umeda and can only refer to adultery: an uninstitutionalized and unacknowledged phenomenon existing beyond the

social structure. To understand the Umeda, Gell insists, is to appreciate social life first and foremost as a knowledge system. "Love" as a concept can only apply to the process of obtaining, distributing, and transforming knowledge whose nature and whose (perverse) value are antisocial: a form of secrecy. An Umeda "love situation" is confidential, adulterous, exclusive, and a matter of controlling socially strategic information. Certainly, anthropological interrogation could never unearth true, authentic information on "love" for as soon as such knowledge were rendered public it would automatically transform and become valueless; the Umeda "lover" becoming an "exploitative cad."

In these anthropological treatments, in short, love as an individual experience and a universal human proclivity is replaced by cultural habitus and social body (Bell and Coleman 1999: 10). Countering this, however, are volumes such as Lucinda Carspecken's collection, *Love in the Time of Ethnography* (2017), where love is explored in the nature of a *human* connection, and a rationale for social analysis and social change alike. Similarly, in *Romantic Passion: A Universal Experience?* (1995), William Jankowiak's contributors are committed to positing love as a thing in itself: a panhuman emotional expression exceeding cultural particularities. Romantic passion, at least, is found to be a private experience that is theoretically universalizable, with cultural specificity taking the form of how "romance" and "lust" are compared and evaluated. Charles Lindholm (1995) describes romantic love as, in essence, a universal experience of individual self-transcendence: an expression of deep existential longing for an escape from the cage of subjectivity and personal phenomenology. Falling in love becomes a creative act of *human* imagining, a kind of religious revelation but with another, charismatic human being as the focus of devotion and absolute value, and a desirous journey from self-consciousness to selfless communion.

I place myself on the universalist side of this debate. Love may find expression in a diversity of forms of life, with a variety of consequences, but it is a universal capacity, and proclivity in human interaction, and always consequential (cf. Dilman 2001: 97). I also want to ask a different kind of question to that posed above, and one that does not take romantic love as paradigmatic. How might love be recruited as a moral force, how deployed as a public virtue?

At another meeting of the Group for Debates in Anthropological Theory (2013), Hayder Al-Mohammad and Veena Das proposed an anthropological recognition of the existence of an "embodied morality of the everyday" that was universal. Social life manifests an emotional engagement with the Other that is mundane and routine. Here is an embodied morality of human social proximity that may go without saying, as if second nature. It is an emotional engagement that is generalized—anticipating Anyone—and it expresses itself

as a kind of non-interference, a respectful distancing between one human body and another (Al-Mohammad 2015; Das 2015). I would propose love as a civic virtue operating precisely as such an "embodied morality of the everyday." It incorporates Anyone in a "civil inattention" (Goffman 1971: 312) that nevertheless extends to the Other the courtesy of letting be.

While containing various other elements identified above—*Eros*, *Philia*, *Ludus*—the kind of love that I am proposing perhaps comes closest to what has been previously validated under the term "*agape*," a Greek noun first used in a translation into Greek of the Hebrew Bible. Leviticus 19:18 includes the phrase "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord" (וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֲךָ כָּמוֹךָ אֲנִי יְהוָה) (Hertz 1968: 501–2). According to current biblical exegesis, "neighbor" is to be understood here to include the "Other," the "alien," and even the "enemy"; and "love" to concern not rapture and romance but respect, justice, and evenhandedness. As Simon May (2011: 15–16) sums up, the injunction entails "scrupulous attention to others' interests, a defense of their being, and attention to the sanctity of their separateness."

In the Christian hermeneutics that followed on from the Jewish scripture ("Love is patient, love is kind. … It is not rude, it is not self-seeking. … Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres" (I Cor. 13:4–7) [Holy Bible 1984: 1205]), "*agape*" becomes a term to denote universal benevolent concern for all fellow human beings: behavior directed to the Other to further their survival and welfare beyond thought of reciprocation. To attend piously to the Other was to engage with their identity and their needs; and one did so in a deliberate, self-controlled way, practicing a sympathetic warmth, but without being ruled by one's passions or pursuing one's own interests. One was guided by the absolute value of the Other as a living being beside oneself.

Such "neighborliness" or universalized benevolence has continued to feature strongly in philosophical discussions of ethics. Søren Kierkegaard, notably, urged neighborliness to be seen as the primary human relation, the bond whereby society assumed a moral shape and a rational appreciation of generalized ethical duties (1995: 113–4). Moreover, neighborliness extended to all human beings. All must be recognized as equally "neighbors," since all humanity was spiritually equal before God. It was the "spiritual" task of humanity, Kierkegaard considered—spiritually "up-building"—to recognize love as a God-given capacity and also a predisposition. To fulfill God's command to love one's neighbor—to bring person into relation to person—was to act naturally (however much this might seem to contrast with the systems of metaphysics and consociation that human beings had seen fit to construct). Being spiritual equals before God made neighborliness a mutual relationship, finally, that was permanent and timeless. Neighborliness did not depend

on reciprocity but was an ideally changeless orientation toward the human Other, independent of personal preferences and partialities.

The project of this book is to build on such conceptions of *agape*, not as religious commandments but as aspects of a philosophical anthropology. If love forms part of a natural set of human capacities, a kind of desirous engagement with the world on its own terms, then how might love be caused to form the foundation of how a moral society operates, globally, to recognize, respect, and accommodate the individual identities and life-projects of its members?

I would theorize upon love "pure and simple," over and against its construction in particular cultural symbologies. I would also consider love in the context of empirical human social life and its probabilities. It is the case, according to sociologist Georg Simmel (1971: 329), that human life in society ubiquitously "courts tragedy," individual identities becoming "generalized" and "distorted." I would ameliorate that assessment; but I do not offer love as a panacea. I cannot espouse love as prophylactic against unhappiness, or a cure for suffering—in an earthly "vale of tears" (עֵמֶק הַבָּכָא) (Box 2008: 107). Nor do I advocate the look of love in isolation of other liberal mechanisms. My project is to argue that love may function as a vital form of personal morality, and of social integration, whereby recognition and respect is accorded to the Other on the basis of their individuality alone. Alongside this are norms of social interaction that would linguistically and behaviorally admit Anyone, and have a care for Anyone, and laws that would enshrine individual rights in a liberal constitution. These will prove vital complements to love as a personal morality. And even then, love is not an easy practice. As a form of civility, it bears the cost of working against cultural habits of "knowing" the Other; and it entails the "asceticism" of letting be, of admitting the Other as a stranger whose life is to be acknowledged, "loved," but from a distance. One looks and loves as the individual Other proceeds along a trajectory determined by their own worldviews, their own life-projects (Rapport 1993, 2003).

Chapter 3

Voices in a Wider Debate on Love

The project of this book is interdisciplinary, universalist, and programmatic. Let me sample the diversity of voices and positions that make the existing ethical discourse on love both challenging and inspiring. How might love play its role precisely? What kind of role? To hypothesize upon love functioning as a kind of emotional engagement that is socially consequential and politically efficacious—moral and inclusive of Anyone as a thing in itself—is necessarily to converse with a range of possible interlocutors and arguments.

LEVINAS AND THE FACE

To accommodate the Other in an ethical fashion, according to philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, is to accept that "the first intelligible" must be a visual and sensory awareness of the bodily presence of another human being (1990a: 295). To stare at a human face "with a straightforwardness devoid of trickery or evasion," even to touch another human body while not seeking possession, is, according to Levinas, to be taken to a point of consciousness and of ignorance and of care that wrenches us out of our preconceptions of culture, of life-project, even of selfhood. It is, he insists, the beginning of an authentic human society—and of duty—based not on social norms or cultural conceptions but on the radical individuality of another human being's embodied identity. Here is the source of a universalist ethics: the sensation, primarily the sight, of the individual Other, their bodily difference and integrity.

    Levinas elaborates. The "face" of the Other—its distinct surface form, its bodily otherness—is inviolable, indecipherable: "those eyes, which are absolutely without protection, the most naked part of the human body, none the less offer an absolute resistance to possession" (1990a: 8). The face is an

irreducible mode in which being presents itself in its essential identity—and alterity. To recognize the presence of the Other is to have revealed to one an uncrossable infinitude, "disproportionate" to the self and its knowledge and habits and procedures. "My neighbor's face has an alterity which … opens up the beyond," Levinas writes (1990a: 18). For this Other cannot be adapted to the "scale" of the self and its life without doing violence to its nature—whether that violence is the physical violence of war or the symbolic violence of cultural classification. To experience the objectivity of another life is, in short, *the* fundamental experience. It is, however, experience that is not knowledge, or not a kind of self-knowledge, knowledge from one's own doctrines; rather, it is "heteronomy through and through" (1990a: 295).

Such recognition comes with a cost, moreover. The freedom that lives through individual human consciousness must be inhibited by recognition of the Other, according to Levinas, and a sense of conscience born. Conscience is a natural awareness; not an awareness of values, but "an access to external being," "when [one] really stares … into [the Other's] unguarded, absolutely unprotected eyes" (1990a: 293). Conscience is "the miracle of moving out of oneself" (1990a: 9)—as when Leonard Woolf suddenly became aware of the irreducible "I" of the puppies he would drown—something engendered by an awareness of the disproportion between the world of the self and the Other.

Being truthful to our awareness of embodied individual human otherness bears the possibility of an ethical accommodation, Levinas is assured. It is, he urges, the beginning of true human collectivity, of establishing universality, accomplishing society and outlawing the "murder" that is part and parcel of a cultural habitude, of deeming otherness to be knowable in the terms of a symbolic classification.

MURDOCH AND THE TRUTH OF LOVE

But when do we really engage in this way, appreciative of the body of the individual Other in a "straightforward" and disinterested and yet overwhelming way? How does such an "originary" recognition of fellow humanity occur, how motivated? When Levinas was imprisoned by the Nazis, his experience was that their dogs recognized his humanity—the equivalence between him and his human captors—in ways his guards did not. Rather than an honest look, "devoid of trickery or evasion," Levinas was subject to what has been termed a "disciplinary gaze": "disciplined" according to the way of seeing and knowing of a particularly tyrannical culture (Foucault 1973). If engaging authentically with fellow individual bodies is the foundation of a moral human collectivity, then how and when is such sensory openness born? For it is not obvious that we are habitually willing to transcend our cultural worlds and the "mythic distinctions" of their systems of symbolic classification.

According to philosopher and novelist Iris Murdoch, *love* is the human practice that may carry with it a force such as to remove the lover from both the conventional and the selfish. Love directs the attention outward, Murdoch claims, contrary to that powerful system of energy that is human self-centeredness and conventionalism, so as to reveal the great surprising variety of the world. In particular, a beloved comes to be recognized in their true individuality: "Love is the extremely difficult realization that something other than oneself is real. Love, and so art and morals, is the discovery of reality. … What stuns us into a realization of our supersensible destiny is [nature's] unutterable particularity; and most particular and individual of all natural things is the mind of man" (Murdoch 1999: 215).

Murdoch here refashions an insight of Plato's that to interrogate the world truthfully is to engage *desirously* with it as if a lover, practicing a "divine," other-directed appetite for the world. Plato recognized that human beings were imperfect, divided creatures, needy, volatile, and unstable, and love therefore assumed different shapes; it was capable of transporting the lover upward and "goodward" as well as downward and "badward" (Politis 2017). A "possessive" love such as was manifest in sexual fixations and excess was selfish, mean, and calculating, and not a place of real vision. Notwithstanding, there was a "higher" or "refined" love that was wise and capable of transforming selfish appetites and attachments into impersonal, unselfish ones. Moreover, when abetted by reason—*eros* abetted by *sophia*, the intuitive and perceptual abetted by the discursive—love vouchsafed a generation of true virtue and goodness: "an intense presence of each to each" (Murdoch 1981: 182). Love engenders "an ineluctable choice between an evident truth and a fable" (Murdoch 1977: 176).

Practicing such a refined or "Platonic" love was not easy, Murdoch admitted, but when accomplished it amounted to "an exercise of justice and realism and really looking, [of coming] to see the world as it is" (1999: 375). "Justice" as well as "realism," because the desirous look of love recognized things in their own terms and esteemed them according to their own lights. It was an immediate, unmediated grasping of otherness and love.

"When is it that human beings stare (or caress) in a transcendent way?" I am led to ask Levinas: "You stare when in love," answers Murdoch. A true attention to reality is inspired by and consists of a Platonic kind of love, love that effects an attraction to—an appetite, recognition, and respect for—the otherness of the real. For Plato "acting lovingly" held out the greatest promise of earthly vision and virtue—as if "acting perfectly"—and love, Murdoch insists (1999: 384), may serve as that motivating force that rivets the attention and effects a (Levinasian) "naked" look free from mythic preconceptions and typifications.

FORSTER AND TOLERANCE

Levinas (1985: 52) voices a wariness regarding the word "love," its being "compromised" as implying something "needy," self-interested, and "vulgar." But he also sees love as fundamentally intrinsic to the revelation of the "ipseity" of an Other—their "human singularity"—and he describes the biblical injunction to "love one's neighbor" as means to "redeem the world" and "go to Eternity" (Levinas 1993: 57–8). "Human love is the very work, the efficacy of Redemption," understood as a universal, disinterested, nonerotic desire to engage peacefully with an Other who remains at an infinite distance (Levinas 1993: 58, 1989: 177–8). May such "Platonic" love, emotional and "desirous" but not possessive or in thrall to the passions of romance, serve as a general ethos in a moral society?

In his celebrated essays "What I Believe" (1939) and "Tolerance" (1941), critic and novelist E. M. Forster argues not. Much as one might wish for such a "beloved republic," Forster's conclusion is that love must remain a private emotion. One cannot love what one does not know personally, he avers, and therefore for the large (and conflicted) public spaces of modern democracies a less challenging virtue is called for: namely, tolerance. The difference being that tolerance operates within the realm of the categorial, keeping distance alive: one tolerates the "alien," the "foreign," while knowing them only through the lens of one's own cultural preconceptions. This makes democratic society a less than ideal arrangement, Forster admits, something worth applauding with "two cheers," perhaps, but not three—one cheer for the way it admits and celebrates variety, and a second cheer because it permits criticism of itself—but such tolerant democracies are nevertheless workable.

Love might remain the great force in private life, Forster elaborates, "indeed the greatest of all things" (1972: 54), but love cannot extend to the impersonal realm of public affairs. The world is so full of people that they tumble over one another; one is continually accosted by stranger-bodies, by skin colors, by shapes of noses, that one cannot hope to appreciate. Tolerance "is wanted in the street, in the office, at the factory, and it is wanted above all between classes, races, nations" (1972: 55–6). To assume that in a "brotherhood of man," "love is all you need" is perilous and vague sentimentalism: "absurd, unreal, dangerous" as a political solution (1972: 54). Tolerance is a less dramatic, less emotional, even dull, and boring virtue, but it is nevertheless perfectly suited to human civilization that must ever guard against militancy. And while tolerance is tame, a "makeshift principle," it yet entails imagination: trying to put oneself in someone else's place: "a desirable spiritual exercise" (1972: 55). Hence, Forster's conclusion: "Tolerance, good temper, and sympathy—they are what matter really, and if the human race is not to collapse they must come to the front before long" (1972: 75).

In a recent publication, political scientist and politician Michael Ignatieff comes to a similar conclusion. "Ordinary people," he writes, are unable to imagine a "global ethics," and remain immersed in the "moral operating system" of a local community that is context-dependent (2017: 26–8). It must be recognized that an us-versus-them distinction will always be the first consideration, the starting point of moral decision-making, for ordinary people in their daily lives. This expressed itself in the Nazi Holocaust, and it did so again in the breakup of Yugoslavia after the fall of Communism. While an ethos and framework such as universal human rights is irrelevant as a moral basis of everyday interactions: too abstract, general, and impersonal. The only hope lies in the "ordinary virtue" of tolerance. Tolerance may be parochial not universalist—unreflexive and unthinking, grounded in a concern for the future of a community, a "shared belief in a collective future worth fighting for" (2017: 165)—nevertheless, tolerance can give rise to a "code of tacit mutual acceptance" across borders such that a kind of resilience and trust and forgiveness can evolve (Ignatieff 2017: 35). Toleration can manage the coming together of ethnicities, religions, and races in a modern, compressed (urban and urbane) society.

GIDDENS AND THE GLOBALIZATION OF AFFECT

Tolerance may seem a tame virtue, Forster recognized (1972: 56–7), "almost ignoble" in how it is prepared to accommodate intolerance and put up with other people's bad habits. Writing in the shadow of the World War II, he imagined how he must tolerate living alongside Germans at the war's end. But Forster also insisted that tolerance should not be seen as a form of weakness. To put up with people was not the same as giving in to them, and civilization was built in this gray zone.

Notwithstanding, it would be my contention that his and Ignatieff's conception of toleration (and relegation of love) lends itself too easily to cultural relativism. We do not exceed the myths of our own cultural worlds, as Levinas warned, so as morally and intelligibly to accommodate the individual other human being in its own terms if "cultural communities" possessing essential identities and homogeneous traditions are allowed to remain as the purported building blocks of society and the ground of our social engagements. I would have anthropology—and civil society—do better than accept the public virtue of a toleration based on distancing preconceptions of culturalism and a politicization of "strategic essentialisms" (Spivak 1987). (Ignatieff admits that "ordinary virtues" are helpless in the face of the "barbarism" that is contemporary fundamentalistic violence and terrorism.) To "allow" ourselves to be "affected by the

meaning of a face," as Jean-Paul Sartre put it in homage to Levinas (cited in Bakewell 2016: 200), is to admit that tolerance—the "cultural" accommodating of otherness as a "subject position" in a formal class—does not fulfill our duty to the individual Other. A more "radical" envisioning of virtue is called for.

Alongside those who insist on a sociopolitical future in which people assert themselves not essentially as individual persons—as specimens of generic humanity—but as "peoples," as members of (proud or oppressed) historic communities (Gray 1992, 2018), there are some commentators who have identified global phenomena that are not neo-tribal in character but universalistic, "humanitarian." For Anthony Giddens (2002: 19), then, the twenty-first century will witness cultural fundamentalism being countered by the creation of a new global, cosmopolitan society. Cultural traditionalism loses its hold, both as regards institutions and the customary exchange of everyday life: reason supplants myth, in Levinasian terms. "There is a global revolution going on in how we think of ourselves and how we form ties and connections to others," Giddens claims (2002: 51). Albeit that the revolution advances unevenly in different regions and cultures, and meets many resistances, nevertheless, it universally concerns the kinds of connections we have with others, and the quality of our personal relations. To wit: we are witnessing "a democracy of the emotions in everyday life" (Giddens 2002: 63). Here are "purer" forms of relationship based not on notions of traditional form or necessity but on the emotional rewards derived from a personal communication.

New forms of intimacy occur in three principal areas: sex and love; parent-child relations; and friendship. But they spread their influence almost everywhere, Giddens is assured, affecting both how we think of ourselves and how we form ties to others. By virtue of new technologies, such intimacy also enters into the "resistance" movements that link people, globally, and in voicing opposition to environmental, political, or economic practices and policies deemed morally offensive. In short, an emotional revolution now potentially involves all of humanity in a new cosmopolitan version of relationality: "emotional communication, and therefore intimacy, are replacing the old ties that used to bind together people's personal lives" (Giddens 2002: 61). Here is the "front line" in a battle between universalism and fundamentalism. Alongside a politics of identity and the strategic essentialism of cultural collectivities are being demanded forms of *global* relationality and rationality. These are based not on arbitrary traditional structures and norms—on the restatement of *internal* claims to authority and truth—but on trust and disclosure—opening oneself up to the Other—by virtue of concertedly egalitarian and democratic attempts at communication.

KANT AND PRACTICAL LOVE

With its echoes of an insistence on the significance of the emotions in social integration (Schopenhauer, Smith, Oz), and of a belief in love as fueling an open engagement with the Other (Plato, Murdoch), Giddens's optimistic prognosis enables me to press on. Again I ask: Could love figure as the pre-eminent public virtue that motivates a recognition of Anyone, the global individual human being who is met anywhere and in possession of its own embodied integrity and uniqueness, overcoming the distortions of a merely cultural, local, and contingent set of classifications and labels for human identification? Could love bear this public moral weight?

Immanuel Kant argues that love can deliver in this way. Human love, which Kant defines as "good-will, affection, promoting the happiness of others and finding joy in their happiness" (1930: 163), can operate alongside respect as a force to draw humankind together. Love is an ethos of recognizing others as whole persons, rational and moral sovereigns in their own right, and deserving of their own personal preserve. It gives rise to an ethical social life that is conducted as a dialectic between feeling affection for a human being and recognizing the irreducible otherness of that life.

The case for love is complexified, Kant admits, by there being two distinct kinds of love: "practical" love and "pathological" love. Practical love is a rational appreciation of what is right: the disposition to act benevolently toward those in need, independent of any relation of partisan feeling. Pathological love, contrariwise, manifests inclinations to help some and not others, at some times and not others, and stems from feelings that come over a person (and might depart if unrequited). Rather than "propensions of feeling," however, practical love manifests the command of an individual will, and its principles are not of "melting compassion" but of action (Kant 2002: 31). Practical love recognizes the humanity of the beloved in an impartial way and acts toward the Other in terms of universal principles. It transcends vagaries of time and affect, a selfless wish as against the "pathological" selfishness of passion. In practical love, one exerts oneself lovingly for the sake of the Other, providing the Other with the recognition that is their due, responding not to any cultural norm or externally imposed law but to a rational human nature and an autonomous individual consciousness.

The ethical social life, Kant concludes, begins with the relationship between a practical lover and beloved, as two autonomous, rational, and dignified individual beings. Respecting one another's humanity, a mutuality and a unity are born: a mutual moral obligation to lead principled lives relative to one another, while united by a common desire to fulfill their rational capacities for a gratifying life. From these narrow beginnings love might be extended as a practice so that humankind as a whole is encompassed and included.

KIERKEGAARD AND NEIGHBOR-LOVE

Søren Kierkegaard also sees love as possessing a broad ethical mission, whereby each individual human being can cast himself or herself in the role of the universal human being. Unlike Kant, however, it is not human rationality that supplies the warrant for an ethical practicing of love but the individual's recognition of his or her "divinely-given" condition (Kierkegaard 1962). There is a biblical commandment to "Love one's neighbor," and since anyone and everyone is a neighbor—as a potentiality but also, by virtue of our planetary home, as a concrete reality—an ethical social integration extends worldwide. Neighborliness, as a kind of love absolutely distinct from the partisan passions of friendship, is an ethical relation based on an acceptance of God-given duties and also God-given capacities and proclivities: we are created to love.

In its working, moreover, neighbor-love brings ethical fulfillment and recognition to lover and beloved alike. In loving one's neighbor one not only fulfills a duty but also recognizes that one bestows love freely: loving not out of external constraint but in order to be true to one's deepest nature. Such constancy in love then provides a source of meaning in human life: the individual willing himself or herself to be true to a moment of recognition, and transforming particular (potentially recalcitrant) instances into a meaningful continuity. Continuously reappropriating that moment of recognition, doing so freely, and vowing to keep on doing so, effects a bulwark of meaningfulness and morality against the threat of life seeming intrinsically absurd. The commitment unifies a life, a human personality: one wills oneself to be true and thus leads a moral life. A lasting commitment to loving the Other stops human lives being fractured and fragmented, chaotic and despairing, pulled all ways by contrasting desires. It affords the self of the lover an enduring coherence, whereby one knows who one is and what one has done.

Loving relations cause one constantly to renew one's moral character in the face of human frailty and change, of tedium and boredom, while a lasting commitment to neighbor-love also provides a foundation to a wider ethical society. Kierkegaard concludes: "to love human beings is still the only thing worth living for; without this life, you really do not live" (1962: 344).

SILVERMAN AND A LOVING IDENTIFICATION

Commensurate with Kant's emphasis on the rational willing of love and Kierkegaard's on the conscious commitment to love is the more recent thesis of psychologist Kaja Silverman, in *The Threshold of the Visible World*, for whom "idealization" is key to an understanding of the human condition. Idealization, Silverman explains, is the means by which human beings make

their lives meaningful: a process whereby *ego* posits another object—*alter*—as necessary and able to fill a void at the core of its own sense of self. If, as Plato posited, desire lies at the root of human engagement with the world, then that desire is born of a sense of lack and gives rise to the idealizing project. Desire "validates" human idealizations: ego's identifying and identifying with an ideal Other is "libidinally validated" and assumes a forceful expression (Silverman 1996: 79). "Love," Silverman suggests, is the name we commonly give to the process of idealization whereby *ego* establishes a particular Other as the cause of its desire. Idealization is the psychic activity at the heart of love, "the precondition of every loving access to the Other," whereby a "lover" sees ideality in the identity of a "beloved" who is other than himself or herself (Silverman 1996: 37).

Moreover, the body plays a privileged role. We tend to confer ideality upon the face and bodily lineaments of an Other. This is how we have characteristically known and idealized otherness, and constituted the frame within which Self and Other have been compared, contrasted and related. And this is—"ideally"—an ethical process. The desire that identifies with another body—so responding to a sense of lack and giving human life assurance and meaning—ideally leads to a recognition and an appreciation of another living being that is "loving" in its effect: hoping for the health and happiness of the beloved Other.

Three dangers are to be admitted, however. Love is not always generous, a gift. A "profound" and "generous sense" of love, Silverman suggests (1996: 71), "implies forming an imaginary alignment with bodily coordinates which cannot be assimilated to one's own": a recognition of the Other's essential otherness. But the *ego* may be as much a site of narcissism as it is of reason, and can wish the idealized Other to become enslaved to itself, even cannibalistically part of itself. The first danger to idealized love as an ethical project, then, is "self-love": the triumph of self-sameness as against keeping the idealized and cherished Other apart. Ideally, identification with an Other should "conform to an externalizing rather than an internalizing logic—so that we identify excorporatively rather than incorporatively, and, thereby, respect the otherness of the newly illuminated bodies" (Silverman 1996: 2). Our aspiration toward the ideal that the Other represents to us ought not to become a resentment that the Other has what we do not, nor an attempt to assimilate the ideal image to the corporeal parameters of the self or otherwise coercively pressurize the other.

Second, there is a danger that *ego* restricts his or her ideality to certain conventional subjects, screening off what is before his or her eyes such that only certain idealizations seem "natural" or "proper." There can be a laziness to *ego*, a timidity, such that the desire to fill a lack is exercised in a habituated and lackluster manner, thus not allowing itself to benefit from the full array of otherness, the true complexity and identity of the world, and its gratificatory

potential. To love "generously" and "excorporatively" is also to work to "de-idealize" cultural norms—to idealize beyond them—so that identifying with an Other is afforded its true potential, its truth.

Finally, we must continually remind ourselves that while identifying otherness is a true engagement with the world surrounding *ego*, the act of idealization stems from a personal need. Since it is *ego* who is "the agent [behind] the illumination," *ego* who is responsible for the desirous idealization of *alter*, there is the necessity for self-awareness. Otherwise there is the danger of the "ideal" Other "congeal[ing] into a tyrannizing essence" to which *ego* is bound in a craven and fallacious submission (Silverman 1996: 2). A generous excorporative love is also an active one: the gift of love takes the form of a "provisional bequest" not a passive prostration. The beloved has conferred on him or her an ideality by *ego* who must beware misrecognizing this as an intrinsic quality of the beloved if that relationship is to be a truthful recognition. All human beings are equally lacking, albeit that each might serve another's need to posit and find ideality.

We can, moreover, train ourselves in love, Silverman concludes, and there can be a politics of love: idealization giving rise to wider ethical relations. This begins as a self-work, *ego* training itself in its habitual reactions so that merely enculturated or narcissistic or incorporating or essentializing idealizations of desire can be overcome. It may seem as if we cannot consciously confer the gift of loving idealization and identification, since its source is a desire that is unconscious. But it is the case that "we can come to be in an active relation to [idealization] after the fact," as a deferred condition, such that loving can yet reverberate though all our "interpersonal relations" (Silverman 1996: 80). It is in this way that loving can become a political tool whereby we recognize the lovableness of any Other, of Anyone, and experience human bodily distinction per se as lovable. *Ego* comes into a politically productive relation with bodily otherness by learning to identify according to an exteriorizing logic: a "heteropathic identification" that calls for a positioning radically discontinuous to ego's own world (Silverman 1996: 85–6). In sum, the individual trains himself or herself deliberately to idealize other human bodies and identify with them in a generous way, overcoming habitual, conventional reactions to those he or she might otherwise wish to repudiate as contemptible, ugly, debased.

RORTY AND THE AGENCIES OF LOVE

Silverman ends her book with the further provocative claim that learning to love Anyone, any individual human body, can benefit from an exposure to "representational arts" such as painting, literature, photography, cinema and

dance. Engaging *aesthetically* with portrayals of otherness that do not mirror images of himself or herself, *ego* is trained in new forms of idealization. As Silverman explicates: "A work of art might prompt its spectator to confer the gift of love" by training him or her to idealize other bodies—bodies that nevertheless diverge widely both from their own and from cultural norms—and so learn "new identificatory coordinates" beyond the self (1996: 37, 98). Art can create representations that are capable of precipitating in their audience an identification and an apprehension of ideality that "abducts" *ego* from their own habits, enabling them to enjoy an "ecstasy" that is "political" as much as personal (Silverman 1996: 93).

Here, Silverman comes close to claims made by Richard Rorty (1986) for what he calls the "agents of love." It is Rorty's argument that ethical progress in recent centuries has been effected less by moral treatises in philosophy or theology than from the growth of a mass market in novels, biographies, autobiographies, histories, travelogues, art exhibitions, and newspapers. These are exercises in what he calls "descriptive particularity": they allow their audience to extend their sympathetic engagement with the world, whereby more people, and people of different sorts, come to be included in the category of "we" as opposed to "they." Consumers in this mass market practice an imaginative kinship with representations of otherness such that the categories of "the alien" and "the outsider" come to be redefined as populated by the fellow human: suffering, frail, and fallible, pained and humiliated. In the novels of George Eliot or Joseph Conrad or John Steinbeck, for instance, one finds sympathetically detailed the suffering of people to whom an English-speaking audience may not have previously properly attended; in those of Vladimir Nabokov or Graham Greene or Iris Murdoch one finds displays of the fallibility and cruelty we as readers may ourselves be capable of. (Likewise the histories, travelogues, and reportage, visual and other, of Henry Tonks, Primo Levi, Levi-Strauss, Norman Lewis, and Robert Capa.) These are "agents of love," Rorty suggests, responsible for guiding the ethical imagination in a liberal society and helping fulfill an ethos of equality and inclusion. It is through aesthetic engagement with their artistry that members of modern democracies— where an autonomous realm of artistic expression has been validated and cherished—have had the possibility of redescribing the Other (and the Self) and extending a "loving" inclusion to other human beings—to Anyone—as potential citizen of the state.

Liberal societies have a historical record in empowering us to become aesthetic "connoisseurs in diversity," Rorty concludes, gradually extending the range of those we imagine being able to share a society with, extending respect and a "polite" recognition. Aesthetic appreciation comes to have a possible political dimension: whereas "all human relations untouched by

love take place in the dark," artistry can offer significant illumination (Rorty 1986: 528–9).

TOLSTOY AND THE LOVE OF ART

Silverman and Rorty rehearse above an argument for the ethical potential of aesthetic appreciation that Leo Tolstoy first makes in an essay from 1897: "What Is Art?" Art, in particular painting, is misconceived if it is deemed simply a means to pleasure or catharsis, Tolstoy argues here. It is rather a necessary condition of human life and a fundamental and principal means of moral engagement.

If, through words, people are able above all to express their thoughts, Tolstoy elaborates, then by art they may express their feelings. The recipient is able to experience the emotion which originally moved the person who made the work of art: "Art is a human activity consisting in this, that one man consciously by means of certain external signs, hands on to others feelings he has lived through, and that others are infected by these feelings and also experience them" (Tolstoy 1994: 59). Art is thus a chief means of human union, since "every work of art causes the receiver to enter into a certain kind of relationship both with him who produced or is producing the art, and with all those who, simultaneously, previously, or subsequently, receive the same artistic impression" (Tolstoy 1994: 56). Not all art is of the same quality, Tolstoy admits. Some unites some people but at the expense of others who are disparaged. This is art that transmits "bad feelings" (superstition, fear, pride, vanity, sensuality, pride, spleen, satiety); it might be known as "patriotic" art, "cultic," "local," "elitist," and "voluptuous." But "sound" art evokes necessary feelings such as merriment, pity, cheerfulness, tranquility, humor, delight, and love.

Moreover, such sound art is to be appreciated as a medium indispensable for a wider progress toward "well-being" for individuals and for humanity alike, Tolstoy is assured: toward their being in "loving harmony with one another" (1994: 171–6). For, as if "by an electric flash," former enmities and isolations come to be replaced by individuals' glad consciousness that others feel what they feel. By evoking an emotional unity between people under the "imaginary" conditions of painting, literature, and music, art trains us to experience such a unity in everyday life. And rather than this harmoniousness being effected by external means—by the coercions of law and police, the organizings of charities and industries—art, uniquely, works through the "free and joyous activity" of aesthetic appreciation.

In sum, art can make brotherhood and love of one's neighbor "the customary feeling and instinct of all" (Tolstoy 1994: 224). Ultimately, by way

of sound artistic appreciation a kindly human communion may come to incorporate all: separations can be overcome between the most different of people and replaced by one common feeling. Art has the capacity to educate humanity in the joy of a universal union that reaches beyond the bounds of the merely customary.

SIMMEL AND THE TRAGEDY OF SOCIETY

In 1916, Georg Simmel published *Rembrandt: An Essay in the Philosophy of Art*. Resonant both with Tolstoy and with Kant, Simmel argued that aesthetics concerns a domain of human production and appreciation that is autonomous and not contingent upon history, society, or culture. Rooted in pleasure and displeasure, in affect and "the heart," and exceeding of conceptual classifications and practical judgments, aesthetics represents a distinctive way of being in the world. To enter into a Rembrandt portrait, for example, was to find honestly represented an individual life in its essential unity: Rembrandt's portraits overcame any division between inner life and physical appearance to provide "unrefracted reflections" of individuality's self-sufficient unity of form and content (Simmel 2005: 18). The eye possesses a unique function among the human sense organs, Simmel averred. When individuals interact by way of mutual glances, they negate the distance between perception and interpretation and enjoy "perhaps the most direct and purest reciprocity that exists anywhere" (Simmel 1924: 358). This is the source of the painter's power: his or her capacity to do justice to the special uniqueness that is an individual human life.

However, it is also the case that "the glances of eye to eye" that unite people fail to "crystallize" into an objective social structure, Simmel went on. "The unity which momentarily arises between two persons is present in the occasion and is dissolved in the function," causing the glancing look to remain a "unique union" between human beings (Simmel 1924: 358). The "tragedy" of human life in society is that here, as against in art, the "law" of individuality is sacrificed to exterior and extraneous concepts (Simmel 1971: 329). Rather than *seeing*, and engaging with the subjectivity of the unique Other, life in society entails a traffic in static and fixed symbolic forms: languages (verbal and other) governed by grammars and syntax; classifications that categorize and emplace the world; laws and norms that make social exchange merely conventional; and material structures and boundaries whose inertia confounds movement and change. Originally creations of the human spirit, the symbolic forms become decontextualized—adulterated, generalized, clichéd—and turn back on their creators. A society is a structure of relations that derives from the individual consciousnesses of those who come

together to create and maintain it. Indeed, albeit that it may come to possess a collective name—a nation-state, a church, a profession, an ethnic group—a society remains in essence a sphere of individuals' "reciprocal influencing": "a web of qualitatively differentiated and individuated phenomena" (Simmel 1971: 19), its unity "nothing but the interaction of [its individual] elements" (Simmel 1971: 23). A society is never a thing in itself, an organism. Nevertheless, social relations are tragic in that they must operate by way of cultural categories: symbolic forms that become a priori and replace individual identities.

Simmel elaborated. Subjectivity may be conceived of as the very antithesis of form—in its individuality, vitality, and fluidity. Yet to express itself, subjectivity must "pass through" form. For we cannot know the individual Other that faces us and we cannot represent that otherness except in terms and forms that reflect our own consciousness rather than theirs: we cannot fully represent to ourselves an individuality which deviates from our own, for "perfect cognition presupposes perfect identity" (Simmel 1971: 9). Hence it is only by way of certain "distortions" that subjectivity comes to be recognized and known by others. Distortions become intrinsic to social life: distortions of three unhappy kinds. First, we conceive of individual Others by assigning them a human type; second, by assigning them a personal character; and third, by assigning them a social position and identity. Such typification and generalization acts, as we have heard, as an a priori veil, which both detracts from individuality—limiting, reducing, corrupting the individual as it is in itself and for itself—and also supplements that individuality—replacing it by what it is not. We thus come to belong—as "members" of this or that society or culture—to the extent that "we" do not belong: by being represented as other than our true selves.

Hence the tragedy of society: a ubiquitous alienation, loss of meaning, and loss of freedom, whereby individual personality is forced to become inauthentic in its expression and its public recognition. Art may remain a compensation, but the conflict between "spirit" and form in social life, between the individual and the stereotype, is insoluble: society members are encouraged to know one another only in distorted and inauthentic ways (Rapport 1995).

PAREKH AND THE DETERMINATIONS OF CULTURE

Simmel's depiction of the distortions of society and their tragic consequences would seem to find paradigmatic expression in the "identity politics" that comes to characterize those societies where "multiculturalism" has become a policy and program. Here, as John Gray (1992: 14) explains, is a political assertion of peoplehood over against personhood: a definition of Self and

Other not in terms of humanity and individuality but via collective rhetorics of difference, closure, and communitarian exclusivity, often of fundamentalist and totalitarian kinds (cf. Amit and Rapport 2002). Self and Other become essentially constituted by their communitarian histories, traditions, and affiliations.

"Cultures are not options," according to Bhikhu Parekh (1998: 206, 212)—a significant voice in the lobby for contemporary British multiculturalism—and "culture" is the fundamental means to discern the identity of what is true and valuable. Human beings are inevitably socialized and so inexorably embedded in a culture, their enculturation furnishing them with inescapable dispositions, common to their cultural fellows, utterly distinct from cultural Others. Born into a culture, it becomes an individual inheritance, willy-nilly, imprinted on bodies and minds, its traditions and heritage determining identity in a fundamental way. Moreover, culture mediates all identity—even scientific truth is seen to be something that belongs to a particular culture. The world contains many cultures, each being different and valuable in its own terms, and there is no independent means to judge, evaluate, critique one culture vis-à-vis another. Individuals do not and may not choose their cultures, in short, for their cultures "choose" them.

Multiculturalism thus "reveals" that members of different cultures may be considered as different to one another as members of different species, concurs James Tully in his book *Strange Multiplicity* (1995). It is natural for human beings to find themselves and know themselves in groups that are clearly bounded, mutually exclusive, and internally homogeneous: cultures bespeak self-evident, quasi-biological collectives, maintaining traditions uniquely suited to members who thrive when they remain true to their cultural tradition and its organic developments and become disorientated when they do not. Hence, different cultural groups may be likened to different species of animal.

According to multiculturalism, a democratic society in our globalized world must recognize the plural cultures of which it was composed and also the fundamentally different types of citizens, each at home in different cultural spaces. Different cultures and culture members possess different needs, different natures; they should have the legal right to fulfill those natures as the traditions of distinct communities dictate. "Our Culture" thus becomes a necessary political rallying cry—a claim, a defense—and "Cultural Difference" posited as a valuable and "natural" aspect of a modern plural society: a demand for recognition and inclusion not for individual human beings as such but for the particular and distinct needs and natures of, say, "Muslims," "Basques," "women," "gays," "blacks," "subalterns," and "working class" (Runnymede Trust 2000). A "politics of recognition" (Taylor 1992) properly insists that a liberal society now sees itself as being composed not first and

foremost of individual human beings—individual citizens—but members of communities that mediate between individual and state. Cultural communities are a person's fundamental belonging: religious communities; ethnic communities; racial communities; class communities; gendered communities; communities of the differently abled; local and regional communities.

BAUMAN AND THE COMPENSATIONS
OF IDENTITY POLITICS

A multiculturalist orthodoxy has come to express itself in an identity politics that seems prepared to reengage with a kind of *ancien regime*: a pre-Enlightenment (or Counter-Enlightenment) "society of orders." Here is a social structure imagined as a demarcation of fundamental differences that are seen to exist between individuals as members of fixed statuses or classes. Such notions have also been current, of course, during the worst episodes of twentieth-century totalitarianism, justifying policies of eugenics and genocide. Hence political theorist Brian Barry's fear that a "new Dark Age" threatens, where fundamentalist and fascist movements mean a retreat of liberal versions of citizenship and its institutions—and Barry's call for an urgent "egalitarian critique" of multiculturalism (2001: 32).

It is to be recognized, however, that a liberal constitution of individual freedoms—a working to overcome or at least ameliorate the "tragic distortions" of society as a form of category thinking—has never been unopposed. Adherents of an alternative "communitarian" vision did not disappear with the overcoming of the *ancien regime* by the American or French Revolutions, by the "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen," and by the promulgation of English civil liberties and the rule of law. Counter currents remained, and powerfully so. For Georg Hegel and his nineteenth-century political followers (as for Giovanni Vico, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Johan Herder in the eighteenth century), the individual human being only gained recognition and hence existence through their place in the realm of the family and their property in the wider realm of society: it was through the mutual recognition involved in property ownership and exchange that individuals attained to self-consciousness as members of corporate groups. The concept of social interaction as the necessary ground of individual existence was then taken forward by many of the founders of modern social science—Marx, Maine, Durkheim, Mauss, Pareto—for whom society possessed an ontological status prior to its individual members, such that there could be no individual selves unencumbered or free from the morally binding and constituting ties of a particular community. Indeed, the human being only acceded to his or her humanity, freedom and personal identity within the community. Under

Durkheimian communitarianism, then, "morality" was public, something defined by and supportive of a *conscience collective* or general will; and "virtue" a public or communal enterprise toward the pursuit of a common good. The individual was an indivisible part of the communal whole or "mechanical solidarity," through ascriptive mechanisms, and the social good called for the subjugation of individual interests (even existence) to the public realm.

It is also important to recognize that the slogan "cultures are not options" (Parekh) is a patent falsehood. Indeed, every one of the purportedly "natural" characteristics of cultural groupings, above, is refutable. Cultural groupings are *not* clearly bounded; they are *not* mutually exclusive; they are *not* internally homogeneous; they do *not* house consensual traditions which develop organically and are uniquely suited to their members' thriving. Cultural tradition is always a matter of interpretation, always part of an argument; cultural belonging is always an act of negotiation and contestation; cultural practice is always a matter of particular and interested application. Cultural groupings always exist in a field: a particular culture is always an agonistic, competitive, and contrastive statement vis-à-vis other cultures. "A culture," in short, is a process of individual creation, negotiation, and interpretation; only deliberate programs of cultural fundamentalism in aid of vested interests endeavor to fix, define, and sanction the fluidity and claim the crystallization of a set of "traditional" givens.

The slogan "cultures are not options" is not only a false claim, however, it can also be argued that its consequences are pernicious. Not only the attempt to determine the shape and course of particular individual lives—how a "pious" "Muslim" "woman" behaves, for instance—but also the attempt to fix whole groups of people and behaviors into particular boxes, to assert fundamental differences between people and groups, and to assert the unchanging and consensual nature of cultural traditions. A moral society as it is envisaged in this book is also a matter of putting such cultural (and "culturalist") claims in their proper place. Alongside the ontological difference that distinguishes humankind from other species of life and individual human beings from one another there may exist the symbolic constructions, the fictions, of cultural difference. These are matters of taste, of aesthetics. A moral society is one where culture—one's "taste" as regards matters of symbolic construction—is carefully regulated as being a voluntary realm, a matter of individual choice; it is not a matter for community elders, neighbors, friends, politicians, even parents to assert and determine. Such a politicization of cultural identity spawns a fundamentalism that falsely seeks to enshrine the fixed nature of traditions and to define people as being collectively the same as some and different to others. But culture is a fiction, and a moral society preserves the individual right to choose. It is an aesthetic matter: what diet, what dress, what art and literature, what football team, what religious faith

(if any), what mythology and ritual practice, and so on, best accords with individual gratifications at particular times.

It is not difficult to see the attraction of identity politics. Notions of culture that emphasize collective samenesses and differences reflect widespread and deeply felt anxieties among people about their ability to grasp and influence the forces that appear to threaten them in a "runaway" world (Leach 1969). In the words of anthropologist Michael Jackson:

> Cultural and ethnic identity have become the catchwords for many of those disadvantaged by colonial and postcolonial inequalities in the distribution of power. (...) Powerless, dispersed, disparaged peoples imagine they can recapture something of the integrity and authenticity they feel they have *personally* lost. (2002: 107)

There is safety in numbers and in the certainties of claiming shared and known traditions. Generalized classifications and stereotypifications become defenses against impotence: attempts to conjure an illusion of fixed knowledge and fixed identities in the face of everyday complexity and flux. Risk, change, anonymity, and alienation are replaced by ideologies of "culture," "religion," "tradition," "gender," "ethnicity," "class," and "nationality" that promise solidity and solidarity.

Here is a form of social exchange reminiscent of the *ancien regime* but with a modern character, according to sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (1998). Identity politics and its fundamentalism—cultural, religious—are responses to senses of insufficiency in a contemporary globalized world; a return to a pre-Enlightenment regulation and categorization of the world is effected as an alternative to contemporary global uncertainties and inequalities. The message of this fundamentalism is that the human individual is not self-sufficient and should not be seen as self-reliant: he or she needs guidance and direction, and can find this in the weight of collective cultural tradition. Here is a cultural fundamentalism that abolishes freedom and so removes risk since every aspect of life is legislated upon. The infinite powers of the group—frequently with divine sanction—are promised and deployed and the individual subordinated to the needs and rules proclaimed in the group's name (Bauman 1998: 74–5). The prophets of culturalism promise an escape from the nausea of uncertainty: a freedom from choice; a form of totalitarianism offered to those who find individual freedom and risk nauseous.

The argument of this book, nevertheless, is that such cultural category thinking is not moral, and its effects pernicious. Attempts at fundamentalistic demarcations, mobilizations, and exclusions encourage a self-perpetuating intolerance and inhumanity: reducing the world to fictional oppositions admits neither synthesis nor resolution. A morality that does justice to

our natural capacity to determine the substance of our lives in individual ways—indeed, the necessity of this, given the individually embodied nature of human consciousness—would be one that deems it right and proper that individuals be given the space to exercise this capacity, to fulfill themselves. So that the substance of individual lives is not a matter of collective determination but becomes so far as possible a matter of individual interpretation: of individual desire, choice, and satisfaction.

Chapter 4

The Ontology of Individuality and the Symbology of Society

If culture is a fiction and category thinking its pernicious consequence, and yet the imagery—the social imaginary of incorporation in essential collective identities—is a powerful attractor, then how to inscribe an alternative imagery? Again, one might begin with Simmel, and the absolute distinction he draws between social structures and cultural traditions on the one hand and the human lives individually led in their vicinity.

"Society exists where a number of individuals enter into interaction," Simmel explains (1971: 23), an interaction that "arises on the basis of certain drives or for the sake of certain purposes." Hence, "any history or description of a social situation is an exercise of psychological knowledge" (Simmel 1971: 32). As society is constituted and maintained by human beings coming together by virtue of their individual drives and for the purpose of their individual gratifications, its history and meaning are matters of individual interpretation(s). A society exists as a set of symbolic forms, and these arranged in structures giving rise to traditions, but what the forms and the history mean, and how they are animated and inhabited in a "social situation, is an exercise of psychological knowledge." "A society is, therefore, a structure which consists of beings who stand inside and outside of it at the same time," Simmel writes (1971: 14–15). Social structures and cultural traditions may seem to be populated by individual human beings but the individual itself is not social: "He is both a link in the organism of sociation and an autonomous organic whole" (Simmel 1971: 17). Individuality, Simmel concludes, is "that structure whose form is absolutely bound to its reality and cannot be abstracted from this reality" (Simmel 2005: 47). Albeit that "he" lends his creativity to the construction of societies, the individual human being remains a thing in itself.

In these formulations, Simmel not only elaborates on his sense of indebtedness to the individual representations that portraiture such as Rembrandt's is able to confirm, but also admits a theoretical debt to Friedrich Nietzsche. For Nietzsche, individual human beings must be conceived of as absolute units, free and for themselves, their essence based not on other things but an inner, independent facticity. "The individual is something quite new which creates new things, something absolute," Nietzsche writes (1968: 403), "all his acts are entirely his own": matters of his will and his evaluation. The individual was a "final" element of being, and no superorganism emerged from their coming together. Furthermore, ultimate value resided in individual fulfillment for Nietzsche. An individual did justice to his or her species inheritance, extended that human inheritance and achieved "greatness," when he or she animated and inhabited in an individual way what was given in the environment, including natural forms, cultural conventions, and social formulae (Nietzsche 2001: 40). A "masterful" life was the free and "willful" making of a life and a life-world. It was within the reach of all—a species-wide capacity—to overcome the conditions of their origin (as "Overmen").

This was not always easy, Nietzsche admitted:

> In his heart every man knows quite well, that being unique, he will be in the world only once and that no imaginable chance will for a second time gather together into a unity so strangely variegated an assortment as he is: he knows it but he hides it like a bad conscience. (1997: 127)

It was often given to "artists" to refuse a "sluggish promenading in borrowed fashions and appropriated opinions," Nietzsche believed. Nevertheless, such creative being in the world was also an example: an incentive. It might shame others into admitting their bad consciences to themselves and refusing any longer to lead inauthentic lives of conventionality. Moreover, anyone could assume the artist's unconditional honesty, and the nakedness. And in doing so, anyone could come to terms with "the law that every man is a unique miracle":

> Uniquely himself to every last movement of his muscles; more, that in being thus strictly consistent in uniqueness he is beautiful, and worth regarding, and in no way tedious. To remove oneself from the mass is to stop taking oneself easily and listen to one's conscience saying "Be your self!" (1997: 127)

In short, the noble potential of humanity as a species existed as a natural fact in each individual version of that species.

"The individual ... constitutes the entire *single* line 'Man' up to and including himself," Nietzsche concluded (1979: 86, 1968: 413): this is the

"tremendously great significance" of the single creature. "Man follows a single line to oneself," Simmel (1991: 46) was pleased to quote from Nietzsche as conclusion to his own thinking. And here, I suggest, in a *line* of natural evolution that runs up to and through any individual human life, is a means to set out on an alternative imaging both of the nature of individual human life and the ideal moral form of its social accommodation. Here is the individual as human *projection*, and the individual life as *projectile*.

THE INDIVIDUAL AS PROJECTILE

Consider a self-propelled projectile careering through outer space. Its energy and momentum carry it along a certain trajectory and it is deflected from this path only to the extent that it comes under the gravitational sway of another body, or is actually hit by another body. Even if this were to happen, the displacement caused to its original trajectory would depend upon its own force relative to that of the other body: its mass and its speed in a certain direction. If it is forceful enough it carries on its way without radical deflection. Consider then the life of an individual human being and the career which his or her life course represents; and consider the social systems, institutional structures, and cultural discourses which are seen to constitute the environments in which individual lives are led. Would not the extent to which an individual human path through life is affected, even controlled, by these outside bodies and forces be dependent upon its projectile force, the forcefulness with which that life is lived in a certain direction? And should not the control which a social-cum-institutional-cum-cultural gravity can be expected to exert upon an individual life, and the displacement caused, depend upon the intrinsic single-mindedness, the self-intensity, with which that human being attends to the effecting his or her own life course? Genius, Nietzsche suggested, resided in the single-mindedness with which human beings approached an activity, and the continuity and complexity of the concentration they imparted to their practices. Their strength of will provided their lives with "the orientation of a straight line" as against "wavelike vacillation" (1994: 164). In Nietzsche's terms, the individual human life as projectile (as has been metaphorized above) was one that possessed the "strong will" and "good conscience" to harness its impulses in one direction, producing a force which protected that individual against deflection through the wills of others. There was a "genius" that human beings possessed, a single-mindedness, that enabled them—any human being, Anyone—to insist that they would lead their lives according to their own innate force and in terms of the directionality they would themselves impart.

Let us take the metaphor of a projectile a further step. Besides meteors, comets, and rockets careering through space along singular paths are also to be found bodies in more fixed trajectories or orbits: satellites, moons and planets, stars and solar systems. All of these objects, however, are composed of the same physical matter (there is only one kind), and all are subject to the same physical laws, of momentum, velocity, mass, and gravity. Their trajectories derive from the constellation of relations which comprise their own force relative to others' in the one physical universe. Again, consider the individual human being on his or her life course. For some this will involve more habitual or fixed behaviors than for others. Some individual lives will be led in more or less common alignments with the lives and routines of others; the individual human being is not alone in the social universe, and for some, life consists of remaining within the ambit of particular others, or "orbiting" jointly with them. That is, besides the innate human force to pursue an individual own path, there is also the force to remain within others' domains or to organize joint trajectories. These latter can amount to aggregations—families, communities, societies—of individuals, all of whose lives are aligned. The extent of the alignment will vary—the longevity, impersonality, and institutionality of the social arrangement vary—and the size of the aggregation will vary (from coupledom and family to nationhood and confederation). But the principle will be the same. Here are individual human life courses and trajectories coming to be deliberately, willfully, aligned one with another so that instead of their intrinsic momentum taking them apart, it keeps them together, moving for a while more or less in alignment. Finally, however, the aggregations, the societies of individuals, are not greater than their sum; there is nothing beyond the matter that (temporarily) constitutes the identity of the individual, and nothing beyond the force which that individual life gives onto, and, in collaboration with others, adds up to. In combination, in institutionalization, individuals may be more forceful than apart (to the extent that they can orchestrate their individual momentums in harmony), but the institution and the society has no life or life force of its own. There is no societal superorganism that emerges from the alignment of the life courses and trajectories of individual members.

The analogy has been taken far enough—without, hopefully, the metaphorization seeming forced. A human life is essentially an isolate, a discretely embodied consciousness, as if a projectile in space. It bears the intrinsic capacities to constitute its worldviews and life-projects according to its own gratification. The *moral* treatment of this life, I would contend, is to have that life force fulfill itself—whether this entails a determination to lead that life apart from or in conjunction ("orbit") with others. A moral treatment is for the human being not to be incorporated willy-nilly in a supposed superorganism (a constructed social category or group, a community or society) and not

to be deflected from a course that is determined by its own innate genius for self-direction and willfulness.

"ONTOLOGY" AND "SYMBOLOGY"

"Society is good when it does not violate me, but best when it is likest to solitude." This is the judgment of Ralph Waldo Emerson (1981: 95), one of the few philosophers whom Nietzsche respected. Emerson elaborated, while solitude is "proud," it is also "impracticable"; but while society is "vulgar," it can also be "fatal." And his conclusion: "We must keep our heads in the one and our hands in the other. The conditions are met, if we keep our independence, yet do not lose our sympathy" (Emerson 1981: 393–4). The image projected by Emerson, by Nietzsche and by Simmel alike is founded on a recognition of an absolute distinction between the organic reality of the individual human being and the contingent, constructed realities of social structure and cultural tradition. Between an *ontological* condition of human reality and a *symbolical* one. "Ontology" refers to certain natural facts of our human condition and of the wider world. Ontological facts are truths that exist whether we recognize them—and value them or wish them—or not. There is an animal species that we designate as *homo sapiens*, and that species reproduces itself by way of individual human bodies and lives only by way of individual human bodies. Whether we designate that species as "*homo sapiens*" or as "*squiggly wiggly*," and its constituents as "individual bodies" or as "****%\$£&#@**s**"— whether we designate the species and the individual as anything at all, or fail to come to a knowledge of their existence—these realities will exist and will continue to have a determining effect on the lives we lead. Due to the ontology of our humanity we cannot, for instance, fly; while our individual embodiments fail and die after a certain number of years. Due to our ontology, we are also able consciously to reflect on our capabilities and liabilities, and, within natural bounds, may endeavor to interfere with them to a variable degree: partially to engineer our own genome and ecosystem.

