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The Editors appreciate comments and feedback from readers. They also value any help in increasing circulation in order to fulfil the Journal's objective, which is to bring together a body of original scholarship on the theory and practice of dialogue that can be critically appraised and discussed.

Aim and Scope

The Journal of Dialogue Studies is a multidisciplinary, peer-reviewed academic journal published twice a year. Its aim is to study the theory and practice of dialogue, understood provisionally as: meaningful interaction and exchange between people (often of different social, cultural, political, religious or professional groups) who come together through various kinds of conversations or activities with a view to increased understanding. The Journal is published by the Institute for Dialogue Studies, the academic platform of the Dialogue Society.

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The Dialogue Society is a registered charity, established in London in 1999, with the aim of advancing social cohesion by connecting communities, empowering people to engage and contributing to the development of ideas on dialogue. It operates nation-wide with regional branches across the UK. Through discussion forums, courses, capacity building publications and outreach it enables people to venture across boundaries of religion, culture and social class. It provides a platform where people can meet to share narratives and perspectives, discover the values they have in common and be at ease with their differences.

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Editorial Introduction

Paul Weller

Academic Editor

In providing a platform for intellectually rigorous engagement with dialogue, undertaken from starting points in a wide range of academic disciplines and in relation to a wide variety of contexts, the *Journal of Dialogue Studies* presents editions that seek to focus on particular aspects of dialogue and its conduct. Bearing in mind a phrase from the journal's overall working proposition that at the heart of dialogue is a 'meaningful interaction and exchange between people', because of its involvement with people, dialogue almost inevitably entails ethical dimensions. Therefore this edition of the journal seeks to open up and critically explore some of the ethical dimensions of dialogue, from various disciplinary perspectives and with reference to various contexts. In addressing this, contributions are made by writers with backgrounds in various national contexts including Israel, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

In particular, this edition contains articles by Scherto Gill and Dvora Lederman Daniely which explore the edition's theme in ways strongly informed by thinking (albeit with practical consequences) of two key philosophers (Hans Georg Gadamer and Martin Buber); those by Pietro de Perini's and Elli Nagai-Rothe which start from more concrete and specific contexts for dialogue, respectively, in terms of the European Union's relations with the wider Mediterranean region, and the inheritance of racialised relations in the United States of America; and finally, that by Charles Wright, which focuses on the mediation between dialogical ideals and group practice by way of engagement with biological and social-psychological perspectives.

Dr. Scherto Gill is Visiting Fellow and Associate Tutor at the University of Sussex's Department of Education and Research Fellow and Executive Secretary of the Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace, based in Brighton, UK. Her article on 'Holding oneself open in a conversation' takes into its title a key quotation from Gadamer. It explores Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics in drawing out implications for the ethics of dialogue. In this she highlights openness to the other and otherness as key ideals for dialogical encounter and understanding, looking especially at the ethics of alterity in relation to the place of otherness in dialogue; the ethics of self-cultivation in terms of a fusion of horizons; the ethics of mutuality, with reference to equality and active reciprocity in dialogue; and ethics of solidarity, as connected with language and understanding.

Dvora Lederman Daniely, who is a researcher and lecturer at David Yellin and Givat Washington Colleges in Israel, also contributes an article that is strongly informed by philosophical perspectives. In 'The Buberian Dialogical Man as a Struggler in the Field of Existential Choice', she explores the ethical dimensions of dialogue through the work of another important philosopher – Martin Buber - whose work has, for many, become archetypically connected with dialogue. The article does so by reference to models of dialogue found particularly in teaching and learning, and argues that such models are limited when they focus only on the cognitive aspects of teaching and learning; while interpersonal approaches that focus on containment and empathy may also not facilitate what Buber's philosophy advocates as the critically important sphere of the "between". Lederman Daniely therefore argues that dialogical relations of a kind that are more fully informed by Buberian philosophy are processes that involve a powerful and continuous existential struggle between the 'I-Thou' and the 'I-it' modes of relation.

Complementing the articles that are more strongly informed by explicit philosophical discussions are articles in this edition which explore ethical aspects of dialogue when rooted in very concrete fields of action and reflection. This includes Pietro de Perini's piece on 'The Origin of Intercultural Dialogue Practice in European Union External Action'. Pietro de Perini a junior research fellow at the Human Rights Centre of the University of Padua, Italy, and a doctoral Candidate at City University, London, UK. His paper analyses European Union policy documents to explore the origins of the concept and practice of the specific form of 'intercultural dialogue' that developed with the original intention of being a tool for use within the European Union's engagements with the wider Mediterranean region. In doing so, he discusses how and why a tool that, when it was first launched in the mid-1990s was thought by many to be quite innovative and to have considerable potential was, in practice, for many years relatively neglected in its actual use.

Moving from the European to North American context, but also discussing some of the limitations of dialogical initiatives, Elli Nagai-Rothe, who holds a Master's degree in International Peace and Conflict Resolution, facilitates intergroup dialogues and manages Restorative Justice programmes at SEEDS Community Resolution Center in Berkeley, California, USA, offers an article on 'Dialogue as a Tool for Racial Reconciliation: Examining Racialised Frameworks'. This draws on her experiences as a facilitator of a seven-week intergroup dialogue on race to explore the possibilities and limitations of dialogue as a tool for racial reconciliation, especially in the context of the United States of America, and with particular attention to the relationship between what dialogue can and cannot achieve relative to the question of structural and power imbalances.

Mediating between moral philosophy and the practice of groups, Charles W. Wright's 'Tribal Morality and the Ethical Other' explores, as its subtitle puts it, 'The Tension between Modern Moral Aspirations and Evolved Moral Dispositions'. Wright teaches in the Department of Philosophy at the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University in Central Minnesota, USA and connects discussion of the ideals of perspective taking and mutual understanding with social psychological and biological accounts of social co-operation in human behaviour. He does this in ways that highlight the gap that can exist between these the evolution of both these ideals, and of the moral sensibilities found among human groups, within which there are tendencies to favour group insiders. He suggests that social psychological intergroup contact theory can help to identify the conditions under which propensities to group favouritism might be overcome.

Following on from the experimental introduction in the last edition of the journal of more reflective pieces, also included in this issue is a piece on 'What does Ethical Dialogue look like? A Reflection', written by Julian Bond, who was formerly Director of the Christian-Muslim Forum in the UK. This takes as its starting point the concerns felt by some about the possibility of becoming compromised during the development of dialogue that connects both with practical engagement and with doctrinal beliefs. This is the second example of the journal's new section intended for pieces that provide a platform for more preliminary reflection on dialogical practice that we hope might complement the more formal peer reviewed academic papers that remain at the core of the journal's project. We will continue to keep this new feature under review and would welcome feedback from readers about the inclusion of this section. In addition, as with the first of these pieces published in the last edition, we would particularly invite dialogical responses from readers.

Finally, as always, this edition of the journal ends with book reviews. On this occasion, Nicholas J. Wood reviews a collection of papers on the work of mainly North American scholars and pioneers of dialogue edited and presented by Catherine Cornille into the *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Inter-Religious Dialogue*; while Michael Barnes reviews the single authored work of Professor of Interreligious Studies at the University of Oslo, Oddbjørn Leirvik, on *Interreligious Studies: A Relational Approach to Religious Activism and the Study of Religion*, published by Bloomsbury, and written under the shadow cast upon Norwegian civil society's attempts to wrestle with the implications of contemporary religious plurality, by the ideology and actions of Anders Behring Breivik.

“Holding Oneself Open in a Conversation” – Gadamer’s Philosophical Hermeneutics and the Ethics of Dialogue

Scherto Gill

Philosophical hermeneutic ‘understands itself not as an absolute position but as a way of experience. It insists that there is no higher principle than holding oneself open in a conversation’

–Hans Georg Gadamer

This paper’s aim is to explore Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics in order to draw out implications for the ethics of dialogue. Through examining key interconnected components in Gadamer’s theory, I highlight the openness to the other and otherness as a key normative ideal for dialogic understanding and their influence on the core practical ethos that underpins dialogue encounter, including the ethics of alterity, self-cultivation, equality, reciprocity, and solidarity. We further consider hermeneutical application or *praxis* by way of a guide insofar as to how one might act in the world through dialogue construed through these ethical dimensions.

Keywords: philosophical hermeneutics, Gadamer, dialogue, encounter, otherness, ethics, praxis.

Introduction

Gadamer argues that dialogue is fundamental to understanding and to our way of being-in-the-world (Heidegger 1962). Since a human’s embeddedness and finitude demand self-transformation, the hermeneutical problem is not only universal but also existential. One of the central threads in Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics is the place of the other in dialogic interpretation and in the process of understanding. From this emerges the intersubjective nature of transcendent human conditions.

Dialogue takes place whilst individuals seek to understand within the interplay of the perspectives present in an encounter, which are constituted in historical consciousness, traditions, cultural contexts, and so forth. Gadamer postulates that understanding is dialogic, and thus intersubjective, including the relationship between oneself and the other, and the relationship between the agent and the world. Indeed, many thinkers have addressed a similar topic, among them,

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Emmanuel Levinas, Paulo Freire and Habermas. Despite criticism of Gadamer for being a 'traditionalist', on the one hand, and 'relativist', on the other, through a closer reading, this paper argues that philosophical hermeneutics offers a truly comprehensive theory encapsulating the central place of the other and otherness in dialogue and in human existence. Equally, hermeneutical applications call for ethical engagement in dialogue.

By dialogue ethics I refer to any argument that proposes desirable ways to engage in dialogic encounters. In discussing this, I want to articulate ethical considerations derived from philosophical hermeneutics. In particular, this paper will look at four important aspects of Gadamer's theory that demand ethical considerations:

1. The situatedness and embeddedness of the interpreter, that requires an openness towards the other and otherness as being paramount in prompting and expanding our understanding;
2. The finitude of being human, that necessitates self-transcendence that is essentially afforded by the other through 'fusion of horizons';
3. The reciprocal nature of dialogic understanding that stipulates an equal and mutual relationship between the dialogue partners; and
4. The linguistic mediation of all understanding that calls for participation in community through language, thereby developing solidarity with others.

Within these, there can be questions such as "In what way does the other count in dialogue?" and "What is it that is actually counted?" However, I do not regard Gadamer's theory as a set of 'oughts' towards the other, since his concern 'was and is philosophic: not what we do or what we ought to do, but what happens to us over and above our wanting' (TM, xxviii). Philosophical hermeneutics is thus a radical departure from traditional ethics which tends to deal with the abstraction, identification and articulation of values, principles and rules that frame the right actions. Indeed, Gadamer's theorisation does not detach dialogue from life itself, nor our mode of being in the world, and instead, as we will illustrate later, it points to ethics as being hermeneutical and thus practical (Thames 2005).

So, the project of this paper is to explore some of the key ideas in Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics that explicitly render his view on the place of the other and otherness in dialogic understanding. These prepare fertile ground for discussing the practice of dialogue ethics. In Gadamer's words, dialogue is itself the practice of ethics by 'not merely recognizing the good, but demanding it as well' (Gadamer 1999, 116). In a global era, where a plurality of otherness is a common factor in all encounters, an analysis of the ethical resources and a reconstruction of the ethical

orientations are pressingly necessary in order to provide guidelines through the use of which dialogue partners may put ethics into practice.

First, though, we must (re)familiarise ourselves with philosophical hermeneutics and what we should be looking for in terms of dialogue ethics in his theory.