Part of our ontology as human beings is our facility with symbols: we construct languages and cultures and societies based on symbolic vehicles— words, images, musical notes, bodily gestures, material artifacts—that hope to signal certain kinds of sense. We symbolically sign "identity," "belonging," "value," "hierarchy," "worth," "health," "mood," and more. In Clifford Geertz's well-known image, adapted from Max Weber, human beings weave webs of significance out of systems of symbols that enable them to lead lives largely suspended in enculturated spaces and social structures (Geertz 1973: 5). Nevertheless, these symbolic worlds *are* constructions. They are fictions, as has been repeated: things that human beings, individually and

collaboratively, have made—and made up. They are not truths in the way that ontological facts are truths. Indeed, cultural webs of significance are epiphenomenal: they depend on the ontological phenomenology of humanity and individuality. They are fictions that must have a tenuous relation to reality at least—however distorted—if they are to have any longevity. As Ernest Gellner phrased it (1995: 8), it is the *natural* construction of society that guarantees the cultural construction of social reality.

The distinction between ontology and symbology is a fundamental one for an anthropological science of the human, I would contend, as for an anthropological vision of morality. It is the distinction between truths that stand for themselves—truths that abide whether or not they are humanly recognized, truths that are independent—and truths that depend on human construction and recognition—and that disappear as soon as their being believed in and invested in cease. The "natural modesty of women," the "nature of men as unable to control sexual urges," the "domestic as a natural sphere for women," the "civic as a natural sphere for men"—these are fictions: symbolic truths that pertain to a particular cultural construction. They do not exist if we have no knowledge of them or abjure them. But the fact that reproduction of the human species calls for "male" and "female" elements to come together in a specific way is an ontological truth that we cannot ignore or wish away if we wish for progeny. Equally, human individuality, the fact that we occupy distinct bodies with their own metabolisms, their own consciousnesses, their own lifetimes, is an ontological truth; it abides whether or not it is culturally recognized or valued, whether or not it forms the basis of social-structural incorporation. There is individuality and there is all manner of historico-cultural construction of the nature and identity of social persons that we might identify: "individualism" in the "West" as against "dividualism" elsewhere; a tribal *persona* as against a classical *personage* as against a Christian *personne* (Mauss 1985), and so on. One must not confuse or conflate the ontological and the symbolical—"individuality" and "individualism," for instance—and one must not confuse the nature of independent truths with dependent ones. Rather, as an anthropologist one interrogates the distances between them, the fit between them. Given the ontological nature of humanity and of individuality, is this culturo-symbolic construction a good fit? Is it morally optimal? Is this an appropriate—a *civilized*—way in which our nature as individual human beings might be culturally acknowledged and socially accommodated?

In sum, there are matters of natural (ontological) fact, and there are matters of cultural (symbolical) construction. "Civilization" might be the name we give to a meeting between the symbolical and the ontological such that the former does not traduce the latter through ignorance or vested interest or partiality (Rapport 2011). In particular, a moral way forward is for the universal expression of human capacities to be emancipated from the arbitrary

categorizations of sociocultural identification: from the fictions of culture and what John Stuart Mill dubbed "the despotism of custom" (1963: 194). The moral society will be where the individual human being is free so far as possible to conduct and project his or her life as an expression of his or her own "genius" and will. The worldviews and life-projects, the tastes and aesthetic choices, also the cultural constructions take the form of a fulfillment of Anyone's own individual substantiations of its universal human birthright.

The love that I imagine as civic virtue in this book entails that recognition and respect whereby Anyone is provided the space and liberty to pursue the project of their own life.

COSMOPOLITAN POLITESSE

In an earlier work (*Anyone: The Cosmopolitan Subject of Anthropology*), I considered a practical solution to the "problem" of society as identified by Simmel: the fact that we might only know the individual Other by virtue of the imposition of alien and alienating, "distorting," labels, categories, and taxonomies. I argued for a discourse and an ethos that I termed "cosmopolitan politesse" (Rapport 2012: 7–10, 174–97).

"Cosmopolitanism" as a concept can be said to encompass both the universality of a common humanity (or "*cosmos*") and the uniqueness of human individuality (or "*polis*"). Our human commonality comprises *universal* bodily capacities; these come to be *uniquely* substantiated in individual lives. That is, individual human beings uniquely deploy universal, species-wide capacities in the developing of their consciousness and the authoring of worldviews and life-projects. To be a human being is to be an individual, ensconced in an individual body, entrained on an individual life course.

Cosmopolitanism is also an emancipation from cultural constructions that would impose limiting symbolic classifications. Cosmopolitan politesse was envisaged as an ethos and a practice that recognized the true, ontological nature of humanity and individuality, and was supervenient upon traditional constructions, classifications, and evaluations of the world, upon traditional hierarchies and politenesses. The aspiration behind cosmopolitan politesse was a means and a mode of social interaction—meeting, speaking to, being polite to, engaging with other people—that presumed the common *humanity* and the distinct *individuality* of those met and endeavored to classify them in no more substantive fashion than this: as "individual" and "human." One presumed that one was engaging with an individual human Other and not with a representative of some more general class: "a woman," "a Dane," "a Jew," someone "working class," or "black," and so on. Cosmopolitan politesse concerned a different way of meeting others so that, so far as possible,

one did not engage with them as *representatives* of some collective category but rather as Anyone, an individual human being.

Cosmopolitan politesse was imagined as a code of good manners, a public linguistic and behavioral style of address and exchange, but also as an embodied, an ethical program aimed at more than mere "politeness." It presumed the individuality of interacting citizens but did not presume an intimacy with them. Society members anticipated one another's individual nature but did not expect to know one another's private selves nor to read off private truths from public expressions. One *saw* the Other, Anyone, but one did not presume to encompass—necessarily to know or understand—what one saw: one *apprehended* but did not *comprehend* the human Other.

Cosmopolitan politesse was imagined as a kind of balancing act, then: it balanced a public respect for the individual with a public ignorance of the individual. One recognized Anyone as an actor entrained on a life course, amid life-projects of his or her or their own devising. And yet one would afford that Other the recognition and the space necessary to fulfill their life-projects (to the extent that it may not prejudice the potential fulfillment of anyone else). As balancing act, cosmopolitan politesse was also a matter of proportion. It was a surface beneath which individual lives were led in personally meaningful ways; and it was a surface upon which the balancing act of social life was carried out. In Emerson's phrasing: "We live amid surfaces, and the true art of life is to skate well on them" (1981: 275). Too little politesse—too dense a social environment or too regimented—and Anyone might be threatened by the designs of others and may not have the space to lead an individually determined life. Too much politesse—too rarefied a social environment or too anomic—and Anyone might not be afforded the support or nurture necessary to lead an individual life and may succumb to the schemes of others by default.

In short: cosmopolitan politesse was imagined as a code of public sociability in which Anyone was accorded a place, recognized as a potential interlocutor on the basis of his or her common humanity and not on any other presumed intimacy or requisite affiliation or supposed common identity. Yes, they entered the public space of social interaction as "an individual" and "human" but as no more "specific" a social actor than this. A "cosmopolitan" public space did not define itself as necessarily privy to the intimacies of personal selfhood, nor that the radical particularities that characterized such personal selfhood might easily translate into common forms of expression. And politeness was envisaged as a virtue: good manners as medium through which to interact with Anyone at a respectful distance. One cared sufficiently about one's fellow human beings to ensure that they were afforded the space to come into their own and not become mere means to others' ends, but one did not presume to know in any detail, or seek to influence in any substantial way, what another individual's "coming into their own" might entail.

And yet, what might be the motivational force by which cosmopolitan politesse is *understood* as virtuous, and *welcomed* as ethos and interactional code? More is needed. Category thinking is no passing ill, as Simmel explicated, and it is even an attractive solution to the scales and complexities of contemporary social life, as the continuing currency of identity politics evinces. We are comfortable with categories and classes, at ease in our habitual symbolic classifications of the world and the collectivization, homogenization, and reproduction of identity that they construct. What might motivate their being transcended in recognition of the ontologies of individual life? Might love play a role? Love understood as an appreciation of individual identity, yet an appreciation that does not expect to know the content of that other life: does not expect or need to know—or even be enamored of—the substance of what Anyone makes, individually, of their human capacities. One attends "lovingly" to the Other as a living being whose birthright is an individual destiny. This must be the quest of the present work: the civic virtue of love as "polite" practice.

Chapter 5

Taking Stock

Love, Vision, Category, Moment

Was it possible to consider a kind of interactional code that human beings might generally be motivated to practice, a code that avoided the distorting (reductive, coercive, homogenizing) mechanisms of general, collective labels, classes, and categories, a code that took as its foundation the irreducible embodiment of the individual Other? A "loving recognition", it has been suggested, whereby one visually apprehended the Other (Levinas), emotionally engaged with the Other, desirous to know (Murdoch), and was appreciative of its individual difference (Silverman) might provide the motivation to transcend a narrowly conventional way of engaging (and traducing) otherness.

To "fall in love," says Murdoch, is to be stunned by a realization of an unutterable particularity beyond the self and its habitual world. This realization must however be subject to a rational accounting such that it is continued in a "practical" not a "pathological" fashion (Kant), and such that one commits oneself to its conscious avowal (Kierkegaard). A consequence of this ratiocination is the possible transformation of loving recognition into a political project: one engages lovingly not only with those individual other bodies one might "instinctively" idealize and identify with (Silverman). Indeed, the political project might result in a globalization of affect: strangers on a global scale being moved to engage with one another in ways that insist on preserving the personal nature of our human being in the world (Giddens). Finally, this process—emotional, rational, political—might be one of learning and training: one might mentor oneself. The aesthetic engagement that one has with representational arts—equally emotional and transcendent in quality— can be a route to seeing otherness, recognizing both its humanity and its individuality (Silverman, Rorty). The artist is possessed of a special facility to *look* at the world (Simmel): a facility that the viewer might borrow, but also learn to practice for themselves (Nietzsche, Tolstoy). Loving recognition was

a special kind of looking—straightforward, honest (Levinas)—and moreover a looking that an appreciation of art might train.

This conclusion can appear naïve, however, even hopelessly so. The attention that the Nazi regime devoted to the arts, for instance, while difficult to assess in terms of an "authentic" engagement, would seem to cast doubt on art's moral essence. Yes, Tolstoy would distinguish between the moral capacity of "sound" art and the "patriotic," "cultic," "local," and "elitist" art that transmitted "bad" feelings, but is this enough to encompass and silo a Nazi co-optation of artistic expression? Here, to recall, was a regime establishing forms of government-approved art that had the force of law. In the words of Joseph Goebbels (Reich Minister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda), the Third Reich would embody "a new modernity, not only in politics and in social matters, but also in art and intellectual matters" (cited in Adam 1992: 56). A "German" art of a Third Reich was to inherit from classical Greece and Rome art forms that embodied an inner Aryanism—uncontaminated by the Jewish influences that had perpetrated such acts of aesthetic violence against the German spirit. While "Jewish" modernism was degenerate—indecipherable, depraved, distorted, and representative of the corrupt nature of an inferior race—the new German art was to be "noble," "heroic," "pure," and "mystical." Generally comprehensible, it would *in itself* induce a new Nazi ethos and overcome moral bankruptcy. In Nazi-occupied Europe, widespread purges of "degenerate" art and artists were then undertaken, and wholesale purloining of painting, furniture, and sculpture considered "Aryan." In the death camps, music—singing on command, playing instruments in prisoners' orchestras, having to listen to "Aryan" compositions—was perpetrated as a special kind of violence and torture that attacked inmates' certainties and senses of self (Grant 2013; Brauer 2016). As recounted firsthand by Primo Levi:

> Marches and popular songs dear to every German … lie engraven on our minds and will be the last thing in the Lager that we shall forget: they are the voice of the Lager, the perceptible expression of its geometrical madness, of the resolution of others to annihilate us first as men in order to kill us more slowly afterwards. (1987: 56–7)

Aside from the possible naïvety of a thesis concerning the ethics of artistry, it is also appropriate to recall Simmel's caveat that whatever the truthfulness to art (and to visual apprehension), art and society are nevertheless autonomous of each other. The individuality that might be inscribed artistically does not translate into social exchange where generalized and impersonal cultural and symbolic forms must be the common currency. Rorty, too, had his misgivings. A liberal society may surely empower "agents of love"—the

novelists, ethnographers, and artists whose connoisseurship was to advocate for the moral recognition of the Other in his or her individual particularity—but it was also the case that such a society prided itself on the *neutral* character of its public procedures, their "rationalism" and generality. Once the Other had been admitted into society, once it was accepted that any human being was deserving of democratic inclusion, liberalism deployed "agents of justice"—civil servants, doctors, lawyers—whose professionalism was to deal impartially with all members alike by way of anonymity and distance. A liberal, "procedural" justice entailed precisely ignoring the individual nature and character of lives. The general ethos of liberal politeness was, indeed, to put aside personal worldviews in public—the seeming "final vocabularies" of cultural meaning and value, belief, and desire—and engage with others (and with oneself) in terms of an "ironic" restraint. It might be the case that human relations untouched by love take place "in the dark," but this is the price of a civil society in the liberal mode, Rorty concludes (1986: 533). We know the Other generally as a class, and only retreat into exclusive private clubs of belonging and moral agreement actually to meet and appreciate individual others. "Two cheers for democracy," then, to echo E. M. Forster, because the universal inclusiveness on which the liberal society prides itself is practiced at the expense of affective engagement. In short, the demands of love and those of justice cannot be substantially reconciled, and a liberal society determines that justice must be enough.

It is for the abovementioned reasons that I would lay such store by the *moment* of love: as something epiphanous and visionary. Recognizing the individuality of fellow human beings entails powerful and motivating "moments of vision," I would argue (a "magic" that "penetrates like a dart" [Hardy]), when one *sees* and apprehends beyond the conventional cultural categories that guide habitual perceptions and that would define (and confine) the individual according to external and extraneous collective memberships and identities. The moment is brought about by the emotional force of being strongly affected by what one sees: the visual recognition of another life, individual and distinct. *Whether this moment of vision is mediated by an artistic representation, or an experience of an Other who is physically present in and as themselves, the moment is an overwhelming emotional connection*: here is an Other "I," a life in its own bounds and entrained on its own course, sui generis. The emotional force of the moment of vision is such as to inaugurate a process. The "lover" reflects on the moment, rationally considers its implications. Love is a desire, says Plato; but love is also a rational reflection on the commitment to recognize Anyone as a "neighbor," says Kierkegaard, a rational willing of oneself away from a pathological possessiveness, says Kant. Love begins as an unconscious identification with an Other, says Silverman, but then it can be trained so as to become a generous appreciation

of the embodied otherness of Anyone. Loving recognition is a process, a complex of behaviors comprising attraction, appreciation, and respect. An emotional attraction gives on to a rational appreciation and then an ethos of respect, a training and an organization in caring.

THE LOVING EPIPHANY?

The process I have outlined for a loving recognition begins with an epiphanous moment. But this moment also needs further attention. Need every apparent epiphany entail a loving and virtuous coming into being? Need every epiphany be life affirming, or even life changing? One "falls in love," but does one not equally "fall" into revulsion or repulsion, into displeasure or nausea, into hopelessness, melancholy, or despair?

The experience has seemed to lend itself especially to literary treatment.

In her novel *The Nice and the Good*, Iris Murdoch has one character in particular, Theo, an aging bachelor, come to an understanding of two kinds of love. There is a "possessive self-filling" love that is self-centered, and there is a "higher" love that is impersonal in nature, that transforms selfish attachments into unselfish ones (Murdoch 2000: 348). An episode of possessive love in Theo's younger years had led to tragic consequences, leaving him ashamed, guilt-ridden, and empty of the will for further engagement with the world. Becoming apprized of the equally questionable history of a close friend, Willy (guilty of saving himself at Dachau by virtue of betraying others) who has similarly kept himself socially sequestered, Theo suddenly recognizes the principal moral duty of him and Willy alike. What is "good" is for each of them to engage with otherness: to practice that impersonal, non-possessive love that pays attention to the claims of ongoing individual lives around them. This moment of vision has the force to lift Theo from the "tyrannical" hold of his guilt and sense of sin. "Nothing matters except loving what is good," Theo realizes (Murdoch 2000: 344). In this way, he might break free from a customary "adherence of evil" to which a self-possessed personality confines him and embrace not only Willy's condition but that of a wider field of individual relations.

In another novel, *Henry and Cato*, Murdoch presents another instance of epiphany. "Breathless with wonder and almost a spectator of himself … and quite independently of his will," Cato discovers that he has been "invaded, taken over, quietly" by a loving divinity (1977: 39–40). An "earthly" perspective has suddenly been transcended by a "mystical" and, indeed, "heavenly" one. The epiphany did not precipitate a "headlong rush into a new life" for Cato, nor an experiential "glow" that absolutely resisted the temptations

of time nor a vision that "cleansed" him absolutely of his old self with its "irrelevant desires," "ordinary pains and anxieties," and "the willfulness of vice." Nevertheless, "like a river, like a growing plant," there came to Cato the realization that "his whole life must be a showing of what he now *knew*": a devout attempt to love others (Murdoch 1977: 40–3). The moment of vision led him to recognize how he might devote his life—devoutly—to the attempt to love others.

Murdoch elaborates on her thesis in her more explicitly philosophical writings. Self-centeredness is a powerful system of energy, she admits (2001: 65), but it also reduces the world to a false unity—as Emmanuel Levinas urged. Love counteracts this by directing the attention outward: inspiring attention to reality and revealing a *surprising* variety to the world. "Love is knowledge of the individual" (Murdoch 2001: 27). At least, this is what Murdoch would describe as a "high love": "an exercise of justice and realism and really looking," coming to see the world "as it is" (1999: 375). But this is a hard task, Murdoch also recognizes, and difficult to maintain. Love is often too possessive to be a place of vision as against self-centeredness, and one remains ensconced in a solipsistic world in which one would have others play a part according to one's own customary specifications. Social convention is likewise an enemy of love, causing one to fail to see the individual because one is sunk in a social whole of apparent orders that uncritically determines one's reactions.

Notwithstanding, there are loving epiphanies, Murdoch insists. They can be described—as in her novels—as ideally entailing processes of "unselfing." These may amount to the most extraordinary and revealing experiences in life, "whereby the centre of significance is suddenly ripped out of the self, and the dreamy ego is shocked into awareness of an entirely separate reality" (Murdoch 1999: 417). One falls in love, transcends self-centeredness, and also illuminates the possible sovereignty of a "good" society where the human Other is not overwritten by cultural classifications.

In her book *Cockroaches*, Scholastique Mukasonga describes the 1994 genocide of Tutsis by Hutus in Rwanda. "Cockroach" was the term long in use by Hutus to designate the less-than-human Tutsi. From the first pogroms in 1959, however, to the final onslaught there was a long period of waiting, such that when the months of slaughter finally arrived Mukasonga experienced it as a kind of release. The discrimination between "Tutsis" and "Hutus" was so long on the verge of becoming a violent confrontation, that when the habitude of a stand-off between the social groups was finally overcome, and descended into an orgy of destruction, it felt to Mukasonga like an epiphany: "At last! Now we may stop living our lives waiting for death to come."

The "moment of deliverance" that led to the death of dozens of friends and family also led Mukasonga to an epiphany that her personal life-project must be to transcend living in a stalemate of oppositionary ethnic categories. She realized (after Levinas [1990a: 153]) that both the physical violence and the symbolic violence that had preceded it derived alike from "shutting people away in a class." She resolved now to live differently, and "in the name of others."

To provide testimony to the voices of murdered individuals was the motivation behind the writings of Primo Levi on the regime of Nazi genocide, we understand. Most particularly this concerned the death camp or Lager, where the moment of arrival was itself murderous in its revelations: the shocking realization of a "gray zone" where the everyday world of black-and-white realities is left behind.

Levi elaborates, the Lager inmate—if they had survived the journey and the initial "selection" for immediate murder—was ignorant often of where in Europe he or she had reached, and why; who was to be obeyed, how, and to what end; and why individuals continued regularly to disappear after (further) "selections." Nor did the Lager reduce neatly to "victims" as against "persecutors," the righteous distinct from the reprobate, goodness distinct from evil. Rather, the case was all against all, moment to moment: one could form no understanding of the overwhelming edifice of violence and menace. Levi writes (1996a: 23–4):

> The arrival in the Lager was a shock because of the surprise it entailed. The world into which one was precipitated was terrible, yes, but also indecipherable: it did not conform to any model, the enemy was all around but also inside, the "we" lost its limits. … One could not discern a single frontier but rather many confused, perhaps innumerable frontiers, which stretched between each of us. … This brusque revelation, which became manifest from the very first hours of imprisonment … was so harsh as to cause the immediate collapse of one's capacity to resist. For many it was lethal.

Levi's conclusion (met already in the Preface) is a "loving" one, as I would define it: "It is intolerable that a man should be assessed not for what he is but because of the group to which he happens to be assigned" (1996a: x). "What we commonly mean by 'understand' coincides with 'simplify,'" he goes on (1996a: 22–3), and we display a "Manichean tendency which shuns half-hints and complexities." The knowable is reduced to a schema by whose means we orient ourselves and decide upon actions: but such simplification must not be mistaken for reality. The "epiphany" suffered by the Lager inmate concerned not only the physical violence perpetrated on a categorial

Other whom the Nazis designated as sub-human "vermin" akin to rats, but also the ongoing symbolic violence of a world reduced to chaos and apparent anarchy: a "nihilistic violence" of disorientation, offering no opportunity of recognition or projection (Rapport 2000). *If This Is a Man*, Levi famously titled his principal account (1987): the reality of humanity and individuality become unrecognizable.

These three accounts, from Levi, Mukasonga, and Murdoch, have in common their momentariness: their focus on a moment of radical change when the world as known collapses and the habitual arrangements, relations, and patterns of social life fall away, or are stripped away. But clearly the experience of such "moments of vision" possesses an extreme variation in its existential character: not all such "epiphanies" are moral or concern a loving recognition. I have ventured that to recognize the individuality of another life, a life released from the limitations of cultural construction and categorization, calls for the "shock" of a loving engagement: the motivation of a loving looking. But clearly the routine of a social life based on categorial masks and labels— Simmel's "distortions"—can be displaced, "shocked" into negation, in other ways besides a loving one.

Also apparent is that an epiphany of loving recognition might itself have variable consequences. Leonard Woolf recognized the commensurate "I"s in the puppies he had been instructed to drown, and the episode affected him deeply enough for him to include in a written autobiography many decades later, but he still appears to have gone through with the original act. As a child perhaps, he did not have ultimate control over the puppies' fate, but he writes as if he himself carried it out *in spite of* the momentary recognition of the cruelties involved. Clearly, there will be moments when people see through the cultural fictions by which their lives are routinely led and *still* revert to them as "inevitable" or "necessary," or as "for the best," as "the least worst solution," and so on. One reckons: "Ideally, in the best of worlds, I would live and act differently; but at this point, acting as a loyal (or simply a routine) member of this cultural tradition, this social structure, this community of practice, is the best that can be done."

Growing up in the Gorbals is the autobiographical account by Ralph Glasser of the Jewish migrants who left Baltic ports such as Riga in the late nineteenth century to escape pogroms in the Russian empire. En route to the "Golden Land" of America, some found themselves diverted to British ports such as Glasgow, Liverpool, London, and Cardiff, and stayed. Glasser found himself growing up in a Glasgow slum.

It would not be true to say that the Jewish migrants established a "community" in the Gorbals, Glasser reports (1986: 21), because the strongest

bond among the collection of exiles was a negative one: to use the shock of arrival to "close the door firmly on the past." From poverty and oppression they sought an "ultimate escape," and they saw this not in a sentimental fixation upon the past, in roseate vignettes of shtetl life and rural Judaism. The moment of arrival in Britain was also a moment of possible emancipation from the burden of an imposed and stigmatic identity: "For many exiles, and even more so for their children, the best solution for the Jewish Problem was to cease to be Jews" and accede to being simply individual citizens of the British state (Glasser 1986: 21).

Nevertheless, this case of overthrowing the limits of ethnicity might be said to be unusual; even for Jewish migrants. *After the Ingathering*, a collection of studies of ethnicity in Israel, concludes that immigrants to the new state, far from simply embracing or creating "Israeliness," sought not only to maintain what ethnic identities they may have brought with them—as Latvian or Polish, or Argentinian or Moroccan—but came to manifest new awareness of these, instilling their ethnic identities with new vitality. Becoming Israeli and leaving behind intolerable situations in Europe or in Arab states from the mid-twentieth century onward entailed not only a new national affiliation—"Israeli"—but a multiplication of religious and ethnic particularities (Smooha 1978; Weingrod 1979; Rapport 1998). As Alex Weingrod concludes: "cultural assimilation and heightened ethnicity are quite compatible trends; in fact, their linkage may be inevitable" (1985: x).

The conclusion is amply borne out in more recent immigrations to Britain, where a new nationality is accompanied by a maintenance of ethnicity and a revitalization of cultural tradition: indeed, an insistence on "multiculturalism" as we have seen. The moment of becoming British—as with becoming Israeli—and enjoying the rights and freedoms of a liberal citizenship is also a moment of reasserting communitarian loyalties and rights: of "reinventing" the customs, conformities, and prejudices of a traditional symbolic classification of the world in a politicization of culture (Parekh 1994: 11–12; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983).

Veena Das, working in contemporary India, describes the everyday, even mundane, character of those "moments of vision" whereby the classificatory distinctions between "Hindu" and "Muslim" are overcome and people fall in love with a categorial "Other." Das urges an appreciation of the everyday as a setting where routine differences and habitual boundaries need not necessarily predominate: "everyday life is the site in which the life of the [individual] Other is engaged" (2010: 376). It is mundane for normativity to give way to the "dangers" of love: the very regularity with which individuals fall in love across the ethnic and religious borders effects "some calming of the turbulent potential of this event" (Das 2010: 378).

There is, she urges, an embodied reality of the everyday whereby one seeks to incorporate "the notion of nextness or an adjacent self": a "moral striving" to recognize a human Other who is engaged with humanely (Das 2010: 377). The transcending of delimiting social and cultural categories may be seen as commonplace.

At the same time as such epiphanies occur, however, the system of symbolic classification that underlies the Indian social structure, with its irreducible differentiations between things "Hindu" and things "Muslim" (not to mention its caste hierarchies) is maintained. Individuals fall in love, they meet and marry across the symbolic divisions that culture would erect, but the consequences of their love are proximate only, the effects non-structural. It might even be argued that the epiphanies come to operate as moments of catharsis whose release of tension enables a reproduction of the social structure (Gluckman 1954; Scheff 1979). A loving vision comes to be encapsulated in a wider world of perduring religious, ethnic, and status groupings and boundaries.

The case becomes more complex, then, and questions multiply. How might moments of vision be effected such that loving consequences and not hateful ones ensue? And how might such moments be practically consequential as against momentary catharses or stirrings of conscience that are put aside, whether for reason of practical necessity or instrumental gain or sentimental gratification? And again, how might moments of vision be sufficiently powerful for the traditional weight and freight of classificatory orders and communitarian fictions ("Hindu" as against "Muslim," "Moroccan Jew" as against "Polish Jew") to be overthrown?

To employ another word from Ancient Greek philosophy, I am calling for the epiphany of the moment of vision, of love, also to be a *metanoia*: a moment when a change of heart is born, a change in life orientation that is fundamental and lasting. It seems that to progress with a proposal regarding the ideal deliverances of loving recognition—and also the edificatory potentials of aesthetic representation in this regard—the above insights, claims, queries, and caveats need to be more concretely located. I should provide material by which they can be put to the test. To do so, I shall draw on field research of my own, as an anthropologist immersed in different ethnographic situations.

Part II

EFFECTING LOVE AS PUBLIC PRACTICE

Chapter 6

Empirical Investigations

On Stanley Spencer and Phil Ward

Here are words from the novelist Joseph Conrad (1914: 14–15):

> Art itself may be defined as a single-minded attempt to render the highest kind of justice to the visible universe, by bringing to light the truth, manifold and one, underlying its every aspect. [The task] is, by the power of the written word to make you hear, to make you feel—it is, before all, to make you *see*!

The words could, in their essentials, also be those of the British painter, Stanley Spencer (1891–1959). A focus on Spencer's art, life, and public afterlife offers a useful window onto the possible program of loving recognition, I shall suggest. By drawing on field research of my own that includes the project of Spencer's art and its reception by audiences past and present, I can hope to explore love as a public practice from an empirical perspective. For Spencer, love was the core of a personal philosophy, a vision that he refined throughout his life—both in his paintings and in his copious writings. I draw on this corpus of work in order to examine the ways and extents to which Spencer can be said to have "lived" his philosophy and embodied the vision, and whether that vision lived for others.

"RAPT CONTEMPLATION": STANLEY SPENCER'S LOVING VISION

Love was revelatory of truth according to Stanley Spencer:

> Love reveals and more accurately describes the nature and meaning of things: [it] establishes once and for all time the final and perfect *identity* of every created thing. (Cited in Glew 2001: 165)

There were many kinds of love, from sexual to a generalized benignity toward things (and including kinds of love that some might find odd, such as homosexuality), but all of them, Spencer was assured, contributed to an artistic or visionary way of seeing and being. Certainly, the paintings he produced that he most valued were, Spencer explained, those "visionary" depictions where he felt he had been able to effect a "loving looking": love was the generating force of his art and to compose an image "with love" was to be "in love," to achieve harmony. For love transformed: it brought a new awareness, a realization of the world as if seeing everything for the first time. The things which constituted the world had an identity independent of one another, and one thing—one person, one object, one place—could not be another, but the feeling of love could bring things as close together as was possible:

> Every thing, every item is looking to be unified into one special thing which thing will give to it & reveal, its essential meaning. (Tate Gallery Archive 8419.2.4)

Through "looking with love" a kind of marriage was effected: a giving to and receiving from the world that made one more integral with other things as if a real living part of them. Social convention may only know marriage of one kind and degree, Spencer recognized, but through a loving looking he could successfully feel himself married to every human being, also to "trees and hedges, roads and thoughts" (cited in Glew 2001: 133).

All people, all things, and all places were worthy of being loved, Spencer elaborated, and all had a need of love. Love was all-inclusive in its sight and its reach, and not a special, exclusive tribute to be paid to some and not to others. From his own humble beginnings in a cozy village milieu in rural Berkshire (Cookham), and from the contrast between this "suburb of heaven" and his experience of the two world wars, Spencer had acceded to a vision: a truth concerning the deliverances of love as global panacea for connecting all that the world contained in a true and moral order:

> During the [Great] War, when I contemplated the horror of my life and the lives of those with me, I felt that the only way to end the ghastly experience would be if everyone suddenly decided to indulge in every degree and form of sexual love, carnal love, bestiality, anything you like to call it. These are the joyful inheritances of mankind. (Cited in Robinson 1979: 53)

While "order of the conventional kind so often suggests precedence":

> In my "all being equally great, equally God," idea I would wish my heaven to be a kind of jungle, but with all the people & animals on a love footing with each other. (Cited in Glew 2001: 205)

Spencer recognized that the "higgledy-piggledy order" in which he saw things was unconventional, but he also insisted that his feelings were not wrong. His love was instinctive and it drew him, through a sense of attraction, into a fusion with otherness that felt spiritual in its envisioning. Not to exercise a "loving looking" was to be surrounded by ugliness and meaningless, and feel imprisoned; but to love was to generate a true "artistic" vision:

> An artist wishes to absorb everything into himself; to commit a kind of spiritual rape on every thing because this converts all things into being or revealing themselves as lovable, worshipful things, snugly tucked up in the artist and his own special glory and delight. … It is unbearable for an artist to be continually seeing things in and through a film of apparent utter meaninglessness; he is engaged in a continual effort to remove this barrier. (Cited in Glew 2001: 165)

Nothing could ultimately stand in the way of the will to love, Spencer believed, and a beloved world was what he saw his art as expressing, giving tribute to, and effecting.

Nowhere was this more apparent than in a series of paintings undertaken in 1937–1938 to which Spencer gave the title *The Beatitudes of Love*. Eight of the series survive, with subtitles such as *Sociableness*, *Passion*, *Knowing*, *Worship*, each showing, Spencer explained, how human "souls" could be "unified" through love. "I can do without all my pictures except these," Spencer wrote in a letter in 1939—bemoaning, as he often did, the nature of an artist's life that called for him having to sell the loving and beloved images that he had created. "Every one of these people are the beloved of my imaginings," he elaborated. These images truly represented the world and its contents in its divine ordering, and in presenting these to humanity, indeed in reviewing them himself, Spencer felt himself to be a kind of Christ-like figure and a new Adam:

> Sometimes I feel I were showing his creations to God. Take an Edwardian old lady. Five feet high. Bloated. Purple dress. Ridiculous little feet pinched in ridiculous little shoes. I feel that in my painting I'm lifting her up, saying to God "Look! Isn't she bloody wonderful?" (Spencer, cited in Rothenstein 1984: 107)

Surely, *The Beatitudes of Love*, he continued, were "more genuine than any religious painting I have ever done. … I have never seen any paintings that more truly reveal the individual" (cited in Collis 1962: 141). The apparently distorted representations of human beings against nondescript backgrounds were, he explained, teachings concerning the transformational engagement with the world that love promised and effected. Love overcame apparent

ugliness; love overcame distances; love overcame meaninglessness to reveal
true individual identities and their relations:

> I do myself love the "disagreeably abnormal" persons in these paintings in the same
> way as I love my home or whatever my feeling has fixed upon, so I love them from
> within outwards and whatever that outward appearance may be it is an exquisite
> reminder of what is loved within. (Spencer, cited in Kisler and Paton 2003: 14)

Here is *The Beatitudes of Love: Consciousness* (see Figure 6.1).

The Beatitudes of Love series amounted teachings of a truth that lay
immanent in the physical world if properly apprehended. Of *Consciousness*,
Spencer wrote in his notebook:

> Without any particular reason for it, they are suddenly aware of each other,
> and whereas in ordinary associations there are preliminary signs etc., in this
> case it is just what there is not, a something that stands in the way of intima-
> cies etc is found not to be present. And the couple start licking each other's
> tongues when a moment before they could never have believed it possible. But
> it means and expresses something, and they do it with great fervour. (...) I call

**Figure 6.1 *The Beatitudes of Love: Consciousness*, by Stanley Spencer (1891–1959),
1938 (oil on canvas 76.2 x 56 cm).** *Source*: Private Collection. © Estate of Stanley
Spencer. All rights reserved Bridgeman Images.

it *Consciousness* because it is like waking up and realising all one has been missing while asleep, and making up for lost time. (...) They are both aware that they both want to do the same thing. They don't say what they want to do to each other, and they know what they are. … They know that they are both strong, and that they are going to exert their physical strength on each other. She has never thought about her boring healthy body. A solid woman who has done work, and scrubbed floors, and who has always had a happy tempera-ment, and has never thought much above being a help to everybody (...) and now suddenly with all her sense and wits about her, she finds herself doing this, not helplessly, but with meaning and intention and purpose. She feels "this is the first time I've ever talked sense." He is telling her with his tongue all the things she has never thought of before. (Cited in MacCarthy 1997: 136)

Spencer is happy to depict the perfection of a relationship where love is the recognition of the true identity of another: something neither heralded by con-vention nor obstructed by circumstance. The couple in *Consciousness* surprise themselves by following their feelings without restraint, and without needing justification or the use of words. They know themselves and they know each other, suddenly, perfectly; and they follow the course that their feelings have set for them into a relationship of mutual expressivity. "Beauty to me is expres-siveness," Spencer concluded his note on *Consciousness*, "and that is as far as I can say" (cited in Hyman 2001: 161); and, "I clearly say in my pictures than I think these people are nice" (Tate Gallery Archive Microform 16B).

Nor was it only the truth of human beings that love revealed, Spencer empha-sized. He looked with love such that the essence of identity was revealed in regard to animals and plants, material artifacts, buildings and places, as well as human beings. And he found love to be an aspect of a natural, mutual looking: all things on earth were capable of a loving looking, and "a duck is as expressive as a swan & as eloquently so" (Spencer, cited in Hyman 2001: 161). All belonged together, all of humanity, all of animality, indeed all of "creation": all comprised one cosmic whole. A loving looking revealed this, a visionary artistry represented this and was also a way of "saying 'ta' to God" (Spencer, cited in Rothenstein 1970: 51).

So distant was a normal, conventional, ordering, and warring human world from the true spiritual order revealed by love, that Spencer insisted on empha-sizing this distance in his art. He wrote: "If I am called upon to worship … then I will begin with the lavatory seat" (cited in Glew 2001: 205). This is *Sunflower and Dog Worship* (see Figure 6.2).

Of the image Spencer recorded in his notebook:

A husband and wife make love to the sunflowers in their own garden. The hus-band holds the wife's bag so that she can do it better. … In each case the husband

Figure 6.2   *Sunflower and Dog Worship*, by Stanley Spencer (1891–1959), 1937 (oil on canvas 69.8 x 105.4 cm). *Source*: Private Collection. © Estate of Stanley Spencer. All rights reserved Bridgeman Images.

and wife hold the sunflowers which they are worshipping in a way which is meant to express their union with it—for instance, the man holds the end of the leaf. As love causes a thing to be seen in a new way and gives it a new and unexpected appearance, the thing is held in a new and different way. The woman's hand presses the leaf of her sunflower to her body. … But you have to realize that these things are only possible in their sensual context. The spotted Dalmatian is licking the tongue of a man on the other side of the garden wall. In the picture the colour of the two tongues is mauve and the man's pink is very pretty. I am glad the tongue incident was allowed to remain as otherwise it would have very much deadened the meaning of the picture. It would have made it appear that this incident of the Dalmatian and the man was just the usual, and quite meaningless supposed relation of a man to a dog which, while it may be alright on some occasions, would have been quite wrong in this picture. (Cited in Tate 16B)

Again, love caused things to be seen in a new, truthful way, introducing a new "sensual" context to human life, whether concerning one's relations to fellow humans or to other animate and inanimate things. To be in love was to be in a new state of awareness, and Spencer was glad, above, to have been able to effect a representation of human-animal relations and human-plant relations that showed a divine truth independent of norms of visual presentation and differentiation. The physical nature of the metaphors that Spencer felt were appropriate to describe a loving looking at the world is also significant. It is an emotional engagement, a feeling of physical desire. Spencer elaborated:

It is not so much a matter of loving as of being in love which is really needed. If you don't know what loving a thing is, think of your own animal greed for

food; think of how a dog rushes at a bone and tears the meat off it. (Cited in Tate 825.22)

And again:

I want love, and I hate hate, and I must have meaning in it, and it comes to me direct through desire. God speaks eloquently through the flesh, that's why he made it. (Cited in Pople 1991: 301)

Sunflower and Dog Worship was also a matter of recognizing in the non-human world a closer relationship between being and desire. So that when he was painting dogs, Spencer explained, he felt as though he might himself be adoring the world around him with his nose. His loving looking enabled him to connect in a new way. Painting *Sunflower and Dog Worship* was not merely a matter of an "objective amusement," him merely delineating the characteristics of a dog; rather, through his painting he was "smelling with him and adoring and worshipping the smell. I am as much that dog smelling the anus of the black-haired dog and as much the black dog being smelt as I am myself or the wife or the husband" (Tate Gallery Archive Microform 16B). Dogs knew what they needed instinctively. The divisive codifications of human society and of "proper" conduct confused and contaminated the instinctive nature of love to give and receive and so to approach another's true identity. Yet, through love, for human beings too there was the capacity finally to engage with the world free from a merely conventional response.

To adhere to "ready-made standards," to blindly follow codes of behavior and conduct and rules was to be "cut off from [one's] essential humanity," Spencer concluded (cited in Glew 2001: 199). Love, however, was a desire born out of a sense of the worth and worthiness of everything on earth. The artist was "sainted"—especially favored—in being able to transmute the desire into a vision of identity and belonging. But the capacity to love was universal, Spencer insisted, not a select talent: it was "in all & is free" to see the spiritual beauty, truth, and meaningfulness of things in the world (cited in Glew 2001: 214). Love was indeed the one "art" that all things in the world may practice: all loved. What kept love's perfect democracy from apparent view and full effect was that human beings were not always aware of their capacity to love or their need to love and their facility in it. And hence the role of the artist was to reveal, teach, and guide.

How has Spencer's audience reacted to his images, and their philosophy, and methodology of love? Initially with incomprehension, to the extent that Spencer felt the need to refrain from exhibiting his "visionary" images (such as *The Beatitudes of Love* series) lest he be made into a public "coconut shy."

Landscapes and portraits were easy to sell—bringing in a vital income—but before the watershed of the 1960s—of the *Lady Chatterley's Lover* obscenity trial and the Free Love movement—as well as the satiric depictions of grotesquerie (from George Grosz and Otto Dix to Francis Bacon) that were to become common artistic fare in Britain as well as on continental Europe, Spencer did not easily find an appreciative audience. During his lifetime, some representations were deemed so scandalous as to be unshowable, including "Double Nude Portrait: The Artist and His Second Wife" (1937) (see Figure 6.3).

Figure 6.3   Double Nude Portrait: The Artist and His Second Wife, by Stanley Spencer (1891–1959), 1937 (oil on canvas 91.5 x 93.5 cm). *Source*: Tate Gallery. © Estate of Stanley Spencer. All rights reserved Bridgeman Images.

In 1950, indeed, Spencer found himself threatened with a police persecution by the one-time president of the Royal Academy, Alfred Munnings, for producing and disseminating pornographic images. Newspaper editorials and letters from the public were equally scornful. Were not the couple in *The Beatitudes of Love: Consciousness* "so wilfully monstrous that one can hardly bear to look at them?" (http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/stanley-spencer/stanley-spencer-room-4-those-couple-things). Were not his "distorted" depictions of "degenerate," "deformed," and "degraded" human beings and behaviors, in general, his "repellant shapes" that exceeded all the bounds of "good taste," the creations of a man "faulty" in the "heart as well as

the head!"; and did not Spencer himself cut "a most grotesque figure!" (cited in Wright 2010: 174).

In 2017, however, the *The Beatitudes of Love: Consciousness* was sold in auction at Christie's, London, for £1.57 million. In catalog notes accompanying the sale, art historian Carolyn Leder describes, "The Beatitudes of Love" series as exemplifying some of Spencer's "most powerful and extraordinary imagery." Albeit that "the ugliness" of the pair of figures in *Consciousness* "deliberately allows nowhere for the kindly viewer to find sanctuary"—every element of appearance, posture, manner, and dress being utterly devoid of reassurance in this regard—nevertheless,

> by doing this, by making them so completely outside any sort of "norm," Spencer is telling us that their relationship has a validity and substance that can outdistance most of our own, based as it is on a pure form of understanding, of consciousness of each other. (Leder 2017)

In 2011 *Sunflower and Dog Worship* also went up for auction, exceeding its upper estimate of £1.5 million to sell at Sotheby's in London for £5.4 million. It was said that the price reflected the respect that the art market now held for one of the twentieth century's most important British artists. Sotheby's "Catalogue Note" observed the following:

> This important but complex painting is perhaps one of the most extreme manifestations of Spencer's notions in the mid-1930s that … envisages a heaven-like state of all-embracing love … within this very local *hortus inclusus*. Dogs frequently appear in Spencer's paintings and often carry an implication of already inhabiting the state of untrammelled freedom which mankind is seeking, and … the success of *Sunflower and Dog Worship* comes from Spencer's ability to evoke both the current state and the previous one from which we have moved. In order to do this, he has rendered the actuality of the scene with an amazing truthfulness, so that we immediately recognize from our own experience the roughness of the capstones of the brick garden wall, slightly warmed by the sun, understand the spring of the husband's stiff shirt collar which has popped open in the joy of the moment, and empathise with the deep and hearty sniff of the perfume of the sunflower that his wife is taking. Even amongst the dogs, we are immediately familiar with the perfunctory rear-sniffing and general interaction with their surroundings.

The Note concludes by saying that although Spencer's more imaginative paintings were not such "easy sellers" as his more orthodox landscape and still life work when they were first produced, even then there was a small band of collectors and museums prepared to make purchases. *Sunflower and Dog Worship* actually sold within two hours of Spencer having made it available to his London agent, in 1937, to the collector (and novelist) Sir Hugh Walpole.

If it remains unclear from these more recent auctions and catalog notes the extent to which the art market is apprized of the *philosophy* behind Spencer's startling images—as against their shock value and eccentricities—other sources are more revealing. "Spencer's painted characters, like himself, literally love to look," is how art critics Mary Kisler and Justin Paton (2003: 32) sum up their appreciation, and it is significant the ways and extents to which sections of Spencer's audience have *always* seen his artistic productions as concerning love, and being imbued by love. As Spencer saw his paintings as lessons in love, so those who have engaged most deeply and persistently with Spencer's art over the years—as fellow artists, professional art critics and historians and patrons, or simply as admiring members of a wider public—have consistently claimed love to be evidential and to be key to their engagement. The sculptor Antony Gormley (1992: 7), for instance, describes Spencer's output as "an art of affection" that has as its purpose the development of human consciousness. Refusing conventional stylistic prescriptions in its projecting of an idea of love as a "transforming power of immersion," Spencer's loving art engenders a realization that *personal* human experience is universal. We learn how love functions as:

> The force that both connects and redeems. It is the force that emanates towards things and joins them together[:] an integrating power which starts with individual experience and reaches out to embrace what surrounds it. (Gormley 1992: 7)

Sited in Spencer's native village of Cookham there also now exists the Stanley Spencer Gallery, established shortly after his death in 1959. It was the first gallery in Britain to dedicate itself to the work of a single artist. "Few men of comparable eminence made fewer enemies," adjudged art historian John Rothenstein (1979: 10), an opinion shared by Lord William Waldorf Astor, Chairman of The Stanley Spencer Gallery Planning Committee, who spoke at the formal opening in 1962. The Gallery was a community project, idiosyncratic in its space and collection, of modest scale, that somehow "reflect[ed] the nature of Stanley Spencer: small, cheerful, very special and deeply loved" (Astor, cited in George n.d.). Today, the Gallery remains a key focus of the attention lovingly paid to Spencer's art, with a permanent collection of paintings, drawings, and memorabilia, as well as changing seasonal exhibitions. It is run by a keen set of custodial volunteers, alongside a management committee (archivist, publicist, curator) and an association of members: the Friends of the Stanley Spencer Gallery. This, combined with the thousands of visitors who view Spencer's art each year, represents an appreciative audience.

Indeed, I would say there is a "community of affection" that surrounds Spencer's art. It is apparent in the testimony of the current president of the

Friends of the Stanley Spencer Gallery, art historian James Fox, describing his own personal encounter with the art, from boy to man, and the love intrinsic to it:

> I still remember what a physical effect the painting had on me: a chill up the spine, a lightness in the head, a sweet taste on the tongue. Finally I'd found something that tasted even better than fizzy cola bottles. … Spencer is in my opinion one of the most important British artists of the century [;] but the real reason I love Stanley Spencer's work is that it is full to bursting with love. Love for his family and friends, for nature, and of course for Cookham, infuses every mark, every brushstroke, he ever made. (Cited in Friends 2015)

I also find a wider community of affection evidenced in the comments recorded in the Gallery's Visitors' Books by those attending the seasonal exhibitions and taking the time to reflect:

• "A spiritual experience";
• "A strange combination of uplifting events";
• "A scene of wonder!!";
• "The village from heaven";
• "Inspiring visions";
• "It just lifted me. A jungle of clang!";
• "I love his people—very distinct characters!";
• "I love his fun faces and [the] quirky angles [through which] he sees people, especially the colour and joy of life!";
• "I feel like I'm on pilgrimage! Wonderful";
• "Worth the pilgrimage";
• "A realized wish come true";
• "He's my greatest inspiration";
• "Wonderful work, a spiritual journey."

More detail is provided by Anita, one of the Gallery's volunteer-custodians, explaining Spencer's philosophy to me:

> Stanley knew of love—welling up inside him—from childhood. He wandered round Cookham in wonder and love. This was a very powerful frame for looking at the world. Everything is to be wondered at, everything to be loved. It meant he could get through the First World War, and so on, because he was prepared to see the positive side of life always. So, there may be trauma there but also more besides. He saw dreadful things but he was not overcome. … He infused positivity into everything: he saw things in Cookham as they could be. Just walking back from the station to home, through ordinary Cookham, he walks through a scene of enchantment.

   Nor is the personal tone in Anita's account unusual. The community of affection that surrounds "Stanley" succeeds in "lovingly" engaging with his personality, his life, *and* his artistic vision; so as to gain a "personal" relationship with him, one that is transformative. "His paintings recreate the world for you," as another visitor to the Gallery put it. His art is "life-affirming," explained another Gallery custodian, both succoring her on the occasion of recent bereavements and also delighting groups of those with mental health problems and depression who visited regularly from local hospitals.

   My proposal is for love to be understood as emanating from a kind of look: an attention to the individual Other that is at once affective—"desirous"—and a truthful recognition. This loving appreciation carries with it the emotional force, and the insight, to surmount the customary categories and classes by which the world is normally and normatively comprehended: to transcend the classifying, generalizing, defining, and limiting that characterizes a culture's symbolic identification of the world and its objects and relations. "Love" is here understood not solely or principally as a private and domestic virtue but as public and civil practice: a structuring of social interaction not by means of distorting typifications but by an affective attention to Anyone, the individual Other, voided of the fictions of a culture's "mythical" construction of the world.

   May the habit of attending lovingly to the lives of individual others be encouraged and cultivated artistically? I have introduced the case of Stanley Spencer, "one of the most extraordinary and best-loved British artists of the twentieth century" (King 2002: 7). Spencer painted "with love" according to his own assessment; and at least cursorily, above, his artistic output is met "with love." The supposition remains, that an appreciation of Spencer's art—its "loving looking"—might motivate the viewer too to a "loving recognition" not only of that art but also of the larger world.

FINDING LOVE AS A HOSPITAL PORTER: THE WELL-BEING OF PHIL WARD

Let me introduce a very different case study, concerning the hospital porter "Phil Ward," a colleague at Constance Hospital, Easterneuk, when I conducted field research as a porter at the hospital. Some 140 porters worked at Constance Hospital in the early 2000s, out of a workforce of thousands. They were almost all male and ranged in age from seventeen to sixty-four.

   Constance Hospital was a major teaching hospital, situated in a large coastal town in the east of Scotland. It was also the main employer in a post-industrial urban region of high male unemployment. Publicly funded, the

hospital catered to an extensive catchment area and dealt with all manner of medical need from physical to psychological, surgery to therapy, acute to long-term care. But the porters were not medically trained, and were involved in tasks calling for physical stamina more than other criteria. They would ferry patients across the hospital, deliver mail, deliver body parts and samples of bodily substances to the hospital laboratories, transport dead bodies from ward to hospital mortuary, and they also act as security personnel. In a setting geared to the ministering and the managing of medical expertise, porters occupied a lowly position in the hierarchy of skills, on a par with the (female) "domestics" (cleaners), and far below the doctors (consultants, surgeons, and students), the administrators, also the nurses and laboratory technicians, the clerks and carpenters. This lowly status was reflected in portering pay: the minimum wage as designated by the British government. And the status was exhibited by the portering uniform of blue canvas trousers and blue or yellow polo shirt, with name badge and title—"Support Services"—ironed on above the heart, in clear distinction to the medical-ward staff (in white), the operating-theater staff (in green), and the administrators (in suit and tie).

Porter Phil Ward had a ready grin, and when he smiled he revealed a black front tooth. Combined with his wiry, boyish, and compact frame, he reminded me of an "Artful Dodger" figure as Dickens might have portrayed him, albeit that Phil Ward must have been in his late thirties. The other porters at Constance Hospital largely agreed that "Wardy" was "a real character." I did not personally take to him because I was usually annoyed by what appeared to be an inveterate laziness and irresponsibility, and a petulance and belligerence when he did not get his own way. But there was no doubting Wardy's popularity. Many other porters seemed to extend toward him a generosity and a solicitude even at the expense of themselves, and this included the portering management. Phil Ward was granted the license to act as an artful dodger at the hospital's expense, as it seemed to me, an accommodation that I would now interpret as a kind of loving recognition. His fellow porters at Constance, as well as the Hospital management, saw something individual and worthy of care, respect, and civil affordances in the case of Phil Ward, independent of the judgments that might define him simply as a "lazy" "porter." Routinely his hospital coworkers afforded him the individual space to be himself.

At first glance, Phil Ward's life appeared to lack integrity: he seemed barely in control. Other porters enjoyed hearing what Wardy might be up to now, and they embellished the sagas of his life: there was a vicarious thrill in imagining the life of the chancer and skiver. There was also a way in which other porters looked out for Wardy *because* he did not look out for himself, his irresponsibility seeming to extend even to his own life and welfare, including that of his "bairn"—the child of an ex-partner. Drinking, gambling,

fornicating, fighting and lying, always short of money, and doing his best to avoid work, the income tax office and Child Support—indeed doing his best sometimes to distance the very ones who would show solicitude toward him—Phil Ward seemed content constantly to challenge his consociates into proving that they were his colleagues after all. In "abusing" his friends, Wardy seemed to insist that the "abuse" should not be regarded as serious, and hence that others' reactions should be a continuation of solicitude toward him. It was due to the success of the popularity and strength of Wardy's character that this strategy also seemed usually to work: people liked to be with him, to hear of him, and to weave his derring-do into their worlds of gossip. On one view, Wardy's inclusion, no matter what, was part of the "democracy" of the portering community, the way "we" engaged with one another in mutual support and trust, and in opposition to the impersonal organization, hierarchy, and even regimentation of the wider institution of the hospital. On another view, I would suggest, the porters exercised a loving recognition in his regard and did so because in him they also saw a paradigm case of an individual life *sub specie aeternitatis*.

One morning in the porters' lodge (known by the porters as "the buckie")—two cramped rooms in the hospital basement where the porters would gather between being allocated jobs, while also gossiping, reading the newspaper, listening to the radio, making tea and snacks—there was talk of new beds and mattresses coming into certain wards, and discussion of how the old ones were to be disposed of. Wardy, indeed, was to get one of the latter for the room he was presently occupying in the Nurses' Residences. Not long afterward I heard a cheery Wardy himself boast how he was now able to come to work "along the corridor … didn't even need a sweater!" I asked him what he meant:

Wardy: I'm living in the Nurses' Residences 'cos I was kicked out of my house. Same old story: normal reason: too many arguments with my wife.
Nigel: Have you got kids?
Wardy: No, no kids. Well, I do, but I've not seen him for years. I don't see him. Won't see him. He's got a new daddy now, and a brother, and a sister.
 Nigel: How old?
Wardy: Nine now: "Little Phil Ward." But I've not seen him since he was one.
 Nigel: You probably will one day: he'll want to.
Wardy: Aye. Probably see him again in end—when he's 16 and hooked! [He laughs]

It was typical of Wardy that this information was conveyed without apparent emotion, barring the final black humor. Having disputes with one's spouse and being homeless were presented as a normal old story: there was

no shame attached. Wardy would claim normalcy for his life and challenge others to see it differently.

Another porter, Wes, lived in the Nurses' Residences with his fiancée. Soon there was joking talk in the buckie about Wes being kept awake by Wardy: his music blaring through the wall and also the noise of him fornicating. Ian conjured up the picture of Wes trying to watch television as the picture bounced and there was an overwhelming squeaking sound as Wardy had sex on the bed next door. "Well, why shouldn't I make a noise?" was Wardy's straight-faced rejoinder to Ian's verbal picture: "I pay my Council Tax. *I* can hear Wes watching *Brookside*! [a soap opera for adolescents]."

The saga of Wardy's marital relations and his sex life remained a popular and ongoing one, fuelled both by Wardy's cryptic statements and his fellow porters' fanciful embellishments. The tattoo on his right arm, Wardy explained to me, was meant to be a rose with flames rising from it, and then with "Sharon" inscribed beneath. (Above the rose and flames, and normally covered by his shirt sleeve, was also "Sonya" [presumably the mother of his son].) Soon, Wardy added, he planned to have a black panther tattooed beneath "Sharon!" Or maybe not, he reconsidered laughingly, because then he would have Sharon and a panther fighting like wild things forever on his arm. "Nay, it's still Sharon I love," he concluded. Not long after, however, Wardy was announcing, in response to further queries, that "Sharon is binned: it's definitely over between us."

The uncertainty regarding Wardy's amorous relations, the bachelor status he had reclaimed for himself, and what might happen next, were a constant source of titillation for the porters amid a tedious work-shift (both in Wardy's presence and not):

Ian: You know how that receptionist, Moira, always drapes her leg over yours when she's in here, sitting on the bench? Well, she couldn't do that to Wardy 'cos after 30 seconds he'd need to be off to the loo and wanking off!
Dave: You know what your problem is, Wardy? Too much … what's that stuff? Testosterone! [Wardy grins and moves to make a phone call] There he is now! On the phone to his lover!
Ian: It's that nurse from Ward 16. I can lip-read what Wardy's saying to her 'cos I've seen it so often now: "You're gonna get it tonight!"

With his Delphic words and grins, combined with his boasts, Wardy was happy to play the "Porter's Fornicator." Yes, he admitted: he might have had "a woman" in the Nurses' Residences, keeping Wes awake with his "entertaining." Yes: he was off work on Sunday, so he and the woman would be "going at it like bunnies"—the last time they did it, it felt like his "knob was coming off." Yes: if Peggy Cox [the portering sub-manager] was snooping

around the buckie earlier, then it was probably to check on the bulge in his trousers. Alongside this verbal play, however, were moments of truthful admission from Wardy, where he would claim a human sympathy:

Wardy: She's not talking to me at all now, Sean! I just made it far worse … You know how you do something as a reaction? Without thinking. Like you do. Then you regret it. So, I said yesterday: "I'll kill the both of them!" Just as a reaction. And I would have done—yesterday. [He leaves the buckie]
Sean: [explains to others in the buckie] This is about Linda in [Ward] 16. The blond one. You know. Wardy heard she was at a car-boot sale in Easterneuk and had left with some bloke. And he thought the worst.

That Wardy had been accommodated in the Nurses' Residences amid his marital and domiciliary troubles was thanks to the generosity of the portering management—Peggy Cox and others. I was struck by how sympathetic the hospital managers generally were, seeming to take wider social and economic circumstances into account—of the porters in general and of Wardy in particular—when instrumental considerations alone (of performance at work) would have warranted dismissal. One morning not long after Wardy had acquired his residential sinecure at the hospital, Peggy and her deputy Pat McFarlane had come upon Wardy in the buckie looking unshaven and unkempt. Wardy's makeshift style of dress was often an item of note among the porters: he was teased for wearing the same malodorous, wrinkled blue shirt for ages, also for his skin-tight trousers, and for his brogues worn with white socks. On this occasion, Pat McFarlane announced that being unshaven might look fine for a night out on the town but not at work. Wardy replied by complaining that Management had not given him the overtime he had requested—and warranted—to pay for his upcoming court case and counsel ("I can't afford insurance on £130 per week!"). Peggy Cox commiserated but asked him nicely and jocularly to please, next time, shave on *his* time not the Hospital's. "What am I going to do with you?" she concluded maternally (though not being that much older in terms of years).

Wardy's tone when discussing his own plight, financial as well as sentimental, whether with Management or with fellow porters, was always one of rightful indignation. The factors that had brought him to this plight were "human" ones, as we have heard—"same old story: normal reason"—and his actions, he wanted us to understand, were "human" too. He was not differently responsible to the rest of us: it was rather that he was never accorded his proper due. Wardy was quite open about his situation, therefore, and openly demanding that he be given the means—by Management, by us, or anyone else—to improve upon it. If assistance was not forthcoming, Wardy took it as a personal affront: he demanded his rights while perennially, it seemed, being surrounded by "two-faced cunts who stab you in the back!"

I found it difficult to sympathize with Wardy, as I have said, because he seemed to me so blatantly hypocritical, selfish, and self-exculpatory. I was always surprised at the license granted to him by the other porters as he continued aggressively to lambaste them, and blame them for his own failings. It was not his fault, Wardy insisted, that numerous hospital wards were desperate for oxygen cylinders that had not been delivered since Monday because it had only been *his* job since Thursday (today was Friday). It was not his fault that his name appeared nowhere in the job-roster book for the past two hours: he had been allocated the job of clearing the rubbish and, knowing he was going on holiday today, Desmond (one of Wardy's friends) had left everything for him to do: rubbish piled up everywhere! Having kept friends waiting thirty minutes when they had generously offered him a ride home, he then requested that the chargehand sign him in for an extra half-hour's overtime for the period he had just spent messing in the locker room.

In part I think the other porters' generosity was a recognition of a genuine naivety on Wardy's part. He did not (always) appear to know that he was being cheeky, hypocritical, lazy, self-exonerating. When Wardy would return to the buckie from a job—his first for a while—with the laconic utterance "Robot!" as he settled himself back to studying the betting pages in *The Sun*, he genuinely seemed to believe that he was being made to work as if an automaton ("Them nurses will be wanting us to give them a rub soon, lying on the beds!"). There was, then, a likable innocence to Wardy's enjoyments, scams, and derring-do—as also his disasters. Wardy appeared not able to help himself, needing others to protect him from his own self-destructive (and belligerent) tendencies. When a notice went up in the buckie that a new chargehand (a minor position in portering management) would be taken on and trained, and "all names will get consideration," the name "Phil Ward" soon appeared on the list—and Wardy seemed genuinely hurt and embarrassed at the general hilarity this caused. When Lee, a current chargehand, even told him he had no chance—"That's just my opinion, like: you could prove me wrong"—a shocked Wardy retorted: "Well, why don't you keep your opinions to your fucking self!"; before going on to add that the first thing he would do with his new power would be to ban people from going for smoking breaks—as many porters, his own supporters included, liked to do. Perhaps, rather than getting (pointlessly) annoyed, it was more fun to see what mishap would befall Wardy next. The sagas of his life became something of a cherished possession among the porters. He was *their* Artful Dodger, *their* innocent.

The porters also put up with Wardy, I think, because of a realization that his troubles could easily be theirs or anyone's. There was also a recognition that Wardy was who he was, his own person, and could not help being this anymore than anyone else could. There *was* a kind of integrity to Wardy,

an authenticity, and this was due respect. Amid the institutionalism, regimentation, and hierarchy of the hospital, amid the shaming limitations of broader social and economic aspects of the portering life in Easterneuk, Wardy resolutely remained the person he *had* to be. Indeed, it was on these terms that Wardy demanded the notice of others; and the porters—if they at all liked him—gave this recognition to him with solicitude and a certain respect.

Finally, it was the case, as we have seen, that Wardy saw himself as ordinary: trying to make do in difficult circumstances while making choices and having priorities that were to be expected, and accepted. Wardy succeeded in convincing himself—as it seemed to me—and to convince other porters too that how he acted was normal, however abnormal the circumstances he was reacting to. It was this claim to normalcy, coupled with the other porters' solicitous responses to the claim that afforded Wardy his sense of equilibrium—again as it seemed to me. Insisting on the routineness of his life— "*Ecce homo*"—the other porters responded to his demands with recognition and respect.

MORAL CASE STUDIES?

Are these two cases—that of Stanley Spencer and Phil Ward—in any way moral exemplars?

I have described my own impatience with what I took to be Phil Ward's laziness, irresponsibility, and self-centeredness. Notwithstanding, I was also witness to the patient treatment that he received at the hands of the other porters, the care and attention that they extended toward him: something that I would describe as a kind of loving recognition of him as an individual. It was, however, not part of a reciprocal engagement. Equally, I have described a loving recognition that was extended toward Stanley Spencer—as a person, as a producer of images, and as someone propounding a distinctive philosophy of love. Both during his life and since, Spencer enjoyed the sympathy of a supportive audience of friends, lovers, art critics, and patrons—however much members of a wider public found his art disturbing. I want to ask now, then, as I have of Phil Ward, whether Spencer reciprocated this loving attention. Did Stanley Spencer afford the world the same space that he demanded for himself? If it is moral to enable the individual as projectile to pursue its own course through a life—Stanley Spencer as love-inspired artist, Phil Ward as pleasure-driven porter—then what of the effects that life has on others? In particular, did Spencer enact a "loving looking" with those Others he *actually* encountered as distinct from those he called into being through his art?

For the distinction is crucial. "Loving recognition" must pertain to an onto-logical reality of *true* individual otherness and not simply to the otherness deemed to exist in a symbolic construction of the world—through a cultural cosmology, whether painted or written, or however instituted. It is necessary to ask: How are the above case studies moral in relation to the collateral lives of real Others with which the main protagonists come into conjunction? How was it to be "loved" by Spencer?

Here is how Stanley Spencer is introduced by his first biographer, Maurice Collis (1962: 15):

> He stands a giant (though physically he was a very small man) who was never deflected from his main concern, which was to express himself. His story is bound up with three women in particular, and also a fourth. He was influenced by them for a time, but remained unchanged in essentials. They people his art from 1927 till his death and are the recurring subject of his writings. But he was a recluse at heart, a paradox of which [his posthumous] papers leave no doubt.

A second biographer would also find recourse to emphasize the "self-intense nature of his genius": self-absorbed and self-referential (Pople 1991: 209). The four women to whom Collis refers are Spencer's wives, Hilda Carline and then Patricia Preece, and his subsequent mistresses, Daphne Charlton and Charlotte Murray. Of these, his first wife Hilda was probably the most significant Other in his life, and the person to whom he felt closest in the world—even after their divorce in 1937, and even after her death in 1950. Hilda remained his great "hand-holder" and affirmer. In her he saw the same mental attitude to things as himself; she secured him and grounded him, enabling his imagination and emotion to take wing. It is possible that Spencer's entire philosophy of love grew out of his love for Hilda, and he claimed that any autobiography he would ever succeed in writing would necessitate contributions from Hilda: his own life would only make sense by showing "both [their] journeys" combined (Collis 1962: 181).

However, it was also the case that Spencer found himself and Hilda to be incompatible living partners. Their preferred lifestyles drew them apart and their actual worlds were private ones (Hilda had an unshakeable commitment to Christian Science). It became painfully apparent that each could only approach the other from the distance of their separate lives. While still married, Spencer could write to his wife:

> All your affability to me is not a genuine product; you are not moved by me, you have given a thing called God that job. ... You cannot serve Stanley Spencer & Christian Science. (Cited in Rothenstein 1979: 53)

Hilda wrote, not unsympathetically:

You are too much of an artist to have satisfactory relations with any women. That is the price you have to pay for your genius. (Cited in Pople 1991: 195)

And Spencer responded:

In spite of all I feel for you and my need for you, somewhere in me is an absence of love. I never have fulfilled love for another. (Cited in Pople 1991: 195)

It is arguable that Spencer found he could live with Hilda happily only after divorcing her—and loving her memory, and turning their everyday relationship into something spiritual. His love for Hilda was as much sublime as earthly, and became more so. It grew so that it was impossible for Spencer to separate Hilda from his artistic vision, her presence in it seeming ancient and primordial but not truly a bodily presence. He wrote:

Hilda was the love I felt for what I looked at, she was the smoke coming from the factory chimneys. I want and need her in *all* my experience. (Cited in Pople 1991: 453)

His love united him to Hilda, but to all "creation" and to "God" too. Hilda became his phantasm, her image more lovable than her person. Some of his most touching painted portrayals of Hilda (such as the series "Domestic Scenes" from the mid-1930s) were executed at the very time when their relationship was at its most fraught. "[It is] incredible," Spencer concluded one letter to her, "that you exist in the flesh!" (cited in Collis 1962: 127). But again, this was not something to which Hilda did not extend her sympathy:

Being with Stanley is like being with a holy person, one who perceives. It isn't that he is consciously or intentionally good or bad, or intentionally anything, for he *is* the thing so many strive for and he has only to *be*. (Cited in Pople 1991: 463)

There was also the issue of Patricia Preece, with whom Spencer became infatuated and eventually married. He wanted them both: Hilda, the seeming spiritual, domestic, thoughtful, considerate, sincere, complex, gauche, circumspect, and intense partner; and Patricia, the seeming sophisticated, sexy, socially connected, elegant, stylish, vivid, lively, direct, forceful, superficial, teasing, and opportunistic one. The laws of England may not allow him two wives, but he would have two all the same; marriage was a private matter, whatever the law said. Hilda and Patricia each gave him something necessary

but different, Spencer reasoned; he could be passionate, sincere, and whole-hearted to both. "Our marriage is in no way interfered with because the symbol of legal marriage is dropped," Spencer wrote to Hilda after their divorce: "there is an idea, a concept between us" (cited in Collis 1962: 127). But Hilda retreated, and then Patricia did too. Which left Spencer and Hilda continually writing and reading letters to one another to mediate their loss.

As Hilda withdrew increasingly from his everyday life, so Spencer progressively idealized the figure that she represented for him. Any awkwardness of hers as a living presence could be made increasingly to conform to his spiritual vision. She joined the pantheon of personalities, contemporary and biblical, with which he would populate the private world of his paintings. She came to be found there playing the role of youthful confidante, or else of comforting mother-figure, looming over a diminutive Spencer like a form of protective covering. After their divorce and even after her death Spencer worked to develop their spiritual union, Hilda acting as his supportive ideal companion, Madonna, and *alter ego*. He continued both to paint her and to write to her. A first letter to her after her death begins: "Come ducky and tread on the Moor with me" (cited in Collis 1962: 213). And seven years later (and only two years before his own death), he is writing still:

> Dear ducky Hilda: Hilda ducky –
>
> I do hope that a very large number of my letters to you will be preserved—I have just read from page 665 to page 695 of my letters to you. … I like these letters they seem to have point & to be always looking for something that is vital between us.
>
> I feel when I write to you it is a call to you from any moment of my life. Just as I knew I could love you at any moment: even arrange to specially love you at some specific quarter of an hour in a week, so I know I can at any time in my life say hullow ducky & hullow again ducky & at once we are being together at this moment & you noticing the bed backed against the wall opposite the windows. (Tate Gallery Archive 8419.1.2)

But the spiritualization by Spencer of Hilda, and of their relationship, should not obscure the nature of his treatment of her when she was alive. In 1934 (and before their divorce in 1937), Spencer informed Hilda in writing:

> My affair with Patricia is my one & only social achievement; the true & correct reward for all the best work I have done. (Cited in Rothenstein 1979: 54)

And again, in 1935, having gifted Patricia Preece possession of the house he had bought for himself and Hilda and their daughters, Spencer complained

of the monetary upkeep he must continue to provide for Hilda (Shirin, and Unity):

> I like to spend money on what I love to spend it on & what I feel deserves to have it. But to have to pay only because of a moral obligation to do so is not very nice & like Income Tax I like to pay only what they have a right to demand. (Cited in Rothenstein 1979: 54)

To which Hilda replied:

> Your letter has brought on a complete breakup of health & worse still of mind. … I am terrified of life. It is all too much for me. (Cited in Rothenstein 1979: 54)

In 1937, having finally been granted a divorce by Hilda and now on a honeymoon with his new wife Patricia Preece (accompanied by Preece's lesbian lover), Spencer was still insisting to Hilda that he never intended to give her up, and wanted to be espoused to both her and Patricia, while elaborating to her his admiration for Patricia:

> You see the difference between you & me & P & me is this: I know that no degree of love that I or any one would be capable of feeling for her would be in excess of her worth. I am so far unable to love her but my inability is due to my own imperfections. (Cited in Rothenstein 1979: 65)

To which Hilda replied:

> Oh my darling, why do things always come too late? There seems to have been tragedy throughout our marriage. When there should have been complete happiness, it was never quite so, and when there should have been sexual freedom, there never was. … You would reckon to shape your own destiny, and therefore forcing things and riding right over them is part of your outlook. To you that seems right, to take the matter in your own hands and shape it as you will. … And yet I am not in your mind and I know I never will be. That is why we cannot pull together. (Cited in Pople 1991: 368)

And a year later, while apologizing for having to take him to court to get him financially to support their children and herself, Hilda insisted:

> Either I love you or I don't, & if I love you I cannot hurt you.
> But I cannot be certain that you are equally single minded about me. I think, because I bear things without recriminations or complaining, that you think it is right to make me suffer & compatible with loving me. (Cited in Rothenstein 1979: 65)

By and large, Hilda seems to have been extraordinarily patient, sympathetic, and accommodating—loving—in her dealings with Spencer. She extended toward Spencer the love that would have him express himself as he saw fit—a love that recognized the uniqueness and preciousness of Spencer's life and its gratifications. In her accommodations, moreover, Hilda acted to the detriment of her own well-being, suffering a mental breakdown after the divorce, and then developing the breast cancer that was to kill her at the age of sixty. The young daughters were passed over to a distant "aunt" to bring up.

In 1978, Hilda's brother, Richard Carline, wrote an appreciation of his celebrated former brother-in-law, whom he had known from their being art students together at the Slade School in London before World War I, as well as from their being affines. Of relevance to our purposes here is the reflection Carline offers on the breakup of Spencer's marriage to his sister. Albeit that Spencer was to be regarded as "one of the most significant, and especially one of the most original, of artists in this century," Carline (1978: 33) reports on his sister's inability to kowtow. Both were extremely stubborn characters, and each demanded complete agreement. Heated arguments between them extended to hours, the strain leading to Hilda absenting herself, first mentally and then physically, and often for long periods. Back pain that she had suffered since adolescence could make Hilda especially inert and withdrawn, and this increased with age. Religious views divided them and also domestic differences: Hilda reaffirmed her allegiance to Christian Science—attending meetings, offering funding she could not properly afford—and seeming to transfer to it her main daily attention. She gave up on her painting—originally a major point of meeting between her and Spencer—and increasingly gave up on housekeeping too. Spencer claimed he was doing everything himself, including much of the childcare with the arrival of their daughters (Shirin in 1925, and Unity in 1930). However much one took Spencer's claims of his steadfastness and her withdrawals as a one-sided exculpation, it was still the case, Carline concluded, that his sister bore her portion of blame for the breakdown in their relations and ultimate divorce.

When Hilda physically retreated from the marriage, in the 1930s, and returned to her family home in Hampstead, London, she took their two daughters with her. Spencer remained with his painting projects in the countryside (the villages of Burghclere and then Cookham), and the family did not live together again. There being little room at the Hampstead Carline home, first Shirin and then Unity were given over to maternal relatives to bring up, in particular after Hilda's mental collapse. Spencer would visit often, over the years—Hilda especially—but he was largely an absent father. Only as a teenager, Unity claimed, then in boarding school in Devon (in the 1940s), did she have the opportunity to form a direct relationship with her father. Spencer's infatuational relations with his second wife Patricia Preece had finally

past (although she would never grant him a formal divorce), and he had begun to visit her and Shirin more regularly. And only on reading the definitive biography of her father by Kenneth Pople in 1991—when she was in her sixties—was she able to know her father properly. "Children of geniuses tend to have a rather hard time of it," Unity observed:

> My father needed to be alone a great deal, not because he had a "monkish" temperament but simply that he had to go into himself and rummage around and walk about inside himself; this was his source of strength and conviction. (*The Guardian* 2017)

Certain images of their father's, such as *Double Nude Portrait* of him and Preece (Figure 6.3, above), she and Shirin continued to find it hard to accommodate. While generally the nudes that he painted extended his portrayal of resurrection and redemption, his main themes—images where "the lovemaking is generous and no one is dominant"—*Double Nude Portrait* reveals a vulnerability, distress, and bewilderment in their father that made the daughters alike still feel protective (*The Guardian* 2015). And again, Unity's concluding judgment was a generous one:

> I didn't feel resentful—rightly or wrongly. I felt that he was honest about what had happened …, that he had taken himself to task over it. And that meant a lot to me. (*The Guardian* 2017)

In a letter written to his older brother Sydney in 1911, Spencer summed up his nineteen-year-old self: "I am inspired of late. I hate people individually, but I glory in human nature; sounds paradoxical, but it's true" (cited in Glew 2001: 34). It seems that "being loved by Spencer" does not, in the case of his wife Hilda and his daughters, perhaps speak particularly highly of his recognizing their collateral individuality, or extending to them the liberty of a space in which they might come into their own. Equally, I have said that when working as a hospital porter alongside Phil Ward I did not find myself able to appreciate the selfishness, as I saw it, with which he engaged with those around him—whether his fellow porters, or the patients and other hospital staff that I could observe, and the family members about whom I heard reports. And like Phil Ward, Stanley Spencer was afforded what I would adjudge to be a loving appreciation by those closest to him but he does not (always) seem to have reciprocated in kind. Spencer demanded to be taken on his own terms. In his later years, with the help of Charlotte Murray, a lover who was also a psychiatrist (a former student of Jung's), Spencer is said to have achieved a greater measure of "balance" in his life: of emotional calm and self-awareness. In his beloved Berkshire village of Cookham he became

a cherished and renowned local figure. The same village today hosts the Stanley Spencer Gallery, as we have heard, whose voluntary workers and friends seem to become devotees of his personality and village life as well as his art. Certainly, those with whom I have engaged appear willing to forgive or to bracket off the unloving behaviors to which his "eccentricities" gave rise.

Nonetheless, the selfishness—self-centeredness, at least—that Spencer and Phil Ward both displayed and made habitual cannot, I feel, serve as moral exemplars of the kind I would hope. Stanley Spencer and Phil Ward were loved, but it seems to me they were not themselves sufficiently loving of the concrete Others they found around them. More precisely: they were insufficiently receptive to and engaged with what did exist concretely around them—the individual Others who lived as consociates of their lives—and failed to transcend the "mythical" frameworks of their own worldviews, their "cultures of alluvions and allusions" (Levinas 1990a: 295). Stanley Spencer and Phil Ward do not appear to have engaged with the Other as what Levinas described as a "first intelligible." They enjoyed the loving recognition of their consociates but they did not seem to experience or at least to act upon those moments of vision where Others' due, as individual human beings, calls for a loving appreciation.

Love as foundation of an ideally moral society needs more than is provided by these case studies.

Chapter 7

Three Possible Ways
to a Universalized Love

If love is to function as a civic virtue, a universal ethos practiced by all, then the case studies in chapter 6 suggest that more attention needs to be paid to selfishness. Must love always be a shared practice? Must the person who is loved be loving in return?

Three possible ways forward offer themselves. The first is to insist on unilateralism. The individual maintains his or her personal duty to love the Other regardless of the behaviors received in return. Hilda Spencer, in chapter 6, might be said to have followed this course in relation to Stanley, to her own personal detriment perhaps; likewise the hospital porters in regard to Phil Ward. Emmanuel Levinas promotes such unilateralism as *the* ethical response to the incomprehensibility that the human being encounters. Faced by the inscrutability of the Other, *ego* has no moral choice but to extend a loving recognition.

A second solution might be termed "institutionalized loving." The phrase sounds oxymoronic but it is a way of describing a theory of "civil society" wherein rules are instituted concerning the mutual rights that individual citizens have in regard to one another, central to which being that the state or the regulating authority ensures that equal rights to individual fulfillment are maintained. Personal difference is allowed, accepted, indeed encouraged, and membership of social groups based on perceived similarities is strictly voluntary. Meanwhile, the diversity exhibited in personal expressions of individuality has acceptable limits, as conforming to the possibilities of a common society in shared space. In John Hall's (1998: 55–9) summation, a civil society is one that respects the human individual as an end in itself and institutes the opportunity for each to create their own selves. Or as encapsulated in the words of the Chief British Prosecutor at the Nuremberg Trials, William Shawcross (and recorded at the Holocaust

Museum in Washington, DC): "The individual must transcend the state: the state and the law are made for man, that through them he may achieve a higher purpose, a greater dignity."

A third solution might be called "teaching loving" or "training in love": love is taught and learnt as a common ethos necessary for a humane and fair social life. Kaja Silverman depicted this kind of approach, in chapter 3, in her suggestion that an appreciation of art—images and words—might *inculcate* a recognition of human lives distinct from different to our own. "Training in love" (or training for love)—training oneself and others—also corresponds to a sociological literature that focuses on an "ethics of care": a normative theory that holds care or benevolence in interpersonal relationships to be fundamental to moral action.

Let me examine in more detail each of these ostensive solutions to the "democratization" or universalization of love.

LOVING UNILATERALLY AS A PERSONAL DUTY

For Emmanuel Levinas (echoing Aldous Huxley), the "secrecy of subjectivity," the absolute incomprehensibility of one individual to another, is the fundamental fact of human being. It "marks the very extent of being" that existence is "absolutely intransitive" and cannot be shared (Levinas: 1985a: 57). But this is also the foundation of any ethical relationality: to acknowledge the irreducible mystery and integrity of individuality as preceding any claim to knowledge, any cultural demarcation of identity, or any legislation of normative social relations.

Levinas was born in 1906 in Lithuania. He moved to France to attend university in 1923 (while his family remained in Eastern Europe), eventually marrying there and acquiring citizenship. In World War II he fought at the front for a French unit, was captured and imprisoned in Stalag IIB, a camp reserved for Jewish PoWs, and endured five years of hard labor under constant threat of deportation to a death camp. His wife and daughter survived the war but the remainder of his family was murdered by the Nazis and their local collaborators. While Nazism had uniquely made the Jews into subhumans, no longer part of a human world, Levinas wrote, anti-Semitism was actually typical and imitated by all social aggression: it was the "shut[ting of] people away in a class, depriv[ing] them of expression" (Levinas 1990a: 153). In essence, anti-Semitism represented not a majority oppressing a minority, or xenophobia, or racism, but "a repugnance felt for the unknown within the psyche of the Other, for the mystery of its interiority …: a repugnance felt for the pure proximity of the other man, for sociality itself" (Levinas 1989: 279).

Levinas's philosophy would be an attempt to formulate an ethical response to evil and to gratuitous suffering whose paradigm case was Auschwitz.

Levinas saw himself as "a thinker" not "a Jewish thinker," but it was also the case, he believed, that the Old Testament provided universal moral guidance. It bespoke a universal human order independent of any religion and contained ethical truths valid for all human beings: "any man truly human is no doubt of the line of Abraham" (Levinas 1990b: 99).

Following from this, a key passage, for Levinas, was Gen. 22:1

> And it came to pass, after these things, that God did prove Abraham, and said unto him: "Abraham." And he said: "Here I am" [*Hineni*].

This response, "*Hineni*" ("Here I am"), occurs at other significant moments in the Old Testament, including when Moses responds to God's calling him in the form of a burning bush, and when God appears before Isaiah and requests a messenger. It is the way that biblical characters respond piously to a divine call. But it must also be understood, Levinas explicated, that according to Judaism a human being was essentially free and individual—and hence having no possibility of numinous experience. Abraham, Moses, and Isaiah say "Here I am" to a call they *hear* but *do not and cannot comprehend*. They feel God's presence as a concrete event in their personal, bodily sensorium—a witnessing, an "inspiration"—but they have no personal comprehension of God: it is a revelation that "*gives* nothing" (Levinas 1985: 107). Abraham, Moses, and Isaiah respond without rational warrant, without this-worldly knowledge, by virtue of an interior certainty alone.

This biblical passage was cardinal to Levinas. Every human being, he determined, should feel themselves likewise called upon and commanded by the "divinity," the absolutely incomprehensible otherness, that is another human being—and should make themselves available. The essential message of the Bible was that in the same way that Abraham "heard," felt, and responded to a "God" he could not comprehend, and responded in his freedom, without there being any explicit program or formula concerning how this response was to be effected, so we are all as human beings called upon to respond to the individual human Other whom we can no more comprehend or experience numinously. It was the human responsibility to say "Here I am" in the face of the human Other, having "witnessed" their felt presence and their need. This was the ethical "program" that Levinas enjoined, the ethical rejoinder to the horrors of the twentieth century and its experience of trauma: "Here I am." As Levinas summed up:

> The ego stripped by the trauma of persecution of its scornful and imperialist subjectivity is reduced to the "Here I am" as a witness of the Infinite, but a

witness that does not thematize what it bears witness of, and whose truth is not the truth of representation, is not evidence. (1981: 146)

It was the case, Levinas went on, that human beings can *imagine* forms of reality that at the same time we are unable to comprehend. It was Rene Descartes's insight that the concept of Infinity actually transcended human understanding: we have named and brought within a horizon of thought something that exceeded our capacity to think it. Humanity had an unmasterable relation to Infinity—as it had to Death. The concepts contained more than could be humanly known. Infinity and Death—and God—are irreducible to ourselves, to a human sameness, Levinas elaborated, and they contain a lesson about the other human being—Anyone—that faces us in social relations. For Anyone is *as* different, *as* irreducible, *as* other and *as* excessive.

Certainly, God and the Infinite established, for Levinas, a certain kind of ideal sociality. *An ethical relation to a human being facing us—any human being—was one that accomplished concretely the formal structure of transcendence found in the concept of infinity or divinity.* Yes, we were human and we were individual and we existed within horizons of knowledge but, as with protagonists in the Bible, we were also assured of "inspiration": of imagining and concretely witnessing forms of reality beyond our own. The relationship with the Other—with Anyone—entailed an intentionality that ultimately "ruptured intentionality." We experience what we cannot know. In Levinas's elaboration:

There is an opening beyond what is delimited; and such is the manifestation of the Infinite. It is not a "manifestation" in the sense of a "disclosure" which would be adequation to a given. On the contrary, the character of the relation to the Infinite is that it is not disclosure. When in the presence of the Other, I say "Here I am!," this "Here I am" is the place through which the Infinite enters into language, but without giving itself to be seen. … The "invisible God" is not to be understood as God invisible to the senses. … How then does it take on meaning? I will say that the subject who says "Here I am!" testifies to the Infinite. It is through this testimony, whose truth is not the truth of representation or perception, that the revelation of the Infinite occurs. (1985a: 106)

To understand more fully how the biblical response "Here I am" translated into a responsibility to love unliterally for Levinas—and what "testifying" and providing "testimony" to an Other that *ego* can never know meant, in practice—one may examine Levinas's attempt to provide answers to two questions that he made fundamental: "What kind of sociality precipitated the

Holocaust—and might precipitate any such social aggression?." And, "What kind of sociality might negate a Holocaust?."

Levinas laid the blame for the Holocaust on "culture": "In society such as it functions one cannot live without killing, or at least without taking the preliminary steps for the death of someone" (1985a: 120). The clue to this radical claim was to be found in the title of Levinas's *magnum opus*, "*Totality and Infinity*." A cultural construction of the world is a "totalizing" one, in that through systems of symbolic classification "all" in the "known" world is included, assigned a place, defined, and limited. From ancient mythologies to modern ideologies, cultures habituate their members into domains of category thinking that seize hold of an object, naming and defining, and possessing it in denial of the independence—and radical otherness—of its being. Culture entails what Levinas termed a "tyranny of the order of the same," where everything is a part of a whole or a case under a "law." Culture is a symbolic totality that denies the infinity of otherness and replaces it with the "solitude" of sameness—as if all were knowable and categorizable in the same way, in one way. In truth, however, a culture—any culture, and the structuration and politicization of identity it engenders—is a horizon of knowledge only. It may claim to encompass nature, it may seem second nature to its members, but it is neither of these things.

In truth, the world contains infinities. The paradigm case is Death. Death is continually "other" to human experience: an event that happens to us without our having any possibility of a priori knowledge, and possessed of an otherness that we can never transcend. But Death also leads us to a realization that worldly existence is "pluralist" and absolutely lacking in commensurateness or common denomination. For, even more proximally and mundanely, another human being cannot be known. *Ego* faced by *alter* is "a relationship with a Mystery" equivalent to that with Death (or Infinity or God): a relationship "neither spatial nor conceptual" and indeed obscured by the conventional descriptive and analytic optics of culture (Levinas 1989: 43, 48). Just as there is an abyss between life and death, so there is an abyss between individual embodied consciousnesses: "I am monad inasmuch as I am" (Levinas 1985a: 59). Social life, the relation of one individual embodiment to another, cannot (and must not) be construed as accessing a common intersubjective space. Rather, *ego*'s relations with human others possesses an exteriority that is irreducible and absolute. Is the other in pain? Is the other sincere? *Is* the other as I am? One might have been misled by culture into thinking one knew—thinking the world stretched out from one's point of vision, as good and bad, the same and different, pleasurable and distasteful—but coming face to face with the Other, facing the Other's absolute difference, is to discover the relativity

of one's habitual conceptualization and classification. For the Other cannot be comprehended, cannot be expressed—cannot even be thought.

Notwithstanding, the totalizing—conceptualizing, categorizing, "thematizing"—practice of a culture works to ignore, deny, and eschew any such not-knowing, and so invites in totalitarianism in various forms and degrees. Under cultural totalism all is reduced in an anonymizing way and not allowed to remain itself: culture traduces the world and transmutes it into a life of masks. Hence, the Holocaust.

But culture and concept, history and landscape, as containers of knowledge and mediators of knowledge are mythic, not true; and we *can* transcend them. Indeed, we exist beyond culture, as human beings, ubiquitously, Levinas insisted. Our experience is neither imprisoned nor defined by the conventional languages of culture; there is "an opening beyond what is delimited" (1985a: 106). For we mundanely have encounters that refuse integration into the identities of the same, encounters in which is manifest existence that absolutely resists culture. This happens with Death but even more mundanely this happens when we meet the radical otherness of another life. Our "solitude" within the apparently known cultural world of sameness is absolutely "sundered" (Levinas 1989: 43). What is called for is a "heralding" of those moments when we are visited by the "infinitude" of the Other: to allow ourselves to *be* within them, to say "Here I am," and admit their value. We admit there is a "not-knowing" which is essential, a not-knowing that is of the essence of our experience of reality, and hence fundamental to our moral being in the world. "Herald a man freed from myths," urged Levinas (1990a: 276), for it gave rise to a foundational moral moment:

> Conscience is not an experience of values, but an access to external being: external being is, par excellence, the Other. Conscience is thus not a modality of psychological consciousness, but its condition, at first glance it is even its inversion, since the freedom that lives through consciousness is inhibited before the Other *when I really stare, with a straightforwardness devoid of trickery or evasion, into his unguarded, absolutely unprotected eyes.* Conscience is precisely this straightforwardness. (1990a: 293, my emphasis)

Ordinarily, Levinas admits, *ego* may be happy to subsist within the closed and totalizing language-games of a culture, but the *event* of meeting otherness opens up the possibility of transcendental experience. *Ego* becoming sensible of an embodied exposure to a human Other gives birth to a moral consciousness *inside itself*, as it were, unilaterally, as a kind of epiphany.

The form that the epiphanous meeting with otherness takes, Levinas epitomizes as a "face-off." *Ego* finds itself (mundanely) *facing* and *faced by*

an other *face*: "the way in which the Other presents himself, exceeding the idea of the Other in me, we here name face" (Levinas 1969: 50); and "the face is an irreducible mode in which being can present itself in its identity" (Levinas 1990a: 8). The particularity of Levinas's formulation is also meant to convey the special qualities of this meeting. For the sake of description of an epiphanous moment of meeting, Levinas would name the event "face to face," but *ego* may not presume to know the body of the Other as an "adequation" of its own. "Face to face" should not be construed as removing the secrecy or reducing the mystery. A bodily proximity occurs but it refuses affinity, schematism, or even contemporaneousness: it even refuses a simple phenomenological synthesis. Just as human beings never know Death—never comprehend Infinity, never see God (only traces of His being in the world)—so *ego* never actually apprehends anything essentially true of the Other—the truth of his or her face or body—only traces. *Ego* only knows the encounter with *alter* as a kind of fissure, something that breaks apart its categories of definition and appropriation. Any other face and body that *ego* might hope to approach "are already absent from themselves" (Levinas 1981: 89). "The immediacy of the sensible is an event of proximity and not of knowledge," Levinas concluded (1987: 116).

But it is an event nonetheless, and of such an order as to be able to avert the possibility of the Holocaust if recognized, if honestly admitted into consciousness. Staring "straightforwardly" and devoid of the "trickery" of a cultural construction of the world, into the face of another human being "disables" *ego*, revealing an external reality that is beyond an habitual consciousness and laying the foundation of a truly moral being in the world. *There is a kind of sensibility born out of the physical awareness of the bodily proximity of the Other, whose strangeness and alterity leave emotional traces that have the power immediately and enduringly to overcome the distance between individual human bodies.* The proximity should be experienced as an "urgent assignation" prior to any cultural a priori. *Ego* is "sensibly" possessed, in its "psychism," by an "ineffaceable" alterity in such a way as to be dishabituated from the habitual language-games of culture, despite being unable truly to formulate the event as knowledge. The proximal encounter with the Other is a kind of "passion" or "surplus" or "anarchy," Levinas suggested (1969: 73), "a traumatism of astonishment" that should become an "obsession." *Ego* who admits to himself the awareness of *alter* "has discovered man in the nudity of his face" (Levinas 1990a: 234), and now has the experiential power and motivation, *and the moral duty*, to destroy the myths and idols of cultural tradition, of blood, landscape, and language. *Ego* must now "break the system" of culture and history, break their pieties (Levinas 1998: 34).

Ego has this duty, Levinas insisted—and it is unilateral, overriding all other considerations—because encountering the face of the Other is to be recognized as a categorical *summons*. If a biblical Abraham, Moses, and Isaiah were "inspired" to acknowledge the presence of a God they could not (and could never hope to) know, and responded "*Hineni*" ("Here I am")—implying "I recognize a duty to acknowledge your presence and divine right"—then *ego* is equally bound by his or her humanity to respond to the Other and their human rights. The "face" of the Other may not deliver messages in a known language—it simply "expresses itself" (Levinas 1969: 51)—and yet *ego* is bound to respond. Otherness juxtaposes itself concretely and ubiquitously against *ego*'s life (as unavoidable as death), and without properly deciphering or understanding or even *observing* that proximity, *ego* is summoned to respond.

The mystery of an Other that cannot be known, imagined, or possessed, and yet that possesses an alterity that concretely *is* and proves indubitably the plurality of existence, places *ego* under an absolute obligation, Levinas insisted. The call of the Other is imperative: human and frail and yet imperious; and *ego* responds not out of conscious compassion, pity, or sympathy, but because of "the impossibility of evasion" (Levinas 1996: 95). Faced with the "traumatism of astonishment," *ego* cannot be indifferent.

Moreover, as did the figures in the Old Testament who were "ordered and ordained" by the face of the Other, Levinas (1985a: 97) argued that the historical record also evidenced the ubiquitous ethicality of human responses. Even at the Holocaust's apocalyptic depths, one found "the muffled stirrings of a persistent, invincible humanity":

> The "I" of men, forced by suffering back into the shackles of the self, breaks forth, in its misery, into mercy. … [A] primordial tenderness for the other, [a] gratuitous goodness … rises, before hope, from the abyss of despair, [a mercy going] from one human uniqueness to another, independent of, and as if in spite of, structures—political or ecclesiastical—in which they were exhibited. (Levinas 1994: 89–90)

An archetype, here, might be the testimonies provided by Primo Levi's writings, surviving Auschwitz but finding he could forget nothing: faces, sensations, events, words (even in unknown tongues). It was as if his mind "had gone through a period of exalted receptivity," Levi averred (1996b: 11). Levi also described how such "inspired" recognition of the human individuality of others was not special to him, as in the following account of the "fissure" in habitual reality, the "rip," afforded by the proximity of another death-camp inmate, Alberto:

> For him renunciation, pessimism, discouragement were abominable and culpable: he did not accept the concentration camp universe, he rejected it both

instinctively and with his reason, and he did not let himself be tainted by it. He was a man of good and strong will, and miraculously he had remained free, and his words and his acts were free: he had not bowed his head, he had not bent his back. A gesture of his, a word, a smile had a liberating virtue, they were a rip in the rigid fabric of the Lager, and all those who had contact with him felt this, even those who did not understand his language. (2000: 118–9)

In sum, to see the face of an Other, human and naked, and to look nakedly and honestly upon it is to find an alterity that resists (mythic) possession and opens up a new dimension in the perception of being: a transcendent one, a glimpse of the infinite. The vision should be appreciated as the "first intelligible": an opening onto an absolute reality "before cultures and their alluvions and allusions," and independent of historicization (Levinas 1990a: 294–5). The vision also instills in *ego* a duty and responsibility that precedes any attempt to grasp the encounter cognitively. It is a summons, a demand for acknowledgment, one that must be obeyed if one is to avoid the tragedy of cultural totalitarianism and its violence. The realization by *ego* of otherness must now be the basis of a new metaphysics, a new social contract, in which ethics precedes epistemology. An ethical human sociality, one that eschews the possibility of the Holocaust, is one where an allowance for the Other's mysterious being not only undercuts all claims to knowledge but undergirds all behavior. *But the behavior of ego is the first ethical move here, the social foundation, paradigmatic*. The ethical society is founded upon *ego*'s dutiful unilateral response to the Other—*and only this*.

For the mystery of other human beings, their "infinity" must mean that we adopt a "pluralistic" conception of sociality rather than a "synthetic" one. There can be no real sphere of commonality or fusion between human beings, and what is "primary" and what abides is the Other's (and *ego*'s) secrecy. An ethical society, therefore, is one that "would render justice to that secrecy which for each is his life" by basing itself on "the principle of an absolute individuation" rather than a generalized "people" (1985a: 81). An ethical society is one respectful of individual identities and human freedoms in that it both begins and ends with "the secrecy of subjectivity" as its foundational assumption (Levinas 1985a: 78).

A pluralistic society imagines a "collectivity that is not a communion," Levinas concluded (1985b: 94), where there can be no ethical societal supervenience upon the dyad of *ego*'s individual relationship to and responsibility for *alter*. The inspired encounter of *ego* with the traces of an individual human Other is also the *end* of the ethical relation—its limit or extent. One might imagine a "politics" that extended the ethical relation from the individual other to a "society" of others; but this conceptual move must be resisted, Levinas insisted. For it is totalizing: there is no way to generalize upon the

individual relation between *ego* and *alter*, and turn it into an institution, without committing the violence of "thematizing": categorizing, defining, comparing, and numbering. "Politics left to itself bears a tyranny within itself," Levinas summarized (1969: 300), and "society" would hence "moderate" the privileged relation between *ego* and the unique Other through a contextualizing of the latter in a collective. Politics and society considered in this way, and practicing a "total and additive sociality" where individuals are known as members of a genus—become like things—cannot operate "without killing" (Levinas 1985a: 120).

In the same way that figures in the Bible responded unilaterally to the absolute remoteness and transcendence of God—neither an object, an Other, or an interlocutor—so *ego* has an absolute responsibility to and for the other, according to Levinas, while recognizing that this is responsibility for what is other to *ego* in nature, deed, and practice. *Ego* is responsible to the Other just because the latter is facing. And again, this is an entirely non-symmetrical relationship, lacking in commonality or intersubjectivity, *ego* experiencing a call it cannot know. Whether or not the Other reciprocates is entirely beyond the point: a matter entirely the Other's affair not *ego*'s. This is the case not only for reason of ignorance of otherness but also for reason of individuality of selfhood. *Ego* has exclusive responsibility as an individual and the responsibility is non-transferable: no one else could replace it or substitute for it. This represents the "supreme dignity of the unique": "I am I in the sole measure that I am responsible, a non-interchangeable I. … Such is my inalienable identity as subject" (Levinas 1985a: 101).

This being the case, finally, there can be, for Levinas, no explicit doctrinal program concerning how *ego*'s duty toward the Other is to be ethically manifested. Just as there is no numinous experience, no personal epiphany of experiencing God, so *ego* must feel himself or herself commanded to acknowledge and be available to the Other but *without formulae concerning what this means in a particular case or how it is to be done*. Only in personal interiority can one look to find the foundation for ethics, but even here *ego* can only be guided by inspired feeling: feeling that is grounded in a face and body that calls out to him or her, but a feeling that is not sympathy or empathy, and a feeling that does not translate into a discourse of sameness or difference. *Ego* must respond to *alter* "recognized" as an instance of no abstraction, no classification. *Alter* is just who *alter* is, and *ego*'s response has no universal character: it is simply what *ego* feels called upon to do in the moment; it is done with no sense of understanding and no expectation of communion or reciprocity.

Yet, the "inspiration" by which the Other manifests itself in *ego*'s subjective experience is commonplace, Levinas insisted. Just as the Bible and its

Talmudic commentary are the outcome of inspired individuals through the ages—writings that give testimony to the human experience of traces of divine presence—so awareness of the truth of human otherness is ubiquitous. Anyone and everyone may be inspired by otherness. Before finishing with Levinas, it is important to reiterate the significance of this fundamental and foundational moment of "vision."

Inspiration is a preconscious sensing of another individual body that calls out to *ego*. The face "speaks" to *ego* not in a language that is comprehensible (cultural), we have heard, nor with a strength that can force its way past *ego*'s habits of totalizing the world. But here, nonetheless, is an authenticity that "cuts across" culture, interpellating *ego*, taking it hostage and making avoidance impossible: *ego*'s encounter with *alter* is an "exposure" (Levinas 1969: 66).

Inspiration then concerns how *ego* attends to the vocative agency of the Other's body calling out "Hello." If inspired, *ego* responds in an equally acultural (non-propositional, non-reflective, non-subsumptive) way: "Here I am." "*Hineni*" is a kind of moral response that does not endeavor or expect to reduce the Other to logic or number, to neutralize its alterity but allows it to "withdraw into its mystery" (Levinas 1985a: 67).

"Hello" and "Here I am" are not merely to be understood as conventional greetings, then, as affirmations in a language-game. Rather, in such speech acts are the beginning of an ethical relation with the Other: banal yet ubiquitous acts of civility, hospitality, kindness, and politeness upon which can be founded civil relationships of trust. Indeed, it is in such speech acts that can be recognized the essence of language, not as a shared system of signifiers but as "a semantics of proximity" (Levinas 1993: 93): before it is anything else, language is an address from and to the Other. ("Après vous, Monsieur" could be considered a summary of his entire philosophy, Levinas admitted; equally, "Shalom" or "Go in peace" [1985a: 89, 1993: 124].)

Levinas used the word "love" to describe this engagement with the Other that exalts their unique alterity and "opens up" their "human singularity" (1993: 57). Not laying claim to the Other's identity or reducing the Other to logic or number, the lover exercises:

> a disinterested affectivity—or desire—in which plurality as social proximity does not need to be gathered under the unity of the One. The excellence of love and sociality [expressed as] responsibility for the neighbor [is a] a sociality which, in opposition to all knowledge and all immanence, is a relation with the Other as such and not with the Other as a pure part of the world. (Levinas 1996: 158–9)

Here is love understood and practiced not as a struggle to possess or fuse with or know but as "a caress without content" which affords the Other the

space to "withdraw into its mystery" (Levinas 1985a: 65–9). *Ego* respects the irreducible difference of *alter* (also their humanity, nakedness, and vulnerability) and a sense of obligation—equally infinite—is born. Love is an awakening to the proximity of the Other, and the concomitant absolute responsibility to the Other to the point of substituting the self for it, subjecting the self to the Other, absolutely passively and eschewing any self-interest. A loving response entails the "nobility of a pure *supporting*" (Levinas 1990a: 178): a unilateralism that is the origin—and the limit—of the ethical relation.

INSTITUTING LOVING AS A RULE

A very different approach to the question of how love might be translated into a generalized public virtue and common practice is taken by the political science literature on civil society. "Civil society" describes an arena of social practice in liberal democracies where individual citizens freely come together to further their mutual ambitions and benefits. "Civil society" describes a post-Enlightenment social order, writes Ernest Gellner (1994: 33), "born under the joint auspices of reason and nature," where truth is no longer a matter of cultural convention and social compulsion: to the contrary, the cognitive growth of science has eventuated in a truth of a "culture-transcending" kind. The beneficence of civil society has been to break the circle between religious faith, institutional power, and society such as to liberate individual life-projects from "coercive and superstitious systems," ideally replacing "fear and falsehood by consent and truth" (Gellner 1994: 32). Here the citizen establishes his or her own habitus, free from the prejudices, the pre-judgments, of others' cosmologies and classifications, unhampered by either structural or theological bonds.

The inhabitant of civil society, Gellner elaborates, is considered to be an unconstrained individual who enacts his or her own worldviews and reaches some agreement with fellow inhabitants concerning a social order on the basis of instrumental contracts, and associations and institutions freely entered into. The state fulfills the role of arbitrator between the diversity of interests and keeper of the peace. What I have designated as "loving recognition" is here enshrined in laws and normative procedures that guarantee the individual citizens' rights to "civil" practices, and provide redress should these be obstructed or ignored. In the summation of Salvador Giner:

> Civil society is a historically evolved sphere of individual rights, freedoms and voluntary associations whose politically undisturbed competition with each other in the pursuit of their respective private concerns, interests, preferences and intentions is guaranteed by a public institution, called the state. (1996: 304)

Or as phrased by Adam Seligman:

> Civil society is, most essentially, that realm where the concrete person, that particular individual, subject of his or her own wants, caprices, and physical necessities, seeks the attainment of these "selfish" ends. … Civil society is thus that arena where … free, self-determining individuality sets forth its claims for satisfaction of its wants and personal autonomy. (1998: 81)

"Society" is conceived of as an assemblage of essentially autonomous individuals, each with their own possible conception of the good life; state apparatuses operate to ensure legal equivalence between these, as equal citizens, through a fair process of public decision-making and the application of universally valid principles of justice.

There is an intrinsic ambiguity here, nevertheless, that causes civil society to be prone to a "precarious equilibrium" (Perez-Diaz 1996: 83). For the civil arena is pitched between the free expression of individuals' life-projects and their regulation by the state; also between loyalty to narrower belongings such as family or ethnicity, and affiliation with larger global or diasporic organizations beyond the state. Civil society is a kind of "hybrid" zone. How will civil justice fare against family loyalty? How will civil accommodations compare to global advances and opportunities?

To continue for the time being with an ideal description, however, a civil society, as a framework of laws and norms where individual rights to equal recognition and respect (to "love") are secured by a state, will display certain key features. Giner (1996: 304–6) identifies them as follows:

i. *Individualism*: Civil society is grounded on the assumption that the foundational unit of social life and social order is the individual citizen. Civil society is made possible due to the existence of such citizens, who act as repositories of autonomous will, as sovereign in their own affairs, and as free and equal before the law. Any and all political, economic, and cultural institutions are recognized as no more than associations or aggregates of citizens as individual actors.

ii. *Privacy*: Individual citizens enter the public space of civil interaction as private subjects. A subtle balance is maintained between public and private here: civil society represents an arena of universal interaction—Anyone is welcomed and recognized—but it is conducted by citizens whose "home" is a private personal preserve of individual body and mind. "Privacy becomes the most characteristic achievement of a sound and strong civil society," Giner (1996: 305) suggests, paradigmatic of non-interference in individuals' freedom. The integrity of the individual "home" is legally sacrosanct. Citizens partake in public exchange but this

inclusivity does not presume to interfere with who those individuals are to themselves, and for themselves. At home in their private identities, the arena of civil society becomes a space of normative politenesses, conducted by individual citizens who "pass through" its contractual relations and equitable procedures (Kaviraj 2001: 26–7). The citizen is included in public as Anyone, while at home in a private domain of individual identification.

iii. *Pluralism*: Civil society engenders an array of voluntary associations, political, cultural, and social, where individual citizens pursue their particular interests in varying degrees of cooperation and collaboration. Crucially, the individual is ensured free passage into and out of such associations such that no group membership is a cage or a ghetto, and none can function as an essentialistic categorizing or labeling of identity. The individual is also free to establish new associations—new cultural "clubs"—and to navigate a path among associations in a creolizing of hybridizing fashion, establishing a unique combination or amalgam of memberships, as he or she experiments with interests and gratifications. In the diversity of associations and choices there is a diffusion of loyalties and of the agonistic potential of these memberships; but the voluntarism and the relations between associations are regulated by law. Civil society comes to comprise a complex space where private individuals, accorded inclusive recognition and respect as Anyone, also come to play roles as "club" members. Irony undergirds these expressions of cultural difference and distinction, the associative pluralism being sustained by an ultimate detachment.

iv. *Marketplace*: Organizationally, civil society can be seen to operate as a kind of marketplace of contracts. Not only cultural affiliations but also goods and services are distributed according to an ongoing multitude of spontaneous transactions. Freely entered into acts of exchange between autonomous individuals—retaining the privacy of their motives and gratifications, of their material and intellectual property—together manifest a kind of "hidden hand" out of which emerges a solidary, mutually beneficial and mutually supported social arena. Classes of differential "wealth" may emerge, too, from a competitive allocation of goods, but this unintended consequence should be ameliorated by the diversity (and contrariety) of goods that individuals seek, by the laws enshrining equality of individual opportunity, and by the free movement of individuals among voluntary associations.

v. *State*: Crucial is a rule of law, guaranteed by a state apparatus and routinely overseen by governmental institutions, ensuring the foundation of individual rights and their operation. Relations between citizens, between citizens and state, and between citizens and voluntary associations (cultural "clubs" and families and communities) are all practiced in such

a way that the individual is accorded a "loving" recognition: *afforded public inclusion, a private preserve, and opportunities for individual identification, self-gratification, and self-fulfillment.*

It is the case, according to a number of political theorists, that we are witness to the emergence of civil society now on a global scale that incorporates, or at least invites the membership, not only of Anyone but of everyone. Certainly, for Mary Kaldor (2003), opportunities now exist (and are being accepted) for individuals to link up with like-minded others across the world so as to address liberal-democratic demands. "Global civil society," according to Kaldor, is a form of grass-roots globalization of individuals on a global scale urging forms of social interaction—of cultural belonging, individual movement, economic investment, and contractual organization—that will pertain to a global arena. Global civil society represents a new form of social and political interaction—constituting and being constituted by a global system of rules, both an outcome and an agent of contemporary globalism.

John Keane concurs:

We are being drawn into the first genuinely bottom-up transnational order, a global civil society, in which millions of people come to realize, in effect, that they are incarnations of world-wide webs of interdependence, whose complexity is riddled with opportunity, as well as danger. (2003: 17)

Keane elaborates. Increasingly, the national and global intersect and co-define each other, so that no clear line divides the "inside" from "outside." Here is

a vast, interconnected and multi-layered non-governmental space that comprises many hundreds of thousands of self-directing institutions and ways of life that generate global effects. (Keane 2003: 20)

Socioeconomic actors and institutions—individuals, households, businesses, social movements, NGOs, voluntary organizations, ethnic and linguistic communities, ways of life, and cultural associations—organize themselves across borders with the deliberate aim of drawing the world together in new ways, including critiquing ideas of absolutism in states and in communities. The actors amount to an unbounded society of individuals and groups, a constellation of institutional structures, networks and associations, functionally interdependent, both integrated and decentered. Global civil society is an unfinished project notwithstanding. It may more accurately be described as a "syndrome" of processes and activities, with many origins and multiple dynamics. But its ethos replicates the liberal (and "loving") one of civil society on a smaller, national scale, and potentially it comprises the most complex civil interaction in human history.

Kaldor and Keane differ somewhat in their characterizations of the nature or substance of the global exchange. For Kaldor, what is fundamental to the new global ethos is an idea of civil society as an "open[ing] up [of] access for the individual to global centers of power": it is "individual freedom [that] is a condition for emancipation both political and economic" (Kaldor 2003: 14). Global civil society offers a medium through which contracts between individuals and bases of authority and control, political and economic, social and cultural, can be discussed, mediated, and negotiated. It does not substitute for democracy at national levels but supplements it globally. Insofar as war and violence, and lawlessness, can no longer be contained within nation-states, global civil society minimizes these threats to social relations everywhere: increasing reason in the management of human affairs and replacing submission, superstation, ideology, fear, and insecurity.