Hermeneutical Understanding¹

Hermeneutics is applied in situations in which we encounter meanings that are not immediately accessible to us and which require interpretive effort. Dallmayr (2009, 34) calls it the 'ambivalent character of interpretation'. The earliest situation in which the hermeneutical principles were being adopted was when interpreters sought to understand significant texts, such as religious scriptures, whose meanings were often obscure, resulting in the alienation of the interpreter from the meaning. Since then, hermeneutics has been used to refer to all situations of understanding where the same alienation may occur. These situations include occasions when individuals engage in dialogue or conversation, experience works of art, or try to understand historical events and actions. In this paper, I mainly focus on situations of dialogue and dialogic conversations.

In his book, *Truth and Method*, Gadamer makes an important distinction between hermeneutics and method or methodology. He asserts that hermeneutics is not a method, but rather it is a human's mode of being-in-the-world; differently put, human existence is constituted in the world, an enveloping wholeness (Steiner 1978). This claim does not mean the rejection of the importance of methodological concerns. Instead, it is an insistence on the limited role of method and on the necessity to prioritise understanding as a dialogical, practical, situated activity. What Gadamer maintains here is that human understanding, which has ontological significance, is irreducible to mere methodological applications.

Philosophical hermeneutics offers some distinct ways to define a number of key concepts, such as: human finitude, historical consciousness, tradition, prejudice, horizon and language. I will briefly introduce these concepts here and elaborate on them further in order to explore their wider implications for dialogue ethics in the later sections.

For Gadamer, interpretation has a temporal and situated character and cannot be carried out by an anonymous 'knowing subject'. To understand is also to understand a web of meanings and contexts within which such understanding takes place.

1 This section may seem very descriptive in setting out the key ideas from Gadamer's complex theory. It is indeed aimed at readers and scholars who are less than familiar with Gadamer's work.

Gadamer asserts that humans are finite beings, as our knowledge and language are always framed within, and conditioned by, our historicity and tradition. It requires human effort to overcome such finitude through hermeneutical endeavours.

As has been briefly mentioned, historically, the hermeneutical approach had been applied to the unfolding of the meanings in the text from the author's perspectives and the contexts within which the author's perspectives originated. It combines tapping into the framework of language (syntax, discourse, semiotics) with a critical analysis and interpretation of the author's intentions, which 'are themselves expressions of an on-going dialogue situated in a historically evolving and culturally specific tradition' (Kögler 2014, 13).

Gadamer critiqued the ideas of two philosophers, Schleiermacher and Dilthey, who also explored the topic. Schleiermacher saw that both understanding and misunderstanding occur naturally. To avoid misunderstanding, he argues, it requires a 're-creation of the creative act' (TM, 187) in order to understand the author of the original text better than he understands himself. This approach aims to interrogate the words' meanings, the author's worldviews, the historical situation and/or the author's biographical contexts, in order for the 'true' meanings of the texts to unfold. Dilthey, on the other hand, wanted to develop a hermeneutical approach to understanding the human world that could achieve the same rigour as a scientific approach to the knowledge of the natural world. The hermeneutical task, for Dilthey is to uncover the original life-world the author inhabits, and to understand the author as he/she understands him/herself. Understanding in this way, according to Dilthey, is self-transposition and the imaginative projection of the author's intention and meaning across temporal distance.

Notwithstanding these differences in their hermeneutic approaches, from Gadamer's perspective both Schleiermacher and Dilthey would have regarded the tradition of the interpreter as being negative and unhelpful in attempting to achieve an understanding that is not interfered with by his/her own tradition. As mentioned, for Gadamer, any knower or interpreter's present situation (which carries his/her own historicity and tradition) is already present and well constituted in the very process of understanding. His critique of Schleiermacher and Dilthey's approaches is therefore that they provide a one-sided view of interpretation by trying to somehow ignore the interpreter's tradition and to promote an idea that to understand is to purge all prejudices from one's subjectivity. For Gadamer, such an approach would result in alienating the knower from his/her own historicity and tradition.

To avoid alienating the knower, it is necessary to recognise that understanding, as a hermeneutical task, is not to reconstruct (objectively) the intention of the author/person who writes/speaks. Instead, understanding is 'the entering into an

event of transmission in which past and present are constantly mediated' (TM, 274), and is hence concerned with historical continuity. The interpreter always seeks to understand within the boundedness of his/her own tradition which, when combined with the temporal distance separating the person from his/her objects and from his/her own past, offers a rich and productive ground for the critical and creative application of tradition. It is noticeable that this participation in one's own tradition is not the object of understanding, but the condition of its occurrence.

Our historicity and tradition form the basis of our prejudice in Gadamer's conceptualisation of the concept. He maintains that the original meaning of the word does not have the negative connotation that we have now attached to it. Prejudice is not necessarily unjustified and erroneous, thereby distorting the truth. Prejudice simply means 'a judgement that is rendered before all the elements that determine a situation have been finally examined' (TM, 273). Gadamer asserts that being situated within traditions, and thus assuming certain prejudices, does not readily limit our freedom. On the contrary, prejudice opens up our scope for understanding. It defines the unexamined premise that the interpreter brings when seeking understanding. Emerging from our history and tradition, prejudice can bridge the temporal gulf between the interpreter and the object of understanding, be it a text, an event, an action, a conversation, or a piece of artwork. It connects the familiar world we inhabit and the unfamiliar meanings (otherness) that resist being incorporated into our own. It is where we can start to engage with otherness.

This may sound controversial, but Gadamer claims that prejudices or prejudgements constitute our being. To understand does not necessitate that we somehow become prejudice-free. Instead, to understand is to form new horizons that are more comprehensive and that can help to overcome the limitations of our existing one. In this way, the meaning of a text or conversation surpasses its author, not just occasionally, but always, and understanding is not a reproductive process, but rather a productive one.

Habermas (1990) challenges that such an appeal to tradition and prejudice implies the lack of a critical approach to tradition and thereby results in our turning a blind eye to the power of ideology. In other words, stressing that human's embeddedness makes it impossible to critically reflect upon the social and political impact of ideology. To respond, Gadamer asserts that the interpreting subject can him/herself never be truly free from tradition and to suggest otherwise would be a deception. Indeed, Gadamer asks: 'Is not, rather, all human existence, even the freest, limited and qualified in various ways?' (TM, 277)

Indeed, this finite determinacy of human thought shows that the way one's horizon can be expanded must be through understanding. Horizon refers to our range of

vision, which ‘includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point’ (TM, 301). A person who has no horizon does not see far enough, and hence overvalues what is nearest to him. To acquire a horizon means that ‘one learns to look beyond what is close at hand – not in order to look away from it but to see it better, within a larger whole and in truer proportion’ (TM, 305). This makes it possible for the interpreter to discern without excluding these positions, and to integrate what is within the immediate vision and what is at large in the world. Horizons do not imprison us, since they can shift and expand. Hermeneutical endeavour thus entails broadening our perspectives through the fusion of horizons. Fusion of horizons is the fruit of encounter where we are open so the other can genuinely challenge our own perspectives and we are able to recognise the particularity of our horizon and that of the other in relationship to greater universality. Taylor (2002, 132) concurs that the ‘road to understanding others passes through the patient identification and undoing of those facets of our implicit understanding that distort the reality of the other’.

This is Gadamer’s response to the critique of reducing hermeneutics to facile consensualism, or to a form of relativism. Indeed, the historical movement of human life means that there is never a horizon that is closed and, instead, it is ‘something into which we move and that moves with us’ (TM, 303), indicating that understanding is continuous and necessarily incomplete. It is also clear that Gadamer dismisses dialogue as balancing differences in opinions or perspectives, or as assimilating the other into our own. Instead, he focuses on the openness of dialogic understanding and its to-and-fro nature, an infinite possibility for self-transcendence and growth, as we shall see.

Gadamer further claims that dialogue occurs in language, and that understanding is always mediated by language, which is itself formed in the process of dialogue. This primacy of language in the hermeneutical experience determines that our mode of being in the world is through our being ‘in’ language. This means that it is within language that anything to be understood is interpreted and, similarly, it is within language that we encounter ourselves and others (Malpas 2013). In this regard, language is dialogue and is, in part, human’s being-in-the-world, an important aspect that we will elaborate further when discussing its implication on dialogue ethics.

So far, I have revisited a few of the interconnected foundational concepts in philosophical hermeneutics which clearly articulate how Gadamer conceives human understanding. Together, these establish our ways of being in the world as being fundamentally relational – not only in the way we are in relation to other human beings, but also in our relation to the world itself. They serve as a starting point from which we can further elaborate on Gadamer’s influence on the ethics of dialogue, which we shall turn to next.

The Ethics of Dialogue

I have identified four broad ethical considerations that are embedded in Gadamer's dialogue theories. In this section, I will exam each of them more closely.

The Place of Otherness in Dialogue – The Ethics of Alterity

The first condition of hermeneutics is an encounter with otherness. An encounter brings our attention to something alien which, in turn, makes us become acutely aware of the situatedness of our understanding and knowing. According to Gadamer,

The hermeneutical problem only emerges clearly when there is no powerful tradition present to absorb one's own attitude into itself and when one is aware of confronting an alien tradition to which he has never belonged or one he no longer unquestioningly accepts. (PH 1977, 46)

This is also to say that when a person is trying to understand something, be it text, or the subject matter of conversation, he/she is prepared for it to tell them something – something alien (in Gadamer's words), something different from what they already know. This requires sensitivity to otherness that is 'neither neutrality with respect to content nor the extinction of one's self' (TM, 271), but involves the interpreter's foregrounding and fore-meaning, as well as an acceptance that the other person and his/her perspectives count in the dialogic deliberation. Gadamer does not speculate in terms of how much, and from which aspects, the other and otherness should be counted in dialogue, nor does he maintain that an openness to the other and sensitivity to their otherness necessarily result in understanding. All that he asserts is that openness to otherness calls for one's capacity to attend to and listen to what addresses us in a text or conversation.

It is therefore in Gadamer's insistence on the place of otherness in dialogue that we come across an explicit claim concerning the ethical essence of interpretation. Following Kant, hermeneutics does not treat the other as a means to an end. Instead, the other and otherness are constituted in the moral worthiness of a person, which is an end in itself. Equally, the other can equally command our own moral attitudes of respect, responsiveness and relationship.

What addresses us is also what prompts us to become aware of our own embeddedness which further invites the subject or the thing that we dialogue about to 'present itself in all its otherness and thus assert its own truth' (TM, 272). As we have already touched upon, after all, it is our own tradition, pre-judgement and truth claim that are being called into question. To be sure, whilst it is necessary that we remain open to the meaning of the other, this openness 'always includes our situating the other meaning in relation to the whole of our own meanings or

ourselves in relation to it' (TM, 271). Tradition or historicity is thus 'a genuine partner in dialogue, and we belong to it, as does the I with a Thou' and 'the Thou is not an object but is in relationship with us' (TM, 352). Gadamer contrasts this experience of the Thou with the hermeneutical experience of the other, and he suggests that the former is forever self-regarding, always rooted in self-relatedness. In comparison, the hermeneutical experience of the other is 'to experience the Thou truly as a Thou – i.e., not to overlook his claim but to let him really say something to us' (TM, 355), and this is where the openness (to the other) belongs.

In this way, the presence of otherness and our openness to the other are absolute prerequisites for dialogic understanding to take place. Here, one allows oneself to be put into question by the other, which goes beyond merely keeping an open mind on the meaning of a text or what the dialogue partner has to say to us. It means allowing the questions of otherness to become one's own and putting one's own prejudices at risk. When both dialogue partners do so with regard to the object of dialogue, it becomes a shared inquiry, and the other becomes our co-investigator/co-interpreter. The ethos here is to regard the other as a co-subject and not just as a 'Thou', as such. In fact, Gadamer cautions the use of the I/Thou relationship because it jeopardises the mutuality of such a relation, as we shall soon see, and it 'changes the relationship and destroys its moral bond' (TM, 354). So, for Gadamer, it is preferable to refer to 'the Thou' as 'the other', because it can help us make it clear that the 'I', or the one, is always the other's other. The hermeneutical relationship is therefore ultimately aimed at a relationship of we, or solidarity, to which we will return later.