For Keane, on the other hand, the keyword is respect for otherness, expressed as a nonviolent self-restraint, as politeness or civility toward the stranger. Global civil society is "the universal precondition of the open acceptance of difference" (Keane 2003: 203). It has institutional structures—governmental and nongovernmental—whereby individuals and groups of individuals are led to coexist peacefully, and intolerance is subject to sanction. The principles enshrined in global law are compromise, mutual respect, and power-sharing among different ways of life. A global civil society does not enforce unity, nor expect automatic consensus, but nurtures an awareness of the complexity of the world and the hybridity of identity. It also nurtures the complicity of the world: all may now contract into an ethical principle that guarantees respect for difference universally. A global civil society is categorical, normative, only to the extent of presuming a common framework of law and intelligibility wherein both difference and sameness can be recognized, and where disagreement has its means and modes.

For both Kaldor and Keane, however, a nascent global civil society concerns the contemporary evolution of a global rule of law, global justice, and global empowerment. It is a "militant" ethic in Keane's words, proselytizing "respect for humanity in all its diversity" (2003: 209; cf. Giddens 2002: 50). Through peaceful nongovernmental channels, it aims to spread equality, liberty, and solidarity globally as "sacred" values that are worth fighting for. Indeed, the globalization of the concept of "civil" society is in itself one aspect the emergence of a global civil society, and the successful propagation of its corresponding ideas, ideals, language, and institutions.

But there is no question of the distance still to be travelled between such idealizing (and idealistic) descriptions and global realities. On the one hand we may be witness to global institutions such as the United Nations and the International Criminal Court upholding international legal codes of human

rights and crimes against humanity; we witness interventions being sanctioned, military and financial, into the domains of totalitarian states (Iran, Libya, Iraq, Syria, North Korea); and we witness the "crises" of large-scale movements of people to democratic states in the West as migrants and refugees. Contemporary events such as these lend credence to the notion that civil society and its legal assurance of individual recognition has an increasingly global reach. On the other hand, we can be in no doubt concerning the challenges faced. Indeed, according to anthropologist Chris Hann, there is scant evidence of a global civil society emerging as an alternative to local traditions of public sociality, certainly not as the primary institutional framework within which security and solidarity are universally established. More fundamentally again, civil society as such may be critiqued as but one version of a "citizenship regime": as an ideology in favor of certain vested interests. A more appropriate gloss for "civil society," Hann suggests (1996a: 168), (as in its German translation) might be "bourgeois society" or market economy. To attempt to export this globally is a neo-colonization, by way of an ethnocentric concept, with a poor understanding of social relations. Civil society is merely a Western, liberal, individualist project; its legitimation is ultimately Kantian—respect for the individual as end in itself—and "whilst not impossible, it is only fair to say that producing transcultural argument on this point is notoriously difficult" (Hann 1996b: 59).

In many parts of the world, an anthropologist may continue, liberty is less significant a value than prosperity or order. To avoid ethnocentrism is it not necessary to recognize that totalistic cultures, where there is an ascriptive classificatory order or a puritanical scripturalism, are ideologies and societal models *equivalent in status* to Western civil liberties? In particular, it is impossible to ignore the hostility of militant Islam to the ideals of civil society. As Ernest Gellner (1994: 14) himself observed, the Muslim world manifests an "astonishing resilience" of its formal faith where individualism and freedom may be unintelligible, even heretical. A fundamentalist Islam now militantly promotes a totalizing and totalitarian vision that nonetheless is efficient in confronting large-scale social problems. Fed in part by continuing economic insecurity and social inequality, here is a social world "utterly foreign" to the contours of democratic civility: "modern" subjects of a state absolutely distinct from the free-thinking ones of Western civil society (Hall 1998: 74–5). Here is social participation and inclusion, but not on the basis of the individuation and pluralism of civil society. In the words of Ismet Özel, a Turkish Islamist intellectual:

> The most degenerate mental disease that passed onto us from modern bourgeois civilization is the belief that within certain limits we are free to determine our own future. (Cited in Kasaba 1998: 278)

"Civil society" is here a political ideology of the West—understood as such and resisted: a global so-called slave order that gives onto poverty, unemployment, inflation, and corruption, "established and run by imperialism and Zionism" (cited in Kasaba 1998: 271).

Civil society finds its "equivalent," in short, in a radical Islam that promotes religious purity, patriarchy, gender differentiation, hierarchy, regimentation, and authoritarianism. Enlightenment thought that summarized the values of the *ancien regime* as hierarchy, coercion, territoriality, and loyalty to community tradition was not inaccurate, Gellner (1993c: 3) reflected, but then as now the notion that through reason alone humanity might be led to liberation from totalitarianism was naïve.

More broadly—beyond Islamism per se—and in a more morally ambiguous form than plain despotism, global civil society is threatened by a "fundamentalizing" world of "neo-tribalism"—the multiculturalism that we have met—that might promise more emotional attachment and reward (revenge, empowerment, sacrifice, magic) than civil society can muster (Perez-Diaz 1996: 86–8). As Adam Seligman (1997) elaborates, an identity politics poses a threat to such a "bourgeois" political form as a civil society of individuals: a world of tribes and gangs where membership is not chosen but fated, and where the dominant mode of interaction is not trust among individuals but the making of alliances among groups. While the criteria of group membership may vary—referring to lifestyle, religious belief, sexuality, economic status, ethnic lineage, and others—what is common is the claim that the predominant relationship considered between human beings in contemporary society should be by way of their "communities" (cf. Amit and Rapport 2002, 2012).

Indeed, Seligman suggests we are witness to a critical turn in ethical life wherein people no longer believe they are responsible as individuals (whether to themselves or to others). Personal responsibility, an ethos and ideology that grew in the West as traditional social roles became less constraining and the authority of social groups diminished, now loses legitimacy to a corporatism or collectivism that once more attaches not only identity but responsibility, honor and rights to groups rather than individuals. In place of the authority and the personal preserve of an inner conscience as the source of moral judgment on proper conduct, the external forces of culture and tradition regain legitimacy and support.

Even within civil society, finally, in settings accepting of its moral premises and individualistic foundations, the challenges to its success cannot be denied. Again as identified by Salvador Giner (1996: 307–18):

i. *Vested interests*: Voluntary associations come to develop a collectivistic autonomy both vis-à-vis their individual members and vis-à-vis the state. An enforced social homogeneity within ethnic or religious groups,

for instance (under the dispensation of multiculturalism), leads to individuals being trapped in essentializing practices; membership of the state becomes secondary to that of community. Or again, economic classes develop, leading to entrenchment across generations, to monopolies and oligarchies hampering free market-exchange, and to obstruction of individuals' free movement and voluntary identification.

ii. *Intolerance*: An ethos of tolerance of difference engenders an extreme diversity—including expressions of illiberalism and intolerance—that threatens pluralism and tolerance per se. An effervescence of citizen movements gravitates toward extremism and zealotry, toward fascist, racist, and fanatical sects feeding agonistically—schismogenetically (Bateson 1936)—off one another. Here, individual citizens become unable or unwilling to differentiate between sectional and common interests, between justice and loyalty, and demand public implementation of prejudicial communitarian goals and bigotries.

iii. *Moral relativism*: People withdraw from participation in the wider civil domain, identifying solely with their specific cultural club(s). Or else they become depoliticized entirely, ensconced in their private and personal preserves. Impoverished communication across society leaves the public realm in the control of the few, and prey to activists promoting partial and narrow interests.

Where does this leave the proposition that civil society might represent a form of social organization, with global possibilities, in which recognition and respect for the individual human Other might find expression and guarantees in a legal framework of rights and redress?

One response is that of Richard Rorty (1998). While civil society may be a Western idea, it is still for the best, globally. Most people, especially those relatively untouched by the European Enlightenment, may simply "not think of themselves, first and foremost, as a human being"; nonetheless, "a culture of secular humanism [remains] morally superior" because it is "a culture of hope—hope of a better world as attainable here below by social effort—as opposed to the cultures of resignation characteristic of the East" (Rorty 1998: 197). "There is much still to be achieved," Rorty admits, but "basically the West is on the right path. I don't believe it has much to learn from other cultures. We should aim to expand, to westernize the planet" (2011).

A different response is to explore how one might retain elements of a universalist definition of civil society but not see this as a uniquely Western phenomenon, by favoring a more inclusive usage. Were civil society to be understood to refer more loosely to "the moral community, to the problems of accountability, trust and cooperation that all groups face," according to Hann, then one might elsewhere find:

specific practices and normative codes through which people are made account-
able and responsible to other members of society. This is the broader meaning of
civil society, and it can be fruitfully explored in *all* types of human society. …
In this sense, all human communities are concerned with establishing their own
version of a civil society, or civilization. (Hann 1996b: 20)

Via a global activism rather than a Western-led alliance, it might be pos-
sible to reach out—even to an Islamist world—and create islands of engage-
ment that provide alternatives to religious fundamentalism. One must accept
that there need be no essential foundations on which the morality of a civil
society must be built, thereby being freed to start work on such a society
anywhere.

Anthropologist Jack Goody (2001) would concur. Western Enlightenment
notions of moral progress and civility are to be valued, but these progressions
can be seen outside Western Europe too; while within Western Europe such
notions can be less deeply rooted in psyche and society than is often claimed.
There is no straightforward shedding of the uncivil through time, as the West-
ern history of imperialism, colonialism, and war shows. Nor, in particular,
have cultural capacities for rational action been absent in the East. Rationality
is not a unique Western possession, in short, a unique expression of a West-
ern "enlightenment" (even though "rationalizing" as a specific technique of
logical operation may have been generalized there), and Western advances
and advantages in the way of a rational worldview may be temporary and
not constitutional. Societies in China, Africa, and the Middle East can all be
instanced where "enlightened" and "rational" features such as the rule of law,
representation, and a civil way of life predominate.

Civil society offers a possible legal and institutional basis to a loving rec-
ognition of Anyone. But its maintenance (in the West) and its spread (glob-
ally) are matters of political work. Justice for individual human beings as
against loyalty to community traditions is an ongoing effort in political will.

TRAINING IN LOVE AS A COMMON ETHOS

In a Different Voice, by Carol Gilligan (1982), offered a thesis in feminist
scholarship which argued that men and women tend to view morality in
different terms, deriving from differences in the normal and normative life
courses of the genders. While men formulated abstract justice-based theories
of morality that emphasized fairness, rights, and equality, women favored
generosity, equity, and need, emphasizing sustaining connections in actual
situations through empathy and compassion. A woman-centered moral soci-
ety was not founded on the minimalist injunction not to harm others—so

difficult both to measure and to effect in social space—but to *care*: "to act responsively toward self and others"; to practice "responsibility in social relationships" such that irreducible "differences in need" were recognized (Gilligan 1982: 149, 164). Moral "maturity," Gilligan concluded, might be reckoned as effecting a complementarity between a "feminine" ethics of care and a "masculine" ethics of justice, and so to incorporate traditionally feminine virtues and values that had not been accorded a public role.

The argument has since been taken forward by Joan Tronto. She conceives of care as:

> *a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our "world" so that we can live in it as well as possible.* That world includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web. (Fisher and Tronto 1990: 40)

All human beings require care all the time, she elaborates, though some may be better able to care for themselves or to charge others to do so. Moreover, human needs are not fixed, for capacities change through the life cycle, as well as through advances in science, and through changing societal sensitivity to what may and should be afforded. Rather than identifying people as essentially in pursuit of independent goals, then, it behooves us, practically and morally, to recognize people instead "as constantly enmeshed in relationships of care" (Tronto 1995: 142). All human beings can and should see themselves as engaged in care activities, both as receivers of care and as caregivers.

Care has four specific phases or components for Tronto. Care entails that "humans *pay attention* to one another; *take responsibility* for one another; *engage* in physical processes of care-giving; and *respond* to those who have received care" (Tronto 1995: 145). More precisely, there is:

i.   "*Caring about*": acknowledging the need for care (refusing to stand aside or ignore), and not simply knowing but being attentive;
ii. "*Caring for*": accepting responsibility to meet the need and taking on that responsibility;
iii. "*Giving care*": physically providing care and being competent, and following through with sufficient adequacy such that the need of care is met;
iv. "*Evaluating care*": measuring how needs have been met, while accepting vulnerability and inequality (not necessarily demanding reciprocity).

Ideally these four components are integrated holistically in care-giving practice, Tronto urges. But as well as the organizational difficulties in managing this, two other dangers intervene: paternalism, where care-givers presume

they know better than the receivers what needs are; and parochialism, where known care-givers and procedures are indiscriminately favored. These difficulties and dangers should be seen as pressing, global concerns. For if they are taken in hand—if one could operationalize the above four-fold schema as a form of social organization and avoid paternalism and parochialism—then, Tronto is assured, an ethics of care "has much to recommend it as a systematic framework for moral and political thought," extending from immediate subjects of care to the more distantly needy (1995: 141). *Across different scales—from persons to institutions and to societies as such—becoming adept at caring "can inform the practices of democratic citizenship"*: an ethics of care can train "better citizens in a democracy" (Tronto 1993: 167).

Tronto elaborates further. While traditionally, "feminine care" has been distinguished from "masculine obligation"—where action and reaction have been conceived of as matters of formal due in specific roles (such as a legal contract)—the aim now must be to organize *institutions* that can operate across society, even globally, to provide the public care that might previously have been associated with more intimate, familistic spheres. Taking advantage of recent studies of bureaucratic procedure that point up how supposedly "rationalized" behavior is inexorably mediated by the "impurities" of personal character, responsibility and relationality (Herzfeld 1992; Vohnsen 2017), Tronto imagines implementing political processes that *deliberately* provision civic bureaucracies as "caring institutions" whose components and purposes are both impartial and intimate.

This is a learning process, again undertaken on different scales. Institutions make themselves aware of the intrinsic dangers involved in a politics of care: the power differentials potentially invoked in a caring relationship, and the necessity of balancing between rationality and pluralism (diverse personnel and diverse methods for a diversity of needs). Such a "becoming aware" by institutions may involve a deliberative and political space within which individuals' needs come to be addressed and interpreted by way of a "communicative ethics":

> No caring institution in a democratic society [would operate] without an explicit locus for the needs-interpretation struggle. (Tronto 2010: 164, 168)

In other words, caring institutions would set out to learn how to recognize the needs for which they are responsible, how to manage provision within themselves, allocating responsibility, and how to evaluate the reception and effectiveness of care work. A lengthy process of institutional deliberation and learning is involved here, Tronto concludes, as well as a learning by individuals of how they might care and be cared for, what "care" might entail in a human life. But it is by thinking through institutions in this way that we may

be able, as a society, to effect a logic of care that promulgates "a basic value": that "proper care for others is a good," and that by "striv[ing] to enhance the quality of care in [our] world … we may live in it as well as possible" (Tronto 1995: 143).

An "ethics of care" thus develops into a broad ambition including analysis, policy, and activism. It would apply a concept and an ethos more usually associated with private (domestic, familial, "feminine") arenas so as to engage "urgent and serious issues in a global context, … paying attention to and addressing the needs of distant others in morally responsible ways" (Koggel and Orme 2010: 111). Such needs might cover all to do with the "well-fare" of an individual life: its "well-being, health, safety and security."

This broad ambition also brings an ethics of "care" into conjunction with other writing, variously conceptualized in terms of "decency," "civility," or "sympathy," that may also be addressed here for the ways in which, as with "care," the terms are deployed to suggest the teaching and learning of a universalizable ethos of recognition and respect.

There is a realm of "*civility*" that exists between practices made enforceable in law and practices that follow a personal inclination, Leroy Rouner begins. It is here that we find the necessary, generous, and creative behavior that engenders social solidarity: civility is "the central unenforceable bond that makes community possible in our pluralistic world" (Rouner 2000: 2). As Adam Seligman elaborates, modern social life may be characterized as "life among strangers." Here:

> Individuals no longer embedded in collective groups, no longer viewing the stranger as necessarily dangerous, no longer hostage to traditionally defined terms of membership, group, and participation, meet, in the confidence of the nation-state. (Seligman 2000: 71)

Ideally, civility is that social ethos whereby autonomous (and unknowable) individuals are recognized as fellow human beings over and against racial, ethnic, sexual, religious, and other differences. Civility is democratic and inclusive, while being affectively neutral compared to more familial, communitarian, or cultural engagements. As defined by Christopher Bryant:

> Civility bespeaks a common standard. … It demands that in all life outside the home we afford each other certain decencies and comforts as fellow citizens, regardless of other differences between us. It is … a cool concept. It does not require us to like those we deal with civilly, and as such it contrasts strongly with the warmth of communal, religious or national enthusiasms. (1996: 145)

Moreover, cognizant of human fallibility, duplicity, and partiality, civility as an ethos does not anticipate social life as being easy. Through self-absorption and self-centeredness, one may pay insufficient respect to the sensibilities of one's fellow citizens. Nor will the nurturing of civility as an ethos necessarily make things socially comfortable. For instance, while it might be courteous in an Islamic context not to anticipate women taking political stances, this cannot be promoted or condoned as *civil* behavior since there is an othering here whereby one section of the citizenry is classified as less than or essentially distinct from another. Courtesy overlaps with civility but it is not the same; indeed, to be courteous may be to be uncivil. In short, while traditional affective affiliations may be subsumed within the nation-state or broader institutions, they do not necessarily disappear; civility would mediate between individuals no longer ascribed sets of traditional obligations and responsibilities but still possibly attached to these. Civility as an ethos carries the potential to promote a humanistic or "democratic" interaction among citizens in modern complex societies, but its common standard that must be taught and learnt. The challenge of meeting civility, Robert Hefner concludes (1998: 3), has become globally apparent and pressing.

Under the concept of a "*decent*" society, Avishai Margalit imagines meeting this challenge. To treat human beings as nonhuman, as animals, objects, machines, or numbers, rejected from the Family of Man is essentially to humiliate them, Margalit begins (1996: 218), while a decent society is one that does not humiliate. This is more than simply a "proper" society adhering to due process; or a "respectable" society cognizant of its members' honor; or even a "just" society concerned with the distribution of goods and rights and opportunities. Propriety, respectability, and justice are of indubitable importance, but a decent society aims at something more: at protecting members' individual dignity, their autarchy, or spiritual autonomy. A decent society is trained on negating humiliation, the "behavior or condition that constitutes a sound reason for a person to consider his or her self-respect injured" (Margalit 1996: 9). To institute a decent society is to teach and learn decent institutions operating across the society as a whole, Margalit considers. These will span an arc from how individuals routinely engage with one another in public, and the symbols they deploy in this exchange, to that society's voluntary associations—churches, professions, and so on—and to the bureaucracies of the state. In all cases, the routines and institutions are taught, and learn to operate such that individuals' dignity as human beings—their names, their privacy—are not threatened, and all are included alike.

In a sense, "love" can only be received from other individuals, Margalit concludes (1996: 129), but "decency" can come to encompass a society's members inclusively within a routinized and institutionalized care.

What links the above scholarship on civility, decency, and care is their *socializing* vision. Social space is deemed not neutral but an ethical arena where recognition and respect for fellows, for the individuality and finitude of life, may be learnt and taught. One can undertake training in a "loving recognition," it is asserted, by virtue of how a social institutionalism—meaning both how individuals interact with one another and how organizations and bureaucracies administer to their constituencies—is effected.

It is ultimately to social philosophy from the Scottish Enlightenment that such an emphasis on *training* in "love," on *learning* and *teaching* recognition and respect, can be traced: to questions asked by Adam Smith and David Hume on how we acquire the metaphysical, moral, political, and religious skills necessary to live a moral life. It was Smith's thesis in particular, in *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), that "sentiments," understood as the "original passions of human nature," provided the psychological foundation on which a moral life held in common by members of a society could be based. I elaborate on Smith's account, in brief, for its insights into how a training in love might be emotionally effected: how care, civility, and decency may link to "sympathy."

However selfish "Man" might be, Smith began (1976: 9), there are nevertheless "some principles in his nature" that lead him to take an interest in the fortunes of others, and, indeed, "render their happiness necessary to him." Even though we have no immediate experience of what other people feel, we are able to *sympathize* with them: "sympathy … denotes our fellow-feeling with [another's] passion" (Smith 1976: 10). It is the experience of "sympathetic emotions," Smith posited, that promote a kind of trans-subjectivity, by way of analogy, and thus provides an emotional basis for sociality and moral relations. This occurs both through the force of our acts of imagination—"passion arises in our breast from the imagination" (Smith 1976: 12)—and also involuntarily: we feel bodily sensations on viewing others. Sympathy is that natural practice whereby the situation of another, whom *ego* observes, is imagined and felt.

Alongside the natural "principle" that Man possesses sympathy, is a desire to curry favor. From birth on, Smith observed, we desire to please those around us. Indeed, the desire to be "loved" may be accorded a defining characteristic of human nature, one implanted by God:

> Man naturally desires, not only to be loved, but to be lovely; or to be that thing which is the natural and proper object of love. He naturally dreads, not only to be hated, but to be hateful; or to be that thing which is the natural and proper object of hatred. (1976: 113–4)

Hence, a process is entrained. Having observed others, we then observe ourselves; and having sympathized with others, we imagine ourselves being the object of others' sympathy in turn, and being sympathized with. What impression would we leave? We observe ourselves through others' eyes, and are happy with what might seem to them good in us, and mortified and shamed by what must seem to them bad in us. We learn the "respectable virtues" of self-denial and self-government by realizing that we need to lower our passions so that they coincide more nearly with what another might be able to imagine. Desirous of the sympathy and approval of others, we feel remorse, shame, grief, and dread when we behave according to passions that are selfish. And we learn the "amiable virtues" of condescending to others and indulging them when we imagine that which we ourselves are not impassioned about, thus raising our sympathetic emotions.

In short, the moral identity of an individual comes to be formed through the process of sympathetic observation of Self and Other, for Smith. An individual develops a moral conscience by imagining the view of his or her own actions from the Other's perspective. "Moral self-consciousness requires that I divide myself as it were into two persons," Smith wrote (1976: 113): the embodied Self and the "tribunal within the breast" whose authority derives from the censure of the world. What is "decent" is to indulge in bodily passions that mankind is likely or able to sympathize with; and the converse for the "indecent." We come to learn an "impartiality" by continually observing the social world around us: we observe others and are confirmed in our own beliefs when others are affected as we are. Certain general rules concerning what is fit and proper come to be instilled since "immoral" behavior shocks others' sentiments, and thus ours alike. We learn to correct self-love, impetuosity and partiality, and avoid what might render us odious, contemptible, and punishable: gradually we learn a sense of duty. By the same token, having sympathized with others we may also judge them. When their emotions and reactions accord with what we have learnt to think of as proper to feel and do in a situation we extend to them our approval; likewise our disapproval, when they behave differently to ourselves. Furthermore, when we judge them to be feeling and acting correctly we are willing to join them in action. We feel we have a duty to support another who behaves properly and expresses virtuous passion. We feel that a person is worthy of reward or punishment based on whether what we feel toward them is gratitude or resentment.

But *ego* is not alone in this: indeed, the situation is a general one, and reciprocated by those around *ego*, and hence moral social relations and moral forms of social exchange are also born. "To be observed, to be attended to, to be taken notice of with sympathy, complacency and approbation" are the driving force of "all the toil and bustle of the world," Smith (1976: 50) concluded. Societies come to be held together by this learning and teaching

process of sympathetic sentiment. Societies are forms of emotional trade between participants, each of whom is ensconced in bodily regimes of passion and sympathy, and comes to be engaged in a personal struggle to regulate an internal balance between decent and indecent passion. "Moral sentiments"—social emotions—are the bedrock of successful communalism: a "harmony of society" whereby the above emotional exchange becomes internalized and second nature; ideally a society is a "concord of the affections" (Smith 1976: 22).

Notwithstanding, the harmony and balance are in constant danger, Smith recognized. While the person of "perfect virtue [may] join, to the most perfect command of his own original and selfish feelings, the most exquisite sensibility both to the original and sympathetic feelings of others" (Smith 1976: 152), the world divides into the foolish and wise, and the former will still be free to behave indecently. *Ego* may thus come to find that to please one (wise) person is to displease another (foolish one) who is judging him or her according to their own interests and not an impartial moral standard. But this too, finally, is a learning process. The wise and moral individual replaces a desire to please all those around him with the desire to please the "Impartial Spectator": an abstract Other who represents the moral interests of mankind and a kind of vice-regent for God, who can nevertheless remind *ego* of the way of moral sentiments and teach a transcending of selfish passions (Smith 1976: 41).

The idea of the Impartial Spectator was itself a product of Smith's learning, and the representation of his mature moral thought. As his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* moved through its six editions (between 1759 and 1790), so Smith's notion of a moral sociality less entailed being sympathetically in tune with extant collective norms or public opinion and more a matter of *ego*'s independent ratiocination. *Recognizing the Impartial Spectator ego put himself or herself in a position to make categorical moral judgments, abstracted from any direct connection either with his or her individual worldview or with the immediate Other*. Reminiscent of both a Platonic version of ideal form and of a Kantian version of moral imperatives, through sympathetically connecting to the Impartial Spectator, *ego* could accede to a judgment based on a global or universal impartiality. Adam Smith came to reckon this as a higher form of morality than seeking recognition or approval from a locally environing community.

In sum, social spaces as arenas for learning and teaching (civility, decency, and care) was central to Scottish Enlightenment thought. We learn to care through sympathizing with what exists beyond the self, Smith posited, and thereby we partake as individuals in a possibly common, reciprocal moral project. *Inter alia*, Smith also posited certain human-natural givens: the capacity and the proclivity to feel for others, to sympathize with them.

By way of these principles a social ethics is born. We can and do learn recognition and respect for our fellows—"love"—by imagining how we might feel in their place. A further step is our employing the perspective of an impartial spectator: we learn to uphold rational and universal principles of moral decency. Imagining an Other remains a partial exercise but we learn about the individuality of Anyone, the preciousness of that short life, and we learn how, ideally, it might be moral for anyone anywhere to act and be acted upon.

ASSESSING THE WAYS TO LOVE

We have been exploring a number of proposals concerning the ways in which a loving recognition of fellow human beings might be routinized and universalized. I have wanted to consider, in particular, the important question of how a reciprocation of such recognition and respect might be encouraged, and how the "unloving"—the "uncaring," "uncivil," "indecent," "unsympathetic"—might be engaged. For Levinas, the individual must unilaterally love the Other, regardless of the Other's behavior which is in any case essentially inscrutable. The individual's moral duty is to respond to the call of the Other in a way that honors the individuality of his or her own existence: only the individual experiences that call in his or her distinct embodiment and no one can substitute for that distinctness or that duty. For advocates of civil society, alternatively, in societies that are increasingly complex, internally diversified and global in extent, it is by legislating for regulations that ensure recognition and respect that rights and freedoms of individual citizens can be ensured. Finally, there are those inspired by Enlightenment notions of the undergirding of society by reciprocal moral sentiments. Products both of the imagination and the passions, and capable of being nurtured and tutored, learnt and taught, these can instill in social relations and societal institutions a common sympathy such that a caring, civil, and decent inclusiveness may come to encompass all.

How are these proposals to be assessed? They are not mutually exclusive I would urge (despite Levinas's misgivings). Indeed, the three emphases might be said to complement one another: the individual, the social learning, and the legal. At the same time as one might assume the *personal* duty unilaterally to love the Other, one might enjoy the *legal* dispensations that make individual recognition and respect sanctionable, and one might find a caring institutionalism being *taught* and *learnt*.

However, one might also imagine the different versions of a "loving" solidarity pulling against one another. A caring ethos, institutionalized as a matter of individual behavior and organizational procedure, one might deem to be an unwarranted interference in matters of personal conscience. One might

deem it an inappropriate rationalization for there to a legal framework—a form of social engineering—for matters one feels can properly be undertaken only voluntarily and personally, or by inspiration and on faith. Or again, if something is enshrined in law, and the responsibility of specific offices and officers to oversee, then one might decide that it need not be one's own constant duty or personal concern; and so on.

It might further be posited that human fallibility will always prevent our enjoying perfect civility: in making common cause with those Others we would categorize as somehow beyond the Pale. No "way of loving" or combination of these will provide a universalizable solution to a denying of the individuality of life. Even a momentary recognition that one might make of the Other as an individual human being pure and simple is in the following instant superseded by the perception that the Other forfeits that human recognition by the cultural choices they have made, say, by the way of life they perpetuate and promulgate. Are they not unavoidably unworthy: "Fascist," "Muslim," "working class," "womanly," "black"; "ignorant," "superstitious," "common," "dirty," "lazy"? In Adam McClellan's (2000: 91) summation: "We lack sufficient powers of love and objectivity to view those who oppose us as fully human."

We have heard E. M. Forster state the difficulty in visceral terms:

> The world is very full of people—appallingly full; it has never been so full before, and they are tumbling over each other. Most of these people one doesn't know and some of them one doesn't like; doesn't like the color of their skins, say, or the shape of their noses, or the way they blow them or don't blow them. (1972: 55)

This was written amid World War II, as Forster imagined the difficulties he might find in living with former enemies after its end. And we have also heard his recommendation, that we cultivate tolerance as a public virtue for the rebuilding of a global civilization, for love will be beyond us. We cannot love a "public" that we do not and cannot know personally, while tolerance and "good temper," being far less dramatic and emotional than love, remain applicable "in the street, in the office, at the factory, and … above all between classes, races, nations" (Forster 1972: 56, 75). Notwithstanding, I have argued for the need of something more radical than tolerance as an ethos of societal solidarity on a contemporary global stage, more trenchant; so that we overcome the distorting effects of human beings being identified according to their purported "subject-positions" within closed cultural communities and classes (as "Muslim," as "working class," as "woman," as "black," etc.). It is not to be tolerated that by virtue of such fictional ("cultural") distinctions human beings are defined as "essentially" members of particular

communitarian collectives. Such memberships may be undertaken voluntarily, and in maturity, but they are nevertheless always to be treated "ironically" (to recall Richard Rorty's term) at the same time as they are enjoyed: precisely *as* fictions, whatever may be the rhetorical claims to value and truth that accompany these memberships. ("Ironists," in Rorty's recommendation, are those who recognize the contingency of cherished statuses, beliefs, and values that come dressed up as "natural" within cultures' attempts at "final vocabularies"; ironists recognize that systems of symbolic classification do not reach beyond time and chance to reality [1992: xvi].)

One does not, in other words, lose sight of the essence of individuality—its preciousness—even as one pretends to all manner of symbolic differentiation of humanity into cultural classes. This book is dedicated to the search for a public virtue that individuates the Other and establishes this as the basis of solidarity: society inexorably formed from individual human beings as its constituent units. To cite Primo Levi a third time: "It is intolerable that a man should be assessed not for what he is but because of the group to which he happens to be assigned" (1996: x). It is only individual life that has an ontology—a natural being—and only this life that has ultimate value.

From the apparently unloving selfishness of Phil Ward and Stanley Spencer, we have examined loving recognition as a possible unilateral response to individual otherness, as a possible civil framework of rights and laws, and as a possible caring ethos of social relationality, learnt and taught. But questions remain. Indeed, questions mount. How, to borrow McClellan's phrasing, to love (to recognize and respect) "those who oppose us"? I am sufficiently heartened, nevertheless, that the routes to a loving recognition examined above—the individual, the social learning, and the legal—and their possible combination and complementarity in social practice do offer the argument a way forward.

I return to ethnography and the empirical case study; precisely, to Constance Hospital, Easterneuk, and part of the British National Health Service.

Chapter 8

The British National Health Service

It may seem an over-used example (even a cliché), but I find that in its ideal-typical practice, the system of health care in Great Britain—the National Health Service (NHS)—can be seen to instantiate the individual recognition and respect, the "love," for which I have been arguing. I would say that here the personal duty unilaterally to love the Other, the legal dispensations that make individual recognition and respect sanctionable, and a caring institutionalism that is taught and learnt, are found together in an existing social setting.

The NHS has gained a ubiquitous place in British society, politics, public consciousness, and debate since being enshrined in the "National Health Service Act 1946" and launched in 1948, indeed, coming to assume something of the status of a "sacred cow," an institution that criticism dare not touch in essentials. This ubiquity is particularly useful to my argument that love may function "mundanely" as a universal public virtue. In particular, I argue that the NHS may be said to combine the ways of loving outlined above: a unilateral attending and "loving" behavior through its officers, its medics and managers, *plus* the learning and teaching of an ethos of caring institutionalism, *plus* a legal foundation. In Raymond Tallis's summation, "born out of extraordinary circumstances," here is "an extraordinary institution" (2016).

The NHS was part of a legal, social, and economic "settlement" following World War II by the then Labour Party government in Great Britain: one of a number of major social reforms, aiming at comprehensive health and rehabilitation care for all British citizens (and funded through taxation). At its launch by Health Minister Aneurin Bevan on July 5, 1948, three core principles were enunciated: that the NHS should meet the needs of everyone; that it should be free at the point of delivery; and that it should be based on clinical need not citizens' ability to pay. While (controversial) reforms to the constitution

of the NHS were instituted almost immediately—charges for the provision of dentures and glasses (1951), charges for medical prescriptions (1952)—and it is now facing competition from private health schemes and hospitals, the NHS has continued in a very recognizable form up to the present day. The cost of catering to the health needs of the population of Great Britain may be some ten times greater than it was in 1948, but the NHS employs today more than 1 million people toward the objective of comprehensive care, through a range of health services the vast majority of which are free for people ordinarily resident in the country. The constituent parts of Great Britain—Wales, England, and Scotland—have responsibility for their own slightly different versions of the service, but the NHS has still been described as "the institution which more than any other unites our nation" (Boyle 2012). Furthermore, in a recent (2017) comparison of eleven health care systems worldwide (conducted by The Commonwealth Fund), the NHS received the highest ranking: this despite other countries now investing more of their GDP in health care (9.9 percent in Britain compared to 11.4 percent in France and 16.6 percent in the United States). The NHS was adjudged to be the best at "care processes"; to deliver the safest care and the most affordable and patient oriented; and to offer the most equity. Over the seventy years of its existence, the British NHS has also been associated with some of the key advances in medical treatment, including joint and cataract surgery; combinative drug therapies (in cancer and organ replacement); MRI, CT, and ultrasound scanning; dealing with the health risks of smoking; palliative care; and statistically charting the health profiles of age cohorts and populations.

CONSTANCE HOSPITAL, EASTERNEUK

NHS Scotland employs more than 150,000 people, aiming to provide health cover for a population of some 5.3 million. It is the legal right of Scotland's citizens that the public health care system offers them provision that considers their holistic health needs; offers treatments that are of optimum benefit; encourages them to take part in decisions about their health and well-being; and provides information and support for them to do so, including raising concerns or complaints about the health care they have received. To provide more evidential information on this, let me return to my field research in a Scottish NHS hospital, and my experiences of working there as a porter. How did porters fare in the delivering of institutional care, and in receiving it too?

There was something of a cavalier, even callous, attitude often shown by porters toward patients at Constance Hospital. Patients' names, for instance— "Emma Cowe" ["I'm a cow"], "Sharon Lovett Moore," "F. Rug" ("perhaps

that's 'Mr. Fireside Rug'")—were bandied about as a daily source of amuse-ment. Patients' ailments were equally casually regarded: those needing psy-chiatric help were "The Loony Tunes"; while those missing limbs were "The Minefield Squad." Disposing of amputated body parts was deemed one of the worst jobs because "It's about a mile to the incinerator, and it's fucking cold too!" A cardiac arrest, meanwhile (calling for porters quickly to deliver "the cardiac machine"), or an automobile accident (causing numerous ambu-lances of the injured or dead to arrive one after another at the Accident & Emergency Department), resulted in an excited rushing about by the porters and a breathless reporting back: "Lots of blood!," "Casualties being packed in like sardines!."

Routinely, porters passing each other in the hospital corridors while in the process of conveying patients to their destinations on chairs, beds, or trolleys, and also seemingly in the midst of sympathetic exchanges with their respective charges (who were usually seated or lying below the porters and facing away from them) would roll their eyes at their portering fellows, or otherwise make it known by their gestures and signs that their sympathetic sharing with the patient before them was a politeness only: superficial, even a sham. Indeed, meeting fellow porters mid-job could occasion each to leave off their work—stopping pushing their charges—and exchanging gossip with one another for some min-utes, perhaps going off to check the lunch menu in the staff dining room and assessing who was already taking their break. The parked patient meanwhile, asleep or awake, became as much an inanimate object as the medium of their conveyance. Similarly, the sealed containers positioned outside operating the-aters where medical staff would place diseased and excised body parts ready for transport to the hospital laboratories or incinerators were happily comman-deered by the porters for the trading of black market items among themselves: booze, counterfeit DVDs and PlayStation games, and so on, were secreted in the containers for pick-up. (Martin and I find a bottle of whiskey he has ordered from Roy in one such box alongside a uterus: "I don't mind having my hands on a uterus," Martin quips, "but I do prefer it when it's not walking around by itself!") It was a common portering complaint that the particular job they had been assigned with a patient had been a "cock-up" because "Management" had provided an erroneous classification: wrong patient name, wrong location, wrong destination: "That's been a fucking waste of my time!."

This species of callousness and gallows humor did not extend to the deaths of patients, however. The individuality of death seemed significantly to change matters. The car crash alluded to above—porters rushing to A & E to witness the after-effects—also eventuated in Mick, a porter on night-shift, later taking a woman down to identify the dead body of her husband (one of the five people who had died). They were accompanied by a policeman, but none of the proper—official—medical staff or morticians could be found to

do their duty: Mick was doing it himself "just to be nice." "But what a state! The body was a real mess," Mick recounted:

> I washed some blood off the face so it would be a bit better for her but he was really mashed up. Head held together with staples, eyes out to here, filled with blood. Face mashed up. Unrecognizable. I mean, you see it all the time on TV or in films, but this is very different. Fantasy is very different to real life! … And she was in a real state after, the wife: there's a small room down there they can go into ... But I couldn't get it out of my mind. The following day, watching TV, I just kept remembering. My wife said, "What *is* the matter with you?," and I said: "I just can't get this face out of my mind."

Let me provide some context to the apparent callousness on the part of the porters before considering the seeming transformation wrought by death.

PORTERS AND THE "CONTAGION" OF THE HOSPITAL

On my first day working as a porter at Constance Hospital, I found myself and six other new employees crowded into a small office, being instructed by Pat, a portering sub-manager, on the details of the job. Pat's manner from behind his desk was matter-of-fact, allowing for no nonsense from us inductees. We sat silent and rather cowed. A significant part of what Pat had to say concerned our relations as hospital employees with patients: there were institutional proprieties to be learned and followed. Regarding confidentiality, for instance:

> Never speak about anything you hear or overhear or see inside the hospital outside it. There was a case once of a porter at another Easterneuk Hospital—he's gone now—who was indiscreet and spoke about a patient and it so happened the person he spoke to was a relative … So: say nothing, 'cos you never know whether a relative or relation might get to hear. If I was a patient I'd not like people to know my case-history.

Regarding personal hygiene, Pat continued:

> You have to keep clean when dealing with dirty materials and soiled materials round the hospital, and also patients. I always wash my hands after dealing with three or four patients.

And regarding violence:

> Don't wear earrings to work [one of my fellow neophytes blushes, drawing attention to his own]. 'Cos it might get pulled off by a violent patient.

Ninety-nine percent of the time—no: ninety-nine-point-five percent, ninety-nine-point-nine percent—there is no violence. Mostly it's the drink getting the better of people. But it's important never to get involved. Just try to talk them into quietness. There used to be courses put on—"Managing Violence," and "Managing Patient Movement" too—but in recent years they've not been able to afford porters—or managers—taking the time off to take them.

Leading us out of his office to a wide corridor on the hospital floor, Pat then had us practice moving a wheelchair, a trolley and finally a bed, pushing them along a straight stretch, and through swing-doors. Pretending to be patients and porters in turn, some frivolity returned to our group. Pat instructed us how that we must push beds and trolleys from the head end so that the patient was facing the direction he or she was going. It used to be "Feet first only for the dead," but this had now been reversed, Pat explained. The same for wheelchairs: we were always to push from behind: never to pull the chair with the patient facing backward. The importance of learning how to push patients was so that we did not hurt our backs or tire out our muscles, Pat explained. It was no good being a porter and then getting injured and being "on the sick." Also, we were responsible for the patients in our care. We were to know, then, that there were three pedal positions on the new trolleys and beds: brake on; wheels free; and wheels aligned. Lastly, Pat warned us never to take a patient who was dressed in pajamas or lying on a bed across the Hospital's Main Concourse—the reception area by the front door where the shops and cafes and boutiques were—unless we wanted to risk a severe reprimand. The doctors and hospital administrators did not want the "privacy" of pajamas or beds revealed to the public. If necessary, we were to take the long way around—a lift down to a lower floor and then up again—so as to avoid the reception area.

I was struck, during the induction, by the way Constance Hospital appeared as a container: Constance contained the sick and those who treated them; indeed, Constance might be dirty and the patients violent and drunken, and so we porters should prepare ourselves on entering by removing earrings and being ready regularly to wash. As neophytes practicing for our coming containment by the Hospital's habitual practices and ordinances, we porters must carefully guard our *own* welfare; because the hospital was struck for cash and uncertain how best to manage according to its own optimal regime of treatment. It was vital not to "get involved": not to forget the boundary always separating off the hospital—its inmates and medical conditions—from the rest of life in the city of Easterneuk beyond.

Becoming further socialized into Constance Hospital in the weeks and months that followed, I came to appreciate the significant ways in which a boundary between the inside and outside of the hospital was maintained

and managed by the porters. Central to this was how the porters treated the patients as a class, and distinguished themselves from them. "The hospital is not exactly a cheery place," I was soon told by Colin: "Being around so many ill people rubs off on you and makes you feel like you need a change, or a long holiday." The patients, I am to know, represent a risk to the porters. Their illness is like a physical contagion that can rub off; you have to be lucky not to catch anything from them. Fred concurred: their being ill even made the naked women you encountered in an operating theater unattractive and "You don't think of them like that."

It would, however, not be true to say that there were no occasions when a sense of compassion did not determine a genuinely sympathetic attitude toward the patients on the porters' part. Patients were, after all, neighbors and friends and family too, at the mercy of circumstance. It was also the case that the porters determined to be ill themselves on a regular basis: they openly and routinely discussed their personal ailments and accidents, and keenly deliberated upon their best course of action. Illness was, after all, a route to sick-notes and sick-pay, and to a time completely removed from Constance. Moreover, particular kinds of physical ailment pointed to the stresses and strains of how a porter worked hard and played hard: the risky nature of living a masculine life inside the hospital and out. Periodically, then, the porters would claim for themselves the status—and "advantages"—of being patients at Constance. A demand for equal treatment—even preferential treatment given them by medical staff in clinics and wards, and with regard to placement upon waiting-lists—was regarded as one of the perks of the job (just as there would be perks of "first refusal" for "seconds" were they working instead in an Easterneuk factory or shop).

Nevertheless, a significant discourse among the porters at Constance involved their construing patients to be a kind of threat to the healthy, manly identity that the porters would reserve for themselves. Hence calling on the porter assiduously to distance himself from the "contagion" of too empathetic or sympathetic a dealing with the patient. Ideally, the porters aspired to being healthy men, as they saw it: essentially active, physical, independent, and fun loving. The patients were the opposite: creatures whom hospitalization had reduced to body parts; little more than pieces of meat, dehumanized by operations conducted upon their passive bodies and individually indistinguishable. There was, in short, a habitual way in which patients were "othered" by porters: distanced from portering identity and masculinity, their sick bodies routinely disparaged.

One day I hear that a rumor has been circulating. A porter has allegedly been "sticking it to the dead": having sex with a dead body. The culprit was, according to the rumor, a married porter who had resigned from Constance

Hospital a while ago; but the current porters are still embarrassed—and titil-
lated. I ask Arthur, one of the portering sub-managers, for the details. He
explains that a woman went to an Easterneuk clinic and was told that the
disease she was suffering from resulted from copulation with a dead body—
and this made it a police matter. She had to reveal to the police whom she
had been having sex with, and she said it was an ex-porter from Constance,
a married man:

Arthur: Now, that's not very nice, is it Nige?! Yet another thing they can say about
us porters … But why would you want to? Have sex with a dead body? Cold.
All that formalin. Yuck! I mean, my wife's sometimes cold to me, and that's bad
enough! [We laugh] Maybe we should embellish the story, eh? And sell it to *The
Sun*! Get some money. Name names! "It was Ian Scott" [a fellow porter]! [We
laugh]

For some days, the rumor is a chief topic of portering gossip. It is, indeed,
already "all over the place" seemingly. Wardy announces that it has reached
Easterneuk city center, because Arthur's wife heard it in the pub where she
works. Roy confirms that his mother has heard the rumor at work too, and
came home to ask him about it: she works in an Easterneuk nursing home.
"But what a sick weirdo! That's sick," Wardy assures me. Josh reveals that
a friend rang him a few nights back and said it was "his sister's friend" who
had gone to the clinic: "But she couldn't remember the name of the guy
she'd slept with when the police asked her! She said it was a one-night stand.
Apparently it's something you catch from the maggots that infest a dead
body." While Tom suggests the rumor is already "old news," since he heard
about it three weeks ago.

Tom's comment is a deflationary one, and other porters soon set to work
similarly deflating and "domesticating" the story. They make the rumor
bearable, and accommodate it within their proud sense of upright, masculine
portering selfhood. The rumor is shameful and threatening, but it can be
laughed off:

Dave: Is it you, Wardy? Humping Sharon when she's drunk and out cold!?
Wardy: That's me, yes!
Arthur: The pervert could be Anne [as Anne enters the porters' lodge to clock out
from her work in the mailroom]! That would be the best sex Anne has had in ages!
Anne: [laughing, but embarrassed] That's disgusting!

As the porters came to terms with the shock of the allegation—an asso-
ciation between a porter at Constance and a patient which was intimate
and shameful, even illegal, with the police having to become involved in

establishing the true details of the depravity and exceptionalism—titillation at the lurid details gradually surpassed the porters' embarrassment at guilt-by-association. The rumor was also domesticated—literally—by its being incorporated into family gossip: into the routine and normative lives of the porters and their wives, girlfriends, and parents, and the spaces of their ordinary familial and sexual relations.

While it may seem, at first blush, as though the rumor and the reaction it engendered included death in the ambit of porters' cavalier attitudes to their work—in contradistinction to what I have suggested above—there were important differences, I would argue. A rumor of necrophilia possessed characteristics of an apocryphal tale or urban legend, and no porter whom I knew believed it to be true. Moreover, death as such was something apart, and beyond a joke. Death had a distinctive sobering effect, moving the porters beyond jocularity. Death returned individuality to the bodies of patients.

DEATH AND THE PORTERS

Death had its official procedure at Constance Hospital. The porters would receive a phone call that a body, with a certain name, was to be taken from a specific ward to the mortuary. The portering sub-manager at duty at his desk in the porters' buckie would turn and see who was available to undertake the job, and, more importantly, whom it was appropriate to send on a job of this special sensitivity. Certain porters were known as taking it on themselves to perform what was seen as a highly significant work, but also one about which a number were squeamish: this was work, that, uniquely for tasks that the porters were called on to do, the porters themselves felt had to be done well.

The selected pair of porters would then collect a distinct trolley with raised sides, over which was draped a covering in heavily stitched blue plastic (such that the contents of the trolley were obscured from view), and proceed to the ward. Before entering the ward, one of the porters would alert a nurse inside as to their purpose, and she would proceed to curtain off the beds or cubicles of the other patients on the ward, and indicate the bed (already curtained off) where the dead body awaited. (A death was a kind of failure, perhaps, against the ethos of best medical practice, and hence best shrouded from view.) The body would already be in a zipped bag on the bed, or else wrapped up and taped in a special sheet or "gown"; an envelope marked "Head Porter," and containing the death certificate, would rest atop the body. The two porters would then approach the bed with their trolley and carefully maneuver the body onto it—not always an easy operation given the dead weight—with the feet facing the front.

Then they would begin the journey to the hospital mortuary, taking care to expose as few patients and visitors as possible to the blue trolley's

passage—for example, waiting until a lift was completely empty and not to be shared with others. At the mortuary, the body-bag was unzipped and certain measurements made of the body—height and width of the shoulders (for the sake of the undertaker)—and the figures then entered into a book, together with the patient's name and age, and the names and signatures of the porters. Finally, the body was maneuvered onto a sliding tray that fitted into a drawer in a large cold-box that took up the length of the wall of the mortuary. The porters would then depart with their trolley, and report back to the porters' lodge, keeping a copy of the death certificate for filing.

Angus and I are called on by Mick, one of the portering sub-managers, to collect a body for the mortuary from Ward 32, "Mr. D. Anderson." Angus is pleased to hear that I know what to do—all the paperwork and such—because, he informs me, it has been over a year since he's "done one," and he's forgotten. "Do we take this shroud with us?," Angus asks.

Angus has worked at Constance for nineteen years—"At least, 19 years on April 23rd!"—he further informs me as we walk to the ward. And the mortuary has not long been as it is now: you used to be able to see right through the cold-box to where they completed the post-mortems on the other side—see halves of cut-up heads and bodies—and he did not like that:

> I used to have to shut my eyes when I pushed a body into the fridge! Now the system is better, and the technicians pull the bodies from out of the other end of the fridge when they do post-mortems. … In fact, come to think of it, the last time I was in the mortuary the undertaker was there too, preparing to take a body into the viewing room for the family, and putting her into a gown: a woman in her forties, I guess. And *she'd* had a post-mortem and all her insides taken out. … No, I'd not like to work in the mortuary all the time! ... Another time, I remember, I had a real shock [Angus laughs]. Not funny at the time, though! I came in expecting no one to be there—it was about this time, back of 6 o'clock, and as I was leaving I heard a voice: "What a noise you make"—me banging about with the trolley—and I've never been so shocked! I jumped, heart pounding; my hair must have been on end. And it was a domestic in there cleaning, and coming round from the back to see what the noise was. "What a noise you make"! But you're not expecting anyone to be in there. What a shock!

Serious again, Angus admits that the worst of it is "having to do dead kids": "You don't mind so much doing old corpses, but none of the boys like doing the babies or young kids." But he's done some of them too:

> The saddest job I did, just after I began, was a six-year old kid with spina bifida: from Ward 12, in a cot. Everyone was crying; me too. The nurses and the parents and the bairns. They asked me for five minutes more when I arrived with the

trolley. I said they could have as long as they wanted. And I could hear them cry-ing. I felt like crying himself. Then the nurse accompanied me to the mortuary to help me carry the kid over: all bent over 'cos of spina bifida ... And then the babies' bodies in the mortuary. They are over to the left, in the drawers, by them-selves. Wrapped up, but you can see they're new-borns who didn't make it. That really gets to me … I also remember another time, one Christmas—no, New Year—when I came in and there were three kids dead on the same trolley! They had been in a fire. The grandma was drunk and it'd been her fault. … Then *she* was in and out of Constance over the years, trying to kill herself. Three times. Never succeeded. She was put in 18 which was a psychiatric ward in those days.

We reach the ward, and Angus approaches the nurses' desk: "Mortuary?," he asks. "It's in bay 5," a nurse responds. Angus and I look at each other as we approach the bed: "'It'! And just to think last night it was a 'He' or 'She'," he says. We find the body in its zipped bag, ready. "Sorry," says Angus to the body, as he and I manhandle it through 180 degrees in order for it to go onto our trolley feet first. As we leave the ward the same nurse intercepts us: "Please. Since you're going. Would you take back the gowns [shrouds] I have in the sluice room; a dozen or so? Because they send them down to us from the mortuary but we never use them in 32, only the body-bags."

When we get to the mortuary, and have deposited "Derek Anderson"—height 5 foot 9, shoulder width 18 inches and hence "N" (Normal)—we receive a message from Mick, the portering sub-manager, to go and do another body, this time from "HDU" (the High Dependency Unit):

> We better watch it, Nigel. We'll get reputations as undertakers if we keep this up! Burke and Hare! The body-thieves.

Angus and I turn ourselves around and at HDU learn from the nurses that this corpse weighs "32 stone" [448 pounds], and is therefore too heavy to be transported by trolley and deposited in the cold-box. We must find a spare bed and mattress "from somewhere"—Angus suggests the Hospital bed store—and bring it to HDU: the body will be stored just on the bed in the mortuary for now. "I know that someone with that weight is not necessarily obese," Angus tells me as we collect the spare bed:

> Because you can retain your fluids and put on a lot of weight. There was a German nurse who worked here who did that, and when she retired she just ballooned 'cos she was retaining her fluids. It was a shame. The heaviest I've ever known was a 46 stone man, young man. They were taking him to the Royal Infirmary when he fell off the chair he was on and they had to call the Fire Bri-gade with their pneumatic hoist to get him up on it again. But then he went on a sponsored diet—for charity, like—and got his weight down to 27 stone.

Returning to HDU, we find that the nurses have closed the curtains to all the other beds. Indeed, a team of nurses now awaits us, male and female. Together the large corpse is slid onto a metal sheet and then onto our bed. A senior female nurse tapes the shroud shut. I ask her if the man's weight contributed to his demise: "I'm not going to discuss that," she replies, in a tone that makes me feel ashamed to have asked, and unprofessional.

As we leave the ward, another nurse checks that the corridors are empty of patients or visitors, and then quickly runs to the lift to call it for us—carefully beckoning to us only when the coast is clear. When we are finally in the lift, and alone, Angus wonders what all the fuss is about: "Anyone seeing us would know it's a body on a bed when we get *out* of the lift, so why not before by HDU?."

After leaving the mortuary a second time, we go to the kitchen in Ward 10 to make ourselves a cup of tea—Angus also being anxious to wash his hands. "I've heard from the lads that you're allowed 30 or 40 minutes to do a body—from picking it up to the end. So we're actually well ahead, Nigel. Having done two, like. No rush." Then he concludes: "But you know, I'd not like to take to the mortuary someone I knew."

It may have been a while since Angus last "did a body" but for Alastair it is a more regular occurrence. Alastair is the porter whom the chargehands know they can always call on for this task, someone who explicitly embraces the duty of dealing respectfully with the dead. "Never a day goes by," Alastair admits to me in a resigned tone, without him being called on to act as the porters' "undertaker" at Constance. It is an important question, Alastair explains to me: Who can and should be sent from among the porters to collect a body? Especially if the dead person is someone known. Alastair likes to do the work as "a sign of respect," he explains: "It's the best we can do. To show some respect," he repeats. And to show what he means he recounts to me an incident concerning a child death in which he was involved. The long account begins with him describing another trip to the mortuary that was equally memorable for him:

An 18-year-old woman dead of cancer. Leuky. She had no hair and was the color of that [tan] kettle. What a shambles! [He shakes his head] Her stepfather—looked more like her son—got lost on the way to mortuary … It took three trips to escort them all down there. The undertakers were there, too, so we could all see everything. And her "stepfather" looking more like her son! [He tut-tuts] … But you know, 18 is not the youngest I've done, Nigel. Done two or three kids. Two. I don't like doing kids. I remember a six-year-old from the kids' cancer ward. The job had been received by the chargehand before I got on duty. So I went down there with Michael, and the nurse was there already,

and the parents. And they wanted her, the kid, to go on the bed to the mortuary (not a trolley)! Okay … And that meant taking the bed along Pipe Street so as not to be seen—not that anyone would have, at that time. ["Pipe Street" was the nickname for the barely lit section of the Hospital in the very basement, with the pipes for heating and ventilation, where the garbage and the dirty laundry was also collected.] So, we banged our way along Pipe Street, the parents accompanying us, crying. All those obstacles to avoid down there, yellow bins, tugs, the rest: not the best environment. Then we got to the lift, finally, and the doors to it were locked! So back I go all the way for the key—the parents left waiting down there. Then finally up the lift, and down the ramp, the child bouncing about on the bed! Then round the corner and up the ramp again to the mortuary—and the bed won't fit! But the undertaker's there, waiting for us, and he says he'll take the body on from there: on a ramp in a corridor! What a shambles! And then we get back to the ward with the bed and the nurse compliments us on a job well done! I mean, who's kidding who? Eh, Nigel? Who's kidding who!

Before I came to speak to Alastair, or even know his name, the nickname I had given him in my notebook—having watched his interactions with other porters—was "Laidback." He was an older porter, in his forties, and experienced, having worked at Constance for a long time. He was also happy to hold court in the buckie and seemingly not take anything at work too seriously. Alastair's day might be spent complaining about the specific jobs he had been sent to do, complaining about how Management was running the hospital, joking about the foibles of fellow porters past and present, discussing the day's menu in the dining room, listening to the radio, and recounting episodes from pub visits or from television the night before: the quiz shows, the soap operas, the football. There was a swagger to Alastair, a self-confidence but also a lightness of touch, that made him an attractive conversationalist. Alastair would hold his own, and hold himself aloof from the Hospital and its workings:

> Yes, it *should* be Peggy's job to tell us about MRSA [Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus: a so-called "superbug"], and that. But we're "only" porters so no one tells us anything. You go into a ward and there are all the nurses all togged up in aprons and gloves and it's: "You go right ahead" to us porters: you go deal with the patients, without gloves or anything! 'Cos we're "only" porters, so who cares? I bet 98% of the porters must be carrying MRSA! Bound to. They said at one time they were gonna give us information about it. Four years on we're still waiting for it.

I recount this about Alastair so as to convey the difference in his demeanor and his behavior when it became a question of dealing with a dead body. There was something absolutely sobering about death: a moment when seriousness and respect replace the ordinary casual attitudes to all that involved

Alastair at work. The encounter with a dead body transcended Alastair's regular habitus and persona, as it did the casual detachment that characterized the behavior of the porters as a whole.

TAKING STOCK OF THE PORTERS

I do not wish to underplay the complexity of the situation that I have described for the Scottish NHS among the hospital porters at Constance Hospital. One possible reading is to find in the above very little that accords with an idea of the NHS as representing a "loving" institution, where "loving recognition" is practiced unilaterally, or enforced as a right, or where an ethos of care is learned and taught universally. What might be more obviously apparent are the hierarchies involved in this large-scale organization; also the tribalism that distinguishes and separates one set of hospital functionaries from another; the mundane tedium to be coped with; the callousness that accompanies a daily diet of others' suffering; the selfishness that seems to characterize the porters as a community and the strictures placed on its' members free expression. But this is not all that there is to read. Death in particular seems to have a special effect: transcending and uniting and individuating. It is true that categorization comes to play a role here too, a known dead person or a child eliciting special concern. But I also recall the apology that Angus gave to the anonymous dead adult body that was accidentally bumped by us as we transferred it onto our trolley. It was an unaffected and immediate expression, genuine and in need of no commentary by Angus for my benefit—or vice versa. There was no embarrassment and no apology. I found the gentleness and solicitude shown by Angus to this unknown human individual to be a moment that cut through the workaday world and overcame the habitus of being a porter at Constance Hospital. And I found the same respect for individual bodies shown by Alastair and by others as well. I do not feel I am engaging in special pleading when I describe these as moments of "love," as something epiphanous and transcending.

But if death for the porters was a "moment of vision" (after Thomas Hardy), then I am still not sure that I can formulate an answer as to how such epiphanies might be universalized, regularly effected. How might one hope generally to prescribe a practice where the individuality of one's fellow human beings is ubiquitously recognized, and prove enduringly consequential?

TAKING STOCK OF MYSELF

"It is vitally important that we should not love," was the conclusion of Fernando Pessoa (2010: 240), in *The Book of Disquiet*, and he offered five

reasons why love and loving were to be avoided as human pursuits. Firstly, they were a threat to our personal integrity: "To love is merely to grow tired of being alone: it is therefore both cowardice and a betrayal of ourselves" (Pessoa 2010: 240). Then, loving was an assault on our human dignity: to be ambitious for love, or passionate, was to render ourselves defenseless before our desires and hopes (Pessoa 2010: 187). Thirdly, to love was to burden oneself with unnecessary responsibility to reciprocate: to become the object of someone else's bundle of emotions made one dependent, and unable ethically to turn aside for fear of being seen to scorn a great gift (Pessoa 2010: 161). Fourthly, to claim to love was to be hypocritical, since "we never love anyone. We love only our idea of what someone is like. We love an idea of our own; in short, it is in ourselves that we love" (Pessoa 2010: 218). (Only the onanist neither disguises nor deludes himself or herself in openly seeking their our own pleasure.) And finally, we delude ourselves in a demeaning way if we assume that the means by which one human being may endeavor to communicate with another—words and gestures—are anything other than "uncertain, divergent things"; and hence "the very way in which we come to know each other is a form of unknowing" (Pessoa 2010: 218). More nearly: "when two people say 'I love you' (or perhaps think or reciprocate the feeling), each one means by that something different, a different life, even, perhaps, a different color and aroma in the abstract sum of impressions that constitute the activity of the soul" (Pessoa 2010: 218).

I can agree with Pessoa's reasoning in each of the above particulars and share what I understand to be his wariness. But the love I am arguing for in this book is not in contravention of Pessoa's grounds and principles. To "love," here, is to let the Other be, not to obstruct the Other in fulfilling his or her precious destiny—the self-authoring of a life course and a life-project. One loves in a *defense* of personal integrity and its human dignity. To practice love as a civic virtue is, in Pessoa's terms, to recognize and respect the individual aloneness, the solitude, that is an ontological given in the human condition. To "love" as I have imagined it is not to anticipate or necessitate any "phantasy of groupness" (Laing 1968: 81): any proposition concerning collective sameness or essentialistic belonging of the individual to a social class of his or her like (a community, a gender, a religion, an ethnicity, a nation). Nor does love as a civic virtue presume that social interaction entails interpersonal communication—intersubjectivity, a sharing of semantic worlds—as against a shared competence in the exchange of common (linguistic and behavioral) symbolic forms. In short, love as a civic virtue can be premised on "Pessoan" foundations: the Other appreciated as an inscrutable individual projectile of life.

Nevertheless, I find it necessary to construe an explicit program of recognition and respect—of "love" for that individuality and distance between Self

and Other—because of the threat that society and culture pose. To recall the diagnoses of Levinas and Simmel: cultures symbolically classify the world in a totalizing way; social interaction is ubiquitously based on the distortions of categories and labels, collectivizing, homogenizing, stereotyping, and essentializing unique individual lives and reducing them to fictions. "In society such as it functions one cannot live without killing, or at least without taking the preliminary steps for the death of someone," was Levinas's stark warning (1985a: 120; cf. Rapport 2015a, 2018).

Moreover, I recognize this in my own behavior—and not only or primarily in my role as hospital porter. In a world of increasing compression of people and their life-projects, where, to rehearse E. M. Forster's judgment, human lives are "tumbling over each other"—where "most of these people one doesn't know and some of them one doesn't like; doesn't like the color of their skins, say, or the shape of their noses, or the way they blow them or don't blow them" (1972: 55)—loving is a strain. Having interrogated the moral probity of Stanley Spencer and Phil Ward (and Hilda Spencer) (chapter 6), having "taken stock" of the porters, of Angus and Alastair and others, it is necessary that I ask such questions of myself. How do I appraise my own loving recognition?

If I am honest, I must admit to feeling myself surrounded by people whose lives I fail to understand, and find it hard to accept or respect. My dislike and distrust extend, indeed, to feeling ashamed that this is what human beings of the twenty-first century could find rational or sensible, meaningful or pleasurable. Even should I recognize the individuality of these lives, it is also the case that they seem to forfeit that respect in my eyes, and to obviate their individuality, by the way in which they see fit to lead their lives—or, at least, *the idea* I have of those lives.

I do not believe I am a misanthrope (pedant, curmudgeon, or snob) with people that I know. It is rather, again as Forster foresaw, the Other who is a stranger and yet inescapable in an interconnected world that I strain to tolerate. But even this is not wholly true: even with proximate Others I recognize that I lead an agonistic social existence: in conflict with any number of classificatory Others. I would decry those who refute Enlightenment rationality and a secular social contract; those who propose a communitarian version of social solidarity and integration in denial of individuality, and against liberal freedoms; those who would see the world as essentially made up of members of distinct collectivities. My distaste for the above "ignorance" and "sophistry" is visceral: I feel an anger, and an anxiety for humankind's progress.

But *if* the world is reckoned in communitarian terms, then I have my own tribal loyalties, and another list of disparaged Others. However inconsistently, I also find myself viscerally opposed to those who I imagine as threatening the existence, the value or the reputation of that which I admire and

support and feel a loyalty toward: from members of my family, to the State of Israel; also to a Western civilization born out of the recent genius of intellectual heroes such as Friedrich Nietzsche and John Stuart Mill; George Eliot, Virginia Woolf, E. M. Forster, Philip Larkin, Stevie Smith, W. G. Sebald, and Primo Levi; Edward Elgar, Jean Sibelius, and Stanley Spencer; Bob Dylan, the Incredible String Band, the Velvet Underground, and the Pixies; not to mention St. Andrews University, Arsenal Football Club, and Welsh Rugby Union.

How might I school *myself* to overcome the above culture of agonism? Any thesis concerning love is also a challenge to myself. How do I find a way of loving the Other that undercuts my own "tribal" inclinations—allows me, at the least, to love *in spite* of them?

In an article entitled "Against the new liberalism" (1992), John Gray argued that the true political life of the present age was characterized by the collapse of the Enlightenment project. Rather than human beings shedding historical differences, traditional allegiances, and local identities and uniting in a universal civilization grounded in a generic humanity—and rather than a global morality based on universal principles of justice and rights transcendent of particularistic loyalties and conceptions of good—our political life was to be dominated by renascent particularisms, militant religions, and resurgent ethnicities. History had passed Enlightenment hopes by: human sociality would continue to entail deep immersion in diverse histories and communities, embracing distinct cultural identities and inheritances.

Gray elaborated. Human beings sought a "sense of security as much as, or more than, personal autonomy" (Gray 2018: 4). Hence, they continued to display a propensity for distinctive cultural identities, understood as inherited fates not choices: preferring to give allegiance to dependable social and cultural forms to which they could lay local claim, however imperfect (Gray 1995: 124–5). The need for a common identity, for a sense of collective belonging, for being part of a community in which they could recognize themselves could not be dismissed as atavistic prejudices. These were needs that individualist societies did not satisfy, and the humane and tentative liberalism of a John Stuart Mill had therefore nothing to say to today's crises of social integration and identity. (Karl Popper's "open society" of individual diversity and critique, premised on a recognition of the mere conventionality of institutions, their fallibility and their alterability, proved to be too much of a "strain" [Gray 1989: 25].) Anthropological, sociological, and historical inquiry revealed an ongoing and irreducible diversity of cultural forms—in which the content of morality and the conception of the moral varied widely—all now demanding political recognition.

There was no way round this diversity, Gray concluded (1995: 161). It was a kind of primordial disposition, and it represented today's most potent political force. (It was Hobbes and Machiavelli who remained the most insightful political and societal commentators, not Popper or Mill.) Social "success" could only mean the avoidance of violence and war between cultural communities, and human "progress" only the achievement of partial and temporary compromise among irreducible difference.

While my intention in this book (and my hope) is to remain faithful to the Enlightenment tenets of John Stuart Mill and Karl Popper and others—and not accept the "fate" of cultural coercion, homogeneity, and closure—I recognize, *a la* John Gray, that there is a difficult case to answer. It is an illiberal, agonistic social existence that I myself have occasion to lead, with its own communitarian attachments, even tribalism. Notwithstanding, I do not accept the apparent fate of a world of categorial identities and memberships: a world of distinct closed cultural communities in which individual human beings are inevitably and inexorably immersed and submerged; their senses of identity and existential security only deriving from these symbolic environments; the global human whole only held together by parley and partial treaty between community representatives and representations. At the very least, I must establish a practicable relationship between loving recognition and what, even in John Gray's (2013: 132) estimation, are our "impulses to idolatry": to "think and act as if the worlds [we] have made from symbols actually exist."

The realistic project might be to have loving recognition function as an ethos and a virtuous practice *alongside* communitarianism—our "phantasies of groupness"—in such a way that Manichean (Hobbesian, Machiavellian) tendencies nevertheless do not triumph. So that community memberships and cultural claims to value and truth are ultimately negated—treated ironically at best (Rorty 1992: xvi)—and the precious and unique individuality of life is *at the same time* recognized and respected. I know in myself the temptations of tribalism. The hope and aim of this book must remain, however, the construing of loving recognition as a mutual practice where community memberships and cultural claims are commonly transcended by all alike: loving recognition as a lingua franca where Anyone and everyone meets on common ground, and in which Anyone and everyone is equally invested.

Part III

LEARNING FROM OTHER ADVOCATIONS OF LOVE

Chapter 9

Historical Overview

I am by no means alone in proposing love as a major vehicle for imagining how an ideal social solidarity might be effected—nor in regretting how one might fall short of a moral vision in everyday life. For Iris Murdoch (1975: 81), we have heard, love was to be adjudged a force powerful enough to prevail against those emotions and anxieties that "clouded the view"; nevertheless, it was to be admitted that our emotions and anxieties, far from "isolating the particular, may draw generality and even theory in their train." Our human fallibility was such that the "triumph" of love—its perception of the individual, its discovery of particular otherness—may be an imperfect one; we do not follow through, our morality becoming "nothing but self-esteem," complacent, frivolous, selfish "affectations of virtue" (Murdoch 1977: 349). Whatever our protestations to the contrary, it was the case, Martin Gilbert more recently observed (cited in Rowlands 2016: 25), that morality—or justice or kindness—was not necessarily or always our real or chief concern (how else to account for it being acceptable to rear intelligent, sentient, sociable animals for the purpose of slaughtering and eating them?). We may love, we may value morality, but not sufficiently.

What I plan is to look in more detail at how love has been understood by others—and made to seem ideally efficacious—while also recognized as being prey to less than perfect consummation. There is, indeed, a long and venerable history of theorizing upon love as a form of relationality. Some of this history has been alluded to already and applied in the voices included in the initial "wider debate" on love (chapter 3). I now return to this history in somewhat greater detail—to Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, the Hebrew Bible, Nietzsche, Sartre, and Freud—before considering how love has been made to figure in contemporary social thought. Love retains a special attraction, continuing to be seen as possessing a special virtue and as conveying a special

efficacy. Love is a kind of modern religion, Simon May (2011) suggests. We grant love an awe, power, and grandeur that outweighs the habitualities of the everyday, the impurities and compromise. In the West at least, love is something to which we turn in order to make sense of the most difficult questions of existence and through which we expect to achieve a sense of meaning and happiness that overcomes suffering and disappointment. And it is open to all, a democratic and universal salvation: "All you need is love," as the Beatles sang. My purpose, however, is to seek specific answers in this literature. What can be gleaned concerning how love may function as an epiphanous realization of our common humanity and a recognition of the precious uniqueness of human individuality, *on a mundane basis*, such that Anyone may ubiquitously transcend communitarian emplacement and continue to overcome the agonistic effects of category thinking?

PRINCIPAL STEPS ALONG THE WAY

A historical beginning in the theorization of love can be made with Socrates. Many of the claims and counterclaims for love made since the time of Classical Greece can be seen as developments of features of Socratic thought (Nussbaum 1990: 324). For Socrates:

i.   Love is a kind of nonrational passion felt for an Other: a mysterious attraction quite distinct from admiration or respect and more like awe and wonder.
ii. It is in and through a loving passion that an individual is most truly able to know and love an Other: to know and appreciate what the Other most truly is.
iii. Love is a journey, however. First, the lover is struck by the beauty, excellence, splendor, and nobility of the Other. Then, in this beautiful Other the lover comes to recognize the values that he himself cherishes and pursues: the beauty of the Other is recognized as a sign of the radiance of his or her own "soul." This is why he "loves" the Other: to love is to find and follow traces of one's own "gods." Human souls are individuated by what they care most deeply about. It is this set of individual values that love's passion reveals, both in the lover and in the beloved.
iv. Moreover, one would not love an Other if there was not there an echo of oneself. What one sees in the beloved is a reflection of one's own aspirations. Love is aspirational, hoping to fill a lack, a need, and the lover comes to hope for a mutual exchange from an Other who is vulnerable and fired by a pursuit of commensurate aspirations.
v.   Love thus figures as an essential part of the best human life, and is the best way for passion to express itself in life.

The relationship between love and rationality, passion and knowledge; the relationship between love and respect; the relationship between love and well-being; the reasons for love; the aspirations of love. As we shall see, these Socratic themes were destined to remain part of the (Western) argumentation surrounding love henceforward.

However, it is also difficult to ascribe them as definitively "Socratic," because Socrates himself is known chiefly through the accounts of others: of his student, Xenophon, of his contemporary, Aristophanes and, most especially, of another student, Plato. "Socrates" is a key protagonist in Plato's *Dialogs* (*Phaedrus* and the *Symposium*) but it is not clear the extent to which "his" insights are not versions of Plato's own. What, then, do we define as distinctly "Platonic" insights into love? For Plato:

i.   Human beings are attracted to and "love" what they do not already have. We are essentially needy beings: insufficient and incomplete.
ii. Human beings are also characterized by a self-interest that causes them to seek out and love what is essentially good for them. Loving or "erotic" desire is the striving for what is best and most beautiful in the world: love is a search for the ideal.
iii. By "erotic," Plato means chaste: carnal love (sex) is a degraded form of chaste love. Sex may provide motivation to search for and find the good—love may begin as sex—but then it becomes more purely "erotic": a desire that expresses itself as a search for personal growth, through intellectual and emotional development, scientific knowledge and political order.
iv. This love is an energy, indeed the motor of human experience, since the most basic desire of the human self is to overcome its contingency and unite with what is really real and good, and will make it complete. Love is a desire to possess and to become whole.
v.   Moreover, since it is an ongoing search for that which will complete us, be essentially good for us, and connect us to what is truly real, erotic love contains within it an asceticism, a discipline. The end-result is that love provides a kind of insight into the truth of the world seldom otherwise mortally attained.
vi. Love may begin with a particular individual as its focus, then, but it soon transfers from him or her to qualities independent of particular individuals: it gravitates, for example, toward beauty in the abstract, as an ideal form in itself. In this way, love is a journey, moving from the immediate to the ultimate, from appearances to reality: from a physical world of murky impressions to a real world of abstract concepts and pure intellectual insight.

vii. Love might therefore be said to be possessed of a "divine" power. It dictates the passionate human pursuit of the truly real, journeying through what is superficially attractive to a gaining of deeper insight. What may begin as a desire for the physical prowess or the charming kindness of an individual Other ultimately transcends the physical and even the personal, culminating in "philosophy": the possession of an absolute wisdom. Love for an individual's beautiful body, say, is the start of an "ascent" from physical desire and bodily gratification in a specific time and place to a lasting spiritual understanding. This process in refinement frees the lover from merely physical insufficiencies, vulnerabilities, and need: from lust, jealousy, anger; even from flesh and human mortality. Ultimately, love transcends individuality: erotic desire terminates in an ideal realm of purity and peace beyond life's disorder, intractability, and imperfection.

viii. The refinement of love's journey or ascent entails the "sophisticated" lover becoming increasingly discriminating. A "neophyte" may begin by loving one other body; but then he or she comes to realize that beauty in one body is akin to beauty in another body: "beauty" is one and the same. He or she thus weakens their fierce love for one body—even coming to disparage it as a small thing: the experience is recontextualized. But he or she is still desirous, still needy, and pursues the essence of this thing, "beauty." What is the essence of a "beautiful" thing? Surely, it is beauty of "soul," an essence, of which physicality is an appearance, a pale reflection. Beauty of soul is more true, more pure, more lasting, and "honorable" than the beauty of physical appearance. Finally, the lover accedes to the "sophisticated" insight that beauty is not an individuated form at all: it inheres neither in an individual body nor an individual soul. What manifests itself in any individual body or soul exists ultimately as an abstract idea, a form. A love of persons becomes a staging post, in short, in an acceding to the ideal. The individual beloved becomes an imperfect version of abstract or archetypal beauty (or kindness or justice or wisdom, and so on). The more sophisticated lover recognizes that a love of persons is shallow compared to the spiritual rewards of a love of the ideal, and so progresses through the flawed human body to a meditation upon an abstract, archetypal, "formal" realm of what is absolute and eternal.

ix. The ascent to the form of beauty, say, is paradigmatic of many such ascents. Love bears the promise of an ascent to all the forms of which the universe is truly composed: to the reality that underlies the empirical realm. Such forms are not humanly perceptible, Plato admitted, but they are gradually intelligible. They are eternal, and everything that is and is to be known derives from them.

x.   Another way to describe the journey of love, the ascent from neophyte to sophisticate, is to say that we become more "rational." In coming to realize that more enduring qualities exist beyond the apparent and the superficial—that physical gratification is inferior to that afforded by the truly beautiful and good (and so on)—erotic desire is inherently rational: it teaches quality and immortality. Carnal love is essentially irrational, and encourages a false scheme of values (such as esteeming merely physical beauty), but through erotic love human beings are able to liberate themselves from the distortions of their passions and even from their bodily limits; we can escape the threat of self-deception that can occur when we are bewitched and corrupted by bodily passion. To follow erotic desire is to undertake a developmental and educational process, then, a refinement that is an enlightenment. We learn to practice a detached, unaffected, and exact intellectual scrutiny of our own heart, analyzing and classifying the vicissitudes of our passions. The mature and sophisticated lover acts in a discerning and clear-sighted way—not recklessly or wildly or unconditionally. Moreover, such rationality never deceives: the ascent of love is of progressive discrimination.

xi. We learn, *inter alia*, that the self is implicated in a wider world, that beyond personal interests are cosmic ones. The lover is thus led from isolation, solipsism, and selfishness to the formation of social practices (dialog and politics) and principles (science and art) that constitute the cement of an holistic life. But the erotic-cum-rational pursuit of the ideally good, true, and beautiful can also be said to ensure the integrity of the self; for one comes to know one's innate nature, the true condition of the universe and one's place within it. Love is indeed our ideal guide through life, taking us out of ourselves, disengaging us from what we are and where, and leading us beyond, to what is new and better, all the time revealing limits that are there to be overcome. Beginning with interpersonal relations, erotic desire thus enables the possible perfection of human sociality: an ever more inclusive vision. The impulse to love thus contains within it the seed of universality: it is the path to the true idea or form.

xii. Nor does the journey end. For there is no limit to human erotic desire: love always causes us to seek what is beyond, what we do not have. Human beings will never be complete, and love remains a thrilling discovery, continually leading to new insights and illuminations. This also means that we grow impatient with what is already possessed, that love may also be destructive of habits, practices, and relations that are merely conventional or comfortable; for our restless desire continually suggests that we may raise our sights—become more demanding, more perceptive, hopeful for the more perfect.

xiii. In sum: Love holds out to human beings the promise of wisdom con-
cerning what is true, and virtuous. It is also an art whose practice can
become more sophisticated and discriminating. The inborn need and
capacity is honed, mastering the loving attentiveness that is paid to
objects in the world, and the rationality of the response to what love
reveals. Human beings possess an innate desire for fulfillment, and
through it can acquire a judgment of what is best; the achievements of
erotic desire are a life worth living.

There are striking overlaps between the treatments of love we find in Plato
and in Socrates: the emphasis on love as aspirational, hoping to fill a need,
and on love as a journey whose end is true knowledge of Self, Other, and
world. Nevertheless, for Plato this is also an intrinsically rational "ascent"
and not a passionate ecstasy, the culmination of which is an overcoming of
selfhood, of convention, indeed of human being and the physical world, in a
realization of true ideality.

More striking still are the contrasts between the above Classical Greek
thought and the injunctions of the Hebrew Bible of a millennium previous.
"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord" is accompanied, in
Exo. 20:13–14, by five negatory injunctions (Hertz 1968: 299–300):

• Thou shalt not murder.
• Thou shalt not commit adultery.
• Thou shalt not steal.
• Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
• Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neigh-
  bor's spouse, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his
  ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.

Rabbinical commentary on this passage repeats that here, "as in all moral
precepts in the *Torah*, the Hebrew word 'neighbor' is equivalent to 'fellow-
man,'" and elaborates:

> [The Tenth Commandment, not to covet,] goes to the root of all evil actions—
> the unholy instincts and impulses of predatory desire, which are the spring of
> nearly every sin against a neighbor. The man who does not covet his neighbor's
> goods will not bear false witness against him; he will neither rob nor murder, nor
> will he commit adultery. It commands self-control; for every man has it in his
> power to determine whether his desires are to master him, or he is to master his
> desires. Without such self-control, there can be no worthy human life; it alone is
> the measure of true manhood or womanhood. "Who is strong?," ask the Rabbis.
> "He who controls his passions," is their reply. (Hertz 1968: 300)

While for Plato we have heard love and desire to be coterminous, in the Jewish tradition love entails a restraining of one's desires. For Plato one loves to complete the self and to know the world: one aspires ideally to undertake a process of learning and becoming which takes the form of an incremental inclusion; the self incorporates the world by virtue of its innate physical desires. The process of Platonic love is to follow an ascending path of erotic desire by continuously adding to self-knowledge, *transcending* the individual self in a community of being. Contrastively, the Hebrew Bible declaims that loving otherness is through constraint. There is a fundamental stasis here: "Here is you and there is the Other." To love is to know that boundary and the distinct identities it enshrines, and to respect it and them absolutely. One keeps one's distance. One leaves the Other be to enjoy their identity and their own as you do yours. To love one's neighbor is to recognize they are equivalent to oneself: the same and different; and to attend to that difference in all one's material dealings. One cannot know more of the Other any more than one can know God: there can be no mortal, numinous transcendence. To love is to respect the distinct identities of what the world contains and not to threaten them by a covetous neglect of the border between them.

These are radically different understandings of knowledge and of morality into which love is incorporated as a phenomenon and a practice. A (Hebrew) structural vision as against a (Greek) processual one. The Ten Commandments of the Bible (including, "I am the Lord thy God," "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me," "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain," "Remember the Sabbath day," "Honor thy father and thy mother") give knowledge and instruction in a world that is already structurally delineated for *ego*—and for "Israel," the wider human society. There is God and family; there is a structuring of time, of work, and rest; and there is the structuring of social relations. Here is *ego* and there is *alter*, the neighbor; and there is the proper distance to be maintained between them (no coveting, no stealing, no adultery, no murder). Love figures importantly in this structure, as a kind of righteous acknowledgment and acceptance by *ego*, and as part of God's covenant to Man. On the one hand, then: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy might" (Deut. 4: 5), and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Lev. 19:18); and on the other hand: "The Lord, the Lord God, [is] merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in lovingkindness and truth" (Exo. 34:6), and "[the Lord thy God] loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment" (Deut. 10:18), and "The Lord thy God loves thee" (Deut. 23:6) (Hertz 1968: 364, 502, 770, 790, 847). Love, in other words, plays a key part in the maintenance of an ordained stasis.

In Plato (and Socrates) by contrast, love is instrumental in a growth and progress of knowledge and of moral social relations that come into being. Following innate erotic desire, humankind aspires to complete and fulfill

selfhood and in the process ascends to a true appreciation of a reality and a morality previously hidden from view. Love is key to learning of the world, to becoming mature and sophisticated, part of a rational process of discernment and discrimination. True knowledge and moral behavior are the prizes at the zenith of this loving ascent—as against being divinely revealed, sanctioned, and commanded at the outset. Elements of this contrast, we shall see, resurface in all later treatments of love.

Notwithstanding, in Aristotle, Plato's student, we find a treatment of love that represents a kind of compromise. Love gives rise to an ideal society, according to Aristotle, but it is one in which a mutual recognition of and respect for intrinsic otherness, by its members, is responsible for the possible perfection of each as an independent being.

The natural and proper aim of human life is for each individual to fulfill his or her potential, Aristotle contends: we are our own first and chief concern. However, *ego* can only come to a knowledge of itself through relating to others. The reciprocal love of friends, *philia*, is the supreme form of this relation: one identifies with a friend, wishes them well, and seeks a deep mutual harmony with them. "A man becomes a friend when he is loved and returns that love and this is recognized by both men in question" (Aristotle 1915: 1236a 14–15). Aristotle elaborates:

i.   All animals are defined by their bodily capacities and potentials. In the human case, uniquely, we are motivated by a desire to know our capacities and potentials because we are not born with the instinctive knowledge that animals have. We do not move automatically to the fulfillment of our natures but choose the means by which to actualize our potential. Furthermore, we recognize that there are better and worse ways to do this, in ethical terms as well as practical ones. We think about goals, and the plans to reach them, and make choices about how to put plans into effect. But it is still according to nature that men seek their self-interest, seek the good—the "good" meaning what is immanent in nature and what something is capable of becoming—and fulfilling a natural capacity is virtuous in itself.

ii.   Uniquely, men do their seeking of self-knowledge by way of social relations. Man is by nature a "political" animal, one who lives and thrives as citizen of a *polis*, a city-state. Only a beast or a god is able to achieve what is good for them without the discourse of daily social relations.

iii. "Friendship" (*philia*) is the ideal relation between fellow citizens. Friendship may be defined as reciprocal goodwill: as mutual support in achieving individual goods. *Ego* wishes *alter* well for their own sake— as an independent being—and receives in return help to know itself, to

know its good. Friendship is the mutual awareness of reciprocated good will whose objective is flourishing individualities.

iv. Friendship may, however, be differentiated into three kinds. First, there is a friendship born of utility: mutual usefulness, an exchange of material benefits. Second is a friendship concerned with pleasure: mutual fun to be pursued, a mutual pleasing. And finally, there is friendship as a mutual striving for virtue, for individual excellence. These "virtuous" friends love each other for what they essentially, naturally, are. Virtuous friends are allies in the dynamic striving for personal well-being, helping each other to learn and become themselves; they hope each other well in a disinterested way, not seeking personal advantage. If each person naturally loves what is good for him or her then virtuous friendship aims mutually for what is loved by the beloved.

v. Virtuous friendship is the truest, most complete, and durable form, according to Aristotle. More than this, it provides the perfect basis for wider societal bonds. But a virtuous friendship takes time to form: it is an achievement—not something given in nature or ascribed by convention. It is a slow unfolding of mutual knowledge, appreciating the complexity of being with a fellow living individual being, the recognition of another's character, the overcoming of solipsism. Nor is there any guarantee of success. Developing a virtuous friendship entails living together and sharing in discussion, thought, and feeling, slowly becoming familiar with an Other's identity and coming to enjoy a mutual trust: overcoming the suspicion that the Other is merely self-serving.

vi. More precisely, trust comes from friends recognizing that each is the other's equal in virtue: able to strive for and maintain, in his or her own unique way, a commensurate standard of merit. *Ego* can see himself reflected in *alter*, even if not exactly. A friend is "another oneself," and *ego* can wish for *alter* what he would wish for himself as a self-dependent individual. But this also means that to be perfect friends, to be able to trust each other absolutely and help each other strive for perfection, there must be a *potential* mutuality to begin with: two people feasibly on a par with each other materially, socially, economically, emotionally, and intellectually. Perfect friends must be alike in their capacity for virtue, equally capable of making rational choices across a lifetime toward the fulfillment of an individually good life.

vii. A man and a woman can never be virtuous friends in this way, since women are naturally inferior, Aristotle considered. Friendship between the sexes can only be a lesser one, of mutual pleasuring through sex, or mutual utility through reproduction. Notwithstanding, the perfect friendship of men who are alike in virtue is a model for a good life that

      ultimately can extend from this dyad of individual equals to society as a whole. Ideally, virtuous friendship constitutes an ideal society, a city-state in which a good life of natural fulfillment is aspired to equally rationally by all.

viii. While friendship begins as personal and private, then, it also has fundamental significance as a civic contribution. *Philia* can be described as the motive for sociality: individuals living together for the purpose of fulfilling their human potential and achieving noble actions. It can be said to be an ethical obligation for individuals actively to pursue friendship, for friendship promotes concord and friendship entails communion. Human society—not a natural state or an instinctual effusion—is the great achievement that human beings may together construct as a result, as a consequence of their need for friends.

    I say that Aristotle's vision for love represents a kind of compromise between Hebrew and Greek precedents, and I mean that the "stasis" of one irreducible individual human being facing another, each involved in their own "good life," can, for Aristotle, nevertheless share in a process whose outcome is mutual, virtuous progress. There is the fixity of individuals' embodied capacities— given by "Nature" or "God"—that the virtuous human being must nevertheless aspire to fulfill (having no instinctual path to this). There is the realization of an ideal human society as a constructed form, and yet a form predetermined and limited by the innate potentialities of its individual members. Elements of Self and Other as mutual necessities *and* as mutual exclusivities inhere in Aristotle.

More broadly, to take stock of this historical overview to date might be to emphasize the positive and necessary contribution that love is seen to make as a civic virtue. Whether the world and an ideal human life within it is understood in terms of an ascribed structure or an accomplished process, or a combination of the two, love is deemed a significant force for the good. Love is variously characterized: as rational and as passionate; a matter of restraint and distance and of engagement and communion; a source of new knowledge and of acceptance of givens; a route to aggregating Self and Other and of integrating the Other with the Self and of transcending Self and Other entirely. Notwithstanding, love is welcomed and encouraged as among the highest of virtues, and with far-reaching beneficial consequences.

    This positivity also characterizes the interpretations of love of Kant and Kierkegaard that were briefly addressed before—without undervaluing their differences. And it characterizes writers and schools between ancient and modern historical periods that are also worthy of mention: Roman writers such as Lucretius and Ovid, Christian theorists such as Augustine and Aquinas, and the Enlightenment philosophers Descartes, Spinoza, and Rousseau

(cf. Wagoner 1997; Singer 2009; May 2011). I feel warranted in bracketing these with the Hebrew and Classical Greek sources that long preceded them—and in leap-frogging them with no more than a nod of acknowledgment—because I would address at more length the very different interpretations of love, and its coloration, that emerge more recently in the historical survey. I refer to Nietzsche, Freud, and Sartre.

The reading of love offered by Friedrich Nietzsche is an agonistic one. He begins by attacking Christianity as a "slave morality" that, through love, has sought to provide compensation for this-worldly experience. Christianity teaches a dismissal, even hatred, of what is real—human nature, pain and suffering, contingency and change—and that love (of God and man) provides entry to a super-reality of eternal peace, comfort, convenience, and predictability. Love is accompanied here by pity: a further means by which the details of one's own life are left behind, now exchanged for the suffering of others. Christianity would have us flee from our consciousness into nihilism, for Nietzsche: it is the love of nothingness. A recognition that there is *no* God, however, Christian or other, *no* divine ordering of the cosmos only randomness and flux, *no* God-given community or society or family of human beings, *no* underlying common ground of interests and perspectives—nor even perduring identities that outlast momentary alignments between quanta of power seeking aggrandizement—calls for a strong stomach and for self-discipline. But it is a noble path, Nietzsche insists: one eschews the seduction of *agape* and pity and embraces *amor fati*, a love of "fate."

Christian love is born out of weakness and fear, Nietzsche elaborates, out of loss, suffering, and resentment. Carnal love, meanwhile, is a simple veneer, disguising a war between genders that do not like or understand one another, a war that ultimately legitimates female subordination. A moral love, by contrast, is self-love: loving one's own life, affirming the contingent, time-bound, individual path that fatefully one's life has taken; and also the future that will uniquely emerge from it. *Amor fati*, love of one's fate, is to embrace the discipline of being satisfied with one's life and one's self, and not resentfully seeking escape or revenge elsewhere:

> My formula for greatness in a human being is *amor fati*: that one wants nothing to be other than it is, not in the future, not in the past, not in all eternity. Not merely to endure that which happens of necessity, still less to dissemble it … but to *love* it. (Nietzsche 1980: 68)

This is a formula for greatness because there is a nobility to one's individuality and its unique course. Pain and suffering have not killed the *ego* or maimed it; to the contrary they have been party to *ego*'s growth and becoming: "What has not killed me has made me stronger" (Nietzsche 1979: 23).

Amor fati is not a recipe for quietude and passivity, then. Quite the opposite. It is to recognize the true nature of life on earth—a battle between warring forms of life, or "power-quanta," to expand their influence and so increase their power—and to enter the fray with absolute commitment. *Amor fati* is what an "Overman" as opposed to a slave is capable of achieving: one who is master of his or her own life. An Overman wills himself or herself to be creative in relation to all that happens and has happened and will happen. An Overman takes responsibility for endeavoring to fashion and refashion circumstance such that they serve his or her interests and gratify his or her desires—recognizing the capacity (and need) to be an artist of his or her own life or else fall prey to the designs of others.

This kind of love is not easy, Nietzsche admits: it takes great self-discipline. But it can be learned. Indeed, anyone can be an Overman to himself or herself, transforming "this happened to me" into "this I willed." Attending to the contingencies of life, the random and painful, tolerating them, learning to deal with them with patience and discipline and finally "overcoming" them, an Overman transforms "necessity" into will: the ability to determine what emerges. The "triumph over Christianity" is a love whose essence is a "spiritualization of sensuality": a true coming to terms with the truth of being a Self in the world (Nietzsche 1979: 43).

While both the individuality of fate and of self-discipline mean that life is intrinsically a solitary affair—each timebound embodied consciousness alone—friendship is nevertheless possible, Nietzsche counsels. The friend is always an Other, with his or her own goals, hopes, and fate; friendship is not the union of two as one, a collapsing of boundaries, nor even a like-mindedness. However, friendship can be experienced as individuals headed in the same direction for a while, known not by how they *approach* one another but in how they maintain a certain mutual distance while tracking an aligned course. "Brotherly love" is the respect one might have for an Other who is helping himself or herself, master of an individual world commensurate to one's own and oneself: "I teach you the friend in whom the world stands complete, a vessel of the good—the creating friend, who always has a complete world to bestow" (Nietzsche 1979: 23, 1980: 88).

Nietzsche's love entails self-oriented perfectibility, as did Aristotle's; while his imagining individual friends as neighbors who proceed in an equivalent fashion through their distinct lives has its equivalence in the Hebrew Bible. But there is no Aristotelian Nature or Jewish God giving direction and warrant in Nietzsche. Love gives rise to no *telos* and reveals no ordained system or plan. Love is a kind of personal orientation to the world: and a nobility: love what happens, love what one is party to, love the inhabitations of self and environment that one's engagements have

been responsible for. And love is also a morality: in accepting the world as it is, accepting one's responsibility for the thoughts and actions one creates from the contrarieties of impulses of which one is composed, one does not expect to receive from others nor expect of oneself in relation to them. In the words of the contemporary whom he admired, Ralph Waldo Emerson:

> Every man alone is sincere. At the entrance of a second person, hypocrisy begins. We parry and fend the approach of our fellow-man by compliments, by gossip, by amusements, by affairs. We cover up our thought from him under a hundred folds. (1889: 46)

The work of Nietzsche (and Emerson) leads directly to twentieth-century Existentialist thought, such as that of Jean-Paul Sartre, including consideration of the niceties and paradoxes of love. Our human consciousness is a unique natural phenomenon, Sartre contends, key to which is our ability to conceive and to will the contrary to any state of affairs—including our own thoughts, plans and actions, and identities. Not only are we self-aware, we are essentially indeterminate beings: we can imagine ourselves afresh and hence come to change ourselves. Another way to say this is that we are "condemned to be free," human freedom being embodied in the capacity, always and inevitably, to conceive—and to act—contrarily. Every human being has the radical possibility of starting life anew at any moment, irrespective of his or her life's previous course, because of a self-awareness and a "negative capacity": every human being possesses a natural "rebelliousness" against what is that cannot be eschewed. Moreover, since self-consciousness and freedom is the essence of human being, "identity," the content of a human life has no fixity, no necessity, no *essence*. The individual human being in and of itself has no essential selfhood, only the capacity to choose the substance and content of its life—and to change that substance—continually. Even to the extent of disowning its own past actions and negating its past.

Since nothing compels our thoughts, our interpretations, or our plans, we human beings can be understood as responsible for our actions; because we could have decided to act differently, both beforehand and afterward. The power of human consciousness is not power over the world's materiality, but we are nevertheless responsible for determining meaning: what materiality means, what is significant and valuable in *our* conscious, individual worlds. This remains *ego*'s to control to the extent that we can say that our actions *are* our choices. Furthermore, it is also the case (following Nietzsche) that we can transform the world's hard facts by the way we interpret and act toward them, at least to an extent. No fact can, in the final analysis, make *ego* do anything: *in extremis*, he or she is always free to die, to choose death. It is "bad faith,"

therefore, to say one acts or acted *because* of something or someone—God, the law, society, family, cultural tradition, nature, the climate, hunger, conscience. Any human being is essentially free. Equally, it is bad faith to claim (to pretend) one is simply a good and obedient member of society; to insist on the "moral" life of society as coercive is an escape from truth. To claim the ineluctable force of moral principles is to ignore the freedom each moment to negate and to choose otherwise. Duty is a rationalized form of evasion: we *are* our actions.

But human freedom may also be experienced as nauseous because it also means we are never at one with ourselves. Since we have no essential selfhood only the capacity to keep creating a self, the one we happen to be at one time is not necessarily us or solely us. The self of the moment is always contingent, and distinct from, even other to, our essential capacities to make ourselves. "I" is an Other; alternatively, any "I" is never identical to the choices I have made and do make and will make and may make for myself. There is no escape from this situation, no "exit" from the freedom to which we are "condemned." But then there is love. It is through love, and especially through sex, that we make the attempt, however futile, to escape. Sartre describes sexuality as a kind of skeleton on which all human attempts at relationality—an escape from freedom—are constructed. It is a thread passing through all human life, characterizing our desire to eschew the nausea of individuality, establishing a true connection to an Other and experiencing fixity. Love and sexuality thus embody human confliction. Despite our ontological separateness we seek union. Despite the contingency of meaning in human life—its dependence on continual acts of individual creative interpretation—we aspire to being loved by another who will see us as essentially and enduringly meaningful. We want an Other who can serve our desires—who connects and fixes—and yet to do so they must remain autonomous and different to us. Love wants to render the consciousness of the beloved captive and yet also necessarily to preserve the Other's separate identity. Love makes one vulnerable—weak relative to another who "means the world" and whose withdrawal would threaten one's security—and yet love also affords one power over a beloved Other. Love is a battle for mutual possession by way of mutual submission: we seek both autonomy and intimacy, vacillating hopelessly in our desire.

Hence it is that through love we come to grief. Sexuality and love are shot through with contradictory impulses, Sartre concludes: the lover "wants to be loved by a freedom"—by a subject of thought and action with an irreducible point of view—but also "demands that this freedom, as freedom, should no longer be free"—in that it is "possessed" by the relationship of love (1958: 389). The contradictions remain "tragical": embodiments of an ideal with no possible realization or even equilibrium.

Love as an expression of conflicted desires—now of an unconscious kind—is taken up also by Sigmund Freud. In his early writings, Freud understood love as the expression of sexual energy that sought pleasure and release through tactile stimulation, genital pleasure being the most intense of which we were capable. Freud named this sexual energy "Libido" an innate and insatiable drive pervading all human existence and needing no external stimulus. When the libido encountered objects that satisfied it, it formed attachments to them. When sexual gratification was impossible—say, between parents and their children—the libido came to be diverted into non-genital satisfaction. This latter was a kind of "aim-inhibited love" that "sublimated" the original energy and channeled it into the more "refined" creative ends that characterized the "civilized": the libido was responsible for the progress of civilization. In his later writings, Freud gave more emphasis to human union, renaming libido "Eros." Our separateness could not be overcome but human beings were driven to pursue the (unattainable) sense of wholeness first felt by children before they realized that their parents were separate beings. The loss of union with our mother and father terrified us at the same time as their power aroused our admiration; we must concede their distinct selfhood while still being driven to desire unification. Human development entailed the inevitable realization that what might gratify us also existed beyond us.

Human life, in short, meant hoping to be loved: we craved union with, and satisfaction from, lovers. Moreover, as we recognized an increasingly complex world beyond the self, so we aspired to an increasingly complex identification with it. The individual human being could be said to be constituted by the history of his or her identifications and loves, Freud considered. But since any such union was impossible, our relations were bound to fail, and our loves and lovers to disappoint: that which we loved and needed for our gratification could not ultimately fulfill our desire. Moreover, love did not transcend a fundamental human selfishness—we could not affirm the other for who they really were—and any seeming tender devotion by lovers was actually narcissistic. Each was ruthless in the desire to possess the other for their own satisfaction and to eliminate the possibility of their loss. Love became an intrinsically ambivalent experience, in short, even metamorphosing into a kind of hatred. Love failed as we turned the "unreliable" beloved into a cruel, destructive beast that we wished to destroy.

Hence Eros was inexorably accompanied by "Thanatos," a death wish, Freud concluded, from the very outset. We felt both tender and vengeful toward our parents: we identified with them, and we also wished to cannibalize them and bring them "back" inside; we wished our parents to be our masters, and we wished to punish and kill them. These early loves then set the model for later ones. The child's desire for its parents was but the first of an abiding need and search for security—and the disappointment that followed.

The sexual love of adults rehearsed childhood attachments; and chaste love was but a sublimated form of carnal love. "Almost every intimate emotional relation between two people which lasts for some time … contains a sediment of feelings of aversion and hostility, which only escapes perception as a result of repression" (Freud 1922: 54). Love was not a place of purity, goodness or harmony, in short. The closer we came to an Other the more clearly we saw the distance that actually separated us. We could not find oneness or reciprocity in the promised intimacies of love, or anywhere else. Human love entailed an essential overvaluation: a distorted appraisal that established unreal value, which then became the (false) basis of a relationship in which anger and neurosis were latent and where insatiable desire remained unfulfilled.

TAKING INITIAL STOCK OF THE
HISTORICAL LITERATURE

What insights does a historical survey offer of love as a civic virtue? What light do the above postulations and interpretations throw on the book's questions. ("How might love provide moments of vision such that category thinking does not obscure or corrupt the individuality of life? How might such epiphanies translate into more than momentary recognition, paving the way to a loving appreciation as a way of life?")

Each of the sources provides a kind of answer. In the Hebrew Bible, then, the ethical behavior that includes what I have called "loving" is consequent upon faith. A religious commitment to the Torah, to the Ten Commandments and to the exegesis of Jewish spiritual leaders over the centuries (the Talmud) delineates a particular way of life. This latter includes certain metaphysical givens and certain doctrinal principles. One's faith is in a God who is sovereign over the world as a whole, and who commands behavior that pertains to the world as a whole: "Love thy neighbor as thyself." As a human being, one *is* a self, one *has* a self, and equally one has *neighbors*, other human beings: all are to be loved alike. "Hear O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is One," are the opening words of the principal Jewish prayer, the *Shema*. To belong to the group of Jewish believers, "Israel," is to recognize humanity as a whole (over whom God has jurisdiction) to which one's duty also extends. Indeed, to be an "Israelite" is to have a special role relative to the non-Israelites, the "Nations." As the Prophet Isaiah transmitted it: "I, the Lord, have called unto you in righteousness, and have taken hold of your hand, and submitted you as the people's covenant, as a light unto the nations" (Isa. 42:6). In short, to be a member of Israel is to recognize a special covenant between God and you such that your behavior will exemplify righteousness toward the world as a whole. One's covenant with God, as a believer, entails exercising

self-control, constraining one's passions, and in particular *loving the individual Other—the neighbor, the enemy, the alien, the stranger—as a version of oneself.* To continue to belong to Israel and to count oneself a righteous Jew is to wish for the Other what one would wish for oneself. As summed up by Rabbi Hillel in the first century BCE: "'What is hateful to you, do not do to another.' That is the whole Torah; the rest is merely commentary" (cited in Hertz 1968: 502). Love is a command, and its universal practice a mark of one's Jewish faith.

For Socrates, love—a nonrational passion, a mysterious attraction for an Other quite distinct from respect—is "ethical" insofar as it reveals the true individuality of one's soul. Love's passion draws one to the "mystery" of an Other with whom one does not share a "rational" (conventional, habitual) connection but who is nevertheless a soul mate whose individual values are commensurate with one's own. Hence, the journey leads back to the self: a self whom *ego* now knows for the first time. Similarly, for Plato, love is a journey of desire: *ego* is struck by the beauty—or wisdom or kindness or integrity and so on—of an Other who promises completeness by filling a need. Love is an energy of *ego*'s, and self-interested, but its exercise also entails a process of learning rational discrimination—and self-discipline. One realizes that the object of one's desire cannot be the individual first loved, nor any individual human being, nor any thing physical or living, because ultimately one's aspiration is to possess the perfect version of the original target of one's desire: the abstract and paradigmatic form or idea. Love's energy does not wane, furthermore, and there is always more that may be known. Erotic desire has ethical consequences, finally, in that *the lover disengages from a narrow and selfish perspective to appreciate his or her place in the ideal universe. Ego* learns judgment, exchanging the particular for the general, the concrete for the abstract, and coming to see the qualities of a more perfect being in the world, whether social or natural. There is an ethical ascent of love from passion to rationality and subjectivity to objectivity, and this teaches the truth of the identity of the things that the world contains and how these properly relate together.

For Aristotle, human love is an expression of an animal drive to fulfill its nature. "Goodness" is the fulfillment of natural capacities. Uniquely, human beings reach goodness not instinctually but rationally and through social relations and discourse. A "friend" is ideally an Other who engages with *ego* in mutual support and through reciprocated, disinterested good will. Slowly growing in knowledge of one another and trust, each learns of their individual natures and learns the best—most rational, most moral—ways of living these natures to the fullest. And society as such might ideally be modeled on this virtuous friendship: a meeting of individuals equal in potential nobility of thought and action. Indeed, individual perfectibility *calls for* community. Living together such that one discovers one's equals in potential excellence,

one shares in discussion and thought with these "friends," taking pleasure in common pursuits, holding property together. Albeit that love is individually focused for Aristotle, and accords to a natural hierarchy—only some people can be fully friends with each other (men being superior to women and some men being less virtuous than others)—nevertheless, the drive to self-fulfillment expresses itself ideally through social engagement. *By manifesting good citizenship among loving friends,* ego *rationally and nobly achieves his or her natural individual ends*.

For Kant—to recall his contribution to the book's early "debate" concerning loving recognition—a practical love that exercises a rational appreciation of what is right in regard to the Other promotes their happiness and finds joy in their happiness. It is a selfless love of goodwill and affection, and a form of categorical imperative. That is, practical love is an ethos that recognizes others as whole persons, rational, and moral sovereigns in their own right, and deserving of their own personal preserve. Practical love operates independently of any relation of partisan feeling, transcending the vagaries of time and affect, appreciating the humanity of the Other in an impartial way, and acting toward the Other in terms of universal principles. *Practical love gives rise to an ethical social life conducted as a dialectic between feeling affection for a human being and recognizing the irreducible otherness of that life*.

For Kierkegaard, equally, love possesses a broad ethical mission due to the commandment to "Love one's neighbor." Neighborliness is an ethical relation based on an acceptance of God-given duties and God-given capacities and proclivities, and something distinct from the partisan passions of friendship. Moreover, neighbor-love brings fulfillment and recognition to lover and beloved alike. An enduring commitment to loving the Other—an avowal of the moment of recognition—stops human lives being fractured and fragmented, chaotic and despairing, pulled different ways by contrasting desires. Such constancy also provides a source of perduring meaning: the individuals who will themselves to be true transform particular, potentially recalcitrant moments of consciousness into a meaningful continuity. Loving relations, Kierkegaard concludes, cause one constantly to renew one's moral character in the face of human frailty and change, of tedium and boredom, *the commitment to love not only unifying a single life but also a wider ethical sociality that rests on neighborliness as a foundation*.

For Nietzsche, love is part of a recognition of the nature of life, the latter being a struggle between competing sources and vessels of power beyond good and evil. To love is to revere one's life, one's self, the power and potential it contains, and the necessities against which it struggles. One recognizes and respects—loves—one's sensuality, one's individual embodiment, its needs, its power, and its freedom of action. To lead a noble, an ethical,

life is to endeavor to be master of it: to turn one's longings into an arrow of gratification. To incorporate human otherness into this love takes the form of respecting those "friends" and "brothers" who endeavor in a commensurate way to be Overmen, creative artists of their own circumstance. Brotherhood means aligned lives: *a society of individual masters of their destinies whose trajectories of self-gratification episodically overlap.*

For Sartre, love is a tragic expression of human contradictoriness, and ultimately futile. We are isolated self-creating beings and yet we wish to escape the nausea of this freedom into an intimacy that will assure us of a structure to our lives. We seek a lover who will affirm that "we" are always who we are, possessed of a definite identity and assured of a permanent meaningfulness. But this fixity is not true, and it is living in bad faith to act as though it were. It is also to give in to contradictory desires: wishing affirmation from a beloved Other who has an independent point of view, and yet wanting control over that Other and its viewpoint so that it is always reliably there and always affirming. *Loving relations with others is built on a desire both for Others to be with us—even in us, within our self-created worldviews—and yet also to remain different from us.* Love, in short, becomes a futile battle for mutual possession. We vacillate between our own individual worlds and a recognition and respect for otherness, but are unable to reach either satisfaction or stability.

In Freud, finally, elements of Nietzsche and Sartre combine. Love, whether as a search for genital gratification (Libido) or for wholeness (Eros) is narcissistic and fundamentally selfish. We desire the beloved not in and for themselves but for ourselves. Hence, love becomes a site of conflict, not harmony or purity. Indeed, love is accompanied by hate because the beloved must fail either to assuage our genital needs or to supply us with union or co-identification. Recognition of the Other is but a temporary by-product of *ego*'s neediness, a misplaced hope whose mistake, once discovered, turns to negation. The only compensation is love's side-effects. *Love drives civil exchange between human beings where desire comes to be sublimated or "refined," its true aims inhibited and its energies diverted into creating art or establishing polities.* But this is ultimately a form of repression that will result in its own neuroses. To hope for recognition of an Other in and for themselves is futile; and to expect civilized (sublimated) behavior to continue without accompanying neuroses equally so.

In sum: I have asked how love might provide moments of vision such that recognition of the individuality of life translates into respect for the individual Other as a way of life. A clear answer comes from the Hebrew Bible and its Christian development in the notion of *agape*. One loves the Other—one's "neighbor"—as an act of faith that precedes any individual epiphany of

otherness and apparently removes the need for it. For Ancient Greek philosophy, for Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle alike, recognition and respect for otherness appears as something of a by-product of the expression of individual desire, or a co-product at best. The appreciated Other is the soulmate to whom one is attracted due to values held in common (Socrates). The Other is a given part of an order in the world whose ideal form one comes to appreciate as one's desires become more discriminatory and rational (Plato). The Other is the befriended equal (or fellow citizen) whom one engages in the mutual pursuit of perfecting one's own capabilities (Aristotle). A clear and direct answer is also given by Kant. The practical or rational love between two people who recognize and respect one another's autonomy and dignity as individual human beings gives rise to a mutual moral obligation to lead principled lives relative to one another; from this narrow beginning, an ethical social life might be extended as a practice that includes humankind as a whole. For Kierkegaard, too, there is a clear route to a universal ethical otherness through commitment to being a good neighbor. Anyone and everyone is a neighbor on planet Earth, and to will oneself to remain true to one's duty and one's nature—to be loving—both ensures an ethical sociality and effects a bulwark of meaningfulness against life seeming intrinsically absurd. For the "moderns," Nietzsche, Sartre, and Freud, finally, a loving recognition of an Other remains fraught with contingency. It is the brotherhood that temporarily accompanies an alignment in the lives of Overmen who master their fates and make facts in tandem (Nietzsche). It is part of a futile attempt by free beings who, in bad faith, attempt to escape the nausea of their condition (Sartre). It is part of an attempt to achieve physical gratification and union by conflicted beings whose desires lead them to hatred and death: at best to a sublimation of desire, and repression (Freud).

Let us move on.

Chapter 10

Contemporary Treatments: Love Today

Given the above historical foundation, what contributions have been put forward more recently? Scholarship on love flourishes, and I shall present a sample of interventions that appear most original or insightful. I shall ask of this material the same questions, while retaining the above "answers" for comparison.

The material can usefully be presented according to different general approaches that are taken to the subject of love. These might be demarcated as follows:

• Love is a kind of function or effect;
• Love is a kind of motivation or spur;
• Love is a kind of social interaction or relationality;
• Love is a kind of virtue or civility.

The last most closely contains my own concerns, but the range of approaches provides a useful context. I shall present this context of current theorizations as a whole, before assessing the consequences for the project of this book.