From the perspective of dialogue ethics, hermeneutics demands that the interpreter, first and foremost, prioritise an openness and attentiveness to the other and otherness. This means care – care for the other and care for what the other has to say, instead of inattention to, or disinterest in, the other. It is such openness that enables us to care for, listen to, respond to, and thereby bond with the other. Hence, philosophical hermeneutics embodies 'an ethics of alterity and responsibility' (Bruns 2004, 38).

The primacy of the other in dialogical encounter is equally proposed in the philosophical ideas of Emmanuel Levinas, insofar as there is a similar insistence on the subject's irreducible engagement with otherness (Tealon 1997). However, some Levinasian scholars have criticised Gadamer for downplaying the importance of alterity (Vessey 2005). For instance, Bernasconi (1995, 180) suggests that Gadamerian dialogue features a 'diminishing alterity', and Caputo (2000, 43) critiques that 'there are limits on Gadamer's notion of alterity'.

Gadamer's response to these challenges can be found in his writings. He points out that during our encounter with otherness, there are always tensions between the polarities of strangeness and familiarity, and he suggests that individuals generally try to resolve such tension in their experiences of the text or the subject of a conversation. When the meaning is 'not compatible with what we had expected', it 'brings us up short' and allows us to engage with it differently (TM, 269). This ongoing process of encountering the other, and of renewal or expansion of one's horizon is precisely what Heidegger has termed the 'hermeneutic circle'. Gadamer sees that this process 'makes it possible to venture into the alien, the lifting up of something out of the alien, and thus the broadening and enrichment of our own experience of the world' (PH, 15). This is a challenging tension between at-homeness and not-at-homeness, between self-possession and what places our horizon in question. This in-between-ness is where hermeneutics is located and otherness resides, and it equally posits the other in a place that is central to our own understanding. In order to attend to the meanings implicit in the otherness and to achieve understanding (rather than misunderstanding), the criterion for questioning is imperative. The hermeneutical task thus '*becomes of itself a questioning of things* and is always in part so defined' (TM, 271, italics in original). In fact, the 'real power of hermeneutical consciousness is our ability to see what is questionable' (PH, 13). In this way, Gadamer proposes the central role of the other and otherness, rather than downplaying alterity. Kögler (2014, 10) goes further and interprets Gadamerian alterity as meaning that 'the other appears as a partner, a mutual co-self, an other who is both different and close enough to be understood, to be taken seriously, to be taken into account'. The Gadamerian ethics of alterity is therefore not a diminished alterity, instead it insists on the continuing presence of the other in a never-ending hermeneutical process (Vessey 2005).

Fusion of Horizons – The Ethics of Self-Cultivation

Philosophical hermeneutics recognises the finitude of human understanding and its temporal and cultural situatedness. To overcome such finite determinacy, Gadamer proposes that one of the hermeneutical tasks be to reach an understanding about something *with* the other through the fusion of horizons. He elucidates that the reason why he insists on the *fusion* of horizons, rather than on the *formation* of one horizon, is that forming one horizon can underplay the tension between divergent perspectives, beliefs, cultural contexts and historical traditions that shape our interpretation of the subject matter we seek to understand. In fact, as we have seen, residing in such tension are the conditions for understanding. It is precisely by engaging with these differences that our own horizon becomes expandable.

Hermeneutics thus entails a to-and-fro movement between the whole and the part where we never truly escape our prejudices, nor are we fully constrained by them.

For Gadamer, this fusion does not mean disregarding oneself, nor assimilating the other. On the contrary, he suggests that we must imagine the world of the other by bringing ourselves into it. This 'consists neither in the empathy of one individual for another nor in subordinating another person to our own standards' (TM, 305). Instead, hermeneutics promotes virtues such as humility, by accepting the temporality and historicity of our being as we seek the opportunity to expand our horizons so that we rise to 'a higher universality that overcomes not only our own particularity, but also that of the other' (TM, 305). Gadamer further elaborates that what is achieved here is a higher truth, precisely because hermeneutics allows what is alien to become one's own, not by destroying it critically or by reproducing it uncritically, but by 'explicating it within one's own horizons with one's own concepts and thus giving it new validity' (PH, 94). In this way, a hermeneutical task is mutually enriching for the dialogue partners and thus dialogue enables a superior breadth of vision for both. Gadamer summarised thus: the fusion goes on as one continues to encounter the other's horizon, into 'something of living value' (PH, 94).

Gadamer equates the hermeneutical understanding to *bildung* – self-cultivation and self-transcendence (without necessarily the metaphysical 'substances'), in which both dialogue partners and their perspectives are elevated. *Bildung* is a process whereby the individual and his/her horizon have been transformed and it thus implies growth. To understand dialogically is to be able to contextualise meaning, re-configure our horizon and to integrate otherness into our understanding. This process creates a unity in which difference is appreciated, not rejected.

Self-cultivation depends on collaboration with the other in dialogue and so has an ethical dimension. It involves being 'dialogically sensitive' to the presence of the other and to the pivotal part that otherness plays in helping to expand our horizons and to deepen our self-understanding. Hermeneutics is thus constituted in a person's virtuous character, which is situated within their unique tradition, background and dispositions. This aspect appeals to Aristotle's conceptions of *phronesis* and *ethos*. Gadamer asserts that 'there is no *phronesis* without *ethos* and no *ethos* without *phronesis*. The two of them are both aspects of the same basic constitution of humanity' (1999, 155). Hence, *bildung* itself is the pursuit of hermeneutical life through the practice of dialogue ethics. Our earlier point, that the hermeneutical circle is never complete, also suggests that *bildung* is ongoing.

This hermeneutical idea, that the essence of a human's being-in-the-world is being in dialogue with one another and with the world, is also supported by Paulo Friere (1970). However, Freire's (1998) reflection on human finitude is a self-conscious one: 'in my unfinishedness I know that I am conditioned. Yet conscious of such conditioning, I know that I must go beyond it' (1998, 54). Although aimed at

enabling self-transcendence, Freire's (1970) approach to dialogue ethics is to equip the individual with critical capacities and a critical attitude so as to reflect on one's own 'existential experience and human-world relationship and on the relationship between people implicit in the former' (78). From a Freirean perspective, an obvious challenge to hermeneutical ethics of self-cultivation is thus precisely to observe it from the social, cultural and political constraints that result in the 'limited situations of the oppressed' and that critique hermeneutics as having little to say about that. Similarly, as we touched upon earlier, in the Habermas-Gadamer debate, one challenge remains: the fusion of horizons is not sufficient to critically account for the ideological, social and institutional structures and cultures that define these contexts. Further, critical theory tends to challenge hermeneutics' capacity to drive transformation in the world.

In his defence, Gadamer claims that hermeneutical reflection 'exercises a self-criticism of thinking consciousness' (PH, 94). Indeed, self-transcendence leads to a reconstruction of the way traditions on each side are understood, and historical meaning is comprehended. The fusion of horizons rejects the assertion of authority from the interpreter's tradition. This ethos is that both dialogue partners are open to the other's truth-claim but, at the same time, they are willing to confront it and to be confronted by it. Accordingly, hermeneutical dialogue, through the ethics of self-cultivation, will contest those forces and influences embedded in our prejudices and cultural biases. This process is never static and uncritical but productive and transformational.

As to the commitment to changing the world, Gadamer does propose a world-oriented ethics of self-cultivation, insofar as *bildung* represents striving for understanding from the perspective of universality through consciousness-elevating dialogue. Indeed, this Gadamerian ethos not only gives rise to opportunities for individuals to transform themselves and to transcend their horizons, but also for cultures to develop and evolve (Linge 1977).

Equality and Active Reciprocity in Dialogue – The Ethics of Mutuality

In the Introduction to *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, Linge summarises that the hermeneutical dialogue involves 'equality and active reciprocity' (1977, xx). This is because, in dialogue, both interlocutors must be concerned with a common topic or a common question. (In textual interpretation, it is assumed that the interpreter and the author share the same concern.) Dialogue is always dialogue about something. So, understanding means coming to an understanding with someone, and when two people understand each other they always do so 'with respect to something' (TM, xvi). Accordingly, dialogue requires equally committed partners to engage in a mutualising act of interpretation. Hermeneutical endeavour would

be undermined if the interpreter were to concentrate on the other person, rather than on the subject matter. Gadamer clarifies that it is not a matter of looking *at* the other person, but looking *with* the other at the thing that the dialogue partners communicate about.

The equality here refers to both dialogue partners being concerned with what motivates the conversation about the subject matter, its meaning and the questions it intends to address in a similar way; and at the same time, both are provoked by it to 'question further' in the direction that it indicates. This active reciprocity in a hermeneutical dialogue evokes genuine understanding as not only being intersubjective, but also as being dialectical – a new meaning that is born out of the interplay that goes on continuously between the past and the present, and between different horizons.

Gadamer uses the example of playing a game to illustrate the equality and reciprocity. The game and its rules, to which the participants adhere, insofar as they are *playing*, have priority over the individual players. In order to stay in the game, the players must relinquish themselves to the act of playing and cede their individual freedom of subjectivity to something beyond themselves – the game itself. In this sense, as it were, it could even be said that the players are being 'played'. Gadamer then depicts this through an image of two men having free play of the saw together 'by reciprocally adjusting to each other so that one man's impulse to movement takes effect just when that of the other man ends' (PH, 54). This indicates 'a reciprocal behaviour of absolute contemporaneousness – neither partner constitutes the real determining factor, rather it is the unified form of movement as a whole that unifies the fluid activity of both' (PH, 54). The end of this play is that dialogue partners are spoken to, enriched and transformed by the truth which is emerging. Hence, 'when a dialogue has succeeded, one is subsequently fulfilled by it ...' (PH, 66). Gadamer sees that the reciprocal engagement in understanding goes far beyond what we ourselves can become aware of through a mere 'methodical effort and critical self-control' as '[t]hrough every dialogue something different comes to be' (PH, 58).

This is one of Gadamer's principal contributions to hermeneutics which shifts the focus of discussion away from technique and methods (all of which assume understanding to be a deliberate product of self-conscious reflection) to the clarification of understanding as an event that is, in its very nature, episodic (or historical) and inter-subjective and trans-subjective. In the give-and-take 'game' of play in dialogue (with the support of language, as we shall see) lies the ethics of mutuality, the practice of which can help engender new meaning that takes both dialogue partners to greater horizons.

However, the questions remain in terms of whether hermeneutical ethics underestimates the place of power or domination as a social issue in modern societies. Marshall (2004, 126) writes provocatively that the ethics of mutuality can be problematic, especially when the relationship between the dialogue partners is 'inherently asymmetrical', because it is not in the power of the individuals to establish equality, but it is in the 'historical institutions and realities' that the power imbalance prevails.

To respond, the ethos of mutuality does not undermine critical self-examination, as it is neither an act of empathy, of assimilation, or of domination. This reciprocal engagement rests on a conception of the good which can give rise to ethical questions about dialogic understanding, rather than mere procedural concerns. According to Marshall's (2004) own close reading, the ethos of mutuality involves our openness to 'accept[ing] some things that are against me, even though no one else forces me to do so' (TM, 361). Acceptance, rather than denial, is an important step towards recognising the power imbalance. Marshall (2004) continues to show that Gadamer 'recognizes the limited sphere of dialogue oriented toward understanding', and 'refuses to pretend that hermeneutics is a critique of domination or an answer to the problems of political life' (131), and that the advantage we gain from the 'duality between the equal and reciprocal partners in dialogue is that we escape the false unity of monologic self-enclosure and orient our thinking toward a unity of being that presents itself' (137).

For Gadamer, it is precisely due to this limitation that dialogue must be carried away by the 'rule of the game' in order that the ethical conditions of equality and reciprocity are met.

Language and Understanding – The Ethics of Solidarity

Gadamer argues that language and understanding are not two processes, but one and the same. This is because language frames our prejudices, and language and understanding are inseparable structural aspects of a human's being-in-the-world. Gadamer elucidates that 'Language is by no means simply an instrument or a tool...Rather...we are always already encompassed by the language which is our own' (PH, 62).

Understanding is language-bound and language is 'the real mark of our finitude', and we are 'always already biased in our thinking and knowing by our linguistic interpretation of the world' (PH, 64). Drawing on Hans Lipps, Gadamer proposes that in every round of interpretation, the dialogue partner is exposed to a new circle of the unexpressed or unsaid, which continues to pose new questions and prompts us to seek new answers. It is the continued and sustained language enrichment that

leads to enhanced understanding and, similarly, and it is the endless linguistic circle that can serve as a bridge between the dialogue partners.

Gadamer proposes that there are three essential features of language in hermeneutics: (1) self-forgetfulness, which is due to the fact that language is lived and so we are less aware of it, and that 'the real being of language is that into which we are taken up when we hear it' (PH, 65); (2) I-lessness, as speaking does not belong to the sphere of the "I" but to the sphere of "we", which unifies one and the other; (3) the universality of language, because 'language is all-encompassing', and therefore 'every dialogue has an inner infinity and no end' (PH, 67). To be sure, when the interlocutors do break due to the lack of anything further to say, the resuming of the dialogue is always implied.

In addition, Gadamer posits that language 'is only properly itself when it is dialogue' and language 'is only fully what it can be when it takes place in dialogue' (EH, 127-8). This demonstrates that language is perfected in the dialogue processes to enable the meaning expressed in language to come to the fore. Things and ideas thus bring themselves to expression in and through language. Gadamer (1986) writes:

It is only in this way that the word becomes binding, as it were: it binds one human being with another. This occurs whenever we speak to one another and really enter into genuine dialogue with another (186).

So, it is in language that solidarity amongst people occurs. This conception of solidarity is that it is an expression of human bonds developed through a reciprocal engagement with one another in dialogue. These bonds emerge from dialogic encounters among those who embody otherness and will remain the other, and they involve a recognition that our attachment to, and care for, the other are developed when we are able to perceive the I and the other as the 'we', in spite of the differences in our horizons – history, tradition, culture, and so forth. This 'we' is not based on the commonality of humanity; instead, the 'we', in a Gadamerian construct, is much more local and parochial (Walhof 2006).

Such sustained engagement with otherness is important in order that the community of life is lived through solidarities. It forms a universal human task enabling individuals to reach out to each other through language. Gadamer précised this thus:

Hence language is the real medium of human being, if we only see it in the realm that it alone fills out, the realm of human being-together, the realm of common understanding, of ever-replenished common agreement – a realm as indispensable to human life as the air we breathe. As Aristotle said, man is truly the being who has language. For we should let everything human be spoken to us (PH, 68).

Hence Gadamer perceives solidarity as being connected to practice, to how we act together – acting in solidarity (Gadamer, 1981). Solidarity thus highlights that though language, norms and practices bind people to each other in certain shared enterprises, such as acting together for the greater good, ‘Everything human’ must indeed refer to its meaning in the noblest sense.

Vessey (2012) considers this way of understanding language as a further support of the afore-mentioned Gadamer's preference for ‘the one/other’ relationship in dialogue (instead of ‘the I/Thou’ relationship). The one/other relationship allows us, as it were, to appreciate the fact that our relations with the other are always mediated through language, culture and tradition. One's openness to the other also implies a recognition of the limitations of the ‘Cartesian accounts of autonomous subjects’ (Vessey 2012, 99). Vessey further proposes that the Gadamerian emphasis on language in dialogue ‘leads him into a unique dialogical social ontology’ (106). Similarly, Rorty (2004) remarks on this unique aspect of Gadamer's theory, highlighting that as our being is in part constituted in language, humans are always already in dialogue. Di Cesare takes this further by suggesting that we are not only in dialogue with one another, but ‘according to our most intimate nature we are ourselves dialogue’ (2013, 158), and that we bring with each of us an ‘unlimited readiness for dialogue’ (2013, 159). Hence, the ethos of solidarity is lived out in dialogue.

The Gadamerian conception of solidarity is further developed in his later works, in his continued discussion on the linguistic structure of human experience and the part that language plays in constructing social meaning. This is where Gadamer shows more interest in the practical consequences of hermeneutics, not only by expressing his ethical concerns, but also by engaging in the political dimension of his thought. However, when applying Gadamerian thought in a political arena, care is paramount in order to consider the possibility of translating hermeneutics into the spheres of political and social matters. At a minimum, the ethos of solidarity means that dialogic understanding is a human's being-in-the-world, and that hermeneutics is not a method, dialogue never instrumental. Marshall describes the character of the ethos of solidarity thus:

We do not enter into dialogue, we find ourselves already in it – but only if we are already listening with the most intense attention, all ears to the discreet, the whispered word. ... (If – a large if – anyone is left in this world who wants to understand, dialogue has already begun (2004, 143).

That is to say, solidarity is already embodied in the dialogue which underlies political communities, but solidarity is not the consequence of dialogue. It rejects the commonalities or shared interests which would render solidarity superficial.

Instead, despite being historically and culturally situated, people bond with one another as the other. Walhof (2006) offers an example of the environmental movement, which is brought forward by solidarity, the bonds of which are not due to race, ethnicity, gender, religion, or sexual orientation, although these external identity markers are very important. The example of environmental movement suggests that it calls forth solidarity amongst people who see the other as another, 'thereby making it possible for us to see new ways that we are bound together' (Walhof 2006, 586).

Conclusion

In this article, I have revisited some key concepts and arguments from Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics and have examined their implications for dialogue ethics.

Rooted in human experience, philosophical hermeneutics has the potential to be applied to our social and political concerns. As we have seen, dialogic understanding comprises our being-in-the-world and serves the ends of being and action. Following Aristotle, Gadamer terms this practical philosophy, which involves *praxis*, i.e., how we relate to things in the world and ground our relationships, including social life, political institutions and economics (PH, 60). In Dallmayr's words, praxis implies 'a thoughtful conduct' (2009, 31). This process requires the integration of ethics so that the purpose of practical philosophy is not limited to understanding, but also to learning how to relate to things in the world (Dobrosavljev 2002). In turn, such concerns can kindle ethical sensibilities and encourage dialogue ethics. As we have explored in this article, philosophical hermeneutics does not fall into the theory-practice duality, instead, it aims to transform our knowing and understanding into something that is more universal. In doing this, accomplishing dialogic understanding through deep encounter draws the individual away from the self in order to return to the self anew. That is to say, the person emerges from genuine dialogue transformed. This new understanding modifies the individual in the dimension of his/her action in the world.

In a highly politicised world, where there are competing ideologies, values and embedded power imbalances, all decisions are made within finite and limited knowledge constrained by cultural contexts, historical references and individual and institutional narratives. The project of hermeneutic ethics can help us to recognise differences, to negotiate meanings and to seek understanding in order to reach out to one another.

Historical consciousness, culture and religious traditions constitute our otherness to each other, and are an important impetus for understanding which contextualise

the self-understanding of each person. In dialogue, the application of the ethics of alterity can ensure that interlocutors are not talking past each other, and avoid the situation where two egos meet separately. Our recognition is that it is through the continued presence of the other and otherness in all forms that we can access and engage in a proactive process of shared inquiry. This need for the other makes dialogue always necessary. Gadamer suggests that the ethics of alterity must be practised at both the micro- and macro- levels, a similar dialogic encounter holds true in larger communities, nations and states (Dallmayr 2009).

The humility to accept our own finitude and the recognition of the need to turn to the other and to be open to the otherness in order to understand ourselves, and things, better, make for productive dialogue. It is an important avenue through which to explore the self-transcendent power of what is described by hermeneutics. Today, the globalised multiplicity of difference prompts us to appreciate all the more the Gadamerian emphasis on the boundedness of our horizons, which demands openness to an ongoing revision of our own prejudices and pre-judgements. Hence, the necessity to engage in continued self-cultivation. Self-cultivation and transcendence may further prompt cultures, institutional norms and community practices to shift. Indeed, the future of mankind may depend on the cultivation of virtues at both the individual and the communal levels in order to prepare our readiness for dialogue and to act towards the end of social transformation.

During dialogue, the interlocutors are equally critical and reciprocally engaged participants in an unfolding inquiry. The ethics of mutuality posits the dialogue partners as co-inquirers through participation in language. In this co-inquiry, there lies the imperative to disclose the roots of modern social malaises, such as violent conflicts, the exploitation of the planet earth, inequality, and so on. In dialogue, people and communities are thus brought together in ways that can lead not only to better mutual understanding, but also to a critical self-awareness of possible hindrances within one's own tradition that might impede a more peaceful and flourishing world.

However the openness to the other and otherness is by no means 'reducing the other to the categories of the self' (Nealon 1997, 129). Indeed, the ethos of mutuality reminds us of the danger of domination, control or assimilation, especially after the West's active othering of indigenous and minority cultures for its own benefit. Equally, it prompts us to be aware of the risk of essentialising cultures' otherness. Instead, it must be insisted that a shared appreciation and mutual learning and transcendence be at the core of dialogue, aimed at the greater good. That is to say, that unity in diversity is not the end but, rather, a flourishing life for all is.

Dialogue ethics enables us to develop a sense of we-ness and of solidarity both with and in the world. This is really the basis on which communities come together, what Gadamer calls, the 'actual relationship of men to each other' (PH, 17). Solidarity calls for actions to address power imbalance, oppression and exploitation, and hence, hermeneutical life that is inhabited in the solidarity involves the participation in 'a community of doing', in the words of Merleau-Ponty (1973). We participate in each other's *doing*, including our memories, narratives, past pains, present concerns, future inspirations and hopes, a participation 'proceeding in the direction of ethical well-being and a shared concern with the good life' (Dallmayr 2009, 37). Such community must be dialogically cultivated globally.

Indeed, Arendt's (1958) *vita activa* challenges us to bring the relevance of philosophical ideas into social and political life. Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics and its implications on dialogue ethics are truly significant responses to this challenge in a globalising world.

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The Origin of Intercultural Dialogue Practice in European Union External Action

Pietro de Perini

This paper analyses the origin of the practice of ‘intercultural dialogue’ as a tool for European Union external action towards the Mediterranean. ICD is currently a relevant instrument in EU external relations. However, when it was first launched in 1995, in the policy initiative known as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership or the Barcelona Process, ICD was granted little effort by the partners involved. Many accounts from that period agree that this tool initially took a back seat if compared to other political-economic priorities in the EU agenda in this initiative. The paper aims to investigate the reasons for the initial neglect of this tool, which was considered by many to be a relevant innovation when it was launched, but that has actually become a relevant resource for EU external action only recently. Through analysis of EU policy documents of the period, the paper demonstrates that the EU had envisaged strategic use of ICD before 1995, in particular, in the hope of tackling key issues, such as mounting xenophobia in Europe and escalating Islamic fundamentalism in the Maghreb. It thus identifies a dual explanation for the limited and ineffective scope attributed to ICD in the first years of the Barcelona Process. On the one hand, in 1995 a number of Mediterranean partner countries were reluctant to lend much credit to the intercultural aspects of regional cooperation, and, on the other, the EU at that time had a growing but still restrained perception of urgency for the emerging issues that ICD was designed to address.