LOVE IS A KIND OF FUNCTION OR EFFECT

Social structures organize individuals' actions and sentiments, Eva Illouz (2012) begins her *sociological* explanation of love, *Why love hurts*. The contents of individuals' thoughts and desires have an institutional and collective basis. We may individually differ in our experiences but that does not make these private or singular: "an experience is always contained and organized

by institutions," giving rise to its shapes, textures, and intensities (Illouz 2012: 13). The way in which we currently psychologize experience is itself a "sociological fact" or effect for even the deepest recesses of our subjectivity are shaped by modernity's core institutions and values. Love, indeed, is a privileged microcosm through which to understand modern social processes since when we love we do so using resources and in situations not of our choosing or making. Love is "shaped and produced by concrete social relations": love "contains, mirrors and amplifies the 'entrapment' of the self in the institutions of modernity" (Illouz 2012: 14). Indeed, it is not an exaggeration to say that is through the causing of a certain kind of love and loving that the modern social self is born. Traditionally, sociologists (such as William Goode [1959]) described love as being culturally patterned and controlled such that its occurrence and influence did not disrupt strata of family and class. With the expansion of a global economy, and the family becoming a site of consumption as well as production, marriage became less tied to the survival of the family economy and more a personal matter for newly emancipated adolescents. This led in turn to a global expansion of the ideology of romantic love that we witness today.

More precisely, our present culture of love and its accompanying economy of gender identity began after World War I. A new architecture of choice was institutionalized at that time that continues up to the present day. Love became central to our happiness and identity in a radically transformed emotional economy of sexual relationships, and an overturning of the traditional economics of marriage. There has since developed a new proceduralism to the routine course of love, with a new ecology of choice—across racial, class, and religious boundaries—an abundancy of possibility—through the internet, for instance—and a new criterion of measuring self-worth through sexiness. Love now "circulates in a marketplace of unequal competing actors [where] some people command greater capacity to define the terms in which they are loved by others" (Illouz 2012: 14). Due to this social and emotional revolution—love as an effect of an increasingly marketized social structure—love has become a chronic source of hurt and misery, of discomfort, despair, and disorientation.

A different kind of effecting or functioning is argued by Robin Dunbar in *The Science of Love and Betrayal*, for whom love is a *biological* phenomenon. Love and loving are not peculiarly Western, modern or capitalistic—whatever may be the reasoning and customs surrounding marriage (a very different issue). "Falling in love is a human universal," not a social construction, and romantic attachments transcend history and culture (Dunbar 2012: 6). Loving must therefore have a biological basis and function. It can be seen that loving relations—whether sexual or parental—share certain features: a focused attention; a sense of wonderment, elation, and contentedness; a

wanting to be with and touch the object of desire; a willingness to act on their behalf. It seems that in love there is a suppression of parts of the brain that deal with fear and aggression, and with mentalizing the Other's intentions and trustworthiness. In other words, we abandon attempts to read off the behavior of those we want to be attached to: to be in love is to have one's attention riveted. Love is the effect of the "heart" overruling the "head" in a trusting attachment that has proved biologically advantageous (even necessary) for social life and relationality. Love is "a natural category of acts" produced by natural selection, David Buss (1988: 100) elaborates. It includes the evolution of desire that has been crucial for human reproduction. When men show off their "resourcefulness," then, or women their "beauty," they are paving the way for loving relationships of fertility and intimacy: shared resources, commitment, and fidelity.

Dunbar's and Buss's biological theses find support in the *natural philosophy* of Harry Frankfurt, for whom "the capacity to love" shares a billing with rationality as "the most powerfully emblematic and most highly prized features of human nature" (2004: 4). While rationality "guides us most authoritatively in the use of our minds, [love] provides us with the most compelling motivation in our personal and social conduct. Both are sources of what is distinctively humane and ennobling in us" (Frankfurt 2004: 64).

Love has four conceptually necessary features, Frankfurt explains in *The Reasons of Love*. First, a disinterested concern for the existence and well-being of the beloved as an end in itself, not means to our benefit; we love with no ulterior purpose. Second, love is ineluctably personal: the beloved cannot be substituted; the beloved is not an example or a class but a particular individual; love is a response to the beloved's specific identity *as* individual. Third, the lover identifies with the beloved to the extent of taking their interests as his own, having them "shape his dispositions and conduct, guiding him in the design and ordering of his relevant purposes and priorities" (Frankfurt 2004: 43). Fourth, love is not a choice or under voluntary control but exists beyond rational willing. Love is a source of caring that is not constituted by judgments and reasons. It is a kind of command, biologically embedded.

The paradigm case is our parental love for children: loving notably alters and enhances our lives. It is in this way that things in the world come to have a terminal value for us, independent of their possible usefulness in our pursuing other goals. Love meets a human need for final ends, and through loving things we become bound to final ends in more than an adventitious or impulsive or deliberate or willful or elective way. Yes, there are dangers present. We do not freely and directly determine what we love and we can be helplessly driven, investing ourselves in others unwisely. Love also comes in different degrees, and we may harm a beloved thing to assist a more beloved one. Again, love is unstable, vulnerable to circumstance as with any

human-natural condition. Nevertheless, our being naturally constrained to love also contributes to its value for us. To be bound by the biological necessity of loving can be liberating, a relief: eliminating uncertainty, relaxing our inhibitions, hesitancies, self-doubt, ambivalences, and indecisiveness. In love we are constrained neither to hold back nor to act meaninglessly.

Ultimately, our loving leads to the standards and aims in whose terms we try to conduct our lives. By loving things we infuse the world with importance, providing ourselves with ambitions and concerns, interests and goals. Indeed, the totality of things loved effectively specifies the person's answer to the question of how to live. The motivations engendered by love belong to our most intimate and fundamental nature, Frankfurt concludes. What we love is not up to us, but love is a source of reason in itself: creative of those reasons by which acts of concern and devotion are inspired. We are naturally moved to love, and by finding things inexorably "beloved" we create value in our lives and the world around us.

Finally, love as sociological and biological function or effect is complemented by an understanding of love as *psychological*. Here, love is a learned response, what is learnt being controlled by reward and punishment or signals of these, by reinforcement. As Howard Miller and Paul Siegel explain in *Loving: A Psychological Approach*, "love is a form of approach behavior. The loved person is approached because of frequent but not entirely predictable associations with many different kinds of rewarding experience" (1972: 5). Love follows a "hope signal" of good things to come. It is also an internal reaction to this expectation, an emotion and feeling, and (like hunger or thirst) it is associated with an impulse to do something: namely to approach, physically or psychologically, or both.

Things in nature rarely happen exactly the same way twice, Miller and Siegel elaborate. So animals develop "stimulus generalization," whereby training in stimulus-response can be transferred between occasion, and to things not exactly the same. "Love is a response to a generalized hope signal, a broad pleasurable expectancy"; and the love object, be it a thing or a person, is a "generalized secondary positive reinforcer" attracting and holding the lover (Miller and Siegel 1972: 14). But variety and unpredictability remain crucial: the lover spends time with a beloved because he or she is never sure what exactly the pleasant experience—the reward and reinforcement—may be or when it will come. Anxiety reduction is the generalized reason for which love behaviors are sustained. It is for this reason, too, that while we might *like* cars, jewelry, and other objects, we generally do not love them as we do fellow human beings, because they are rarely complicated enough to be so diversely and unpredictably rewarding. Love is a psychological effect of "a long history of highly varied reinforcement" (Miller and Siegel 1972: 66).

LOVE IS A KIND OF MOTIVATION OR SPUR

Alternatively, human beings have a supreme need to be united with the ground of their being and to experience their lives as secure and anchored, Simon May writes, in *Love: A History*. By virtue of love we come to be rooted in the everyday, feel solidity, even indestructibility, and have our sense of being deepened. Love is:

> the rapture we feel for people and things that inspire in us the hope of an indestructible grounding for our life. It is a rapture that sets us off on—and sustains—the long search for a secure relationship between our being and theirs.
>
> If we all have a need to love, it is because we all need to feel at home in the world. (May 2011: 66)

Love entails the search for this home: "a home for our life and being." We search because of the extreme vulnerability of an individual life in the world. We cannot ground ourselves in ourselves, however, and find it must be in something other and independent. "There is no greater human need than to find [an] affirmation, nourishment and anchoring of one's being," May explains (2011: 37), and we do so through attachment to a great unattainable power, sovereign and beyond our grasp, seemingly invulnerable: a powerful beloved Other who is both identical and familiar *and* alien and unreachable. One might differentiate between erotic love, parental love, and friendship, but all are motivated alike: commensurate and co-incident means of attending to and assimilating a beloved. Beyond food, water, and shelter, there is no greater need than this ontological rootedness. Moreover, our need for a beloved, and hence his or her or its power over us is such that their demands can even trump our sense of what is moral or humane. Our love is indiscriminate so long as the Other is inspiring and responds to our need.

We experience the very presence of the beloved as grounding, accepting their demands because of how they seem to recognize and be receptive to—to echo and provide a berth for—what we deem essential about ourselves: our strengths and our weaknesses, our origin and our destiny. But this also means that attached to love is fear, born out of our vulnerability. We are in awe of that which we so need, and this fear and dependence can lead to hate. (Hate should not be reckoned as love's opposite, then, for it still exemplifies the core practice of love: attentiveness to the powerful Other.) Nor is love necessarily unconditional or permanent. For love is not selfless: it lasts only as long as the lover finds in the beloved that supreme good that inspires him or her and fills the need. And it is difficult to continue attending to an Other in that way: attentiveness is prey to habit and dulling, and the Other that is perceived as no longer granting rootedness and unity is discarded. "Everyone needs love; many find it; few live it" (May 2011: 7).

Notwithstanding, as an emotion love is universal, May concludes, and there is no emotion needier. How it is interpreted may differ per time and place—why love is seen as existing; and what it desires; and what its social role should be; and how it is cultivated and valued—but universally, human beings are "beset by passionate devotion to those others (be they conceived as natural or supernatural) whom the lovers experience as grounding their very existence, and whom they desire on that account" (May 2011: 11). The longing for love can also be understood as a human search for the unity that preceded current isolation and alienation. To love is to be motivated to become whole again. Historically the search for a grounding Other has meant returning to the origin of our existence: to God, nation, family, ancestors or the primordial oneness of all living being. But whether our love is for gods, people, things, abstractions, landscapes, places, status, a discipline, an ideology, art, money, wine, parents, spouses, or children, we love that which inspires in us a promise of rootedness and union—irrespective of the beloved's other qualities, and even whether or not they esteem or value us.

Alongside the philosophical work of May can be placed that of anthropologists Robert Paine, Stavroula Pipyrou, and Cora Du Bois, and their consideration of friendship cross-culturally. There is a "basic 'motive'" to friendship, Paine begins (1974: 119), and that is "the sense of worth it imparts to the person enjoying it." A friend understands you, values you, is equivalent to you, and can explain you to yourself: you see yourself in your friend such that loving and respecting oneself follows from loving a friend, in a dialectical process. Friendship is remarkable, moreover, not only in its intimacy and confidentiality but its *voluntariness*. The sense of meaning and identity derived from the relationship, and the behavior it gives rise to, are independent of the ascribed social statuses otherwise attached to those individuals. Voluntarism is key, Du Bois concurs (1974: 16–18). Here is a "preferential" relationship distinct from those required by status or role: a gratuitous act, motivated by personal gratifications, whose "non-corporate aspect" gives the relationship its character: spontaneous, mutable, and mortal, emotionally poignant. Save for legal restrictions, friends can behave in any way they agree on irrespective of the public norms and "rules of relevancy" that pertain to other, socially imposed relational ascriptions.

As Pipyrou concludes (31/8/15, pers. comm.), through befriending another—a fallible, imperfect, complex human being—*ego* is motivated to know, accept and appreciate themselves as whole: spurred to being wholly themselves to themselves. Friendship can be accorded a "masterpiece" (in Ralph Waldo Emerson's phrasing [1889: 45–6]), "a kind of absolute," for the way it transcends the logic of the normal and normative commerce between societal members (instrumental, ritual, ethical, whatever).

LOVE IS A KIND OF SOCIAL
INTERACTION OR RELATIONALITY

Then again, for Paul Gilbert, in *Human Relationships*, love is "a social relation of an essentially personal kind" (1991: 122). Relations can ordinarily be divided into two kinds, Gilbert explains: personal and social. Personal relationships aim for the overall well-being of those involved across a wide range of matters and occasions; social relationships involve well-being perhaps not at all but insist on reciprocity within a restricted range of delineated affairs. The relationships also differ in the way they individualize: a social relationship is with a role-player, as against a unique, personalized Other. Finally, personal and social relationships differ in the nature of individuals' involvement: the personal is in essence emotional (because of the particularity involved) while the social is a matter of duty and mutual concern is not heartfelt. But love is an anomalous kind of social interaction, a hybrid. It is particularistic and emotional—lacking the perspicuous structure of rule-bound and role-driven social relations—and yet its reciprocality is principal; "the feelings of love depend on valuing the reciprocal achievement of a common purpose," Gilbert writes (1991: 122). In other words, love is not simply a pursuit of individual desires but of desires held jointly by lover and beloved. Their coupledom ushers in a third space, between its individual members and personalities. "Lovers are not concerned with what is best for each other … but what is best for them as a couple" (Gilbert 1991: 121). Love is a reciprocal commitment to fulfill shared desires, desires valued over and above individual satisfaction, and even possibly in contradistinction to the latter.

Love is thus interestingly impersonal: the performance of roles rather than an unconstrained expression of personality. There is a common purpose, however plastic and inexplicit, to which lovers subordinate their individual interests, and "fulfillment" in love entails not personal satisfaction but joint activity that emerges from compatible desires and shared interests. A loving relationship is thus an achievement born out of trust and commitment: something worked on, a far-from-miraculous emanation of common purposes. Love depends on individual parties putting a shared value on their reciprocity and joint project, and resolving to pursue them jointly. Reciprocity "constitutes love," Gilbert sums up (1991: 122), while power, dependency, jealousy, and disloyalty spell its breakdown.

Gilbert's approach finds echoes in work on the nature of friendship that, equally, is conceptualized in social-structural terms, as "a social compact": an institution among others (bureaucracy, class, kinship), which organizes people in a binding way (Leyton 1974). The love of friends is an institutionalized interpersonal relation, whose character is practical (not sublime, uninterested, or mystical). As Peter Murphy elaborates in "Friendship's Eu-topia," the

love of friends entails mutual dedication to a "third party": a cause, a social norm, a cultural ideology, a place, or setting (1998: 170–3). Friendship is a political relationship between two people always in connection with a third Other through which and by virtue of which they are bound to one another: friends relate to each other only indirectly, via their common ulterior motive; they are not necessarily alike in temperament, position, status, or qualities. The relationship lasts so long as the common cause does, and lives as the friends explore the cause together. In short, friendship is a kind of relationality whereby common aspiration or affiliation transcends other differences and makes the interactants equals in a practical compact.

LOVE IS A KIND OF VIRTUE OR CIVILITY

Or again, a number of contemporary authors, from different disciplines, have considered love as fundamentally a form of "virtuous" behavior—while coloring that term differently and variously contextualizing it in a "civil" social space. Five particularly suggestive versions of this thesis I visit here.

I. We can mean such different things by "love," Mike Martin begins his book *Love's Virtues*, from brief feelings of strong attraction to emotions of tenderness and affection, to desires to have sex, commitments to share a life together, and relationships based on mutual support, economic interdependence, joint activities, compromise, fighting, forgiveness, and reconciliation. We can love paintings, parties, peace, peaches, penguins, power, poetry, people, and places, experiencing different kinds of attraction to the different kinds of objects, and engaging in different kinds of loving activities. There is, however, a central virtue to "true love." This is a "deep caring," which values the Other as a whole—as against focusing on particular attributes (beauty, intelligence, money)—and as the embodiment of a distinct personal style. The deep caring is accompanied ideally by other behaviors: faithfulness, respect, self-respect, fairness, honesty, wisdom, gratitude, courage, self-control, perseverance, responsibility, humility, and hope. All these are imbued with a certain ethical vision: to love truly is to see and know the beloved as irreplaceably dear, and to cherish him or her accordingly. Love is "primarily a set of virtue-structured ways to value persons" (Martin 1996: 6); "love is a way to value persons morally, [as singularly important,] and to be valued in return … as having irreplaceable worth" (Martin 1996: 1). Far from being "blind," love is a profound way of seeing, a form of wisdom: "a virtue-guided way to affirm the value that other persons have" (Martin 1996: 148).

Love's virtuous way of seeing the Other follows a certain process, Martin goes on. It begins in emotion, imbued with a strong disposition to be faithful.

From this early "passive" stage of loving, there then develops a stage of acting faithfully according to that original emotion: from a passive experience of emotion, the lover conducts himself or herself such as actively to influence his or her affectionate emotions. Love becomes an attitude and a relationship as much as an emotion, the lover being committed both to sustaining an attitude of valuing the beloved and to sustaining an emergent relationship of harmonious living. The lover "assumes responsibility for sustaining patterns of acts and thoughts that foster emotions conducive to love" (Martin 1996: 58). We may not be able to commit to having specific future feelings, but love is "a commitment to create and sustain a relationship conducive to those feelings of strong affection" (Martin 1996: 76).

Moral philosophers have often been wary of love, Martin suggests, because morality has been seen as intrinsically impartial: based on universal rules of correct conduct binding for all rational persons. Love, however, remains partial. But then why should morality be monistic, insisting on only one rationally justifiable moral perspective and requiring that we treat all human claims equally? Love entails "highly particularized ways to value persons morally" (Martin 1996: 23). Love might be described as *particularized altruism*, focused on the good of the beloved while also conducive to self-interest. Fusing these together provides human life with its "greatest unearned benefit" (Martin 1996: 168).

II. In *Love and Human Separateness*, Ilham Dilman begins by asserting that "the separateness that characterizes our existence as adult individuals need not separate us. To the contrary, it underlies the possibility of all forms of intimacy in which we make contact with another human being" (Dilman 1987: 107). A loving relationship is "a genuine interaction": contact between people "who begin by being attracted to each other, quite spontaneously, and end by caring for one another. Each responds to, puts himself out for and gives himself to, the other" (Dilman 1987: 88). Lovers do this because of what each finds in the other, and what this means to them: something is touched that lies in readiness in each, something that the other brings out and sustains, or something that the other is able to transform.

A loving contact is one of virtuous, reciprocal affectiveness. We may know Others by first making contact with them in the course of social interaction. But interaction per se is not contact and it is possible to remain alone in interaction if an affective solipsism prevails, or an insistence on neutrality or enmity. Attitude is crucial; for the virtues of love to emerge, what is crucial is that "each is open and himself or herself with the other" (Dilman 1987: 88). The Other is there for *ego*, and authentic in his or her behavior toward *ego*. In return, *ego* meets the Other's behaviors authentically, accepting them as they are and believing them to represent the Other truly. Ego and *alter* in love may

remain opaque to one another yet they are still open and guileless. An authentic openness between ego and *alter* entails their mutual responses being based neither on deception or illusion; the lovers are neither instruments for one another nor phantasies of one another's. Their interaction is inspired by the love each awakens in the other and not by any motive, whether to please or to dominate.

The wonder and magic of love *depend* on the lovers' separateness, then. It is this that makes their responses into gifts to be treasured. And it is essential that the irreducible otherness and separateness of the lovers be respected. If another's separateness is not respected, and he or she is not given the space in which to be themselves, this separateness can turn into something that separates. If the Other is merely a shadow or extension of *ego*, then *ego* is merely loving itself; this is collusion and complementarity but not reciprocity. For there to be real contact, each person must have a real independent identity. Virtuous lovers accept and, indeed, welcome this independence: "it is through such acceptance that human separateness becomes the space in which personal binds may be forged" (Dilman 1987: 107).

Adopting a standpoint of love in one's relations with others is an ongoing and demanding process, Dilman concludes (2005). It involves tolerance, generosity and forgiveness. But the process empowers a person to attain a sense of his or her behavior as his or her own: to achieve an authentic awareness of the self. Love is a force which enables the person to open up to others, to cease being defensive and to grow in maturity. Love captivates, enchants, and possesses: a happiness emerging from what is deepest in the lovers and engaging them as whole selves, a new life and sustenance to be maintained.

III. In *The Art of Loving*, Erich Fromm defines the essential characteristic of human nature as self-awareness. Through their reason, human beings are aware of past, present, and future, aware of death, frailty, and weakness, in particular aware of isolation and loneliness. This causes anxiety—even insanity. "The deepest need of man," Fromm suggests, "is the need to overcome his separateness, to leave the prison of his aloneness" (1975: 14–15). Different cultures have answered this need differently, such as through ritualistic conformity, or orgiastic togetherness with God and tribe and nation. But it remains a question for all ages, springing from the ground of human existence: how to find at-oneness. The true answer is love: the varied achievement of interpersonal union, fusion with another.

Fromm elaborates. There are different kinds of love—motherly, erotic, self-love, religious—but one kind is fundamental, underlying all others: "brotherly." This is a love for all humankind. It is inclusive and equalitarian, and based on the experience that all humanity is one, in possession of a common core that is greater than superficial differences. Brotherly love gives

rise to a "mature" union, as against other merely biological, symbiotic, or sadomasochistic unions in which one party is in control and the other is passively dependent. These "lesser" unions instantiate fusion without personal integrity, or union that is purely physical and only momentary. A brotherly mature love—as against a passing "falling for" another—goes beyond these in recognizing the integrity of Self and Other, the integrity indeed of any human being. Mature love is an acceptance of the condition of human individuality: a virtuous activity.

The exhilaration of a mature love derives from welcoming someone else into the isolate of one's world, Fromm continues. It is a paradox: two people becoming one yet retaining their identities as two. Mature love is characterized by an interdependent "syndrome" of virtuous attitudes—care, responsibility, respect, knowledge—that *ego* develops through an active concern for the life and the growth of that which is loved. The sense of responsibility does not descend into domination or possession, moreover. *Ego* continues to see the Other as they are, unique: "respect means the concern that the other person should grow and unfold as he is," for his own sake and in his own way (Fromm 1975: 30). Fundamentally, mature love is a voluntary act, not one of awe or fear, in response to the expressed or unexpressed needs of the beloved. And it is a kind of art: the development of a faculty. The "art of loving" in a mature, brotherly, virtuous way follows the development of discipline, concentration, patience, and above all a conscious concern. The art of loving requires concentration on the present moment and on perception of the Other, whereby *ego* overcomes any distorting or idealizing narcissism—as if the world existed only to be useful (or dangerous) to the self. *Ego* uses reason to think objectively, and humility to put himself or herself in the correct emotional attitude: neither omniscient nor omnipotent, neither partisan, nor fearful, nor jealous. The art is to accept human nature—to discipline oneself to human imperfections—so that disappointment, antagonism, and boredom are not allowed to supervene. But a continuous striving for "artistic expression" can provide *ego* both with experience and with confidence in his or her powers of thought, observation, judgment, courage, and productivity. The art of loving is to have the courage not to shut oneself up in a system of defenses against the world.

A mature love is at base a form of knowing, Fromm concludes. There are two stages. First comes a psychological, intellectual, and objective knowledge: knowing that the beloved is a separate human being. Then comes possible physical acts that transcend thought and words in an experience of physical union that might provide a kind of mystical knowledge or "penetration" of the Other. But the two kinds of knowledge are distinct, and the former may stand alone: the art of loving may restrict itself to the first stage and love become not concentrated in the personal realm but social, a public

kind of virtue. Brotherly love is fundamental in that the love of one person already *implies* the love of humankind as a whole: our loving an individual as an incarnation of human qualities. A mature lover sees the occasion and the necessity of one fallible human being entering into the needy world of an Other as an instance of a possibly universal form. A mature love is to recognize the universality of human isolation and the needs that derive from it.

There can therefore be no ultimate "division of labor" between love for one's own and love for strangers: to love maturely must be to exhibit a loving attitude to everything. Indeed, the mature lover recognizes that there can be no personal love without universal brotherly love:

> Love is not primarily a relationship to a specific person: it is an attitude, an orientation of character which determines the relationship of a person to the world as a whole, not toward one "object" of love. … If I truly love one person I love all persons. I love the world. (Fromm 1975: 43)

Brotherly love is not merely being "fair" to human strangers from a distance, as if a commercial transaction. Fairness—or tolerance—is not love. Virtue comes from "loving one's neighbor as oneself." Ultimately, for Fromm, the art of loving is "the only rational answer to the problem of human existence" (1975: 109), to achieving solidarity with the universal Other who is as human (fallible, needy) as oneself.

IV. *In Praise of Love* is a work where Alain Badiou develops the thesis that love is best seen as "a cosmopolitan, subversive, sexual energy that transgresses frontiers and social status" (2009: 2). It is something that innovates—risky and adventurous—and it is an enemy of the habit, comfort, and norm that would eschew change in favor of safety. Love "gives meaning and intensity to almost everyone's life," creating a unique subjective state: finally, love is "a singular adventure in the quest for truth about difference" (Badiou 2009: 7, 72).

There is an "abyss" separating human beings, Badiou begins (2009: 27), "the simple difference between two people and their infinite subjectivities." But born out of this separation and disjuncture, love aims to throw a fragile bridge between solitudes by instructing *ego* to experience the world on the basis of difference not identity. Love is that occasion, an emotional eruption, when a kind of meeting breaks through habitual and conventional existence, encouraging *ego* to "construct a world from a decentered point of view other than that of [a] mere impulse to survive or re-affirm [*ego*'s] own identity" (Badiou 2009: 24–5). *Ego* places his or her trust in chance and leaves a routine world: he or she now aspires to see the world not merely from the perspective of the self but from two—or more—and so make the beloved

exist *with* him or her—even if not *within*—and authentically, as the beloved truly is. Love is an overcoming of self-interest and self-satisfaction, for the lover realizes he or she must experience the world from the perspective of the beloved Other. And this is love's virtue. As opposed to desire, which merely fetishizes, love focuses on the Other's very being as it has erupted into *ego*'s life, disrupting, and refashioning it. *Ego* thus accedes to the truth of difference beyond identity. This is the virtue of love as an existential project, with potentially global application. Love begins with a quasi-metaphysical event—an encounter outside the ordinary order of things, disconcertingly slicing through normal and normative symbolic separations and oppositions (however entrenched) in a way that is neither predictable nor calculable nor controllable—and yet its transformation perdures. Love, crucially, has duration beyond the ecstatic event that gives it birth: it is a *tenacious* adventure. Love reaches out toward the ontological, to the universal nature of human being, beyond convention and routine, beyond narcissism and even selfhood.

Notwithstanding, love is opaque. There can be no ultimate overcoming of selfhood, nor even forgetting. Love is not a communion, an intersubjective experience, and lovers remain alone in the world; love does not transport "beyond." But as *ego* stands *beside* his or her lover and they look out at the world together, lovers may nevertheless accede to "resonances" of multiplicity. And this is a transformation: lovers now experiencing the world in a new way. Love can be said to have *encompassed* the human disjuncture, *incorporating* the interpretive stances of the two (or more). To love is to "view the panorama of the world through the prism of difference": a "two scene," a reconstruction even reinvention of life from the perspective of more than one (Badiou 2009: 26). But here, too, is love's virtuous relevance to humanity as a whole. If love is an experience in which a new kind of truth is constructed, the truth that derives from and concerns difference, then in its essence love is uninterested, non-partial, ushering in an ethos and a space superseding the particularity of the individuals involved. If essentially love translates as "we can encounter and experience the world other than through a solitary consciousness," then here is a journey to construct joint truths that potentially humanity may embark on together at increasing scales (Badiou 2009: 39).

The journey will not be smooth, however, Badiou admits. For love is a continuous work not a miracle, and it is something that must be re-declared, re-stated and re-instituted *in situations of trust*. And for this reason, finally, there can be no "politics of love" (Badiou 2009: 57). If "politics" concerns the wider affairs of individuals coming together as members of a society and what they can together manage, then there will always be people in such contexts that *ego* cannot love; politics inevitably brings together intolerable Others. The political sphere of affairs might, indeed, be glossed as that concerned with the management of *hatred* and the control of its consequences:

how enemies may accommodate one another without resorting to violence and war.

Love remains the seemingly miraculous supervenience upon the absolute and infinite difference that exists between human beings, transforming such *exteriority* into creative fidelity. But trust is needed for this epiphanous event to perdure and for the adventure to continue to be experienced as such, and there will always be people who cannot love one another and will not trust—and for whom the best that can be hoped is a "political" not a "loving" accommodation: "our" enemies even if not our beloveds.

V. In *The Way of Love*, finally, Luce Irigaray argues that human history, to date, has seen us exist as "eunuchs of the heart and the flesh" (2002: 3). We have encountered difference but not been sufficiently attentive or respectful. We have always sought to incorporate otherness in one comprehensive order, one meaning, one culture, one country, and not really appreciated the need to "dialog in difference" in order truly to meet, speak with, and love the Other. The history of love has actually been a history of human beings moving away from one another: using conventional practices and tired meanings that do not express true attraction, desire, or care, and leading to a violation and vanishing of both Self and Other.

Irigaray elaborates. There is a core to human being—the individual in all his or her diverse subjective dimensions—that is irreducible to a collective form. Yet, no culture and no language to date has done more than veil this, moving human being away from itself in a purported apprehending of and legislating for the world. Cultures have claimed to overcome nature through ideas, concepts, words, and things, but this forgets "the initial being of each human" (Irigaray 2002: 140); having suspended ourselves in concepts we have relinquished singular experience, divorcing ourselves both from Being and from our individual beings. Culture "remain[s] outside the most intimate and the most nuclear of subjectivity" (Irigaray 2002: 47)

The path to authentic identity requires forgetting words and practices previously defined, Irigaray advises. Cultures may prescribe human orders, including how to relate to self, Other and world, but to reckon with the Self as Self and the Other as Other requires us to leave the structuration of cultural traditions and exercise our freedom. For to use an already existing language is to paralyze Being—life, breath, and energy—and to preclude *living* communication. In our freedom, moreover, "we live before speaking" (Irigaray 2002: 84–5). We are not prisoners within the horizons of our languages and we *can* "transgress" already learned forms. We should not then allow historical configurations to prevent the being and becoming of a unique encounter with identity; we should not accede to the "totalitarian authoritarianism" of a culture but should take responsibility for a new articulation of meaning and

a new way of speaking (Irigaray 2002: 172). In an encounter with Self and Other not burdened by history we *speak in the present*, as individual human beings and subjects, freely transforming what happens into saying.

A "loving speech" that is not confined or imposed upon by the paralyzing traditions of collective speech is not an easy prospect, Irigaray admits. Indeed, it is a constant, ongoing work: something that cannot be invented only once. But it is possible. It is possible gradually to create a language of exchange that attends to identity in such a way as to accede to a real and an unknown meaning and that does expressive justice to authentic meeting. We humans have the capacity to recast the categories of the sensible and the intelligible that we have used to date and so reach a more complex rationality of meeting: attending to "the approach of oneself and of the Other in a more intimate manner than does the denomination of an object exterior to the subject" (Irigaray 2002: 42–3). The collective imperatives of extant culture are extraneous here because they both deny unique individual being and they deny the Being in which humankind as a whole finds itself. We *can* however advance toward unveiling the human in itself, and we can improve relations between individual human beings, perceiving in ways that do not simply seize (name, predetermine, and reproduce). "Loving speech" would enable us to become "more accomplished for human becoming," attending to that wholeness both as everyday practice and as something with potentially universal reach (Irigaray 2002: 43).

Undergirding loving speech is an intention: "to desire and to love without being subjected to one's instincts" (Irigaray 2002: 167). For while human beings have the capacity to open themselves up—to go beyond conventional proprieties and to truly listen to, speak with, and enter into true relation with a human being different from themselves—the first encounter with the Other—as attraction or repulsion—will likely be from within a (closed) cultural world. But then we may *cultivate* an alternative attraction: determine to approach the Other free from both prescribed collective certitudes and also personal solipsisms. Through such cultivation we "transform instinctive attraction into a desire attentive to the Being of the other" (Irigaray 2002: 89). We are able to do this because, as fellow human beings, we are receptive to the "irradiated" truth of the Other's existence even without the nature of its source being at first visible to us. We *know* of the Other indirectly, as it were, unwittingly, through its transforming of our experience, indirectly perceiving an otherness that inhabits a distinct world. To open ourselves up, and escape our cultural instincts, is to admit to ourselves the limits of our extant thinking and being—their horizons—and so accede to "the supreme real" (Irigaray 2002: 109).

More precisely, loving speech deploys the "negative" linguistic technique of silences, withdrawals and questionings that does not amount to a

designating. Finding its body irradiated by the subtle energy of the Other, *ego* moves then rests, goes forward then withdraws, and so practices an "indirection" capable of avoiding the reduction of the Other to an object of *ego*'s own culture. Here is a spatiality and temporality different both from linearity and from repetition: an accommodation that eschews a need or expectation of representation. Such loving speech is touching the Other, visually and acoustically as well as possibly through the skin, effecting a meeting between human beings who remain individual subjects each with their own specificity and autonomy. It is a dialectical process premised on the integrity of the individual subjects: neither is master of the movement of the meeting and neither expects to overcome difference and make the Other the same. Nor does either anticipate any external measure that might assess the validity or value of what is co-built at the meeting; the relationship is an interior work of blossoming, held by no external standard. The formulation "I love to you" is probably better, more respectful, than "I love you," Irigaray concludes (2002: 60), a phrasing that appears to reduce the Other to an object of ego's love.

Creating a true relationship between Self and Other is a work, but a new unity is possible, Irigaray is assured; indeed she is confident that already "another era of speech is opening," a new "culture" (2002: 44). Relationships between Self and Other are blossoming through openness. We are thinking beyond extant landmarks and landscapes, stepping back so as not to assimilate, imprison, and annihilate the approaching Other. We are recognizing that every act of speaking to an Other should be unique. We are creating speechacts that no longer designate amid an habitual, conventional world but "say" the self and world precisely as occasioned by the encounter with the Other.

Nevertheless, the limits of a loving relationship should not be forgotten. The gap between Self and Other can never be finally overcome, and we should not believe ourselves to be absolutely near or the same merely because physically we are lovers—or neighbors, or fellow members of a culture or nation or church. Another individual human being remains strange, an elusive mystery; and each drawing near indeed amounts to an insurmountable, irreducible distancing! The approach and the meeting at best imply "becoming aware of the diversity of our worlds and creating paths which, with respect for this diversity, allow holding dialogs" (Irigaray 2002: 68). This is why the relationship of love may be said to be *characterized* by silence and reserve. There is an appropriation of expression by neither side, and each loving subject ultimately comes to a standstill before the other. Self-consciousness remains vital: ego recognizing the partiality and differentiation of his or her perspective, knowing each moment what belongs to itself and what to the real world beyond. Finally, any human lovers must withdraw into themselves to negate subjecting the Other to an alien order. The loving relationship may be a "conjoin[ing of] two ways of … cultivating the truth," but the virtuous task,

"the most human task," must remain the attempt to "lead the relation with the Other from nature to culture without abolishing the duality of subjectivities" (Irigaray 2002: 124–7).

TAKING FINAL STOCK OF THE LITERATURE ON LOVE

I have given extended space to an exposition of Irigaray's work because of the way it approaches my own project in ethos, also accepting of Levinas's premise concerning the irreducible otherness of another human being. "Loving speech" entails recognizing an Other's individuality while not presuming to reach an intersubjective communion with it, or anticipating incorporating it within one's own worldviews or life-projects. Before appraising Irigaray's work further, however, let me look back on the historical survey I have conducted in the specific context of the questions I would ask concerning the civic virtue of a loving recognition. What do I learn about how love might provide moments of vision such that category thinking does not obscure or corrupt the individuality of life, and how might such epiphanies have duration, translating into a loving appreciation as a way of life?

Least conducive to my project would seem to be those modern approaches that take love to be a kind of effect or function. This latter might be sociological (Illouz, Goode), whereby love is a determinate part of a conventional structuration of the world, or psychological (Miller and Siegel) whereby love serves the function of achieving gratification by approaching the source of the latter in a way to attract and to hold. Or again, love might be said to be a biological effect (Dunbar, Buss, Frankfurt), an indiscriminate riveting of attention on those consociates necessary for survival and/or reproduction, or for an indiscriminate gaining of the final ends and terminal values necessary for well-being. Whether or not "love" can be understood as part of these interpretations of human nature, they do not help answer the questions I would pose. Love as a determinate function or effect cannot figure as a *considered* practice toward an end, ethical or other.

Those who consider love to be a kind of motivation or spur (May, Paine, Du Bois) offer more useful insight. Here, love is born out of personal need, whether for ontological security, a sense of groundedness and home, or a sense of worth, self-knowledge and identity. The need is deemed a human universal that transcends particular social, cultural, and historical contexts. It goes beyond conventions and norms, and has the effect of individuating the beloved. Duration accompanies the need, deriving from the extent to which the beloved Other satisfies that need. The ethical practice that I am seeking appears and exists here as a kind of *by-product*, then (rather like the prior work of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle). *Ego* gratifies himself or herself, fulfills a

need, and *in the process* recognizes the individuality of a lover or friend and cares for it—to the extent that that Other remains a source of homeliness, or identity, and so on. *An* answer to the questions I would pose might be, then, that the moments of transcendent vision provided by love may endure, with ethical effect, in the way of a kind of "invisible hand"—recalling the phrasing of Bernard Mandeville (1714) and Adam Smith (1759), describing the unintended social benefits of individual self-interested actions. In pursuit of their own interests, individuals may benefit society more than if their actions were directly intending to benefit society, argued Smith, and give rise to society's moral nature. Motivated to gratify their own personal needs—needing a sense of groundedness, a sense of worth, and so on—it seems a beneficial social practice of loving recognition may indirectly, "invisibly," ensue. Nevertheless, love as a spur remains a contingent practice: it is not generalized to Anyone, any human Other, and it remains in force only while the beloved advertently or inadvertently remains a source of personal gratification. These are not firm foundations.

What of those who consider love to be a kind of social interaction and institution, a social compact (Gilbert, Murphy)? Routine, duty, and role-playing are key terms here. The lovers (or friends) are linked not in a sublime or mystical or ecstatic fashion but by virtue of their joint desire, feeling for, and commitment to, a common project or purpose. Their relationship is in a way an impersonal one, and indirect, in that it exists in, and by way of, a third space that emerges between the personal lives of the lovers: their common cause. Love endures so long as they share a reciprocated sense of achievement in regard to a common goal. The impersonalism is distinctive here, the "love" becoming something that exceeds personal interest and is invoked, worked at and maintained for the sake of the third party or intermediate space that has come to exist between them. This also means that the scale of the relationship is variable. Any number of individuals might be fellow lovers, working together toward an end they feel commonly attached to. If there was a resonance with Ancient Greek philosophy above, then here there is an echo of the Hebrew Bible: the "common project" of a Jewish faith, as it were, invokes a love of neighbors as a commandment. But there are difficulties here for my thesis, none the less. Love as an institutional form of social interaction conveys no intrinsic ethical purpose. A common purpose or cause or project between "lovers" does not necessarily entail behaving ethically toward an Other or to Anyone. The common project between *ego* and *alter* as beloveds may be to kill or humiliate or hate or simply to stereotype themselves and others. There is nothing intrinsically ethical in a routine social relationship or an institutionalized social structure. In the phrasing of Zygmunt Bauman (1989: 174), society can easily act as "a 'morality-silencing' force," recalling Nazi Germany (cf. Rapport 2003b). And even while love is characterized as a

social institution whose practice is a duty, there is no sense of how it perdures when faith in its success is *not* individually reciprocated, or how power and dependency, jealousy and disloyalty may be eschewed.

When it comes to love interpreted as a kind of virtue, then, Mike Martin's positing of the valuing of persons as being *intrinsic* to the loving relation—the beloved as singularly important and worthy, irreplaceably dear—is welcome. Love's virtue is its *individual* care, Martin insists, involving respect, responsibility, honesty, faithfulness, fairness, gratitude, self-control, perseverance, and humility: the whole person of the beloved is recognized and appreciated. But for Martin, the relationship is also partial and non-rational. Love entails a particularized altruism, only specific Others being thus valued. There is no universal moral component, Martin insists. Nor is there a rational ethos; love is born out of an involuntary emotion, a passivity, which is then actively maintained in faithfulness to that original and originary emotion. It is as if Plato and Kierkegaard partially combine: an originary Platonic desire but without an "ascent" to abstraction; a Kierkegaardian avowal of a passion but without the further recognition that anyone and everyone is a "neighbor," a potential beloved. Nevertheless, Martin's vision of love as the emotional recognition of a precious individual Other, and the transformation of this emotion into an active and reciprocal work, are instructive.

According to Ilham Dilman, love is finding an Other who captivates and makes for happiness, bringing out or causing something inside *ego* to flourish. For this to happen, the lover must be separate from *ego*, and for it to continue *ego* must respect the independence of *alter*. Through love, *ego* comes to know himself or herself, and to accept himself or herself, and, equally, to accept the true otherness of the beloved. The happiness that accrues causes *ego* to work to maintain the relationship, and this succeeds so long as lover and beloved both act authentically and without guile toward each other. What begins as a spontaneous attraction to an Other endures through deliberate acts of caring: "allowing for" spontaneity by being open to an encounter with a different selfhood leads *ego* and *alter* to know themselves in a new, authentic way. Love's virtue involves the practice of reciprocal affect, openness, tolerance, generosity, and honesty. Again as with Plato, Dilman begins from desire—a spontaneous attraction—and also sees this as leading to knowledge, of both Self and Other. The knowledge brings happiness—as against something less appealing. Mutually captivated by one another, lover and beloved work together to maintain the well-being of the important Other in their lives. But as with Martin this remains a narrow relationship, based on very concrete personal affects. It also depends on much reciprocal self-control: being tolerant of the Other's independence, being open and guileless, and forgiving, believing in the Other's intrinsic honesty.

In Erich Fromm's interpretation, a virtuous love can be distinguished from less "mature" versions in that it is the practicing of care, responsibility, knowledge and respect for the life of the beloved and their personal growth. It is mature to accept the nature of the human condition—that we are isolates, that we are fallible—and to wish for a loving relation that is a fusion with an Other while retaining individual integrity. Mature love combines knowledge of a psychological, intellectual, objective Other with whom one wishes (needs) to become involved with the recognition that what one loves in the beloved are human not individual qualities—that everyone has the same needs and everyone would satisfy them in the same (fallible) ways. Such mature love is an art, something that calls for assiduous practice if it is to be successful: for rationality, discipline, patience, concern, humility, confidence, and courage. Indeed, it seems that Fromm's love is a *consequence* of a rational worldview: all are human, all are individual, all are needy and fallible, all are brothers. Holding this in mind, and disciplining oneself to concentrate on the Other before one, one can escape the narcissism of solipsism—of thinking one's personal or habitual perspective is the only one, or special. One finds, instead, that in meeting the beloved Other, one is, as it were, face to face with an individual instance of the human condition. Fromm's "art of loving" thus seems interestingly to reverse various processes. A virtuous and mature love is a rational appreciation of human objectivities before it is "mystical"; it is a universal human engagement before it is a particular encounter; and it is a self-discipline before it is fusion of individual integrities. There is more here of the Hebrew Bible and its training of desire than there is of a Platonic fulfillment whose natural, desirous ascent delivers virtue and truth, alongside a "modern" appreciation of the human condition (after Freud, Sartre, and Nietzsche) whose inevitable fallibilities may nevertheless be managed by a mature consciousness.

According to Alain Badiou, love is an adventure beyond habit and convention brought about by an emotional event: the eruption into *ego*'s life of an Other. This event sets *ego* on a quest and occasions a new need. *Ego* now desires to know this new Other—to see the world from the Other's perspective—and to be with the Other: ego experiences the world differently. Through trust and mutual work, the relation can be made to endure. The virtue here is contained in the lesson in otherness: love teaches *ego* the truth about difference and *ego* recognizes how the Other must remain themselves for the relationship to work. And ultimately this is a lesson not only about one individual Other but about a universe of Others, and about the nature of individual being. Love is an exercise in universalism, potentially at least. There are, however, two important caveats. First, subjective solitude is an ontological fact, and while love may "encompass" individual difference, erecting a bridge between solitudes, the bridge is fragile and there is

no ultimate transcendence. Second, hatreds remain. Individuals will always hate some human others, and political relations rather than loving ones must manage these situations. The path that Badiou follows here from emotional attraction to universal respect is a Platonic one, while the political limitations that he envisages recall interventions from Aristotle, Rorty, Forster, and others. It is not clear, however, why the difference that *ego* recognizes in a beloved should not be a conventional one—should be a recognition of unique individual otherness as against symbolic otherness ("feminine," "beautiful," "youthful," "black")—nor is it clear why a loving desire should occasion a wish to see the world from the perspective of the beloved; and nor, finally, why some must remain hated enemies. If love is ultimately an impersonal, ontological lesson concerning individual identity, and an exercise in universalism, then one might argue that only he or she who has never loved, or only loved imperfectly, would necessarily continue to have enemies. Why should not any Other "erupt" into *ego*'s life with an individual perspective that is lovable?

For Luce Irigaray also, to love is to reach out to an Other who is irreducibly different. Conventional words and practices from *ego*'s habitual culture will not manage this, nor be able truly to express the attraction *ego* feels. *Ego* must therefore transgress any forms of engaging the world that he or she has learned to hope to accommodate the unique encounter with an Other: to perceive in ways that do not simply reproduce the same and "know" the Other in a pre-determined way. Otherness is an irradiated presence that *ego* experiences. It might be attractive or repulsive—or even neutral. The virtue, however, is to accept that to encompass that experience it is necessary to cultivate a new language and new interactional practices. For that irradiation has its source in an alien body and the presence of a unique individual being. To attend to that other being virtuously it is necessary to open oneself up to the specificity of the moment of meeting and to create categories of the sensible and the intellectual that accord with that momentary specificity—and so possibly accede to new, real, and unknown meanings. One must determine to be—to feel, to know, to listen, to speak, to act—fully in the moment of the loving encounter and overcome one's instincts for cultural habits. The new loving relation is a kind of dialectic: an approach and a withdrawal; a "touching" of senses (visual, acoustic, skinny) between distinct bodies; a spatiality and temporality that are neither linear nor repetitive. The key characteristic of this new relation may be silence, and the dialectic may end in a standstill. To love is to experience and to endure the difference of Being, Irigaray concludes. But there is the abiding virtue of remaining self-conscious: respecting mutual otherness and loving difference whose union can never be fusion.

I admire Luce Irigaray's "program" of love as I have said. Her vision incorporates a recognition of individuality and a respect. More precisely she is concerned with how, in their freedom, human beings may cultivate a kind of action and interaction that does justice to individuality and the moments in which it is encountered *through concepts, words, and acts that transcend extant cultural systems of symbolic classification*. The desire to manage this derives from experiencing the radiance of the physical presence of an Other; then reasoning that this radiance is engendered by an irreducible and unique individual otherness; and then determining to remain self-conscious about this individuality, both the Other's and one's own. The form of loving relationality that follows may be characterized more by silence than utterance, by non-repetition and non-linearity: a mutual engaging that is a tentative, ongoing approach and withdrawal.

But, as was leveled against Badiou, why should the radiance of the Other be experienced as a non-conventional difference: as an epiphany that transcends and recontextualizes a culture's category thinking? After all, the history of human loving has, by Irigaray's own admission, largely taken the form of a false, "non-loving" engagement. The answer seems to hinge on Irigaray's insistence on *openness*: on being authentically open at and to the moment of the loving encounter. As with Levinas, being "open"—and virtuous—means *ego* being honest with himself or herself about the *scale* of this event. *Ego* is deceiving himself or herself—and hence traducing the Other—if the event and the experience of meeting otherness are merely seen as reproductions of the same: as compatible with and encompassable by a cultural habitus. No reproducible conventional forms—words, behaviors, concepts, categories—can honestly do the experience justice. And, as with Kierkegaard, to be true to the moment, *ego* must henceforward determine to cultivate a being in the world that *continues* to attend honestly—"lovingly," "virtuously"—to the memory of that moment and the truth it revealed. "Loving speech" is an avowal to be true to the radiance of an Other's "beloved" yet ultimately elusive presence.

But does this suggest a program? To her credit, Luce Irigiaray does talk of the final need move from a recognition of and respect for the *nature* of (individual) Being back to *culture*: to a form of universalizable social exchange. But how is the *scale* of the event, the epiphany—the uniqueness of a meeting with a unique Other—to be thus universalized? Again, can love figure as a *universal* ethos of civil practice, a civic virtue, whereby an epiphanous recognition of individuality translates into respect for individual otherness *as a way of life*?

The wide and long literature on love has offered divergent interpretations of love's nature; and we have met different advocations of love's possible efficacy within an ethical program. At the risk of further reducing a complex

history to the point where true detail is lost, the history of interventions on love turn on a number of crucial contrasts:

- (A) love is a matter of individual discovery, of openness to personal experience; as against (B) love being a matter of collective belonging, adhering to a tradition and following its injunctions loyally.
- (C) love is a matter of *ego* fulfilling desires, or pursuing a vision; as against (D) love being a matter of controlling those desires, learning how truly to see as a consequence of restraint.
- (E) love is a matter of a direct or advertent mission; as against (F) love being an inadvertent matter, an indirect consequence of action toward other ends.
- (G) love is a matter of coming to join with an Other; as against (H) love being a matter of keeping a respectful distance from an Other.
- (I) love is a matter of self-focus and self-gratification; as against (J) love being a matter of attending predominantly to an Other.
- (K) love is an intrinsically particularizing and privileging recognition; as against (L) love being essentially a universal, impartial engagement.
- (M) love is an event whose nature remains fixed; as against (N) love being a process or project whose nature evolves, transforming, say, from an emotional to a rational appreciation.

For example:

i.   One interpretation of love ("Aristotle") might be glossed as: "To know oneself and gratify one's desires it is necessary to engage Others who are recognized and treated as equivalents to oneself," in which characteristics (A), (C), (F), (G), (K), and (M) inhere.
ii.   Another gloss ("the Hebrew Bible") might be: "To be tribal is to act universally: in order to belong to the virtuous in-group, all outsiders must be treated morally as equal individual Others." Here, characteristics (B), (D), (F), (H), and (I) belong, also (L) and (M).
iii. A third gloss ("Peter Murphy") is: "An Other is loved because of a third party which Self and Other both relate to and which calls for them to treat one another well, equally." Characteristics (A), (C), (F), and (G) belong here, also (L) and (M).
iv.   A fourth gloss ("Friedrich Nietzsche") is: "By loving oneself, one's fate, one's life, and dedicating oneself to its control and perfectibility, one gives space and respect to those who are equally masterful and noble within their individual lives." Here are characteristics (A), (D), (F), (H), and (I), also (N).

v. Then a fifth gloss ("Plato"): "Pursuing a desire leads an individual inexorably from a physical relationship to an abstract one and from a particular relationship to a general one such that all is seen in its proper, true identity and relationality." Characteristics (A), (C), (F) and (I) are present here, also (L) and (N).

vi. And a sixth ("Erich Fromm"): "Disciplining one's desires is an art in which greater proficiency affords greater self-knowledge and self-restraint and generosity, culminating in a rational appreciation of the individual Other." Characteristics (A), (D), (E), (G), (J), and (K) belong here, also (N).

vii. And a seventh ("Mike Martin"): "From a first, passive emotion, one learns to assume responsibility for sustaining patterns of acts and thoughts that foster emotions conducive to love." Characteristics (E), (G), (I), (K), and (N) inhere.

viii. An eighth ("Alain Badiou"): "Being spontaneous, being open to the moment of meeting the Other, can lead to an authentic appreciation of different perspectives and identities." Characteristics (A), (E), (G), (J), and (K) are to be found here, also (N).

ix. And finally, a ninth gloss ("Luce Irigaray"): "Being honest about the irruption into one's life of an Other, the radiance experienced, can lead to a search for a new life-world (feelings, words, actions) to accommodate that otherness without traducing it." I find characteristics (A), (D), (E), (H), and (J) here, also (K) and (N).

This book began by recounting an episode in the life of Leonard Woolf that he described as unforgettable and transformatory. Instructed as a boy to drown a group of new-born puppies, he experienced the presence of an individuality inherent in each of the living bodies that he deemed to be intrinsically the same "I" as inhered in himself: each was "a particle indestructible except by death" (1969: 48). The episode was an epiphany and Woolf determined to remain true to it: thenceforward to lead a life respectful of the individualities of that which lived around him.

Extrapolating from this episode in Woolf's life, I have proposed a "loving appreciation" that is born from an event, an experience of individual otherness, that has the force of removing *ego* from an "habitual" existence—engaging with the world by way of classificatory schema that define conventionally, reduce and limit—and instead insists on engaging, with respect, the true individual strangenesses of the world. How, I have been asking throughout, might such epiphanous moments be universalized—from Woolf's experience to a human one—and how might the effects of such moments perdure, resisting the impulse to retreat to convenient stereotypes, to follow habitual conventions, or else to gratify instinctual distaste for (or condescension to, or

fear of) the Other? An answer has been that it is a matter of a unilateral moral discipline on the part of an individual who remains aware of the unavoidable presence of the Other. Another answer that love must be a practice taught and learnt within the institutionalism of a social ethics of care. And another that love must be enshrined in the legal and procedural framework of a civil society of individual human rights. Or else a combination of these propositions, as, say, the British National Health Service can ideally be construed as effecting. How should the argument proceed?

Writings in the history of "love" have offered distinct orientations both to the questions I would ask and to the answers suggested. I have been imagining the civic virtue of loving recognition as a kind of explicit program; whereas others, echoing Mandeville's and Smith's notion of an invisible hand operating to moral effect in human social life, have prescribed love's virtuosity in terms of indirection: an inadvertent matter of action toward other ends (such as self-gratification or tribal belonging or furthering a cause). And again, I have been conceiving of love as an event and process whose nature remains fixed. *Ego* might grow in loving perspicacity—becoming more able to recognize and attend to the individuality of a growing number of human beings—but here was a matter of prolonging or rehearsing an epiphanous moment of recognition whose loving nature remained the same. In contrast to this, other interpretations, from Plato's to those of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Dilman, Martin, Fromm, and Irigaray, have prescribed love as a process whose nature evolves. From passion to reason, perhaps; or from passive emotion to an active engendering of emotion; or again, from surface desire to deep knowledge and fusion; or from a physical attraction to an abstract and spiritual one; or from a superficial accommodation of the Other to a refashioning of one's entire life world. How should these historical approaches be now accommodated to my project? In particular, how might I incorporate an emphasis on the possible *indirection* and *processualism* of love?

I take this as cue to change register once more, from a literary-philosophic appraisal to an empirical account of particular ethnographic cases.

Chapter 11

Love's Devices

Stanley Spencer's metaphysical faith in love and his linking of this to experience of the horrors of the First World War have already been described. For Spencer there was something fundamentally practical in love: "If you put on your paint with love it won't come off; if you kiss a whore with love you won't get the pox" (Spencer, cited in Rothenstein 1984: 106). Love came in different degrees and forms but all were a joyful inheritance of the human condition, Spencer insisted: the ghastliness of fighting and killing could be overcome if everyone expressed their differences instead in love. In his painting Spencer would offer a guide to how humanity might make a beloved world a lived-in, everyday reality; also a portrayal of the beneficial outcome of such loving expression, of a world seen through the lens of love.