Keywords: Intercultural Dialogue; European Union; EU Foreign Policy; Middle East Peace Process; Barcelona Process; Foreign Policy Analysis.

Introduction

In the last 15 years, the European Union (EU) has increasingly made reference to the importance of ‘intercultural dialogue’ (ICD) in its external actions (Prodi 2002; Council 2008a), going so far as to identify the former as one of the most determinant issues of its first quarter-century (Ferrero Waldner 2006).

In international politics¹, the concept of ICD (or of dialogue among civilisations)

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1 Intercultural dialogue or analogue concepts have been the subject of analysis in several disciplines, including political philosophy (Habermas 1984; Senghaas 2002; Dallmayr 2002), social psychology (Kelman 1999; Worchel 2005; Kuriansky 2007), pedagogy (Cestaro 2004), business communication (Prosser 1978), development studies (Hammel 1990).

is generally employed to encompass a set of efforts (initiatives and programmes) prompted by international organisations, national/local authorities and civil society organisations so as to facilitate interactions between ‘units’ (individuals, civil society groups, community representatives) that are characterised by some degree of cultural and/or religious diversity. These efforts are based on the assumption that fostering frequent exchanges between such units can favour a broader mutual understanding among them and thus contribute to reducing stereotypes, improving mutual respect, empathy and, finally, to reducing political, social and cultural tensions. Major ICD initiatives have been developed, *inter alia*, by UNESCO, the United Nations, through the ‘Alliance of Civilisations’, the Council of Europe and the Islamic Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO).

The EU formally introduced ICD into its foreign policy within the framework of the initiative known as Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) or ‘Barcelona Process’. When the EMP was launched in 1995, however, ICD did not receive a degree of attention comparable to that which the EU has attributed to it in recent times. Many accounts of that period (Jünemann 2003; Schumacher 2007) agree that ICD initially took a back seat to other political-economic priorities in the EU’s agenda for this initiative. It was offered as an important component of the Barcelona Process (EMP 1995a; EMP 1997), but was presented with comparatively vague objectives, which, unsurprisingly, informed the establishment of only partially effective programmes. The result was an erratic, and initially ineffectual, implementation process of ICD, the outcomes of which only started to have some visible effect on EU Mediterranean policies a few years later.

This paper aims to investigate the origin of ICD in EU foreign policy with a particular aim to analyse why the EU was pushed to introducing such a tool, which was praised as being a policy innovation (Panebianco 2001), and to immediately downsize its actual relevance within that same policy framework. To answer this question, this paper addresses ICD as one of the several foreign policy instruments wielded by the EU in the framework of its external action. Accordingly, the key to understanding the origin of ICD is identified through the study of the changing dynamics in Mediterranean politics and in the analysis of the EU policies adopted in their wake. The rationale for the introduction of this policy instrument is thus discussed in relation to the evolving Euro-Mediterranean milieu in the period around the launch of the EMP in November, 1995.

Delving into the EU foreign policy documents in those years, the paper demonstrates that the European states and institutions had envisaged the strategic use of ICD at the Euro-Mediterranean level long before the political conditions for its full deployment had materialised. Before 1995, when they were formulating the scope and goals of the Barcelona Process, European member states and institutions

designed ICD primarily as a tool with which to foster mutual understanding among civil societies in the hope of tackling a host of key issues across the Mediterranean, such as the mounting xenophobia in Europe and the escalating Islamic fundamentalism in the Maghreb. In addition, ICD was expected to support grassroots confidence building in the framework of the on-going Middle East Peace Process (MEPP). In other words, when the EMP was formally launched there was a significant gap between the initial strategic idea of ICD, as conceived by the EU in preparation for this new Mediterranean initiative, and the final broad and ineffective scope that was attributed to this instrument in the first years of the EMP. This paper advances two related explanations for this gap. On the one hand, a number of Mediterranean partner countries (MPCs) were reluctant to lend much credit to the intercultural aspect of regional cooperation; on the other, the EU had, at that time, a growing but still restrained perception of urgency for the emerging issues that ICD was designed to address. As a result, ICD was defined broadly when it was introduced in the EMP, without encouraging any specific objectives for its employment. Nothing in the broad formulation of ICD, however, precluded its more effective implementation of more apposite political conditions that were to be met in future Euro-Mediterranean relations.

This paper begins with an analysis of the evolution of the international political milieu surrounding the launch of the EMP, together with a discussion of the main challenges faced by the EU in the early 1990s. The focus then shifts to an analysis of the objectives of ICD that were set out in the context of the political framework under discussion, providing an account of how the EU increasingly attributed more strategic credit to ICD before the launch of the EMP. The third section discusses the reasons that caused the vague conception of this policy instrument when it was originally introduced into the Barcelona Process in 1995. The fourth, and final, section analyses the outcome of these efforts, introducing and discussing the first programmes launched by the EU to implement ICD in the Euro-Mediterranean space.

EU and Mediterranean Politics in the Early 1990s: Challenges and Innovations

As mentioned, ICD was first formally introduced into EU foreign policy in the Barcelona Declaration (EMP 1995a). The Declaration was adopted by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of all the EU member states and the 12 MPCs² at the first Euro-Mediterranean Conference, held in Barcelona on 28th–29th November, 1995.

2 In 1995 the MPCs were: Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and the Palestinian Authority. Cyprus and Malta became EU member states in 2004.

The idea of a Euro-Mediterranean Conference was first endorsed by the Corfu European Council in 1994 and was later championed by the European Council and Commission with a view to offering a platform from which to discuss the establishment of a medium and a long-term framework for cooperation between the two shores of the common sea (European Commission 1994). The outcome of the conference was the Barcelona Process (or EMP), which became the official policy of the EU towards its southern neighbours for the following decade.

Scholars have generally described the EMP's policy framework as a 'true novelty' and a 'radical departure' from past cooperation initiatives, particularly because of its comprehensive approach to security, which encompassed the political, economic, social, and cultural challenges faced by the EU in the area (Bicchi 2006, 145; Adler and Crawford 2006, 4). Some analysts commended the introduction of ICD in this latter context as being one of the greatest innovations of the EMP, insofar as it instantiated the introduction of culture in the domain of international politics (Schumacher 2001, Panebianco 2001). However, in order to understand the innovative features of the EMP, and the original rationale of ICD therein, it is necessary to take a step back and to analyse the historical and institutional processes that initially led to the establishment of the Barcelona Process.

In the 1970s and 1980s, European relations with Mediterranean countries were included under the label of 'Global Mediterranean Policy'. Some authors questioned the actual reach of this policy, limited as it was to economic and trade issues and dominated by bilateral cooperation agreements (Calabrese 1997, 94). Socio-cultural cooperation was envisaged within the informal, and largely unsuccessful, 'Euro-Arab dialogue', established in the mid-1970s between the European Community (EC) and the Arab League (Biad 1997, 54). In 1990, there was a decision by the EC to revise the basic parameters of its relations with the Mediterranean countries. This revision was motivated by the recognition that there was a need to go beyond mere trade relations and to bridge the growing development gap, both economic and social, between the two shores of the Mediterranean (European Commission 1990). The outcome of this process was known as the 'Renovated Mediterranean Policy' (RMP). The advantages of this policy framework were the introduction of decentralised cooperation programmes, as well as aid programmes and higher budgets for the promotion of development in Mediterranean countries (Adler and Crawford 2006, 22).

The RMP had a relatively short life and was *de facto* replaced by the EMP in 1995. Although it had just been revised, this policy quickly appeared to be unsuited to addressing the multi-dimensional changes that were underway in the aftermath of the Cold War (Mascia 2004, 194; see also Calabrese 1997, 91-95). With the collapse of the Soviet Union in December, 1991, and the definite conclusion of

the decades-long confrontation between the Western and Soviet blocs, the EC underwent a process of re-examining its position, role and priorities in the emerging post-bipolar system of international relations. The new international security milieu was characterised, in particular, by a multiplicity of non-military challenges, ranging from increased migration flows from developing countries, to the spread of generalised threats to security, such as terrorism and organised crime. At the same time, the emerging international scenario offered unprecedented opportunities, such as the potential democratisation of former communist neighbours and the removal of barriers to cooperation in areas, like the Mediterranean basin, that were of lower priority to the great powers during the Cold War (Attinà 2004a, 142). In this framework, the EC felt the need to revise the overall scope and instruments of its external action, and to identify new areas for prioritising action. In other words, the EC/EU considered its foreign policy system inadequate to the new world order (Smith 2008, 32). The European Political Cooperation, established in 1970 and institutionalised by the 1986 Single European Act, was replaced by the creation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) by the 1991 Maastricht Treaty. The CFSP was expected to enable the EU to build on the *acquis* of the EPC, to improve joint action, and to make full use of the means at its disposal (European Council 1992a). The first two areas of priority implementation for the CFSP were identified in the European neighbourhood, and they included Eastern and Central Europe, as well as the Mediterranean (Council 1992).

The Mediterranean basin posed most of the ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ (i.e. non-military) security challenges faced by the EU in the early 1990s (Biad 1997; Haddadi 2006; Calabrese 1997; Adler and Crawford 2006). ‘Hard’ security challenges included, among others, issues that related to the proliferation of non-conventional weapons and the emergence of new armed conflicts, such as the 1990 crisis in Kuwait and the ensuing Gulf War. Within the Mediterranean basin, the 1991 outbreak of conflict in the former Yugoslavia represented the first armed conflict on European soil after the Second World War. That conflict was thus a major cause of concern for EU countries and institutions, not least because it ‘exposed the improvised collective decision-making of European States during the conflict’s early stages as embarrassingly ineffectual’ (Calabrese 1997, 90). Nonetheless, European ministers announced a number of declarations in support of the efforts that were underway for peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction (European Council 1992a and 1995a). However, the EU explicitly excluded the former Yugoslavia from the scope of its Mediterranean policies (European Commission 1994). In the early 1990s, the ‘Mediterranean region’ included the Maghreb and the riparian countries of the Middle East with which the EU had established formal relations.³

3 This also included Jordan, with which the EU had signed a cooperation agreement.

The term 'Soft security challenges' referred to a number of issues that were connected to the growing socio-economic gap between Europe and its partners, as well as to the socio-political instability that resulted from it. European politicians were quick to identify social and political instability in these countries as being synonymous with European insecurity (Fernandez-Ordofiez 1990). This perception of insecurity was most strongly felt in connection with the Maghreb, especially among those states overlooking the Mediterranean (e.g., France, Italy and Spain). One particular source of apprehension among European leaders was the rise of religious extremism in Algeria following the victory of the Islamic Salvation Front in 1991 and the ensuing *coup d'état* in 1992; this was, in fact, one of the main catalysts for the revision of EU policies that led to the EMP (Gillespie 1997, 67-68; see also Joffé 1997; Adler and Crawford 2006). This sense of insecurity intensified further when Islamic terrorism directly affected France and Italy in 1994 (Calabrese 1997, 90). European institutions emphasised the causal relationships among the rise of religious fundamentalism in the Maghreb, the current terrorist drift in the region, and the worsening socio-economic divide between Europe and its neighbours (Council 1992; European Commission 1994). A similar relationship was identified in connection with the emergence of other threats to regional stability, such as the growth of transnational organised crime and the increase in both legal and illegal migration flows from the Maghreb. The latter issue was felt most acutely in those European countries that had a strong tradition of emigration, rather than immigration, such as Italy and Spain. Moreover, the growing phenomenon of migration coincided with a rise in episodes of violence and xenophobia on the part of European citizens against migrants, which stoked tensions with their countries of origin. At the same time, the Western Mediterranean was also expressing encouraging economic cooperation opportunities following the establishment, in 1989, of the Arab Maghreb Union. Against this background, the EU proposed the establishment of a special relationship with the Maghreb countries to promote cooperation in the political, economic, social, and cultural spheres (Council 1992). This 'Euro-Maghreb Partnership' constituted the immediate precursor to the EU pan-Mediterranean initiative that was established a few years later through the EMP (Calabrese 1997, 89). The geographical upgrading of this policy resulted in the growing relevance for Europe of the challenges and opportunities that were emerging in parallel from the Eastern Mediterranean.

Two such opportunities deserve special attention in this context. First, the formal beginnings of the Arab-Israeli peace process following the 1991 Madrid Conference offered the EU new opportunities to achieve regional stability and prosperity in the Mediterranean. For Europe, the peace process represented 'a great opportunity which [had to] be seized if dangers to the stability of the region [were] to be avoided' (European Council 1992c, 108). In this context, the signing of the

'Oslo Accords' in 1993, between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, provided an effective political breakthrough, without which 'it would have been difficult to foresee the launch of the Barcelona Process' (Peters 2006, 214). The focus of EU joint action was targeted on the promotion of regional integration in the MEPP, the deployment of confidence-building measures, and the support for bilateral talks and prospective international agreements that were conducive to a peace settlement (European Council 1993). The EU was also keen to amplify the perception, among both Israelis and Palestinians, that those first steps towards peace were bringing an immediate improvement in material conditions (European Commission 1993). In brief, the goal of the EU in the Middle East was to embed any positive outcome of the MEPP within the regional framework of cooperation that was under construction. In this sense, the EU made it very clear from the outset that the EMP was not meant to be a new forum for conflict-resolution or a platform for the MEPP. After all, European institutions showed confidence in an imminent and positive conclusion to the peace agreement (European Council 1995, sec. II).

The second, and maybe less immediate, opportunity that emerged from the Eastern Mediterranean was the submission, in 1992, of accession applications by three MPCs: Malta, Cyprus and Turkey. European institutions were quick to follow up on these requests in the hope of improving their medium- and long-term economic relations with them. Moreover, the applications of the three MPCs provided a possibility, particularly welcomed by Greece, to find a solution to the long-lasting Turkish-Cypriot crisis (Calabrese 1997, 104).

To be sure, the political, security, economic, and social challenges and opportunities emerging from the Maghreb and the Eastern Mediterranean were multi-dimensional and interdependent. However, the establishment of an ambitious, comprehensive, and region-wide initiative in the form of the EMP, in 1995, was not a foregone conclusion. Progress towards the Barcelona Process was only possible due to the commitment of southern member states to match the EU's extensive involvement in the process of transition that was underway in post-Soviet Europe. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 had posed direct challenges to the EU's eastern, rather than southern, borders. Eastern dynamics were given political priority in central and northern European countries, Germany in primis, which were directly concerned with possible changes at their borders (Attinà 2004a, 142). Under the lobbying of those member states, post-Soviet Europe became the recipient of intensive EU economic, political and social support and aid initiatives (Council 1994b). When the 1993 European Council of Copenhagen officially accepted the accession applications of the countries from that area, the barycentre of the Union was possibly moving east. This prospect was a source of concern for those

southern EU countries that were directly affected by the instability challenges that were coming from the Maghreb. France; Italy and Spain in particular, in their opposition to the channelling of EU foreign policy resources to the east, mounted a sustained lobbying campaign in European with the aim of ensuring 'a semblance of balance between east and south' in EU external action (Gillespie 1997, 68; see also Calabrese 1997; Attinà 2004a).

The active lobbying of France, Italy and Spain was also advanced through parallel initiatives in conjunction with different groups of MPCs. The most significant of those were the proposal to develop a Conference for Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean (CSCM), the 'Dialogue 5+5' (Western Mediterranean), and the Mediterranean Forum. All of them called for a multi-dimensional and integrated approach to co-operation between Europe and its southern neighbours (Calleya 2006; Calabrese 1997; Philippart 2003). The CSCM was proposed in 1990, by the foreign ministers of Italy and Spain, during the Italian presidency of the EC. The idea was to develop a model of structured co-operation with the Mediterranean countries on the example of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE, now OSCE). The CSCM should have been established as a system that would have '[taken] a comprehensive and balanced view of all aspects of security, [encouraged] economic development and [promoted] dialogue between cultures' (Fernandez-Ordofiez 1990, 10). For a number of reasons, the proposal did not make it past the preliminary stage of development, which ranged from the outbreak of the Gulf War to France's scepticism against such a highly institutionalised profile of co-operation with Mediterranean countries (Calleya 2006, 115; Mascia 2004, 193; Biad 1997, 55). At the same time, the initiative was adopted by the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU), which organised a series of meetings on this matter from 1992 onwards. The IPU proposal was to build a CSCM project based on three pillars: political and security related co-operation; economic co-operation; and dialogue and human rights among civilisations.

The CSCM project, and the other alternative frameworks, were all eventually overshadowed by the Barcelona Process. However, these initiatives are of crucial analytical importance insofar as they contributed to shifting the agenda of southern European member states closer to the prospect of an integrated and comprehensive framework of co-operation between the EU and MPCs. In this context, it would be naïve to overlook the fact that the active participation of European ministers and parliamentarians in those initiatives would not have resulted in the transfer of some of the ideas discussed there into the Council and other institutions. It is sufficient to note, by way of example, that it was the European Parliament in 1994 that called on the Council and the Commission to revive the CSCM project (European Parliament 1994), just as it was the IPU that requested the distribution of its final

documents to Parliaments and Governments and, in particular, to the participants at the 1995 Barcelona Conference (IPU 1995).

The above facts point to two main catalysts underpinning the upgrading of the bilateral RMP agreements to the 1995 pan-Mediterranean initiative launched by the EU in Barcelona:

1. The fact that Europe was presented with a growing set of multi-dimensional and interconnected challenges and opportunities originating from the whole Mediterranean basin after the end of the Cold War; and
2. The technical alignment of a 'southern EC lobby' (Calabrese 1997, 101) that was committed to redressing the prioritisation of eastern Europe in EU foreign policy. Eventually, however, it was the subsequent accommodation of Germany, the UK and the Netherlands to the positions of the southern lobby, if partly in furtherance of their political and economic interests in the Mediterranean⁴, that was determinant in allowing European institutions to strengthen their Mediterranean policies 'in parallel' with their on-going commitment to central and eastern Europe (European Council 1994a and 1994b).

In light of this discussion, it is possible to identify three main elements of innovation that are inherent to the Barcelona Process. First, the EMP put into practice a multi-dimensional and comprehensive approach to security in the Mediterranean space, through the establishment of a programme of cooperation with the MPCs on three complementary and interconnected thematic partnerships (or 'baskets', in the jargon of the initiative):

1. A political and security partnership to promote human rights, democracy, disarmament, and the fight against terrorism;
2. An economic and trade partnership; and
3. A partnership in cultural, social and human affairs (EMP 1995a).

Secondly, the EMP introduced a regional 'Euro-Mediterranean' dimension of cooperation, in addition to the established bilateral (association agreements) and unilateral (aid for development) channels that were already promoted under the RMP (see figures in Phillippart 2003, 34). This feature, in particular, led some scholars to consider the EMP as an initiative that primarily aimed to establish a

⁴ Germany was traditionally more concerned with migration flows from Turkey; the UK had an historical interest in advancing the situation in the Middle East; while the Netherlands had concerns with the worsening situation in former Yugoslavia (see Gillespie 1997; Calabrese 1997).

security community in the Mediterranean (Attinà 2004b; see also Pace 2007). Thirdly, from the outset the Barcelona Conference involved different types of actors. Besides the officials from the European Commission and the Ministers of the 27 partner countries (15 EU + 12 MPCs) who put forward the EMP, the Barcelona Conference also involved representatives from Parliaments, local authorities, and civil society organisations. In particular, European officials considered that the contribution of civil society was fundamental to establishing a permanent and lasting dialogue between the two shores (EMP 1995b). This plurality of actors was considered one of the greatest elements of innovation in the Barcelona Process (Mascia 2004, 200-202).

The Objectives of ICD in the EMP and Before its Launch

ICD was part of the third basket in the multi-dimensional framework of co-operation that was established by the EMP. This basket, as stated above, denoted the part of the partnership devoted to human, social, and cultural affairs and included a variety of co-operation areas, policy instruments and objectives. In particular, the contents of this basket ranged from cultural co-operation, social rights, development, and civil society interaction to the management of migration flows, the fight against terrorism, organised crime, and illegal migration.

The definition provided for ICD in this framework was somewhat vague. The Barcelona Declaration simply recognised that ‘the traditions of cultures and civilizations throughout the Mediterranean region, the dialogue between these cultures and exchanges at human, scientific and technological level are an essential factor in bringing their peoples closer, promoting understanding between them and improving their perception of each other’ (EMP 1995a). The EU and its MPCs thus introduced ICD as a tool for promoting mutual understanding and knowledge through cultural exchanges across the Euro-Mediterranean space. Besides being very abstract, however, this general goal left the actual scope of ICD, the ‘what for?’ largely unspecified, and hence the whole policy instrument effectively disorganised at the implementation level. This conception of ICD remained in place until the beginning of the 2000s; no further efforts were made to better define the roles, objectives and added values of this tool in the context of the EMP. Yet, the importance of ICD for the larger goals of the EMP was given unequivocal emphasis at all Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conferences during the period 1995-2001 (EMP 1997; EMP 1999). This apparent contradiction raises a simple yet fundamental question: were mutual understanding and cultural exchanges really an end to themselves, or was ICD functional for more specific strategic goals which were initially omitted from EMP documents and practice?

The preamble to the Barcelona Declaration listed mutual understanding as well as measures to reduce poverty and strengthen democracy, human rights, and social development, as fundamental requirements for the promotion of peace, security and prosperity in the Mediterranean (EMP 1995a). From this angle, the role of ICD in the EMP appeared to be that of contributing, primarily through mutual understanding, to the resolution of the above-mentioned set of security challenges that beleaguered the Mediterranean. However, if it provides some concreteness to ICD, since it allows the identification of at least some specific targets for its deployment, this consideration still leaves the scope and relevance of this instrument of the EMP largely unspecified.

To understand whether EU policy makers and officials had considered a more strategic role for the promotion of cultural exchanges and mutual understanding in the Mediterranean, it is necessary to examine the contents of the policy-formulation processes that led to the establishment of the EMP in 1995. This analysis identifies three main strategic targets behind the promotion of ICD:

1. The tensions connected to mass migration into Europe from MPCs;
2. The growth of Islamic fundamentalism; and
3. The efforts to promote peace and build mutual confidence in the conflict areas of the Mediterranean.