Teaching love became his life-project. The Great War might have ended but what ensued proved that no lesson had been learned. From army to church to society one found the same regimentation, the same narrow codification of individual life and expression. It obstructed the realization of a beloved world and his teaching of it. Spencer wrote, in 1938:

> Existing laws and conventions interfere to a serious degree with my paintings. My art depends on emotions and wishes. If they are interfered with my work suffers. I know the excellence of these wishes. I know the powers these wishes have. It is ghastly that my art should be made subject to what vulgarity happens to lay down in law and morality. Such values, applied to my pictures, are quite inadequate to elucidate their true meaning. . . . I feel that I am actually discovering a hoard of significant meanings to life, but am being hampered in my task. The intention of all my work is towards happiness and peace. (Cited in Pople 1991: 381–2)

In 1945, after spending the Second World War as an official war artist in the Glasgow shipyards, Spencer would again write of being filled with a sense of longing to be united with the world going on "full strength" around him. It was his source of greatest joy and he "longed to join in, to declare and make known" (2016: 27). To "join in" and become "a part" was to recognize that something outside himself *was* nevertheless himself: "outside hims" (Spencer 2016: 38). Beyond difference was sameness, beyond apartness was a common universal belonging. The key was how one looked. In a phrasing that recalls both Georg Simmel's faith in the glancing look—"perhaps the most direct and purest reciprocity that exists anywhere"—and Emmanuel Levinas's moral urging to stare—"with a straightforwardness devoid of trickery or evasion"—Spencer could exclaim: "there's nothing like seeing: talking can go to the winds, then" (2016: 76). To see was to recognize how human beings were possessed of a "spiritual homing instinct" that allowed them to find lodgments, nesting places, in the world beyond themselves and that in turn enabled them to "bring out the sense and purpose" of the things they became at home with (Spencer 2016: 46). There was something Platonic here, too: the loving look led from individual being to whole Being and from concrete instance to abstract Form. Did not the walnut tree in the garden lead a "polyamorous life," Spencer observed, its leaves, trunk, and roots occupying such different spaces, crossing apparent boundaries between humanly designated properties? Did not the thrush that crossed between walnut tree, yew tree, and pear, "love indiscriminately"? To see lovingly so as to join in was to make "a new kind of contact with life": to become a "seer," indeed. Through such loving looking one came to occupy apparently "ungetatable places," to transcend "discrimination," to realize one's part in "the Grand Vision," even to "walk with God" (Spencer 2016: 37–9). Not only Simmel, Levinas, and Plato, then, but Adam Smith: echoes of the consummation that sympathy may effect. Beyond the limitations, regulations, classifications, identifications, and separations of societal laws and cultural conventions one might see the world whole, clear, and unmistakable, and make a home there, turning all that appeared to exist outside oneself into one's "lovers."

Elsewhere I have also compared Spencer to Nietzsche for the force of will with which each realized a life-project. Both succeeded in leading lives that reflected a personal metaphysic, exercising a power over trajectories and ends, an "artistry," such that they were not deflected by force of circumstance (Rapport 2003a). It strikes me now that the way Spencer personally practiced "love" for the world echoes the way in which Nietzsche imagined how an Overman, the master of his or her fate, would love. Nietzschean love was a brotherhood of respect between those similarly entrained on a personal life-course. Spencer's love of the world was also one in which he was the sainted teacher (the new Adam or Christ) and others (his wife Hilda, his daughters)

become idealized figures, phantasms, more than flesh and blood—as though Platonic forms of his own masterful staging.

What has been learned, however, since Stanley Spencer's work and life were first offered as a moral case study (and placed alongside the case of a working hospital under the rubric of the UK National Health Service)? How might we now reflect, in particular, on the distance that seems to exist between the teaching of a loving engagement with the world that Spencer felt called on to execute (after epiphanous experience of human warring and of human sexual relations) and his own apparent narrow selfishness? Spencer's case study, I suggest, reveals, the way in which love's virtuosity may entail *indirection*— loving recognition as an inadvertent matter of action toward other ends—and also reveals loving recognition as a *process* whose nature evolves—such as from an emotional state to a more ratiocinative one. There are what might be termed "devices" to love: to imagine loving recognition working as a form of civic virtue is also to consider it as an end that employs means whose character or ethos may not be ostensibly or primarily loving.

Some of the processualism and indirectness possibly involved in a loving recognition has already been intimated:

- *By way of a "loving" allegiance to a common cause or a faith*, in the context of a socially instituted and sanctioned relationship of loyalty, one may come indirectly to recognize and respect the identity of the Other with whom one works or finds oneself consociated.
- *As a consequence of individuals pursuing their own needs, interests and ends*, and by virtue of the human equivalence or commensurateness of these, a generalized "loving" engagement may emerge as if by the work of an invisible hand, whereby each participant in the "market" of emotional exchange gains the "recognition" of personal gratification.
- Love often takes the form of a particulate emotional meeting with an individual Other who affords *ego* happiness and also self-awareness. In the process, *ego* learns to recognize and respect individual integrity. Continuing desire for the individual Other maintains the relation and the respective well-being of its particular participants, and *whereas such desire is a human universal*, an ethical society as a collection of loving dyads may come into being.
- Love is an ideally emotional ("mystical") adventure beyond sameness to difference. This is consequent upon *ego* being open to the world, and honest with himself or herself about experiences and feelings. When coupled with a mature appreciation of the human condition and human nature— how we are fallible and frail singletons—*the emotional advent of otherness may proceed to a rational work*: to finding a language of engagement that

touches otherness but does not threaten its integrity, and to building up trust without giving in to routine forms that claim to incorporate and limit.

In line with such appreciation of the possible devices of loving recognition, it will be useful explicitly to explore the way in which the epiphanous moment of "first love"—the moment of vision in which one espies the individuality of the Other—might be coupled with or become party to a *process* that departs in nature as well as form from that epiphany. It will be useful explicitly to explore the way in which love as a program of civil engagement might be characterized by *indirection*, its ethical effects being achieved through means only indirectly linked to loving.

LOVING AND DOMINOES, NATURE AND FATE

Walking up a hill from the River Clyde and the shipyards one day during the Second World War, Stanley Spencer came upon the Port Glasgow cemetery, with its fine views of the river, the town, and the environing landscape. He was enchanted by the aspect. Port Glasgow disclosed:

> inward, surging meaning, a kind of joy, that I longed to get closer to and understand and in some way fulfil; and I felt that all this life and meaning was somehow grouped round, and in some way led up to, the cemetery on the hill outside the town. (Spencer, cited in Hyman 1991: 80)

"I knew then that the Resurrection would be directed from that hill," Spencer concluded, and he set about another series of pictures featuring Port Glasgow cemetery and people "resurrecting" into a world of loving recognition. From the series, this is "The Resurrection, Port Glasgow" (1947–1950):

Figure 11.1   *The Resurrection, Port Glasgow*, by Stanley Spencer (1891–1959), 1947–1950 (oil on canvas 215 x 665 cm). *Source*: Tate Gallery, London. © Estate of Stanley Spencer. All rights reserved Bridgeman Images.

Spencer appreciated that the resurrection of dead people—the rebirth of those who had been dead to the world by virtue of their unloving appreciation of its condition—might seem like a *distortion* of how, conventionally, the world seemed—a distortion of how human beings ordinarily behaved toward one another, a distortion of how individual bodies normatively appeared—but here, none the less, was the world of beings and relations as they truly, holistically—and beautifully—were.

The poem, "Resurrection on Tewskesbury High Street: After Stanley Spencer," by Helena Goddard, begins with the words:

"Then you and I let all impediments
Fall, threw off the rags that covered our Eden;
And when I woke, people on the High Street
Walked naked, stripped of the criticisms
We fasten to humans." (2017: 35)

"The criticisms we fasten to humans" as being "impediments" I find to be a striking characterization of the limits of category thinking, while the transcendence effected by the loving look is tellingly evoked: as if waking to a world where "rags" are thrown off and individual identities "walk naked." Similarly, the novel *Resurrection*, *Port Glasgow* by Sarah Ward—winner of the Lucy Cavendish Prize, 2017—insightfully brings Stanley Spencer and his loving vision to life in contemporary Scotland: "How could we remain at war if we expressed physical love for each other? How one could consider religion as something external when one truly saw the life in the individuals around one?" (Ward 2018). The effects of Stanley Spencer's art—the "lessons in love" that have been perceived by viewers of his images both during his lifetime and continuing to the present day—have also been documented, above. But it also strikes me now how Spencer's images can be approached as *devices* toward loving recognition. Whatever the distance and disjunction between the paintings and Spencer's own behavior, the imagery has a life apart, only indirectly connected to its creator. Recalling arguments of Tolstoy, Silverman, and Rorty, above, we may also usefully consider images among love's devices, powerfully invoking in their audience processes of ethical perception. "Spencer's work inspires forgiveness and encourages hope," is the conclusion of contemporary artist Karl Musson (2015); the images are as important in the contemporary context of widespread terroristic violence as they were in Spencer's own time of world war.

To explore these possible insights further, I turn at this point away from Stanley Spencer and his audience to another ethnographic case study, this time set in a rural village and valley in the north of England. "Wanet" was the site of

a piece of field research that I conducted in the early 1980s, as a student of anthropology in my mid-twenties, hoping to understand the workings of local social life and the nature of its interactions (Rapport 1993, 1994b, 2002).

Famed for its beauty and history, Wanet is part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park; it represents, indeed, a touristic "hot spot." In the summer months, the valley's 650 inhabitants (and the 250 residents of the main village) can find themselves outnumbered by "offcomers" or "off-comed-uns," those who have come to Wanet from "off," from outside. These outsiders are both visitors (occupying the valley's pubs and campsites and B&Bs) and they are new residents, buying holiday homes in Wanet or retiring here or simply domiciled while commuting to jobs in the city, or working online. Other, less than wholly polite, terms deployed by Wanet locals for these outsiders— indeed, increasingly pejorative—were "Herdwicks," a reference to the breed of (shaggy) sheep whose home is the Lake District (an even more touristy area of Britain), also "long-haired Arabs," and "Hebrew desert-rats": further monikers for those who did not know their proper place, and who "trailed" away from where they were born and bred (if they had ever had such a natural affiliation in the first place).

I was labeled all these things when I first arrived in Wanet (unannounced and uninvited) as a young student. I explained myself as undertaking a college project on the recent history of the dale: how local lives in Wanet had altered over the past century. But I immediately aroused suspicion, a stranger from the city, and surprisingly persistent, hanging round the pubs and the shops and the church hall, trying to join in. I was also labeled "Joshua": a reference to the beard I initially wore, and also a biblical allusion to the spy sent by Moses to reconnoiter the "promised land" of Canaan. A local rumor— half believed—was that a member of the Baader-Meinhof terrorist gang had reconnoitered Wanet in years past: maybe my motives were terroristic, or at least as underhand. There was humor in this and the other designations that I first encountered, but also a signaling of threat, and a clear demarcating of boundaries.

Much of the "teasing" took place in the village pub, The Eagle, where I would park myself in the evening and hope for a game of darts or dominoes with the local regulars. I would hear the latter joking aloud about the need to institute a Wanet Republican Army—modeled on the IRA, and on those militants in Wales who had taken to burning down the holiday homes of English absentee owners—with sentries being placed on the Wanet hilltops, and a chain of command with local "bigmen" at the helm. There was also an insistence, publicly vented, that sooner or later those from outside who "plagued" Wanet with their unwanted presence—swamping the pubs and shops, sending up the prices of local property, introducing urban vulgarities

and promiscuities—would eventually come to the realization that the hard work and the rude health and the stamina needed to survive on Wanet land and in Wanet weather and through a Wanet calendar were not things for which offcomers were physically or psychologically or genetically fit.

Sid Askrig, a local builder, odd-job man (and ex-boxer), middle-aged, and a "big" local character, was acting as something of a local gatekeeper, then, when he cornered me behind a table in an alcove of The Eagle one evening, and subjected me to an interrogation. While his local companions looked on from a respectful distance and grinned, Sid informed me that he had made phone calls about me and had seen through my lies: he had my measure and my continuing presence in Wanet was on sufferance only. When he and his fellows had enough of me, he would be happy personally to supervise my being kicked out again. Then, interspersed by my rather frail responses, Sid proceeded with his questioning:

Sid: So tell me, Nigel. What's your aim in life? what right have you got to exist?
Sid: I mean don't you feel a parasite living off society? living off the backs of other people, like me? I know I would
Sid: So where does your money come from then?
Sid: So mostly you live off grant money from someone else then?
Sid: So are you gonna tell all those townies what you learn about country life then?
Sid: I bet there's lots of characters round here to interest you! Lots of real individuals, eh! Like where else could you find a character like me but in the country?
Sid: But aren't you gonna go and write about your experiences here? Aren't you studying something like sociology?

Before concluding:

Sid: I like proving people wrong, Nigel. And proving them right, if they are right. Like, I'd do everything I could to prove you wrong. Just like I would to prove you right. . . . Recently I proved someone wrong by making love to his wife when he was about six feet away. . . . He said there was no one else for his wife but him, and she claimed the same, so I was happy to prove them both wrong! . . . Now then, Nigel: only three people know that: you, me and his wife. But if four people get to know, I'll know where to come looking. Okay? . . . Anyhow. Let's get a drink, lad. Come on. Fancy one?

Sid was not someone with whom I would have chosen to tangle, and the humor in the above exchange escaped me at the time. As it did when Colin invited me to come with him out of the back of the pub for a fist-fight because

he suspected I was "seeing" his (unhappily married) wife. And equally when "Rabbit" suggested a group fight inside the pub, late one Friday evening when the doors had been locked, and Sid usefully recommended that the "teams" for the upcoming contest should be England against Wales: that is to say, all the men present in the pub at the time against me (born in Cardiff).

But in these exchanges, Sid, the self-appointed "gatekeeper," was none the less allowing me a way in, I came to realize. Were I to show him the proper respect—as client to patron, as novitiate to elder—I might also find him to be my source of authentic local gossip, knowledge, and wisdom. Having first shaved off my beard to show I was hiding nothing beneath—no telling scars, no incriminating features from police "Wanted" posters—I did, in fact, go on to become Sid's occasional builder's mate when I acquired local work (first as a waiter at Hattie's Restaurant, but then) as a farm-laborer for Fred and Doris Harvey on Cedar High Farm. I also came to appreciate the insecurities that Sid felt bedeviled by, financial and marital: the pressures he suffered from, and the escapes he effected. I did, that is, come to find a place in a local and habitual Wanet world of "insiders," learning how to present more of a local face and acquiring something of a legitimate local identity.

However, Tony Harvey's attitude had been different from the start. "Care for a draw?", Tony had asked me one evening as I stood at the bar in the Eagle, after having thrown a few desultory darts at the board. Tony had sauntered up to replenish his beer, from the "dominoes' table." This, I came to realize, was Tony's usual location in the Eagle, during the many hours and evenings he would spend at the pub after work, drinking and playing round after round of dominoes—the "bones." Everyone knew this was "Tony's seat," indeed, and here he could routinely be found. Tony was a skilled player, and his pleasure was plain to see as, to the accompaniment of the clicking counters, he would chuckle, and suck on his cigarette, and makes drole comments. He enjoyed playing with and against different people—normally in a foursome (of two teams), sometimes with just one other person—and that included strangers to the pub and newcomers to the dale such as me. Occasionally I would afterward meet Tony on his brother Fred's farm, when I came to be the farm-laborer there. But the sense I continued to have of who Tony was—where he was most at home, where he expressed himself most unreservedly—connected entirely to the dominoes' table at the Eagle: chatting, before, during, or after a game of dominoes, taking regular trips to the bar for more drinks, and then to the toilet.

Tony was in his mid-fifties, a widower, and owner of a small hill-farm, up on one of the dale's narrower and more remote tracks. Here he lived with his grown-up daughter, and catered to his flock of Swaledale sheep. House and farm had both seen better days, however, and Tony's emotional investments seemed lodged in the Eagle, as I say, where he came for company and

warmth. More often than not of an evening, he would be seen in the special company of Heather, a widow also in her fifties, seated at the dominoes' table together.

The "dominoes' table" was a large rectangular table, with a small wooden lip so that the dominoes would not fall off when shuffled, or when slammed down in joy or exasperation. Eight people could be accommodated with ease on the benches and wall-seat that encircled it. Situated adjacent to the main door, the table also commanded a view of most of the rest of the pub: not just of whoever would enter by the main door (and would "squeeze" past Tony and the table's occupants as they proceeded in), but also of those who were playing darts and those getting served at the bar, those warming themselves by the open fire and those (episodically) going out the back door to the toilets. Tony's seat at the dominoes' table represented something of a focal point in the pub. From here, Tony might orchestrate the evening's proceedings in this kind of way:

Tony [sauntering up to the bar and finding Robby waiting for a refill]: Now, here's my mate! Game of "bones," Robby? Fancy a draw-in? Heather and me, and Doris, were thinking of having a draw.
Robby [receiving his pint of bitter from Maggie, the barmaid]: Aye, Tony! Don't mind if I do, don't mind if I do.
Tony: Nigel? Sid? What about you? Up for a game? [Tony raises his eyebrows quizzically, to which Sid nods and I grin. Tony then slaps Robby on the back and walks with him over to the dominoes' table. Heather is already seated there, chatting to Doris; and Walter is perched on the end wall-seat].
Walter: God, I'm in the dominoes' place! [Walter looks about him in feigned shock as Tony, Robbie, Sid and Nigel descend on him, and realizing that Heather and Doris are seated there by prior assignation].
Sid: Aye! So why don't you bugger-off out of it, Walter Brownlea? This is the dominoes' table. Go and sit somewhere else!
Heather: Draw-in if you like, Walter?
Tony: Aye! Do you want to draw-in, Walter? You'll have to get a partner, mind, 'cos there are about six of us already [Tony looks about him].
Henry [walking over from the back room]: Can I draw in for a game? Oh, looks like there's enough of you already. Never mind: carry on without me. I had a game of darts lined up anyway.
Tony: Why don't you draw in with Walter, Henry, and that makes eight?
Walter: No. Thanks, but I think I'll go over to darts. . . . You've some courage, Nigel, playing dominoes with these sharks! I admire you [he grins].
Sid: Yeah: "Bite yer legs off"! Nay: be off with you, Brownlea!
Doris: Sorry, I'm facing the wrong way now we're starting. I like to watch everything that's happening. Like: who's chatting to who. Or who's looking twined! [Doris laughs and pushes her way round the table to sit facing into the pub]

For Tony and others alike, playing dominoes was a pleasant and "legitimate" way to be in the pub of an evening, then, offering a conventional focus to local socializing. It was also to provide me with a route into local relations. Largely through Tony's good offices—his invitation to draw-in—I found a way to be in the Eagle that was locally acceptable. Seated at the dominoes' table, playing the "bones," I was party to the gossiping even when I was otherwise not versed in a language of topical and public debate. It felt like a welcome form of belonging, a haven even. Moreover, I found that it was a deliberate practice on Tony's part, to recognize people in this way and to include them in his social life at the Eagle, as he was to explain to me as our relationship developed:

Tony: I'll play "doms" with anyone, won't I, Heather? And let anyone join in the draw. Not like some people who'll just play with old friends and refuse to play with anyone new. No: I'll play with anyone. Except on Sunday nights when a friend of mine comes over from Leyton; and it's widely known that then we play together on the little table over there! . . . I don't know why we do it, but we always have done, and now it's just for old times' sake. It's a tradition, eh Heather? Yes: tradition.

Tony's "tradition" was to practice an inclusive ethos. As he elaborated:

I like doms because you can sit and talk and be sociable at the same time.

And:

Have you enjoyed the evening, lad? I like just sitting quiet and I often need a sit-down after standing working all day, eh? And it's the playing not the winning which is the important part of an enjoyable evening.

And again:

When was that night we were playing here, Nigel? With Henry and all? That was a super night! I really enjoyed myself. More than ever. . . . Just a quiet night and no-one in the pub. . . . You know, Nigel: I thought later that was one of the best nights of my life! Really! One of the best nights of my life. . . . A quiet evening of dominoes. Just great. Right?

I could share this sentiment with and through Tony. I came to experience a being-in-Wanet—usually at the Eagle, and usually there playing dominoes—as a kind of beneficent and beneficial "loving recognition." While for others, such as Sid, belonging entailed placement in a local classificatory schema of symbolic positions—me as a builder's mate, a farm-laborer, an offcomer, a resident of Cedar High Farm, a "young buck," a client, and so on—for

Tony it was different. He seemed secure in a life that graciously and casually included others in the circle of what he most cherished: relaxing at the pub over a game and a drink and a smoke. Anyone might be thus included. This was a lesson, indeed, that Tony was keen that I should learn explicitly:

Tony: Nigel and Molly win again. . . . Why did we ever teach Nigel the "bones"!
Nigel: It's a rum do!
Trevor: What's that! A "rum do"? [he chuckles] You picking up the local talk, Nigel! . . . [laughing] Nay, what a Sadducee and a Pharisee you are Nigel, for sure! A Sadducee and a Pharisee.
Sid: "Parasite" you mean!
Tony: "Stupid boy," Nigel! [grinning, he mimics a catchphrase from a TV comedy serial, *Dad's Army*: a term of affectionate dismissal extended by a pompous old man towards an incompetent but harmless young one]
Dave [wandering over from the dartboard]: Don't wear Nigel out with dominoes. He's got a hard day again tomorrow on the farm!
Trevor: What? You can't get tired from dominoes; it's mental work.
Dave: Well, I certainly get tired! . . . God! Tony and Heather and Trevor and Sid— that's a dominoes' super-league you're playing with, Nigel! Watch out!
Sid: So you'll have had another "hard" day today on the farm, Nigel, eh?
Nigel: Not too bad.
Tony: You know, Nigel isn't asked often enough to draw in for a game. People forget too often to ask you, Nigel. But you should just come and barge in if you want a game, eh? Like old Mick Blythe did last night. Just come over and say you want a game. Okay? [I grin appreciatively]

A year later, as I prepared now to leave Wanet, Tony and I reprised our initial meeting leaning beside one another at the Eagle bar—refilling our glasses before another round at the dominoes' table. Tony now took the opportunity to make plain to me the kind of "life philosophy" that he espoused, and the kind of relationality he felt we had shared:

> You seem to like Wanet, Nigel, and I've enjoyed your company. You look like you could be here for good: people either love it here or hate it, and you seem to love it. You're not as daft as you look! . . . Maybe this is a stupid speech and I'm not saying it the right way, but I think you and I share a philosophy of life. I mean some people come here and understand nothing of our way of life but you've kept your eyes open: you know, you've been privileged in being allowed to see these aspects of village life. . . . Like, something I really admire in village life is that there's always someone to help you out, even do your work for you if necessary. Recently I was ill and without asking me or expecting pay, someone stepped in and did my work for me! Before, once, everyone was like this, you know. You walked down the street, you knew everyone, and you would help them all—without thinking about what you were getting out of it. And my recipe of life has always been to give and to help others. I'm not religious and

I'd help someone of any religion—Protestant, Jewish, whatever—as a fellow human being; religious differences are no big problem, see. Because most folks are good; you get a few bad buggers, but most are good; and from them you'll get a return, sometime and in some form, even if at first you don't recognize it as such. . . . Always sow a seed. It's pleasant in itself, it makes you feel good, whatever else might come of it. . . . But, you know, in the last ten years it's changed. Because there's been people moving in intent on grabbing all they can for themselves but not keen on working for the benefit of the village; and putting nowt back. They're simply here for their own profit, not for helping the village as a whole, or the dale of Wanet. But helping's the important thing. These folks are content to exploit the ancient name of the dale and all its features, but they're just using it to line their own pockets. See lad? They just grab what they can for themselves, without a real feeling for the village or the dale. All this happened in the last ten years, see, and they certainly haven't helped the village. . . . Now you know I'm an honest man and I speak my mind and this is just what I feel. . . . Anyway, back to the "bones," lad? Doris and Fred next. These two might be hard to shift! What do you think?

Even when I knew him in the 1980s, Tony seemed relatively frail—tall, but stiff-kneed and with a smoker's cough—and he would have had to undertake the heavy work of managing his hill-farm, in all weathers, relatively alone. When, recently, I returned to Wanet, I found Tony's gravestone in the village churchyard. But also, in the Eagle, and overlooking the dominoes' table, there was a mounted photograph of Tony: him at his seat, "bones" in hand, and beer glass beside him, considering his next move:

Figure 11.2   Tony Harvey at the Dominoes' Table. *Source*: Author's photograph.

I do not mean to sentimentalize Tony Harvey, or my relationship with him. I did, however, experience his behavior in Wanet as distinct: him practicing a moral inclusiveness that entailed a "loving" recognition of individual others. How was he able?

I did meet Tony in a number of locations, and situations, around Wanet. My farm-laboring took place on his brother's farm, as I have said, and I would episodically see him there as he drove by to collect a newspaper or groceries; it was his role, too, to kill and butcher any lambs of the farm that were deemed surplus. Once I met him at his own farmhouse when I drove up his isolated road in a vain attempt to help him locate sheep that had got lost in a snow storm. However, the dominoes' table was our main, and significant, meeting point, where I found myself included within the "society" of the dominoes' game simply as "Nigel."

I have intimated that playing dominoes provided something of a foundation for sociality at the Eagle: recognized as an appropriate way of spending time in the pub while also drinking and chatting. But more than this, the games of dominoes gave a specific form to social interaction, a certain grammar of exchange: playing dominoes at the dominoes' table possessed a rhythm and a setting that framed and situated whatever else (chatting, drinking, observing neighbors) one may be doing. Needless to say, such a foundation of sociality was so routine to pub regular as to go largely unremarked. Nevertheless, the playing ushered in a social space with an assured ethos of its own: bounded, small-scale, tranquil, mannered, cordial—and exciting. It was a space safely removed from the bustle of the rest of the pub and also, to an extent at least, from the conventions (the complexities and limitations) of the social worlds beyond the game. Playing dominoes had its own form of politeness in which other kinds of social contest—other alliances and other disputes, other likes and dislikes—did not intrude.

One might characterize this as a kind of silence. As a grammar of exchange, playing dominoes provided a silent environment, not only in the sense that it was unremarkable in its routineness and in the sense that it could be undertaken "silently" (while at the same time it accommodated other conversation), but also in the sense that it silenced a workaday world of social relations, histories, and associations that were rendered irrelevant. I am reminded of Luce Irigaray's description of a "way of love" as a form of exchange characterized by silence. The unknown and unknowable Other is approached and attended by way of a tentative stepping forward and back—approaching and retreating without presumption—and by an avoidance of language that codified according to convention. The language of love, for Irigaray, is invented to accommodate particular protagonists and particular moments. Playing dominoes on the dominoes' table in the Eagle pub did not entail inventing a new language, but it was a "loving" form, comfortable and comforting, able to accommodate

newness and difference: it enabled relative strangers to be approached and included politely and *in silence*, distracted by the rules and rhythms of play (including the routine clacking of "the bones" on the table surface).

Moreover, there *is* a way to state that playing dominoes involved the invention of a new language: new to each protagonist. A skilled player such as Tony came to fashion a knowledge of how each opponent might play his or her pieces (as in chess): the style of his or her attack and defence, the significance of their playing certain dominoes at certain times. In order to accommodate someone who might become a regular "member" of the dominoes' table, whether as team-member or opponent, Tony would take the time to learn a new "language" of play, helping him calculate the likelihood of who was holding which counters (and which ones were probably lying unused still, "sleeping," in the middle of the table). Admittedly, there was a randomness to some players' style, such as beginners' or that of Stewart—a jolly man, often at the pub, who had learning difficulties—which meant that their strategizing could not be gauged: "Stewart is hard to follow for everyone, 'cos there's no system to his play; like, he's got no method at all," Tony admitted. Usually, however, a skilled dominoes player such as Tony was able to extend to Anyone the courtesy of inviting them into a social exchange comprising a comfortable togetherness—a physical and social intimacy that was not intrusive, that was not necessarily personal (in that each player could concentrate on the game in silence, the game providing a kind of neutral third space)—that was at the same time absolutely individual in the "language" of dominoes deployed. And Tony *did* extend such invitations—and attention, and recognition—to Anyone, including strangers such as myself.

It would not be inappropriate to describe the silence of playing dominoes as a kind of indirectness, then: an invisible hand at play. The protagonists come together "lovingly"—with integrity and privacy—but also in a way unwittingly. They are physically assembled around the table, they are intellectually and emotionally invested in playing out the game in a skillful and winning way, and in the process, accidentally as it were, they provide one another with individual spaces in which to be, spaces in which to maintain individual identities. Games of dominoes provided a conventional form—a polite even anodyne surface—upon which strangers and locals alike might approach one another without compromising their integrity: without having to say too much; without extraneous knowledge; without presumptions of external identities. Dominoes was, after all, merely a game; *and* a loving device.

Dominoes was also a game of chance; and its character of fatefulness was also significant. Ultimately, Tony wanted me to know, "so much in dominoes is the luck of the hand." More than the skills one might acquire, more than the teamwork between cooperative partners, even more than the desire to effect a

certain friendly or polite atmosphere or outcome, was the fact that dominoes was a game of chance, its outcomes in the hands of fate.

After one evening's play at the Eagle, Sid (jokily) bemoaned to the members of the table:

> Well, I don't mind telling you, I'm getting a bit distraught at all the dominoes I'm losing recently. I've tried different partners and it's no help. Look at Trevor, here! A real dead loss! . . . So I'm starting to think it's me!

But Tony reassured him:

> It's like you can't say you're really getting any better or worse, because so much in a game depends on your hand and your partner's, right?

One was not ultimately responsible, Tony insisted. As a game, a device for communication and exchange, removed from the workaday world of ordinary relations in Wanet, dominoes also introduced a kind of fateful realm that gave a distinct coloring to human effort, to the development of skills or the controlling of social interaction. Here, fate held sway. It was a serious admission.

For Sid was not wholly joking, above, and Tony was earnest in his reassurance. Dominoes *was* just a game, but the fatefulness of the play was a significant aspect. It recontextualized local life. How results unfolded on the dominoes' table was not simply according to social proprieties: it was not the good or the respected or the deserving who necessarily triumphed. Nor did results unfold according to a pattern: "normal" winners could not bank on their continued success. And nor did results unfold according to individual diligence or skill, or effort or responsibility or maturity, or in line with other aspects of a willful life-course. A game of dominoes of an evening in the Eagle was a meeting with fate; life recontextualized *sub specie aeternitatis*.

Besides being able to commiserate with Sid about a bad run of luck in his domino-playing—and being earnest in his compassion—Tony, I think, appreciated the fatefulness that playing dominoes ushered in. It was a kind of luxury: to be able to partake of risk, routinely, and without consequence. As a small hill-farmer with poor resources, economic unpredictability was a highly discomforting aspect of workaday existence. Would he continue to eke out a meager living from his flock of hill sheep together with various piece-work jobs? On the dominoes' table, that same unpredictability was something one gained a vantage point upon—came to reflect on, even enjoy—since here winning and losing were not ultimately consequential. Results were "overcome" as soon as the losers bought the winners a round of drinks, and teams broke up and were reassembled. Ultimately, here all triumphed and suffered alike. The fatefulness was leveling, universalizing. Success or failure

at dealing with "the bones" did not correlate in the end with judgments of one's reputation, one's worth, or one's relations with neighbors, families, and friends. Here, all were the same: human, and individual, tending to come by success and by failure in more or less even amounts irrespective of how each was classed, or classed themselves, in terms of skill, diligence, character, learning, or whatever.

I find something of the same realization of scale—of the way in which an individual life was provided a further context, "dislocated" from the efforts of a workaday world, by the force of fate—in Tony's explicit "philosophy of life," as he was keen to describe it to me. In his domino-playing at the Eagle, I have suggested, Tony both extended a welcome to Anyone—something I experienced as a kind of loving engagement—*and* recognized how, "cosmically," all human endeavor, all individual living, was fated to insignificance. There was a time in Wanet, before the arrival from the outside of a new kind of resident, when this latter truth was widely recognized and acted upon. People respected the disparity between their personal lives (and needs) and a truth that existed on a larger scale. Tony alluded to this macrocosm in various ways—"the village as a whole," "the dale of Wanet," "our way of life," "village life," also simply "others," and people of "any religion"—but his "recipe of life" was, and continued to be, to throw a seed into this cosmic space in the anticipation that it would bear moral fruit: help someone in the future; and possibly himself, somehow and in some form. To do justice to life *sub specie aeternitatis*, Tony insisted, was to act in a selfless way: to recontextualize everyday identities in terms of the conditions of life that operated universally and under whose sway Anyone and everyone was fated to serve their time.

Some months previous to disclosing his "philosophy of life," above, and again leaning on the bar in the Eagle, Tony had seen fit to be equally open. He would "bare his soul," requesting me as a largely silent witness:

> What do you think of Kendal, Nigel? It's really mushroomed since I was a kid. A trip there used to be the big day-out of the year! Now the character's changed, what with the industrial estates and big housing estates around it. I still prefer it to Leyton though. Leyton would be nothing without the school being there: it'd be nothing—like Wanet or even smaller. But then the size of Wanet is not what it was. Fewer young people here, 'cos there's no work for them. But then if there were more, it'd change the character of the place! I just don't know the solution, lad—if there is one at all! . . . Mind you: it's the animals I really love—and we're ruining the world for them! Maybe far beyond repair already. I think I can talk to animals, Nigel. [I laugh] No, really. To understand animals, you've just got to think like them. [I nod] Like, recently I rescued a ewe, after that snow fall. I'd found a lamb but no mother. But then when I was helping another one, I looked up and saw the mother: caught in the V of a branch. It was frothing at the mouth,

very weak, and I was sure it would die. But I've fed it at home and cared for her, and now it should recover well. And if it does, you know it'll never leave me till it dies—when I'll make sure it has a good funeral! [We laugh] No: I mean I can kill kittens and that without a thought, but I always feel something for sheep. People say they're stupid, but I feel they know as much as we do, as much as anyone. And they know the lesson of survival: how the species continues to survive. . . . You know I don't really believe in death. There can't be death. There must be lots of lives you have, in some form of "you." That's how people can remember other lives they've had. I mean you might come back as a sheep—or a worm!—but you've got to come back. When I'm buried, or burnt, lad, I won't be dead for long before I'm reincarnated as something. It's not possible, something like death. . . . I'm not a religious man, Nigel, but there must be some directing and controlling force—call it "Nature." It puts the law of survival and the instinct to survive in everything. So I might never meet up with you again, Nigel, but then again there's a chance that I will! You can't really understand it. . . . Like infinity: they say two parallel lines meet at infinity. But we can't really understand that at all. . . . I mean, life is all around us, Nigel. I mean: how many microbes are there in the air between us right now, as we talk?! Millions! So, death isn't possible. Well, I've bared my soul to you tonight, lad! I may have put my foot in it, I don't know [I shake my head]. But that's what I think.

It would be my understanding that the role given to "Nature"—animals, microbes, the world, infinity, death, and reincarnation—in the above peroration, and the respect of Nature, accords with that given to Fate in Tony's world of domino-playing. In both, Tony recognizes dimensions of scale such that the niceties of individual lives, and indeed that of humanity as such, are recontextualized. Viewed amid the world of Nature—of species, of life-forms, of duration, and evolution—human concerns lose their character, their prominence, and their value. As playing dominoes instructs one in the ultimate irrelevance of individual calculation and human planning, and as a village way of life instructs one in the immersion of individual effort within a larger whole, so "the natural world" is indicative of larger truth. An individual life—human life as such—may end but neither is the end. The finiteness of life itself is recontextualized when scaled against Infinity. Why should it not be the case that just as individual life is properly seen incorporated in a community whole, and as human life is incorporated in a kingdom of animals, so life on earth is somehow incorporated in an Infinity that recontextualizes, rescales Death? From the apparently smallest life-form to the apparently largest, all will meet at Infinity. Tony offers a characterization of Fate for my witnessing—whether one chooses to depict it as "religious" or "natural."

And nor was Tony alone in this manner of reflection. Others in Wanet may not have been so open or so detailed in their expositions, but Nature's wholeness and the scale of human life vis-à-vis that of an animal world, a universe

of life, were repeated themes. Fred Harvey, Tony's brother, assured me how being "alone with Nature" was what he loved, working with the sheep and cows up on the high fells; how shepherding must be a very satisfying life if one liked being alone as he did. Doris Harvey, Fred's wife, agreed:

> Nowt beats nature, Nigel: being out on the farm. Being up in the hills with the animals is the best life in all weathers. Because you're busy with a different job every day. And because you have responsibility for so much life. And the animals change every day, especially when it comes up to calving and lambing—each with their different name, and character.

And again:

> I love animals. 'Cos they're human, aren't they? I mean they have feelings. I hate to see them hurt (I mean you have to have your losses). But farming's rewarding because there's new life all the time. Temperamental work, too, always changeable—good years and bad years.

And again:

> I'm not even interested in new dresses. I'm more interested in more realistic things like farming: I could do nothing else unless animals were involved. I love living and breathing things—animals and Nature.

Cyril Hethering, too, was pleased to recount to me during an evening at the village's other pub, The Mitre, how he had once been asked by an elderly Margaret Wick why he did not attend Methodist Chapel. He had explained to her that he:

> did not believe. Or not enough to go to Chapel, anyway, and take up time that I could be out watching Nature's world. See, lad, my chapel is Nature's world. Now, if you watch my eyes, you see they never stop: they follow every movement. So, when I'm driving down the dale in my taxi I see all around me at the same time. Behind me too: I see every movement and I'm always after new ones. I know all the tracks, see. And they're all related, you know lad. So if you see one thing it's a sign that others must also be there somewhere. Nature is a whole, lad.

I was not always convinced that Cyril and others were being as honest or forthright with me as was Tony. I could hear in the above declarations a voicing of sentiments and personae that it might befit members of a farming community beset by urban incomers to advocate publicly. But whether for their own benefits or for mine, the declarations were nevertheless instructive in their form. Life in the village and the valley of Wanet was a life properly

imbued with the knowledge of being part of a larger organic whole. Life in Wanet was a life in Nature: observing, responding, engaging, assisting. Human and animal alike found their identities as part of an ongoing, cyclical process. It was here that individual lives, conventional pieties, and materialistic values, learned their true nature.

Nor, finally, is the advocation of this kind of holism, of fatefulness, of *scaling* of life, particular to Wanet or my experiences there. *Loving Nature* is the title of book by anthropologist Kay Milton (2002), and subtitled *Towards an ecology of emotion*. The book documents the worldwide spread, indeed, of sentiments being voiced such as these I heard in Wanet. The sentiments are by no means new, Milton admits, but what are new are the global (and globalist) environmentalist movements that have been born in recent decades that would promote the sentiments as a political lobby. Yet, Milton also asks why environmentalism is not even more widespread. Given the apparent appreciation of the beauty and majesty of "Nature," the joys that accrue from it and the destruction human practices are inflicting, why is there not more individual and collective passion being shown toward a celebration and marveling at natural history and a despair at its endangerment? Milton's answer is that respect and love for nature are not encouraged or taught—in "the West" in particular—due to the hegemonic place that "rationality" holds, as undergirding public discourse and adult behavior in engagement with "the real." This is coupled with the fact that a scientific worldview does not accord "personhood" to Nature and therefore we can feel no "sense of moral responsibility toward it": "science serves capitalism very well by making the exploitation of nature morally acceptable" (Milton 2002: 53). In short, Milton determines, only those who "survive" social processes of learning to be "rational adults," inhabiting a scientific worldview of "persons" and "non-persons," maintain a "loving" appreciation for Nature and are not diverted in their passionate engagement. "Naturally," it is the case that human beings are emotionally embedded in the world: our ways of experiencing everyday life entail emotional learning and engagement, emotional reactions; "naturally," there is a kind of *emotional constitutionalism* to the way that human beings know and come to be. However, due to the power of "modernist," "scientistic" ways of knowing—so dominant is a "rationalist scientific discourse in which emotion is suppressed and emotionalism denigrated," especially in the West—that even contemporary environmentalist discourse underplays "the emotional and constitutive role of nature and natural things" (Milton 2002: 91).

The global consequences of denying personhood to Nature—of learning not to care for it—are profound, Milton urges, and emotion must be reconstrued, and given its proper status in human being. Emotion is not an opposite of reason—irrational, "religious," metaphysical. To the contrary, rationality is itself consequent upon emotion: "it is the direction provided by emotion

that makes thought rational" (Milton 2002: 150). And when human beings
"love nature," they are practicing an emotional engagement with an Other
that is vitally constitutive of who they are, of how they have become. Loving
nature is hence as appropriate and proper reaction as a loving appreciation of
human Others, of those human "persons" equally responsible for making us
who we are.

Kay Milton recalls the philosophy of David Hume in her wish to overcome
a dichotomy between emotion and reason, and the natural sympathy she
would evoke as fundamental to a human being-in-the-world and engaging
with what and who exists around us. But more than the details of her argu-
ment, or its rectitude, I am struck by the moral lessons that she insists are to be
drawn by a rescaling of human life and recognizing its home in Nature. The
global morality of worldwide environmentalist movements lies in the fact that
every human life exists *in* Nature, according to Milton. Truly—scientifically,
rationally—Nature constitutes the eternal ground of human being and of any
individual life. We know this emotionally. We have been led, however, by the
successes of our scientific revolution to believe that Nature is somehow Other
and that we are able to control and exploit it, "capitalistically." But we exist
in Nature—we *are* Nature—and even while we may have unique reflexive
capacities to consider our relations with it, as if we were outside of it, the
truth is that Nature has an opaqueness to us *because* of our being inherently
party to it. We cannot know it "rationally," "objectively." The moral posi-
tion is to engage with Nature as with a personal Other on whom we depend,
recognizing that this relationship is eternally constitutive of us as individuals
and as species. To love Nature is to come to a truthful realization of the *scale*
of human life, its ground, and its nature.

Tony Harvey's appreciation of the fatefulness of a human life, the embed-
dedness of all life within a natural whole, and the moral inclusiveness
consequential upon this, finds its global counterpart in Kay Milton's environ-
mentalist disquisition.

LOVING AND DEATH

I was led to the above case study, concerning largely my relations with Tony
Harvey in Wanet, through wanting to take account of analyses of loving rela-
tions that emphasize the "indirection" that might be involved—loving rela-
tions emerging by invisible hand—and also the processualism—the character
of loving behavior changing through time. In the use that Tony made of play-
ing dominoes in The Eagle I found a kind of engagement with individual Oth-
ers, with Anyone, that I found moral and loving. But it was indirect, in that
otherness was engaged by way of a conventional cultural form of exchange

that was anodyne, mannered, and largely silent on personal matters. Then, in the environmentalist "philosophy of life" that Tony espoused (and others of his Wanet neighbors, and indeed others in worldwide movements), there was a professed naturalism—a communion with Nature, Life, and Infinity—that transformed the scale of his concern. From a focus on the individual Other in his village pub who might be recognized and attended to, Tony "processed" to a recognition of infinitude: life was to be considered in the context of a cosmos—both microscopic and macroscopic—that enveloped human identity. To live a moral life was to "love nature" at a scale at which the conventional niceties of human exchange—and of individual lives—lost their significance. How was one reputed as a "farmer," a "man," a "widower" in "Wanet"? All was immaterial. All that mattered was how humanity was fated to be, in the context of a universal, eternal, natural ground: humanity as a species among others, and human life as but one form among (an infinitude of) others, large and small. In my understanding, Tony's morality spanned an arc from lovingly recognizing the individual life at one pole to a communing with and caring for a cosmic one at the other. *Using the devices of dominoes (indirectness) and of philosophically rescaling a life (processualism), Tony seemed (to me) to provide a loving recognition to Anyone over and against conventional everyday pieties*.

Why did Tony distinguish between kittens and sheep? Unlike, say, Leonard Woolf with whose account we began, Tony admitted he could kill kittens without a thought but not so sheep, for whom he felt far more. Given the distinction he insisted upon between the narrow human world—concerned with the histories of Kendal, Leyton, and Wanet as places to live and work, and so on—and the wider natural world, perhaps his dismissal of kittens was due to their being pets. Sheep knew the lesson of survival, how the species needed to survive in a natural cosmos, and for this reason sheep were to be respected as equals and trusted as interlocutors. Kittens on the other hand were petted creatures who had removed themselves, as a species, from wild nature and come to depend on a human relationship that was artificial.

Was I hearing from Tony "merely" conventional pieties, then? His attitudes being distinct from those of Leonard Woolf, the bourgeois urbanite, simply by virtue of the disciplines to which he was subjected in earning a living directly from nature? I do not believe so. Tony's worldview was individual, personal—within the context of Wanet too—and he knew as much in his "apologetic" locutions: "Maybe this is a stupid speech"; "Maybe I'm not saying this right"; "Maybe I've put my foot in it." Tony's vision was not Leonard Woolf's, and his epiphany did not concern killing per se—whether of kittens or of surplus lambs or moribund sheep—but here was an epiphanous viewing nevertheless. He recognized that humanity was not of supreme or sole value; that sheep were not ignorant; that human and sheep could

communicate loyalties in a natural economy of cosmic oneness. Also, that death was of life and in life. Any Wanet farmer might know this, but Tony also knew that death elucidated life, and vice versa. Death and Life Tony had come to see, through a personal engagement with the farm animals that he loved, formed an eternal cycle in which there was an equivalence to all life-forms—including humans, sheep, kittens, and worms. Life came in an infinitude of forms, and death was an end but not the end: life reincarnated itself, an eternal return. In a metaphysic that sounds quasi-Nietzschean, or Buddhist, Tony comes to propose that the law of survival and the instinct to survive—the "I" that Leonard Woolf had experienced in his drowning puppies—is manifest in everything—in sheep as in humans as in microbes—but its identifiable forms are transient. "Nature," "life," supervenes upon Death such that "I" and "you" perdure in some form—but not in the one individual form. Individuality finds its home in a vast, cyclical, equalizing cosmos.

What Tony Harvey significantly shares with Leonard Woolf, I say, is the experience of death, and a reflection on Death that throws a special light on the nature of Life: how Life is to be properly known and valued and lived. When Tony spoke of Nature and the incomprehensible infinities it contained—how he would negate conventional proprieties and (ignorant) practices for the sake of saving the world for its animals—he steps back from his everyday life, looking ironically at its habitualities, in a way that is commensurate to Woolf. It is also commensurate, I argue, to how the porters at Constance Hospital came to reconsider their daily routines and attitudes in the context of death: stepping back, ironically, from an habitual nonchalance and glibness when the call came to take a body to the mortuary. Death for the porters, too, provided a moment of vision, a framing of life. It would be my estimation that Leonard Woolf, Tony Harvey, and the Constance porters practiced an *ars moriendi*: they turned death into an "art" by which they came to know life and treat it morally.

By "*Ars moriendi*" one generally refers to an ascetic discipline whereby one reflects on mortality: recalling life's contingencies, the transient nature of earthly goods and pursuits, the smallness of the human sphere and human significance, and hence their vanity. The discipline is often connected to a history of Christian theology, dating back to fifteenth-century Latin texts on how to "die well" according to Christian precepts, while also developing into a broader tradition of writing on "the good death" and its moral deliverances. Practicing the "art of dying" one improved on one's this-worldly moral character by cultivating detachment, turning attention away from what was unimportant in an ultimate scale of things—what was merely conventional—toward timeless values and verities. I would argue that Tony Harvey's discourse on Nature, like his discourse on Fate, were kinds of *memento mori*—habitual reminders of mortality and the truer perspective that knowledge of death gave to life—as

was Leonard Woolf's memory of drowning puppies as a boy, and as was the hospital porters' dealings with deceased patients.

But I would take the further step of saying that *ars moriendi* might offer a moral path, serve a virtuous function, in the way of a universally practiced loving recognition. Deploying *memento mori* one habituates oneself to overcoming a merely cultural habitude: the limiting way in which the world and its human life is conventionally, stereotypically, categorized and addressed. Through *memento mori*, the conventional world is rendered less significant; indeed, *in*significant in terms of the true nature of life on Earth. Death puts culture in its place. Death introduces a scale by which cultural habitudes are reduced, recognized as untrue.

Moreover, Death equalizes: all life comes to die; all is equally finite, equally fated. And by the same token, all life is thereby equally precious. Does not a recognition of the inclusivity of Death, and its inevitability, make for a loving recognition of Life, of the worth of its individual manifestations, and their deserving equal respect and care? *Memento mori* become devices whereby life is recontextualized. A true scale is accorded to human life, and to any individual human life. All are equally infinitesimal in a cosmic schema, each being equally "fated"—powerless to determine the ultimate conditions of their nature and their life-course—and hence each equally worthy of moral attention so that the preciousness of their finitude finds expression.

This might seem a weak argument. Why should a scalar insignificance translate into preciousness? Why should fatefulness translate into worth? They might as easily translate into their opposites, or into nothing at all. And, albeit a universal "condition" of life on Earth, Death is far from an acultural concept. Indeed, every cultural cosmology will incorporate "death," and do so in such a way that far from providing an independent and "emancipating" perspective on an enculturated worldview, death comes to reflect life: its purported nature a continuation of the cultural conceptualization (and categorization) of life (Hertz 1907; Robben 2017). Here is the "cultural" death of heaven and hell, then, or of discrete and manifold levels of punishment and reward—not to mention the possibilities of reincarnation—that mimics the symbolic classification and structuration of life. While I might wish that an *ars moriendi* should transcend culture, and serve a general, virtuous function, I must accept it need not.

But let me construe this positively. It has been my ethnographic experience—as it has been the widespread historical experience—that reflecting on the necessity of death, and the possibility of dying "well," *may* provide a perspective on life that distances the viewer from its habitual niceties, its conventional categories of thought and action. Particular cultural constructions of the world and their symbolic classifications of things and relations are

reduced in significance and reach—becoming local fictions. Meanwhile, all life-forms are fated to die: surely all life-forms are due the same compassionate recognition, a "universal compassion" that might serve as a "guarantee of morality" (Schopenhauer).

This is to understand the practicing of an *ars moriendi* as a personal and subjective phenomenon rather than a cultural one. Recognizing Death served a moral function for Tony Harvey at least, as it did for Leonard Woolf, and for Alastair the porter (in my estimation). Making the practice personal in this way also allows for an appreciation of *memento mori* as being possibly very diverse in form. Indeed, to function as *memento mori* (and as moral devices), a thing need not ostensibly refer to Death at all. For instance, within an *ars moriendi* I would include the "ascetic" discipline of contemplating the natural world as a planetary ecosystem *a la* contemporary environmentalist movements (Kay Milton). The planetary environment becomes a *memento mori* when it rescales the significance and truth of everyday cultural concerns. Similarly, I would include in this context the extraplanetary perspectivism—the view on the planet Earth as gained from Space—with which in recent decades we have become increasingly able to furnish ourselves. Most famously exemplified, perhaps, by the "Pale Blue Dot photograph" taken by the Voyager 1 space probe in 1990—looking back on Earth from a distance of some 3.7 billion miles—a geocentric, human-centered, and Earth-centered, universe is put in its place by virtue of the immensities of cosmic scale:

Figure 11.3   Solar System Portrait—Earth as "Pale Blue Dot." *Source*: NASA JP http:// visibleearth.nasa.gov/view.php?id=52392; Public Domain, https://commons.wikimedia .org/w/index.php?curid=4400327.

Astronomer Carl Sagan expounded eloquently on the possible significance of such a viewing:

> We succeeded in taking that picture [from Deep Space], and, if you look at it, you see a dot. That's here. That's home. That's us. On it, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever lived, lived out their lives. The aggregate of all our joys and sufferings, thousands of confident religions, ideologies and economic doctrines, every hunter and forager, every hero and coward, every creator and destroyer of civilizations, every king and peasant, every young couple in love, every hopeful child, every mother and father, every inventor and explorer, every teacher of morals, every corrupt politician, every superstar, every supreme leader, every saint and sinner in the history of our species, lived there on a mote of dust, suspended in a sunbeam.
>
> The Earth is a very small stage in a vast cosmic arena. Think of the rivers of blood spilled by all those generals and emperors so that in glory and in triumph they could become the momentary masters of a fraction of a dot. Think of the endless cruelties visited by the inhabitants of one corner of the dot on scarcely distinguishable inhabitants of some other corner of the dot. How frequent their misunderstandings, how eager they are to kill one another, how fervent their hatreds. *Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the universe, are challenged by this point of pale light.*
>
> Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. In our obscurity—in all this vastness—there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves. It is up to us. It's been said that astronomy is a humbling, and I might add, a character-building experience. To my mind, *there is perhaps no better demonstration of the folly of human conceits than this distant image of our tiny world. To me, it underscores our responsibility to deal more kindly and compassionately with one another*, and to preserve and cherish that pale blue dot, the only home we've ever known. (1994: 8–9, my emphases)

Certainly, an extraplanetary perspective as *memento mori* is one that I find personally conducive. (I can personally attest to its power.) The images we have more recently received from NASA's Cassini spacecraft, say, of the surfaces of Saturn and Jupiter, their moons, and Saturn's rings, remove me from both the space and the time of my life. The weight of the latter is suspended such that I feel privy to glimpses of Nature and truth on a different, a superior scale. I am made to feel shame for the petty concerns—the disputes and the ambitions—that enfold me as they do others in conventional identities: shame for how they limit *my* vision, and, I would claim, that of others.

Equally I may personally attest to the power of artistic images such as paintings to afford the transcendence of *memento mori*. I have placed "Camp Synagogue, 1941" by Felix Nussbaum on the cover of this book for that reason. Nussbaum portrays a makeshift synagogue at Saint Cyprien

concentration camp (in the Pyrenees) where he was imprisoned by the Vichy French after being arrested in Belgium in 1940, as a "hostile alien" and, ironically, as "German." While the four men wrapped in prayer shawls stand praying near a desolate shack, a fifth stands alone, to the right—possibly representing Nussbaum himself, who was ambivalent about his Jewish identity (I would profess no religious faith myself). The painting was completed in Brussels (after a drawing done in St. Cyprien) shortly after Nussbaum's successful escape from the camp. The reprieve was temporary, however, and after a period of concealment in a Brussels attic—a "Jew" and without residency papers—Nussbaum was given away to the Nazis. He died at Auschwitz, as had his wife and entire natal family, in 1944, now known as Number XXVI/284.

In their rather different ways, the images *Sunflower and Dog Worship* and *The Resurrection, Port Glasgow* that we have met from Stanley Spencer, above, speak similarly to a transcendental rescaling—for myself as well as for others. Spencer's "loving vision" extended to animals and the natural world, as we have heard, and painting resurrections was like a drug, him being "on the bottle." Spencer could not resist an opportunity to reiterate the message that to view and inhabit the world lovingly was to be "married" to every individual thing within it: hence to be resurrected or reborn in a perfect way, as though receiving a gift of redemption. The continuing realness of the world revealed by love was like experiencing a resurrection every moment; life went on but its momentary engagements were transformed in nature:

> In this life we experience a kind of resurrection when we arrive at a state of awareness, a state of being in love, and at such times we like to do again what we have done many times in the past, because now we do it anew, in Heaven. (Spencer, cited in Hauser 2001: 41)

And again:

> The resurrecting is meant to indicate the passing from the state of non-realization of the possibilities of heaven in this life, to the sudden awakening and realization of the fact. . . . So much of the true individual meaning of life is concealed by our adherence to the usual provisions and conditions that have been made for ordinary physical needs that I wish the spiritual and true life, expressed by resurrection, to ride roughshod over all these provisions and assert itself by using everything as it wishes and chooses. (Spencer, Tate Gallery Archive)

In "An Incident in Cookham Churchyard" (2017: 11), Jim Campbell is led to express poetically Spencer's conception of loving recognition as "resurrection," as follows:

At first and last it looks quite ordinary
/
The residents of this home counties suburb
Rub their eyes, stretch, clamber out of graves,
/
Transposing time, and that once fixed
Division of earth and air,
The dead, the quick.

Campbell captures the capacity of Spencer's images as *memento mori*: to be "resurrected," redeemed by Death, is to find oneself into a world where "once fixed divisions" ("earth and air," "the quick and the dead") are rendered insignificant and overcome.

The rendering of Stanley Spencer's images into words, by Jim Campbell, above, and by Helena Goddard previously ("Resurrection on Tewskesbury High Street: After Stanley Spencer"), I take as evidence of those images' power. In particular how an *ars moriendi* may serve the moral function of transcending an everyday cultural categorization of life. But of course the literary need not refer to other genres (the pictorial) in order to offer such a moral rescaling of human concerns: independently, literature serves as an *ars moriendi* par excellence. The potential list of exemplars is long, but I would recall in this context Emily Brontë (1976: 89) inveighing against cultural niceties:

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts, unutterably vain,
Worthless as withered weeds

Also Primo Levi (1996b: 172) counselling against a vulgar materialism and myopia:

> We too are so dazzled by power and money as to forget our essential fragility, forget that all of us are in the ghetto, that the ghetto is fenced in, that beyond the fence stand the lords of death, and not far away the train is waiting.