Since the idea of the EMP, as discussed above, originated primarily in southern Europe's concerns in regard to the Maghreb, it is not surprising that two out of three targets were connected to the tensions in that area. References to cultural exchanges and mutual understanding in those matters can be traced back to the early 1990s' EC/EU cooperation initiatives with Western Mediterranean countries, and in the alternative initiatives proposed by France, Italy and Spain from the early 1990s. The third target, on the contrary, was mainly derived from the opportunities provided by the Middle East, and emerged a few years later following the signing, in September, 1993, of the 'Oslo Accords' between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

With regard to the first challenge, the approach chosen by the EU to manage the phenomenon of mass migration implied a commitment to a liberal trading system, assistance to the developing world, and the establishment of a framework of political and economic relations with third countries in the area (European Council 1992c). In the Barcelona Declaration, this approach was complemented by the provision of co-operation initiatives in support of vocational training and job co-operation in the MPCs (EMP 1995a). In this context, the objective of ICD was not to reduce or mitigate the causes of mass migration from the MPCs, but was connected to the economic and social tensions that derived from the increasing

presence of migrants in Europe. As mentioned above, these tensions, exacerbated by the difficult economic situations in some European states, were leading to increasing episodes of xenophobia and violence towards migrants, and represented one of the most alarming social problems in post-Cold War Europe (Baumgartl and Favell 1995). The Commission was well aware of the relationships between migrants, cultural exchanges, and mutual understanding when it reviewed European policies on the Mediterranean in 1990. In that context, migrants were valued as ‘a bridge between the Community and its Partners’ (European Commission 1990, 11). Yet that group was not targeted specifically by any decentralised co-operation programme promoted by the EC in the RMP framework. European officials confined themselves to stating their concerns on the increase in xenophobic violence against migrants and their resolve to use any means at their disposal to preserve the human dignity and peaceful co-existence of all citizens in the EU (European Council 1993; 1994b). When presenting the EMP proposal, the Commission portrayed the promotion of mutual understanding as one of the factors that might reduce the negative social effects of mass migration, which was considered among the most dangerous effects of the instability in the area (European Commission 1994). After the launch of the EMP, however, the causal link between migration, xenophobia and the promotion of mutual understanding was not formulated in the Ministers’ conclusions, nor was it put into practice through any concrete policy action. Within the EU policy framework the commitment to pursue ICD in the Mediterranean to fight intolerance, racism and xenophobia was officially made clear in the first Common Strategy on the Mediterranean (European Council 2000). Although often dismissed on the grounds that it merely restated what the EU was already engaged in with the EMP (Smith 2008, 46), the Strategy constitutes a relevant point of reference for understanding the significance attributed to ICD in that framework. The Common Strategy, a CFSP Act, was the first legally binding document adopted, after the launch of the EMP, in which the EU had affirmed a tangible strategic objective for the promotion of ICD in that area.

With regard to the second challenge, the objective envisaged for ICD was to weaken the hold of religious extremists on Muslim populations across the Mediterranean, by providing a more balanced view of the ‘other’ through the establishment of direct exchanges at the civil society level. The first two strategic targets considered by the EU for the promotion of mutual understanding were thus inherently related, as both were concerned with the security consequences of socio-cultural stereotypes. A direct connection between a spreading turn to ‘ancient religious legacy’ and growing regional instability was originally acknowledged in the 1990 proposal for a CSCM (Fernandez-Ordofiez 1990, 8). The proposal devoted a full basket, the third, to human rights and dialogue between civilisations (IPU 1992). In that context, ICD was conceived of as a tool to be used to support a process of

mutual appreciation between the two shores of the Mediterranean and to help to prevent or to curb the development of conflicts that were driven by extremism. Indeed, the latter were said to be connected to the generation of intolerance and terrorism that had contributed to the destabilising of good neighbourly relations and to increasing the cultural gap (IPU 1995). However, the CSCM was a non-EU project that was never implemented. Moreover, its influence on the EMP, although glaring in some respects, cannot be verified. Within the European institutional framework, the relationship between ICD and the threats arising from religious fundamentalism was originally established in 1992, with the proposal of the 'Euro-Maghreb Partnership', the embryo of the EMP. As already stated, the main thrust of that initiative was to reduce the causes for European instability that were arising from the western Mediterranean. Religious fundamentalism and integralism were at the heart of European concerns (Council 1992). In that context, the EU aimed to put its relations with Maghreb countries on a better footing across a number of different areas of co-operation, including the promotion of tolerance and coexistence between cultures and religions through exchanges between young people, university students and staff, scientists and those in the media (European Council 1992b). A couple of years later, the Commission, endorsed by the Council and the European Council, was more specific; it recognised that the promotion of mutual understanding would have helped to reduce the negative implications of fundamentalism, extremism and terrorism on European and Mediterranean societies (European Commission 1994). As in the case of migration, EMP co-operation on issues that were related to the proliferation of (Islamic) terrorism in the Mediterranean, was to be supported primarily by other instruments. Specific efforts, in particular, were to be devoted to strengthening co-operation among the law-enforcement, judicial and other authorities. The action plan of the Barcelona Declaration envisaged employing ICD to reach this target, envisaging periodic meetings of representatives of religions and religious institutions, with the aim of breaking down prejudice, ignorance, fanaticism and of fostering co-operation at the grassroots level (EMP 1995a). This possibility, however, was never reiterated, nor was it followed up in the period under analysis.

The third and last context in which ICD was expected to play a specific role derived from an opportunity, rather than from a challenge. In this context, the objective was to employ ICD to help build confidence and sustain reconciliation efforts between populations that were involved in conflict situations. Although the Mediterranean was dotted with old and new conflicts, the EU initially considered this possibility in regard to the Israeli-Palestinian scenario, following the signing of the 'Oslo Accords' in September, 1993 (European Commission 1994). The EU had committed to establishing confidence-building measures and to supporting the advancement of the MEPP at least since the 1991 Madrid Conference (European Council 1992c).

However, those measures were explicitly derived from the CSCE experience and, as such, they mainly encompassed such activities as the exchange of information, data dissemination, and the notification of military movements and communications. In this context, the proactive role recognised by some analysts for the so-called 'track 2 talks'⁵ in the negotiation of the Oslo Accords (Agha et al. 2004) may shed some light on the reasons why the EU explored the opportunity for ICD as a confidence-building measure only after the signing of that early agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation. This conception of ICD concurred with the view of some scholars that the third basket was the part of the EMP that aimed to build 'the conditions for the future development of a security community in the Mediterranean' (Adler and Crawford 2006, 26). However, just like migration and terrorism, this strategic objective of ICD was not followed up during the first years of the EMP. An attempt to revive this function may have been made, however, at the end of the 1996 Euro-Mediterranean meeting of the Ministers of Culture. In their effort to provide some substance to the concrete implementation of ICD, Ministers hinted at its employment as 'an ingredient for reconciliation' (EMP 1996). Yet this insight remained isolated, probably due to the progressive failure of the MEPP at the political level. Indeed, the sudden change in Israeli leadership in 1996, and the reluctance of the new right-wing government to push forward the peace process had negative, if not fatal, implications for the overall progress of the EMP (Asseburg 2003). The consequences affected all the baskets of the Barcelona Process (Aliboni 2000). In the third basket, these tensions may have been behind the trend among Arab Governments to forbid their civil society organisations and experts to participate in multilateral co-operation projects with any Israeli counterparts (Bouquerel and El Hussein 2009, 61). The opportunities to employ ICD as a post-conflict confidence-building measure was therefore almost immediately scuppered by the escalation of tensions between the Arabs and the Israelis, further exacerbated in 2000 by the failure of the Camp David Summit and the outbreak of the second Intifada.

From a Potential Strategic Instrument to an Actual Latent Resource

EU member states and institutions therefore conceived of ICD in pursuit of the three strategic objectives that were laid out in the previous section. However, the silencing of these objectives during the first years of the Barcelona Process undermined its strategic potential and, as shown in the next section, the overall implementation of ICD. Considering the important effects of this silence, why

5 The 'Track 2 talks' have been defined as being: 'discussions held by non-officials of conflicting parties in an attempt to clarify outstanding disputes and to explore the option to resolve them' (Agha et al. 2004, 1).

were these specific objectives neglected during the phase analysed? The paper has already put forward a plausible explanation for the absence of references to the third objective: building confidence between civil societies in the MEPP context, by reference to the impact of the worsening relations between the Israelis and the Palestinians. This, however, does not explain the disappearance of the other two objectives.

The literature on Euro-Mediterranean policies associates the vagueness surrounding ICD with the problems connected to the whole third basket of the EMP. As the argument goes, all the components of the human, social, and cultural partnership, including ICD, were subordinated to the gains pursued through improved co-operation in the political, security, and trade spheres (Jünemann 2003, 8). As a result, not much attention was given to the functioning, viability, and correlation of its content (Gillespie 2003, 20; see also Schumacher 2007, 4). This hypothesis is empirically valid, but the premises stated at the outset cannot be fully accepted. The inextricable interconnection between the objectives set for ICD, discussed above, and the political, security, and socio-economic priorities of the EU in the Mediterranean, suggests that the introduction of ICD into the EMP was not a secondary afterthought, even if it was not as strategically relevant as the creation of a free trade area in the region.

An alternative explanation for the neglected position of ICD can thus be found in the reluctance of the MPCs, especially the Arab and Muslim ones, to lend much credit to initiatives concerning cultural and religious issues within the EMP co-operation framework. As documented in the literature, the Arab countries were interested in 'preferential access to European markets and development aid and resisted the idea of convergence' prompted by the EU (Adler and Crawford 2006, 27). Most of them only accepted participation in the EMP due to the lack of viable alternatives, since, to them, accession into the EU was denied with great scepticism (Joffé 1997). On the other hand, Turkey (just like Cyprus and Malta) was, in fact, seeking EU membership, for both its economic and political interests. Lastly, Israel was interested in the benefits of increased trade and financial co-operation and saw the opportunity to have a voice in the Euro-Mediterranean process in order to promote regional co-operation and security positively (Tovias A. 1998). For all the MPCs joining the EMP, the strategic potential of cultural exchanges and mutual understanding for the sake of regional stability was therefore considered, at best, as an irrelevant waste of resources. Moreover, Arab countries tended not to trust initiatives concerning cultural and religious exchanges, since they raised the spectre of neo-colonialism (Adler and Crawford 2006, 27) and, along with this, there was an attitude of cultural relativism against Europe and the West (Aliboni and Said 2000, 213). This clearly had the opposite effect to what ICD was meant

to achieve. After all, Europe was perceived by some MPCs to be responsible for a number of major economic and social ills, as well as for cultural intrusion and violent xenophobia against their migrant citizens (Biad 1997, 57).

There were other sensitive issues on the table at Barcelona, such as the promotion of democratic reforms and human rights. These reportedly caused friction during the EMP negotiations (Edis 1998, 96), although the EU managed to introduce them, without apparent limitations, into the Barcelona Declaration. The special treatment applied to ICD can thus also be explained by the still limited sense of urgency within the EU around the sensitive issues that ICD was meant to address. In fact, certain security threats, of the kind brought about by religious fundamentalism, could have given much corroboration to Samuel Huntington's theory of the 'Clash of Civilisations', thereby triggering the introduction of a more strategic conception of ICD as being of vital interest to the EU. That choice, however, was not made. This was likely because European politicians did not consider the situation in 1995 to be urgent enough to intervene directly in what Huntington claimed to be the root of the problem: the allegedly irreconcilable cultural differences between Western and Islamic civilisations (Huntington 1993). Southern European states were increasingly concerned with terrorist acts committed by religious fundamentalists from the Maghreb (Calabrese 1997, 90; Biad 1997, 57), however, the predominant European response was to reject Huntington's thesis on the basis that, at that moment, the Islamists in the Maghreb 'may have threatened certain Mediterranean regimes but did not constitute a direct threat to Europe' (Gillespie 1997, 68; see also Bicchi 2007, 143).