And Shakespeare (1965: 436) admonishing the would-be autocrat and despot not to mythologize the "sceptered sway" and forget their fate as "worm-food":

Ill-weav'd ambition, how much art thou shrunk!
When that this body did contain a spirit,
A kingdom for it was too small a bound;
But now, two paces of the vilest earth

Is room enough
Thy ignominy sleep with thee in the grave.

There are, no doubt, other forms besides: *ars moriendi* of a personal character and invention beyond the discursive, visual, and literary examples that I have adverted to. Anthropologist James Fernandez argues, indeed, that there will be a universal nature to this, "motivating in the human condition in general," since *ars moriendi* speaks to the "meaning deficit" experienced by all human beings (1995: 22). Universally, he explains, human beings will find the need to come to terms with:

> the impermanence and transitoriness of our individuality vis-à-vis our imagination of the possibility of its perpetuity, as well as the imperfection of the realization of our projects in practice vis-à-vis the more perfect models we hold of them in thought, which we test and upon which we operate! Of such wretched unrequitement and of such needful search for grace is self consciousness, sooner or later, surely though not uniquely composed. (Fernandez 1995: 22–3)

My argument concerns the moral freight with which any *memento mori* may be imbued such that through them individuals accede to moments of vision: everyday cultural habitudes are rescaled and transcended. The enormity of Death—of Fate, of Nature, of Space—is such that the niceties of everyday life are thrown into relief: revealed to be fictional, ultimately insignificant, in all likelihood partial in their norms and values. Again: this is not a necessary consequence of *memento mori*, but it is a possible one; and I would argue for its being consequential, morally significant, in proposing loving recognition as a civic virtue.

The individual human life should be conceived of as a precious projectile of will and creativity, I have urged: an authoring of identities, a formulating of worldviews, a progressing through life-projects. One values this life as the creation and embodiment of "an entire world" (as phrased by the Talmud). I have also urged that *ars moriendi* be seen as having a personal and subjective phenomenology as much as a cultural one; over against a cultural tradition of *memento mori*, individuals may construe their own such moral devices. "Without the *idea* of suicide, I would have killed myself from the start," philosopher E. M. Cioran has offered as personal revelation, elaborating: "I live only because it is in my power to die when I choose to" (1952). "Death destroys a man: the idea of Death saves him," E. M. Forster has his protagonist Helen Schlegel expound in *Howards End* (1950: 213). Likewise, "Death is what instructs us most of all," from Iris Murdoch (1977: 395) in *Henry and Cato*: to live "with death" is to live "in the truth," "we live by redemptive

death." (But then the quip by humorist Peter Cook is also apropos: "As I looked out into the night sky, across all those infinite stars, it made me realize how insignificant they are.")

I have intimated that for myself, the painted images of Nussbaum and Spencer are powerful *memento mori*, as are the above quotations from Brontë, Levi, and Shakespeare, and as is the extraplanetary view provided by images such as "The Blue Dot." I can also find a kind of relief in the idea of Death: the knowledge that dying *does* entail death of identity, of an individual's worldviews and life-projects—even of "an entire world." For the "ill-weav'd ambitions" of evil may also be limited in this way, their vanity exposed. The "ignominious" scheming of those who would threaten the well-being of individual Others may be conceived of as individual projects dissolved by death; transformed, at least, when their apologists and proponents die. (Again from Iris Murdoch: what "controversies" are not "rendered dim and tiny by the relentless . . . onward movement of history" [1977: 20]). Here is a release and an overcoming. In social spaces increasingly full—"appallingly full," in Forster's phrasing (1972: 55), with individuals "tumbling over each other"—there are likely to be many whose "ill-weav'd ambitions," "creeds," "power and money," appear abhorrent. Thus may one accommodate the individual Other that one cannot like—accommodate those who would partake of the mythic "alluvions and allusions" of cultural essentialism (Levinas 1990a: 294–5). Moreover, one may still "love" what one cannot like, recognizing the individuality of the Other whose span is so meager—whose ideology is so "vain," whose power so "fragile," whose prospects so "vile"—when set against the infinitude of the universe and against death.

A COSMO-POLITAN LOVING

The exposition, above, from Helen Schlegel in *Howards End* is part of a longer passage in which Forster has his protagonist converse with another key character, Leonard Bast, whose fate is less socially secure. Their discussion concerns distinctions of class in English culture, and the economic realities that undergird them. Leonard would claim that the reality of money is ultimate. Helen insists that this to forget Death:

> If we lived for ever, what you say would be true. But we have to die, we have to leave life presently. Injustice and greed would be the real thing if we lived for ever. As it is, we must hold to other things, because Death is coming. I love Death—not morbidly, but because He explains. He shows me the emptiness of Money. Death and Money are the eternal foes. Not Death and Life. Never mind what lies behind Death, Mr Bast, but be sure that the poet and the musician

and the tramp will be happier in it than the man who has never learnt to say, "I am I." . . . We are all in a mist—I know, but I can help you this far. . . . Sane, sound Englishmen! building up empires, levelling all the world into what they call common sense. But mention Death to them and they're offended, because Death's really Imperial, and He cries out against them for ever. . . . Death destroys a man: the idea of Death saves him. (Forster 1950: 212–3)

But Forster also recognizes that one cannot live in Death or subsist in an apprehension of the infinite. In an authorial commentary on the paradox that he is having his protagonist Helen Schlegel enunciate—"the vague yet convincing plea that the Invisible lodges against the Visible"—the argument of the novel is made even more plain:

Behind the coffins and the skeletons that stay the vulgar mind lies something so immense that all that is great in us responds to it. Men of the world may recoil from the charnel-house that they will one day enter, but Love knows better. Death is his foe, but his peer, and in their age-long struggle the thews of Love have been strengthened, and his vision cleared, until there is no one who can stand against him. (Forster 1950: 213)

Death shows up the emptiness of Money but from their struggle it is Love which emerges as the strong (albeit invisible) guiding light to the real things in life. Love possesses a reality which Money does not. The central message that Forster would convey is that it is "personal intercourse, and that alone, that ever hints at a personality beyond our daily vision": "personal relations are the real life, for ever and ever," and "the most important thing" (1950: 26, 74, 156). It is personal relations that hold out a "mirror to infinity."

Forster's message in *Howards End* is not a morbid or abstinent or nihilistic one. Love and Death are both "foes" and "peers," linked in a dialectic, and he sets up his novel as a dramatic unfolding of the tension between them. The moneyed Family Wilcox and those like Leonard Bast who perforce work for them focus on material success in a narrow life of daily social interaction. The focus of the Family Schlegel, by contrast, is "spiritual" purity: belonging in an ideal fashion to a transcendent reality. While for the latter, life's essence is a romance with beauty and the wonder of an unseen whole, the former apply themselves diligently to getting on here and now: they exhibit strength, busyness, and adventure, and prove steadfast companions. The resolution to this tension, Forster urges is, to connect:

Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its height. Live in fragments no longer. Only connect, and the beast and the monk, robbed of the isolation that is life to either, will die. (1950: 167)

The prosaic and "beast-like" Wilcoxes, and the poetic and "monk-like" Schlegels, must form a connexion. Without connexion to the Wilcoxes, the Schlegels would have no links to the material forces shaping the world, and their metaphysic would be instrumentally impotent and economically dependent; they would create ideal forms without context, without responsibility, without weight. While the Wilcoxes, without connexion to the Schlegels, would waste their strength on pettiness, routine, and suspicion: beguiled by a vulgar phantasm that "ten square miles was ten times better than one, whilst a thousand square miles was heaven" (Forster 1950: 179).

Symbolically, Forster achieves this connexion by having Margaret Schlegel and Henry Wilcox marry, setting up house together in the midst of the English countryside at the Howards End estate. But crucially, the connexion is not represented as a fusion: a consolidation. This is fundamental to Forster's message. The Schlegel-Wilcox marriage is not depicted as an easy meeting of two sides, nor their integration into a larger whole. Rather, it remains a dialectic between whose poles the protagonists zigzag or shuttle, emotionally and cognitively. Margaret Schlegel and Henry Wilcox must learn to reconcile the contrasts between their family backgrounds and worldviews by shuttling between these discrete perspectives on life. Their marriage must entail a "rainbow bridge" (Forster 1950: 166). Margaret and Henry must achieve a proportionality in their lives between the extreme divergences of each perspective, but crucially this proportionality may not be construed as a "sterile" averaging out of their differences: the plumbing of a common denomination or middle path. Rather, the connexion effected by the marriage must take the form of a "heroic" proportioning: making continuous emotional and cognitive excursions between the poles, and into the domain of each perspective in turn. One connects "poetry" and "prose," the earthbound and the infinite, by experiencing both in turn, recognizing the truth of both. The critical passage in Forster's text runs:

> The business man who assumes that life is everything, and the mystic who asserts that it is nothing, fail on this side and on that, to hit the truth. "Yes, I see dear, it's about half-way between," Aunt Juley [Schlegel] had hazarded in earlier years. No: *truth, being alive, was not half-way between anything. It was only to be found by continuous excursions into either realm*, and though proportion is the final secret, to espouse it at the outset is to ensure sterility. (1950: 174, my emphasis)

To "hit on the truth" was to traverse a "rainbow bridge" in one's imaginative (emotional and cognitive) practice. The truth, being "alive," was to be found in this movement: between a this-worldly practical engagement and an appreciation of an infinitude of scale.

The message of *Howards End* is one that I would also own: a kind of moral vision that connects the "earthbound" and the "infinite." Or, as I have found them instanced ethnographically: the love of dominoes and the love of death. Forster's novel, portraying the drama and the tension in a marriage of difference, expressly concerns love as an ideal, and also an ideal kind of love: "Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its height." There is recognition of eternal verities, *and* there is appreciation of material fulfilment: an ideal love brings these together as two halves of a moral whole, however they might seem to be distinct perspectives. It is in zigzagging between respect for immediate life and respect for the infinite that an ideal love "is born": as on a rainbow bridge, love "alights on the highest curve, glowing against the grey [of materiality], sober against the fire [of ethereality]" (Forster 1950: 166). Moreover, this zigzagging, loving practice might occur on a number of different levels, or at different scales. There is the interpersonal level, exemplified most clearly in the character of Margaret Schlegel. She experiences the "central radiance" of love as she crosses continually between her own (and her sister Helen's) spiritualism and her husband Henry's materialism. But there is also the intra-personal level. Here, too, a zigzagging practice might contribute centrally, connecting the prose and the passion "within us," another version of "personal relations." Finally, there is the level of publics: a zigzagging practice might also occur between the local and the global, place and space: between the settled world of Howards End, of "trees, meadows and mountains," and the world of movement and non-place to which modern life is increasingly prone (where an establishment like Howards End is more "spectator" than "anchor").

Forster's construal of an ideal loving practice as a kind of rainbow bridge that connects, dialectically, two ends of a scale—the material life of immediate physical embodiment, and an ethereal intelligence *sub specie aeternitatis*—also allows me to imagine how the two devices of love that I have been concerned with, above, might be ideally brought together. I encountered playing dominoes in the Eagle pub with Tony Harvey as a kind of device whereby recognition for an individual life—my own and others'—could be respectfully, "lovingly" dispensed. By virtue of domino-playing's invisible hand, individuals were incorporated socially as themselves. Contrastively, I would characterize Tony's (and others') discourse on Fate, on Nature, Infinity, and Death, as recognition of a macroscopic universe in which individual life and even human life loses its outlines. Such discourses are a form of *ars moriendi*, I have contended: their tropes and images kinds of *memento mori*. Here, individual human life is accorded a different kind of respect: a sympathy for its ultimate insignificance. Forster's powerful insight is that love

as a most exalted practice connects together these two devices. One zigzags between the two ends of the scale: one practices a dialectic between attending lovingly to the microscopic truth of individual lives and needs *and* attending lovingly to the macroscopic truth of eternal verities and ultimate grounds of being. One aspires to balance these dialectically, to "zigzag" proportionally between them: imaginatively, emotionally, and cognitively, one inhabits both (Rapport 1992, 1994a).

In sampling the wider debate on love as ethical practice (chapter 3), we have heard Forster offering only "two cheers" to Democracy since it can be no "republic of love," and tolerance, a lesser virtue, must serve as means of social integration. But in *Howards End*, he also elaborated a vision where "the binding force" of society may be "entrusted to Love alone": "May Love be equal to the task!" was his petition (1950: 232). To return to a word I have used throughout, Forster's vision here is a *cosmopolitan* one; or better, being dialectical (the truth is "alive"), a "cosmo-politan" one. There is the *polis* of an individually embodied life, and there is the *cosmos* of an infinite universe: love at its most exalted is a cosmo-politan practice whereby the ideal lover connects these unlikely "peers" by zigzagging between them, between the individual life and the infinite universe. *Cosmos* and *polis* do not average out or dissolve into common denomination: both are true and distinct, and love at its most virtuous embodies *both* the *ars moriendi* that recontextualizes and rescales everyday concerns (and controversies) *and* the individual recognition that appreciates individuals for themselves (eschewing the categories, labels, and classes that reduce and traduce personal identities). The lesson I draw from Forster is that love's "Beloved Republic" is brought about in cosmo-politan fashion, attending equally, dialectically, to the individual life before one, with its immediate and unique needs, and to Nature (Fate, Death, and Infinity), where all identities are ultimately One.

Part IV

CONCLUDING THE QUEST FOR LOVE

Chapter 12

Loving Recognition as a Program

REPRISING COSMOPOLITANISM
AGAINST CATEGORY-THINKING

Ronald Stade is the Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies at Malmö University, Sweden, and his recent work has involved a UNICEF project in Lebanon. In June 2017, I sent him initial writings that proposed an accord between the concerns of Emmanuel Levinas and my own on cosmopolitanism and on love, asking for his collegiate assessment: He replied by email:

> Now I have read and contemplated your manuscripts on Levinas. Unsurprisingly, my only reservation concerns the interpretation of the word "cosmopolitan." You write:
>
>> "Here is a 'cosmopolitan' anthropology that endeavours to juxtapose the '*cosmos*' of human species-wholeness against the '*polis*' of an individually embodied life and to bring these together in one stereoscopic viewing."
>
> Is it acceptable to use "cosmopolitan" as a metaphor in this sense? Of course it is. I only regret that the deep existential irony of the word is lost. Declaring oneself a citizen of everything makes mockery of collective identities and the privileges (and discriminations) associated with them. I am currently ruminating on the frequent instances of people in Lebanon (and elsewhere) rejecting "perfect categorical fit." They will say things like, "I am Shia, but not really, not like people think." Or, "I fast during Ramadan, but this morning I missed *suhur*, so I'll fast tomorrow" (said with a wink). Or, "My mother is Christian, my father is Sunni, so I don't know what that makes me."
>
> In these kinds of comments, one can detect not just a joking (ironic) attitude towards categorization, but a tacit rejection of cultural categories altogether. This I take to be the empirical evidence of cosmopolitanism: ever more human beings reject the idea that there should be a perfect fit between individual and category.

I realize that this is hardly an original or powerful insight. In fact, it is rather lame as an argument for cosmopolitanism. But I believe that it can be recognized by audiences: that it "rings true." I gave a talk to a lay audience in Almhult [Sweden], the global, very provincial, capital of IKEA, trying to explain why *Daesh*'s ruthless fight against what they themselves call "the grey zone"—the zone in which black and white no longer can be discerned, and compromise abounds—provides the best understanding of what cosmopolitanism is not (or is against). The fear of greyness is eased by proclamations like, "Either you are with us or you are against us" (both Bush the Younger and bin-Laden made this statement in public). Throwing oneself into a category, cutting off anything that keeps one from fitting snuggly into the category, avoiding any false movement so as not to extend beyond the category: this to me is totalitarianism. Becoming a totalitarian personality requires self-mutilation (cf. Borges's essay, *Deutsches Requiem*). Cutting off bits and pieces, sometimes entire limbs and organs. What is left is supposed to be all in one piece, either black or white. Any trace of greyness is supposed to be erased.

To me, anyone "cheating" during Ramadan by eating or having sex in the middle of the day makes an important contribution to our common humanity. Anyone feeling uncomfortable—actually, *annoyed*—when being designated "German," "Jew," "Shia," "Japanese," "woman," etc., is a fellow cosmopolitan. Anyone feeling an urgent need to escape categories, to flee into the muddle and mess of immediate impression and experience, is a fellow humanist.

Your friend,
Ronald

Stade's consultancy for UNICEF includes a comparative examination of health and well-being among Lebanon's distinct religious and ethnic "communities." The country has continued the previous Ottoman practice of officially designating citizens according to membership of particular "*millets*" or "nations." Indeed, this sectionality is written into Lebanese law; every citizen (of the country's 4.8 million) must belong to one of eighteen religious groupings that are recognized, and only one. There is no civil code recognizing individuals as such. Confessional division also extends to the Lebanese Parliament, where the 128 seats are designated as 64 "Christian" (34 Maronite, 14 Greek Orthodox, 8 Greek Catholic, 5 Armenian Orthodox, and 3 others) and 64 "Muslim" (27 Sunni, 27 Shia, 8 Druze, and 2 Alawite). The president of the country must be a Christian, the prime minister a Sunni, and the speaker of parliament a Shia. An outlet was provided in 2009 whereby a citizen was legally permitted to replace their religious affiliation with a slash mark (/) on official documentation; however, pressure from family and other institutions to maintain sectarian identities remains such that the option is seldom selected. It may seem to continue that the Lebanese state, with its meager tax base and lack of large extractive industries, is unable to ensure

the security or well-being of its individual citizens and that for the provision of adequate social services, and solutions to personal problems, family loyalties remain essential. Citizens continue to prefer non-state services—in schooling, say, or health—even where a state option is available, because of the perceived fragility of a general "civil" domain. It is anticipated that public engagement beyond the extended family will be conducted agonistically, in a spirit of contest or race: a kind of "amoral familism" (Banfield 1958), in which the civility of public-spiritedness beyond the household is difficult to guarantee. Some 0.3 percent of the population owns 50 percent of the wealth, and patron-client relations along sectarian lines, where "*wasta*" (connexions) are normative and essential, complete the picture of Lebanese public life (Makdisi 2004; Chalala 2017; Yahya 2017).

I recognize that such a situation is (and will be) by no means particular to Lebanon. Indeed, one is informed by social commentators that a category thinking whereby people define themselves and others as members and representatives of collectivities—human beings essentially constituted by communitarian histories and cultural traditions—*characterizes* our time. "The idea that the world is gradually moving towards a universal civilization based on old-fashioned liberal values is . . . fanciful" (Gray 2018: 5). A "Dark Age" (Barry 2001) of identity politics and neo-tribalism is said to be further fed by the global prevalence of social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter) that create "silos" in which people consort largely with "their own": "echo-chamber expression" in which manifestations of identity become increasingly codified, homogenized, and straitened. Individuals "self-identify" as members of classes.

The aim of this book has been to formulate a possible response to this so that the consequences of identity politics and communitarian essentialism might be subverted, both as regards the legal recognition given to groups—the social respect or legitimacy—and as regards individual practice and experience. The book has sought gaps in the armory and habitude of symbolic-cultural constructions of human being so that, as in Ernest Gellner's maxim (1993b: 3), categorization beyond "the human" (and the individual) is not "taken seriously": even among "consenting adults," classifying human beings into symbolic collectives (nations, ethnicities, religions, professions, classes, communities) becomes a dubious practice.

Gellner's maxim also recognizes that while they should not be taken seriously, and while not being morally optimal, categories, labels, and classes will continue nevertheless to be habitual. This book also accepts that its aim must be to formulate a response to identity politics and to communitarian essentialism that sits *alongside* these habits. People will live in collectives, symbolically defined in opposition to other collectives, by ways of ideologies of nation, religion, ethnicity, class, and so on. But may it not be

achieved—legally, socially, and psychically—that a "loving recognition" of humanity and individuality *at the same time* undercuts these fictions: transcends them in the name of an ontological truth?

I am reminded of another assessment of E. M. Forster's. Perhaps it is and will remain the case, he considered in 1939, that "all society rests upon force." Nevertheless:

> all the great creative actions, all the decent human relations, occur during the intervals when force has not managed to come to the front. These intervals are what matter. I want them to be as frequent and lengthy as possible, and I call them "civilization." (1972: 78)

"Civilization" in the context of this book is those "intervals" between category thinking. The book has explored how loving recognition as moments of vision, of epiphany, might override collectivism to the extent that these moments become foundational of a global humanistic ethos, engendering the global inclusion of individual human beings, as individuals, in a civil society.

As with Forster, Stanley Spencer's example has frequently been drawn on. In the final part of the First World War Spencer was serving in the British army, fighting in Eastern Europe. Marching away from the front at the war's end, Spencer recounts witnessing a soldier in his company shooting a large old dog: seated at a Salonika roadside and intending no apparent harm. "I felt what a vast distance intervened between the minds of these men and my own," Spencer recalled (2016: 338): "when I said 'What did you do that for?' I was met by much abuse." We have also met Spencer's *Sunflower and Dog Worship*, and heard how he felt that an engagement with the individuality of *all* that the world contained was vital to his "loving" philosophy. Yet, in the febrile atmosphere of the years leading up the First World War, Spencer was equally happy to dwell in national-cum-ethnic stereotypes. "I think that English people are the only essential human beings," he wrote in 1913 (2016: 90): the English were inspired "by God, not patriotism"—as against the Germans. There was a particular smell to Germanitude, he went on to explain in 1915:

> Have I ever seen a German, hardly ever; can I smell 'em, can I not! Lord how they buzz. And the smell settles and becomes dirt. When you keep scrubbing it off, still the dirt comes. I wish I could reveal to a man what evil is: that it is nothing to do with whether he visits the poor and needy or not, but just the way his hair grows at the back of his neck. Look at a Jew's hair, or a German—or rather for God's sake, do not. (2016: 142)

Spencer seemed to effect his pejorative discriminations on the basis of reputation alone: as pure stereotype. And yet he will also have routinely seen and

met Jews (at least) at the Slade School of Art, in London (and it was even whispered that his maternal grandmother had Jewish blood). But Spencer was no more reticent in their regard. Had it not become the (sad) case, he observed, that rather than "sincere and modest" Christians, attendance at Cookham Anglican Church on Sundays had been compromised: "largely composed of people with fat white flesh; a lot that come I am almost certain are Jews" (2016: 54–5). The "swarthy son of a tribe of Israel" and the "fat Jewess," advertising themselves brazenly, yet mean-spirited, tempting, and hoodwinking, were distilled for Spencer into the figure of contemporary sculptor, Jacob Epstein: "I do not like his work and he is a Jew and you could not say a worse thing about a man than that" (2016: 139). It was "a pity," Spencer concluded, that "England is so civilised," so accommodating of such "wretched visitors" (2016: 80–1).

I do not report this to single out Spencer for criticism, any more than the Lebanese example as being a specially uncivil case. Moreover, I have admitted my own failings in this regard. I am no more free than was Spencer from the vice of defining categorially, stereotypically, those I deem opponents of my own "family" of loyalties: a motley collection that includes the State of Israel, Europe, Nietzsche and John Stuart Mill, Philip Larkin, Stevie Smith and Virginia Woolf, Bob Dylan and the Incredible String Band, the University of St Andrews and Welsh Rugby. The aim of this book, to repeat, is to formulate a proposition on how the love as a civic virtue might function alongside communitarian allegiances and claims to collective identity and value. The goal must be to establish a viable relationship between loving recognition on the one hand and habitual "phantasies of groupness" (Laing 1968: 81) on the other: those commonplace "impulses to idolatry" whereby we "think and act *as if the worlds [we] have made from symbols actually existed*" (Gray 2013: 132, my emphasis).

The issue has been variously approached. "How might a loving recognition of the individuality and humanity of the Other be consequential?", I have asked, "how does an epiphany become a metanoia, a change of heart?" More than a momentary emotional engagement, a stirring of conscience soon put aside. Or again: "How to love at a distance, accepting that the Other may inhabit worldview and practice life-projects that seem to threaten one's own—even challenging the very premise of a loving recognition, denying the human and individual, their truth and value?" And: "How might such an Other be expected to love me—who is deemed equally alien?" Stanley Spencer admitted (again, in the years leading up to the First World War) that he "hate[d] people individually" at the same time as he "gloried in human nature" (cited in Carline 1978: 30). I can feel the same, when the way of life of the Other appears hateful to me—shameful, primitive, ignorant, violent— and appears materially to threaten my own. (The Other's imagined death can

seem less a source of regret than a reckoning of one foe fewer.) "How, then, to imagine loving recognition as a universal lingua franca in which all are equally invested?"

WHAT DO I NOW SAY IN THE WAY OF ANSWERS?

There was the oft-reported moment in Mahatma Gandhi's life, in 1946, when rioting Hindu and Muslim mobs clashed in Calcutta. Gandhi was approached by a Hindu man traumatized by the death of his son and which had led him to murder a Muslim boy in revenge. Such eye-for-an-eye killing will end with the whole world blinded, Gandhi observed. To escape the cycle of violence would be for the Hindu man to find another Muslim boy orphaned by the riots and bring him up lovingly as his own son—but do so in the Muslim faith of the boy's birth. Clearly, Gandhi's validation of maintaining categories of cultural difference—of coming to a humane engagement with the Other only through the traditions and fictions of communitarian distinction—has not been the "way of love" espoused in this book. No one "belongs" by birth to a culture or community. Ontological truths of common humanity and common individuality ought publicly to supervene upon whatever secondary cultural choices are privately, *ironically*, made.

Richard Rorty, we have heard, laid great store by irony as a civic virtue and liberal practice. A liberal society operated ideally by way of neutral procedures officiated by "agents of justice," or "guardians of universality," he explained (1986: 529–30), which together ensured that every citizen was treated alike. The procedures and their officers were "ironical" inasmuch as identitarian matters of belonging, belief, and value were set aside—all the cultural conceptions and doctrines that may be incommensurable and conflicting—so that public social interaction took place in an acultural, neutral space. As "ironists," all members of such liberal societies ideally recognized the fiction of culture: that their cultural vocabularies, however cherished and seemingly "final," did not stretch beyond strategic essentialism and the stereotypical to ontological reality; nor could they deliver the framework of civil procedure and exchange. It was such irony, Rorty concluded, that gave liberal society and its institutions the practical advantage of enabling individuals and their cultural constructions and groupings to get along together as *private* choices. Liberal procedural "justice" or civility supervened upon cultural diversity publicly and institutionally. Here was a civil society of universal norms of procedure and individual inclusion alongside a possible retreat into private clubs of cultural belonging. Finally, it was the effectiveness and justice of a liberal ironism that made its vision worthy of export as a global model: worth fighting for in the name of individual human rights and human equality, and as holding out the best hope for the species (Rorty 1986: 532).

The *unironical* performance of cultural differences in public life surely offers a "grotesque" vision, political theorist George Kateb concurred (1984: 351). Notwithstanding, the attraction of cultural fictions and communitarian belonging is not difficult to see. The clarity and "purity" of a world of precise categories and clear-cut boundaries, absolute judgments and total explanation, is reassuring, fulfilling (Douglas 1966; Fernandez 1978). Whatever the exaggeration of categorial claims—even the counterintuitive simplicities of their pure, normative, and conventional identities—one is happy to abide by the fiction, secured in and by what is so clearly known (Rapport 1995; Bauman 1998). A "grey zone" (Levi 1996a) where it is insisted that things, relations, and situations are intrinsically complex, even ambiguous and perspectival—a "muddle" and "mess" (Stade)—not black and white, is uncomfortable to inhabit, possibly obscuring the means and ends of action. In short, one accedes more easily to a purity of ends in an unironical cultural world, including senses of proper belonging (Rapport 1999). Rescaling a personal life within the context of the human, or the human within the context of Nature, or life on Earth in the context of cosmic space and time—these might be cognitive and emotional shifts of an ethical and loving kind, I have argued; but a *de-scaling* of life such that the alien and other, the amorphous and unique, become familiar and familial, affords a sense of security. To recall Stanley Spencer's favorite word, it is "cozy" to know *where* one belongs and *how* one belongs and *that* one belongs. One inhabits clear-cut cultural and communitarian worlds where one is here among one's own: one has a place, a name, a lifeworld, and the "danger" of otherness and greyness is ostracized. In the unironical performance of cultural worlds, the indifference and disregard, not to say prejudice and danger, of what is other, strange, individual, inchoate, unknowable, are kept in place.

But again, this is precisely why *love* has been the focus of this book: for its force, its power to unsettle and to overcome habit. Love, I have supposed, as an emotional response to individual otherness—a being touched and being moved to engage, a desire to appreciate and respect—that might cause a break with cultural habitus and give rise to an ironical reassessment of the world. Love, I have hoped to show, might be party to a cosmopolitan politesse whereby ontological truths of individuality and humanity supervene upon cozy worlds of cultural fictions, as both individual avowal and social procedure.

THE ELEMENTS OF LOVING RECOGNITION

The quest for "loving recognition" that this book has represented—what such practice might mean, and how it might be brought about—has provided insight in which notions of scale and process have become fundamental. For

love to function as a civic virtue, elements of individual phenomenology appear *on a scale*, and *in process with*, a social teaching and learning, and societal norms and law. Loving recognition has been seen to concern unilateral personal responses *together with* the politesse of civil procedures and caring institutions *together with* the guarantees of a liberal state. Indeed, a form of tripartite complexity has repeatedly seemed apposite: loving recognition has been suggested as proceeding first from a look, a visual admission ("the look of love"), then to desire, and then to a providing of space (noninterference, keeping a respectful distance, a silent inclusiveness). Similarly, loving recognition has been suggested as a process that evolves first from a moment of epiphany, then to a rational avowal of that moment, and then to a continuing, "ironical" performing of that moment. Let me now summarize the principal elements of loving recognition as they have emerged in the course of the book, how they fit together processually, with specific staging points, and how they comprise a program: the psychical, developmental, social, and legal environment of love as a civic virtue.

A particular understanding of love was being proposed, I explained at the book's outset, love as a complex comprising recognition of the physical existence of an Other, together with emotional attraction to an Other, discernment of the individual specificity of the Other, and respect for the security of that individual specificity. *One begins with a moment of vision*: the emotional engagement with a life that is not one's own. By "emotional" is meant the powerful reaction—the "straightforward staring" in Levinasian terminology, the "unique union" of the look, in Simmel's—where what one sees, what is revealed, what one recognizes, is not limited or channeled by the habits of a cultural lifeworld. One sees truly, ontologically. Whatever else might be facing one, indubitably and irreducibly here is an individual life: ipseity, an individual thing-in-itself, a life-form. The details of that life are not clear but an essential truth is unavoidable: here is an "I," over and against *ego*'s own identity. In particular, here is another human being.

   Plato called the moment of vision "desirous." Not only was *ego* drawn to *recognize* an identity in the world that lived a separate life to itself and its own, but also to *appreciate* that life-form: to respect that individuality. It was a thing-in-itself, wholly Other, wholly beyond the ambit of *ego*'s self, and even *ego*'s world, and the shock of this recognition—the Other as "the first intelligible" (Levinas)—was also accompanied by an appreciation that this individual life-form had a right to its own space, a right to be and to become after its own fashion. The moment amounted to a sundering of *ego*'s selfishness, according to Levinas; an "ascent" of a "loving" kind, according to Plato, by which *ego* was led by desire to know the world in a more truthful way.

The moment of vision also translated into a different kind of engagement with the world: a world that now contained otherness, individual life-forms over and against one's own, that called for inclusion in their own terms. How does one now proceed? For Kierkegaard, as in a way for Levinas, the moral response is for *ego to vow to itself to respect the epiphanous moment*, to be true to its insights. Having recognized the strange alterity of another human being *ego* cannot in honesty disavow it. After experiencing otherness as a "first intelligible," a "sundering of singularity," *ego* must abide by the dissolution of its former world of habitual cultural "sameness" and find a way to live with the knowledge that the world comprises "heteronomy through and through" (Levinas). Henceforward one must *recognize* that one cannot truly know the otherness of life that the world comprises, and this ignorance—this appreciation of individual embodiment—provides the ground of one's future engagement. The moment of vision is one of "passionate inwardness" (Kierkegaard). It owes nothing to systems of symbolic classification, to conventions of relationality. To avow that moment is a leap of faith—faith in oneself, in *ego*'s somatic experience—but it is also the means to give one's life purpose, trajectory, and a sense of duration. To be true to the epiphany of that loving recognition is to originate and maintain a truly meaningful life.

Plato's understanding of love as a process, an ascent, also involved an evolution in the target of one's desire: from one physical individual to all such human individuals, and from the concrete manifestation of an attribute—beauty, strength, wisdom—to its pure and perfect abstract form. Ascending this ladder, *ego* also learned to reflect on his or her desire and to know it rationally. The process of loving recognition I would also see as comprising significant stages. One progresses from the look of love, the moment of emotional epiphany, to an avowal of that moment (Kierkegaard). This might be understood, also, to concern rational reflection on, and learning from, the originary emotional reaction to the individual Other (Kant). *Ego*'s avowal rationally extends loving recognition beyond the moment of epiphany: beyond the individual Other as they were then apprehended to other moments of their apprehension; and beyond that individual Other to Anyone. *Ego* comes to recognize that the object of his loving attention, respect, and care is not only the subject of the original epiphany—the individual Other first seen and loved—but any human being, any individual life, any "I." All are equally Other, equally individual, equally strange, and equally lovable, deserving of recognition and respect. The beloved individual Other is Anyone and Everyone.

But this ascent is a continual process, and more dialectical or zigzagging than a singular progression in one direction. There will not be a single

"evolution" in *ego*'s life from a moment of vision and emotional engagement to a rational and ironic avowal. Rather, loving recognition comprises an ongoing dialectic: a continual zigzagging between loving as emotional and as rational; between an engagement with an individual human being and an engagement with "individuality" as an abstract phenomenon and "humanity" as a species whole. Indeed, the scaling-up of loving engagement as rationalized experience need not end there. An "ascent" from the emotional moment when *ego* "falls in love" with an individual human Other can progress not only to individuality and humanity as such—to all such moments with all possible human individuals globally—but also to a "cosmic" dimension of Life itself. Lovingly to recognize another individual life and respect its unique nature may rationally proceed to a recognition and respect for Life, for Nature, for the conditions fated to befall any organism *sub specie aeternitatis*. To love the individuality of a life can ultimately entail a rational reflection on Death: on the preciousness of individual life for reason of its very finiteness and smallness on a cosmic scale. In short, loving recognition continues to traverse an experiential arc between the emotional and the rational, between the individual and the Individual, the human being and the Human, and also between Life and Death. Ultimately an individual life is nothing; ultimately, against the infinitude of death, an individual life is everything.

The dialectical process of loving recognition also concerns certain devices. The politesse of playing dominoes was portrayed as a kind of device of love: through the indirect means of a routine and apparently casual and recreational social exchange, Anyone could be included in their own fashion. But such devices could also be personal in nature and scale. Such as the practice of *ars moriendi*. Deploying *mementi mori* in the environment of a personal routine may guide *ego* on a regular basis to a view of the world where the "myths of culture," their "alluvions and allusions" (Levinas), lose their weight, their sense of reality. Love is instead reserved for the individual life that is swallowed by Death—eternally finite and eternally precious. To practice an *ars moriendi*—making use of *mementi mori* whatever the subjective aesthetic of these (artistic images, photographs of the heavens, meditative techniques of self-effacement, empathetic imaginaries of self-displacement)—is for *ego* to guide itself to a point of vantage where things are seen according to an ultimate scale. Through such devices *ego* may remain true to the moment of vision even should its emotional force dissipate. One zigzags, between emotion and reflection, between a mundane focus and life *sub specie aeternitatis*, between immediate concerns and ultimate ones: between loving recognition experienced as a moral project and loving recognition simply as routine practice. Through love's devices, *ego* succeeds in ascending above the fictions of cultural category thinking

such that ontological truths of human being and individuality continue to be revealed in their precious fragility and specificity.

Moreover, it has been argued also that the epiphany of a loving recognition need not be an element alone. For love to function as a civic virtue more than a unilateral response to individual otherness is called for, however honest and unrelenting *ego* might be in an avowal of that epiphany. *Such epiphany becomes party to a process*, feeding into other, "institutional" forms of recognition. The phrasing might appear infelicitous, but to imagine and to recommend "institutional" forms of loving recognition, forms that share a moral logic with moments of epiphany, enables *ego* to move forward in a routine way: to create a *form* of social life that is both moral and enduring (to "return to culture from nature," in Irigaray's words). It also enables an inclusion within such a loving social environment of those who experience no such epiphany; or whose epiphanies are unloving, even hateful; or whose epiphanies are difficult to maintain, returning *ego* sooner or later to a previous habitus of category-thinking.

"Institutional forms of loving recognition" include three further significant elements of an ideal loving environment. First, as has been key to descriptions of a "liberal" society since John Stuart Mill, *certain individual rights and liberties come to be enshrined in law*. A liberal state exists to ensure that, constitutionally, each individual citizen is recognized alike as having an equal right to self-fulfillment, equal protections for self-expression—and equal restraints. In Mill's own words:

> The only freedom which deserves the name, is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it. Each is the proper guardian of his own health, whether bodily, or mental and spiritual. (1963: 138)

This freedom pertains to three distinct domains, Mill elaborated: first to thought, feeling, and opinion on all subjects; then to tastes and pursuits; and then to forming social ties that are not forced or based on deception, and are entered into by individuals in maturity of their faculties. There is, however, a dialectic between liberty and restraint—between a following of individual desires and a curbing of these—that a liberal state will regulate, legally; in a world of limited material resources—land, physical space, energy, even clean air—the free existence of "any one," depends on "the enforcement of restraints upon the actions of other people" (Mill 1963: 131). There must be legal regulation concerning the ways and extents to which the liberty of one verges on the deprivation, impedance, force, or deception of others. Indeed, the essay "On Liberty" made the identifying of this dialectic its central concern:

[T]he sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercized over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinions of others, to do so would be wise, or even right These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him or entreating him, but not for compelling him, or visiting him with any evil, in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to someone else. The only part of the conduct of any one, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign. (Mill 1963: 135)

I would call this an "institutional" form of loving recognition whereby laws are constituted and instituted concerning the mutual rights that individual citizens have in regard to one another. Central to this is a state apparatus that ensures that equal rights to individual fulfillment are maintained: recognition of and respect for individual human beings as ends in themselves.

A second form of institutional loving concerns civility. *Certain "polite" forms of social exchange become normative*. "Après vous, Monsieur" might summarize an entire philosophy of ethical engagement, Levinas considered (1985a: 89), distilling the essence of a "civil society" where apparently banal yet ubiquitous acts of politeness form the basis of a fundamental recognition of individual otherness: a public linguistic and behavioral style of address and exchange that assumes the individuality of fellow citizens. Such civil (or "cosmopolitan") politesse might be characterized by a kind of "indirectness": by silence, for instance, or by seemingly anodyne, even clichéd, forms of social engagement. What is key is the managing of a balancing act between inclusivity—interacting with the individual Other, with Anyone—and a preserving of privacy, not presuming an intimacy with that Other or perpetrating a categorization of them. Such civil politesse effects a loving recognition by anticipating the individual nature—the ontological distinctiveness or "subjective secrecy" (Levinas)—of fellow citizens and not expecting to know another's private selfhood or to read off private truths from public expression. Respect for the individual is coupled with ignorance of the individual. A civil politesse connects all individual citizens, includes all (Anyone) in the societal whole, without claiming to incorporate them into a collective identity. A civil society is an aggregation of members while not being an integration.

In short, alongside laws that institutionalize a loving recognition in a "liberal" society, there is a civil code of normative forms of polite engagement

that mundanely but ubiquitously includes all. Such a code is manifest at different scales, both characterizing how individuals interact with one another, with how organizations and bureaucracies administer to their constituencies of individuals.

Thirdly, *loving recognition might become institutionalized in its being taught and learnt*. A liberal state inculcates a civil society that is also "caring": it institutes socializing practices whereby recognition and respect for fellow citizens as being first and foremost individual Others might be learned and taught. To "care" is to pay attention to these fellow citizens Others, to anticipate having a responsibility toward them, to engage actively with them (even if indirectly and at a distance), and to assume "care-giving" to be an ongoing process. Loving recognition thus translates into a social caring that advocates and teaches seeing beyond the cultural habitus of conventional constructions of identities and relations (however else these latter might be enjoined and enjoyed in communitarian contexts). The individual citizen is "trained" to practice a certain irony. However much symbolic classifications of the world ("us" and "them," "pure" and "polluted," "sacred" and "profane") might characterize community attachments and belonging, as member of the liberal society one also appreciates the fictional nature of such identifications and relations, and has a care that one's public practice recognizes and respects the universal commonalities of humanity and individuality. One cares for the personal preserve of the individual human Other. Again, this occurs across different scales, from personal caring to that of institutions and society as a whole. Caring becomes a social ethos at which liberal societies and their members alike become adept. Teaching and learning loving recognition come to "inform the practices of democratic citizenship" (Tronto 1993: 167).

The epiphanous moment of vision in which the individual Other is emotionally apprehended is thus complemented by an environment that includes liberal laws, civil norms of exchange, and social training in care. Here are three institutional forms of loving recognition that represent a kind of conscientious commitment to remain true to the moment of vision, the look of love. *As a process and an environment, a complex of experiences and practices (epiphanies, avowals, legalities, civilities, teachings, ratiocinations, devices), loving recognition is multifaceted, and both personal and social in provenance*.

CODA: IS LOVE ENOUGH?

This book has been conceived as proceeding from *Anyone, The Cosmopolitan Subject of Anthropology* (Rapport 2012). There too, a "cosmopolitan

anthropology" enjoyed a kind of tripartite complexity. It attempted a *scientific* knowledge of human being alongside an *aesthetic* representation that did justice to the individual diversity of human being, and a *moral* discernment of the optimal social conditions for (individual) human flourishing.

But that book left a question to answer. If a cosmopolitan "politesse" was a form of social interaction configured so as to anticipate Anyone and eschew a categorization of the Other as essentially a member of a class, then what might be the motivation for taking up such politesse as general practice and for recognizing its virtue? The answer offered by this book has concerned the loving look. Politesse might be motivated by a moment of epiphany concerning the individuality of the Other, by a process of avowal consequent upon that epiphanous moment, and by a rationalization that recognizes the preciousness of such individual life, when set against the infinity of the cosmos and the impersonalism, the death of personality. Politesse may be defined as a form of indirection: one of a number of routines of social exchange that are apparently silent on the subject of love—possibly silent *tout court*—and that may seem ethically neutral, even vacuous, but in whose formulaicism and universal applicability Anyone comes to be included as themselves. Other such indirect "devices" will then accompany politesse as a practice of loving engagement, devices both personal and subjective, and common and social. Finally, politesse is supported more formally by the procedures of a liberal society: laws that ensure civil freedoms, and a social ethics of care that would institute civility, have it taught and learned, both as individual behavior and as organizational function.

As with "politesse," I would argue that "cosmopolitanism" becomes more secure as a phenomenon, more viable, more full, in connection with love. Indeed, loving recognition can be understood as an ideal form of cosmopolitanism: an ideal appreciation of the scalar connection between individuality and humanity between which *ego*, the citizen, the lover, experientially oscillates. Loving recognition is a zigzag between these poles and perspectives, keeping both the connections between them and the distinctions alive. Here is the "*polis*" of an individual body and life, and here is the "*cosmos*" of humanity as a species. Here is the "*polis*" of humankind, and here is the "*cosmos*" of Nature, of life on Earth. Here is the "*polis*" of earthly life, and here is the "*cosmos*" of the time of the Universe and Death. Here is the "*polis*" of a moment of emotional appreciation, and here is the "*cosmos*" of rational avowal of that moment's general significance. Here, finally, is the "*polis*" of a personal, individual response to an Other, Anyone, and here is the "*cosmos*" of social institutionality (laws, norms of interaction, modes of learning) ordaining that response.

Cosmopolitanism contains within itself a scale of ontological truth that transcends culturo-symbolic categorizations so as to bring individuality and

humanity into continuous relationship. Loving recognition is a complex (emotional and intellectual, personal and institutional, momentary and continual) enactment of that truth.

But still: is love enough?

Our words—our images, our ideas, our emotions, our visions—amount to a "tissue of quotations drawn from innumerable centers of culture," Roland Barthes proposed (1982: 293), in a structuralist denial of authorship and individuality, and a folding of original difference within a culturalist whole. While decrying the proposition, I also recognize the sense of belonging I can feel in others' words. To quote them and be able to parley with them is a form of homage, of righteousness, of respect, and celebration—of love. Albeit that their meanings belong to an Other, I find the words stirring and true, emblematic, and I would have them fulfill their individual trajectory.

Words of Primo Levi's have inspired this book, as have those of Emmanuel Levinas and Iris Murdoch, Stanley Spencer, E. M. Forster, and others. I began with Leonard Woolf's recognition of ipseity—his insistence that "each and all have a precisely similar 'I'"—and I find that words from Aharon Appelfeld provide a fitting end-stop:

> It would seem that there is nothing simpler [than the word "I"], but it holds many dangers within it. The "I" loves to raise its head arrogantly. An arrogant "I" is a grave flaw. An "I" without modesty is a blemished "I." Even worse is the word "we." "We" is a pretentious word, and you have to be cautious with it, too. "We" without "I" is a hollow word. (2017: 127)

The beauty in his phrasing aside, what of the caution that Appelfeld advises in regard to words, and the dangers to be guarded against? Am I being too naïve? A "tissue" of beloved quotations does not necessarily augur a strong argument, a cosmopolitan truth.

A proposal concerning "love" would seem to call for especial caution. "Love is all you need!" conjures up a soundtrack of the 1960s, of flower-power and hippies: John and Yoko staging a love-in in their bedroom before the world's media. Stanley Spencer was also deemed a holy fool—or simply a fool—for claiming "love-making" as a solution to the ghastlinesses of war, and proclaiming himself "married to the world" (while demonstrably failing to provide the loving attention even needed by wife and children). Martin Luther King could rhapsodize on "the redemptive power of love" to make the "whole world a new world," and on love being "the only way," but he was then assassinated. "Make Love not War!," "All you need is Love!," "Love is the Answer!," "Love, Peace and Happiness!" Do I erect these banners of pop culture as sufficiencies of realpolitik?

The following is an extract from a leaflet put out by an Islamist group, *Hizb ut-Tahrir* (Party of Liberation), which seeks to recruit Muslim students from British university and college campuses:

> The Muslim community has been seduced, tricked and subverted into a disastrous relationship with the *Kafir* [disbeliever], the result of which has been the abandonment of our educational nexus for theirs, our moral nexus for theirs, our governmental nexus for theirs so that our anthropological distinctness has been submerged and eradicated until all that is allowed to remain is a romantic appraisal of our Islamic past in Museums of Mankind and other Jew-designated mortuaries of wisdom. (Cited in *The Observer* 1994)

Hizb ut-Tahrir would alert members of "the Muslim community" as to the "deceptiveness, dangerousness and unworkability of democracy," and urge the creation of an Islamic state wherever there is "a concentration of Muslims." It would also memorialize the Koranic praise of fighting and killing, and proclaim "the battlefield" as the only place for Muslims and Jews to meet. The State of Israel is to be deemed intrinsically "criminal," an "illegal entity" to be "dismantled" or "destroyed" without compromise, and suicide bombings in Israel are to be celebrated as legitimate acts of martyrdom. For the Jews are "a people of slander," a more recent broadcast concludes, "a treacherous people," and their eradication through jihad is an obligation:

> No one likes the Jews except the Jews. Even they themselves rarely like each other. . . . The American people do not like the Jews nor do the Europeans, because the Jews by their very nature do not like anyone else. Rather they look at other people as wild animals that have to be tamed to serve them. So, how can we imagine it being possible for any Arab or Muslim to like the Jews whose character is such? . . . And now the Jews live surrounded by enemies. Four million [Israeli] Jews live amidst 230 million Arabs, and amidst a population of over one billion, 200 million Muslims. . . . O Muslims! Purify yourselves from the deception of the rulers, the deception of the Jews and the deceptions of the Western nations which instill in you the delusion that you are weak and that the Jewish state is strong. . . . The Jews are cowards, they are a people of money and not a people of fighting. The Western countries are not with the Jews, rather they are with their own interests. They are Capitalist, colonialist countries driven by nothing except benefit. When they find that standing alongside the Jews will make them lose their interests, they will abandon the Jews. . . . Know that the Jews and their usurping state in Palestine will, by the Help and Mercy of Allah, be destroyed "until the stones and trees will say: O Muslim, O Slave of Allah. Here is a Jew behind me, so come and kill him." The signs indicate that this time is about to come. (Hizb ut-Tahrir 1999)

While the United Kingdom remains its logistical base, where publications are produced and distributed (globally), Hizb ut-Tahrir has, since its founding in

1953, spread to more than fifty countries and claims up to a million members. *The Observer* newspaper has dubbed them "Hitler's heirs."

But why admit an account of Hizb ut-Tahrir and their words into my work? Do I not repay their desire for publicity and to shock—and diminish myself? For my initial reaction to the above, as to the host of other anti-Jewish and anti-Israel sentiment enunciated in the mass media—when a spokesperson for Hamas or Hezbollah swears Israel eternal enmity—is to hate not to love. (Nor, as a "Zionist" and a "Jew," do I expect to be loved in return.) It is difficult not to get drawn into the language-game of cultural categorization and stereotypification: of "Muslims" as against "Jews," "Arabs" as against "Jews," "Americans" and "Europeans" as against "Jews," "Western nations" as against "Jews." It is difficult not to get drawn into the facades of category thinking and to play identity politics. And nor is it a minority interest. The British Labour Party, the main left-of-center political organization in the United Kingdom, currently boasts a leader who has been happy to refer to Hamas and Hezbollah as "friends," and pronounce how "honored" he was to have been able to host representatives of these organizations at the British Parliament. (Surely the actions of the State of Israel are comparable to those of the various fascist states that style themselves "Islamic," Jeremy Corbyn concluded.) It is not unusual to find Labour Party activists and supporters comparing Israel to apartheid South Africa, even Nazi Germany.

Equally I cannot find it in myself to love those who espouse more academic forms of category thinking: insisting that "cultures are not options" (Parekh 1998: 212) and that they represent essentialistic foundations of individual identity; and hence that the integrity of cultures must be preserved in modern complex "multicultural" societies where a liberal distinction between private belief and public rationality is no longer practicable. The diversity of cultural "communities" of which contemporary society fundamentally consists, we are informed, entails a "politics of recognition" and nondiscrimination whereby it is cultural difference not individual difference that is foundational (Taylor 1992). It is hard to contain the antipathy that I feel for those who would advance these warping untruths concerning cultural essences—individuals being fundamentalistically assigned to communitarian memberships—and the unfreedoms involved. But nor do I expect my own liberalism to be loved in return.

But I am aware, too, that to discourse on the rectitude of actions of the Israeli government, say, even on whether the State of Israel should exist, can be construed as a matter of political economy more than one of essentialism and category thinking. Here is a realm of debate not so much concerning disagreement over the nature of reality and how it is socially constituted than over how scarce resources are to be allocated or the best means to a political end (although the distinction between political economy and cultural essentialism, in the literature of Hizb ut-Tahrir and the multiculturalist lobby alike,

is not always easy to draw). And I am aware of the arguments that say that for this reason love and the political do not meet. There can be no "politics of love," we have heard from Alain Badiou (2009: 57), because there will always be people and opinions in politics one *cannot* love. Politics, indeed, *is* about how foes may accommodate one another; politics is about coming together and being together with intolerable others. The foe is *inside* the political realm, intrinsic to its discursive and procedural constitution: love cannot transform this state, and political enemies must always remain as such. As in love, there may be passion roused in politics, but it is the passion of hatred for enemies; political organization exists "to control, indeed to destroy, the consequences of hatred" (Badiou 2009: 71).

That, however, has not been the thesis of this book, which has explored the contrary proposal that love *may* fulfill an explicitly political purpose, indeed serving as a principal civic virtue underpinning and guaranteeing social integration in a liberal polity. I have not wished to distinguish love and politics, reserving the former for a domestic domain of interpersonal fidelity (Badiou 2009: 58; cf. Hirschman 1977). I have sought to reclaim love—the emotional attraction that carries recognition of and respect for an individual Other—for public life, for the social structure, and for moral bonds. "Passion" need not be consigned to communitarian belongings and political hatreds, and in the form of love may be deployed in the political and public service of individuality and humanity.

What then can be my solution to hatred, the hatred felt by me as well as that exhibited by others, and a solution that escapes the seeming naivety of a proclamation that "Love is all you need"? The solution must be found in the political and legal proceedings of the liberal state. There must be an absolute refusal to talk the language of fictional collectivities, of those groupings invented through symbolic classification: "culture," "community," "ethnicity," "class," "church," "nation," or "people." The only "collectivity" of relevance is the ontological one of a common humanity. The liberal state—a cosmopolitan, universalist, and universalizing undertaking—ensures legally and in its everyday procedures that there are no intrinsic "communities" officially recognized or treated, no essential "cultures," only individual citizens, and the common humanity that serves as the basis of universal rights to recognition and inclusion and equal treatment. Also, the solution is to be found in a passionate engagement with this liberalism on a personal scale and as an individual practice: the loving recognition by individual citizens for every other citizen, ultimately for Anyone, for any human being anywhere.

In 1790, Stanislas de Clermont-Tonnerre, a liberal member of the postrevolutionary French Assembly, was part of a legal attempt to codify Enlightenment principles of rational human universalism, including British principles of the rule of law, into a new French constitution. There would, for example,

be an emancipation of Jews and Protestants, granting them citizenship along-side Roman Catholics. But critically, Jewishness, Protestantism *and* Catholicism alike were to be deemed voluntary practices: not markers of essential identities as in the *ancien regime*. It was the ontologies of individuality and humanity that the secular French state would now guarantee, legally, politically, and morally. "To the Jews as a nation one must grant nothing; to the Jew as an individual one must give everything," was Clermont-Tonnerre impassioned summation (cited in Hunt 1996: 88). *As individuals*, all were citizens of France, and Anyone was a citizen of France, included by the same laws and ideally accorded the same rights.

Clermont-Tonnerre's was a cosmopolitan solution, refusing the fiction of culture as collective essence and identity and the constructions of communitarian identifications. Forms of collective belonging (ethnic, religious, sexual, political) were to be recognized and respected solely as forms of lifestyle choice that individuals might make, and their expression regulated according to the laws of individual human rights. Equally cosmopolitan were those key quotations with which this book began. It is "intolerable" for human beings to be assessed not for "what they are" but because of a symbolic category to which they "happen to have been assigned" (Levi 1996:x). "Being human is a feature," not a relation dependent on cultural perceptions or elicitation (Margalit 1996: 124). We must "beware taking too seriously" kinds of classification that threaten the recognition of a common humanity and ensure that we treat all humanity's (individual) members "decently and with respect" (Gellner 1993b: 3). "Love" is a term to describe "the perception of individuals": the "discovery of their reality" and the "respect for their otherness" (Murdoch 1999: 215–6, 337). Love is the "deification" of human individuality (Emerson 1889: 42).

In making recognition of individual humanity the foundational criterion of social life and liberal statehood, I must accept that "Jew" and "Israel" are as much fictions as are "Hizb ut-Tahrir" and "Muslim" (Rapport 2012: 199–207). This is the "price" of love, or the "cost" (to return to love's seeming clichés). There can be no more essential "Jewish" identity, or territory or right to traditional continuance, than there can be "Muslim" or "Christian"—or "male" or "middle-class" or "Mancunian" or "Macedonian" or "masonic." History starts afresh with each individual life, and love is enough if the liberal state enshrines this principle as a birthright: if there is no compromise with assertions of cultural collectivity and communitarian belonging as foundational of identity, no "strategic essentialism." Only the "human" and the "individual" are true, and it is this that a loving recognition translates into a civic virtue.

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