The Contribution of 'Euromed' Programmes to ICD Implementation

The attribution of a broad scope to ICD in the Barcelona Declaration had important repercussions for the implementation of this instrument during the early years of the EMP. In particular, the absence of well-defined objectives led experts, officials and politicians from the whole region to enter into an open-ended debate concerning how, and in what fields, ICD might have been employed. The outcomes of this paradoxical situation were the development of a stalemate and of discontinuity. Implementation had a late start and the selection of areas of co-operation was, in large part, inconsistent with even the most general goal of ICD.

The difficulty of giving substance to the vagueness of this new tool was already plain to see in the 5-year action plan adopted at the Barcelona Conference. The document shows that Euro-Mediterranean ministers deliberately postponed any decision on how to implement ICD. While the political, security, and economic dimensions of the EMP were supported from the outset by precise objectives and

activities, the Barcelona action plan did not provide any specific indications for the cultural dimension. The action plan merely identified a broad list of fields with the potential for co-operation: cultural and creative heritage, cultural and artistic events, co-productions in the media, translation, and other means of cultural dissemination and training activities. The plan also considered a few target groups that should have been involved in co-operation activities, including civil society organisations, young people, and religious representatives and institutions. These references, however, were just broad directions since, as stated in the plan, concrete proposals for action should have come directly from officials and experts during *ad hoc* meetings (EMP 1995a). Consequently, the first programme set up to implement ICD, *Euromed Heritage*, was only launched in 1998, although it was discussed by officials and endorsed by the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Culture as early as 1996 (EMP 1996).

In the following years, experts and officials also agreed to promote ICD through another two programmes, besides *Euromed Heritage*: *Euromed Audiovisual* and *Euromed Youth*. These three programmes were conceived of as offering financial grants funded by the European Commission and disbursed through calls for proposals that were open to civil society and cultural institutions across the whole Euro-Mediterranean area. The EU provided the necessary financial resources under the MEDA instrument (*MEsures D'Accompagnement*), established in 1996 to support all regional and bilateral efforts undertaken by MPCs 'to reform their economic and social structures and mitigate any social or environmental consequences which may result from economic development' (Council 1996).

Euromed Heritage was endorsed in 1996 by the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Culture, meeting for the first time in Bologna to follow up on the Barcelona action plan and to discuss practical possibilities for the development of ICD. On that occasion, the Ministers recognised cultural heritage 'as a custodian of the collective memory, an instrument for a policy of peace, a guarantor of diversity and a generator of employment' (EMP 1996). The programme was only launched in 1998, and it was centrally managed by the Commission's DG Aid. Its first edition, *Euromed Heritage I* (1998-2002), focused on material heritage. It was specifically aimed at starting a process of identification and mapping of historical sites and cultural phenomena in partner countries, at sharing and exchanging conservation and preservation techniques, developing financial and marketing skills, as well as at fostering networking activities among museums, cultural institutions, teachers, and students in the area of heritage conservation. *Euromed Heritage I* received a total of EUR 17 million from the MEDA instrument and funded 16 projects. All of these involved partners from the whole Euro-Mediterranean space, except for a couple of projects that were devoted to very localised activities and concerned only a few coastal countries.

Euromed Audiovisual was proposed in 1997 at the intergovernmental conference on regional audiovisual co-operation, held in Thessaloniki. It was officially endorsed by the Ministers of Culture during their second meeting, held in Rhodes in 1998. *Euromed Audiovisual I* was eventually launched in 2000 (for the period 2000–2005). Its general goal was to contribute to mutual understanding between the peoples of Europe and the Mediterranean through emphasising their common values and the richness of the region's cultural diversity in the fields of radio, television and cinema (EMP Info Note 2000). The EU specifically, considered *Euromed Audiovisual* to be a platform from which to pursue an effective peace prospect on both shores of the Mediterranean (Council 2008b). The specific objectives of the first edition of this programme were to preserve and distribute documentaries and feature films concerning Mediterranean people's lives and cultures; by means of practical exchanges of knowledge about working methods and technology, workshops in script writing and co-productions between independent film production companies. The Commission committed EUR 18 million for the programme under the MEDA instrument. This money was employed to fund 6 macro projects for a period of 5 years, ranging from the production of animation and documentary series, to activities for the conservation and the development of the Euro-Mediterranean audiovisual industries.

The third ICD regional programme, *Euromed Youth*, was launched in 1999. Differently from the other two, the Commission originally conceived of *Euromed Youth* as being an extension of *Youth* (then *Youth in Action*, and currently part of *Erasmus+*), a successful programme involving young people, mainly within the European borders. This Mediterranean 'spin-off' of that programme was managed centrally by the European Commission, DG Education, and Culture and was based on three main actions: fostering youth exchanges, voluntary service, and support measures. The financial resources committed for its first edition (1999-2001) were EUR 9.7 million. The general goals established for *Euromed Youth I* were:

1. To improve mutual understanding among young people;
2. To contribute to integrating young people into social and professional life, and;
3. To democratise the civil society of Mediterranean partners 'by stimulating active citizenship within local communities, by promoting the active participation of young people, in particular young women and young people's associations, and by developing the employability of the young people involved' (European Commission 2004). The total number of projects funded in three years amounted to 211 and involved more than 3,157 young participants from the whole Mediterranean, mostly in the first action of the programme: youth exchanges (ECOTEC 2001).

The overview, above, of the three programmes provides sufficient data to advance a few analytical considerations with regard to the first EU efforts to implement ICD. The following analysis concentrates on the objectives of the programmes, their consistency with the goals of ICD, and the amount of resources allocated to all the funds committed by the Commission to Euro-Mediterranean co-operation.

As concerns the objectives, all of the programmes were developed under the conceptually broad and unspecified umbrella of ICD that had emerged from the Barcelona Conference. They were aimed primarily to the fostering of mutual understanding, either in a specifically cultural co-operation sector, or in a target group. Unsurprisingly, none of these programmes was launched in a field, such as the interreligious exchanges proposed in the Barcelona action plan, which could be specifically connected to one of the strategic interests of the EU. Given that there was little inclination in some of the MPCs to foster co-operation on cultural and religious issues and the parallel need for the EU to give more substance to this part of the third basket, experts, officials and politicians in the region were more likely to find agreement either in less sensible sectors, or in drawing on past experiences of co-operation. In this context, it should be noted that the model on which the first 'Euromed' programmes were conceived followed that used for the decentralised co-operation programmes within the RMP framework that have been promoted since 1992. Although beset by all manner of shortcomings, and having been suspended finally in 1996 (Committee of Independent Experts 1999), these programmes were generally appreciated by their beneficiaries for the economic and technical contribution that they brought to the social development of the MPCs involved. Some of them, such as the *MED Media* programme, were also evaluated positively for the intercultural contribution that they had promoted between participants (European Commission 1997). The experience of these decentralised co-operation programmes, therefore, was able to provide a safe platform for the first implementations of ICD. On the one hand, under the regional approach championed by the EMP, the launch of revised programmes for co-operation in similar professional sectors was expected to bring to the whole Euro-Mediterranean space the positive experiences of mutual understanding that were achieved by the bilateral MED-Programmes. On the other hand, these programmes were also supposed to ensure new resources for the development of the economic, cultural, and social sectors, as requested by the MPCs. In light of this, the *MED Media* programme (1992-1996), which aimed to support the transfer of experience and know-how, in terms of media management, norms, and working conditions, to the MPCs, served as a precursor and blueprint for *Euromed Audiovisual* and its promotion of ICD.

Albeit helpful in kick-starting the implementation of ICD, the choice of very technical fields of co-operation has also meant less adherence to the general goal of ICD. For instance, there is a notable difference between *Euromed Heritage* and *Euromed Audiovisual*, on the one hand, and *Euromed Youth*, on the other. The first two programmes showed a very marked propensity for implementing ICD through co-operation in their technical aspects. Accordingly, they helped to support the development of cultural production sectors in the MPCs while, at the same time, they tended to implement ICD 'as a confidence-building measure at the level of professionals and experts' (Reinhardt 2002, 8). These programmes were evaluated as a generally positive example of regional co-operation (ARS Progetti and GHK 2004). However, from an ICD perspective, they were also criticised for choosing a specialist professional sector as, in so doing, they contributed little to bringing 'the people' of the Mediterranean together and to improving mutual perceptions (Schumacher 2007, 6). It should be noted that all the projects funded under *Euromed Heritage* and *Euromed Audiovisual* were ultimately aimed at preserving and promoting the cultures and traditions of all the peoples of the Mediterranean area, while encouraging mutual knowledge. In any case, the record of these programmes, in terms of ICD, was largely considered 'patchy and élite-oriented' (Philippart 2003).

In contrast, the 1999 launch of *Euromed Youth* marked a notable shift in the implementation record of ICD. From a qualitative perspective, the targeting of young people from both shores of the Mediterranean, rather than from a particular professional sector, secured more opportunities for the programme to reach out to the general public and to 'permeate the social fabric' (RHLAG 2003, 26). From a quantitative perspective, *Euromed Youth I* funded many more (smaller) projects and involved a larger number of people with employment, at average times, of the same amount of resources devoted to other programmes. On the contrary, *Euromed Heritage* and *Euromed Audiovisual*, also due to the expensive technical equipment required to operate in those sectors, preferred a limited number of macro projects, which involved smaller groups of experts and institutions. The evaluation reports commissioned by European institutions for *Euromed Youth I* showed a constant increase in the number of projects funded in the first edition of the programme (26 in 1999, 77 in 2000 and 108 in 2001) and, equally, in the number of beneficiaries involved. Drawing on data from interviews and questionnaires with stakeholders and beneficiaries, the report demonstrated that the activities supported by the programme had contributed to promoting the active participation of young people and to opening them up to new cultures and ideas (ECOTEC 2001, 40–44). On these grounds, *Euromed Youth* has been widely considered as the only regional programme that, during its initial phase, managed to implement ICD and build a level of mutual understanding between the two shores of the Mediterranean, fostering confidence-building, empowering young people through their acquisition

of intercultural competencies, and mobilising thousands of young people from the EU and the MPCs (Pace 2005; Schumacher. 2007).

A brief analysis of the financial resources of these programmes can also give an idea, with some degree of approximation, of the absolute and relative amounts of money destined for ICD. The total funds committed by the Commission to the implementation of *Euromed Heritage I*, *Euromed Audiovisual I* and *Euromed Youth I* amounted to about EUR 42 million. This sum was equivalent to little more than 1% of the overall EUR 3.4 billion committed by the EU to supporting both bilateral and regional co-operation under the MEDA I instrument. However, although cultural co-operation projects were also envisaged on a bilateral track (EMP 1996; EMP 2003), ICD was primarily a region-wide instrument. From this perspective, the percentage calculation of ICD funds, compared with the total of MEDA resources devoted to regional cooperation, amounted to about 11%⁶. These rough data allow two considerations: first, although the EMP was presented as an innovation by European institutions, mostly on account of the inclusion of a regional dimension in co-operation, the amounts of money devoted to bilateral co-operation remained as the bulk of the EU budget, especially in regard to the promotion of national projects under the second basket. For instance, the bilateral economic development project for Egyptian industrial modernisation alone received a budget of EUR 250 million (European Commission 2002). Secondly, within the inherent limits of regional co-operation and thus of the actual design of the EMP, ICD was poorly funded in absolute terms, but not in relative terms, especially when compared to other, allegedly, more strategic dimensions of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation. For instance, the *MEDA Democracy* programme, launched in 1996 to support grassroots democratic reforms and human rights in the framework of the first basket of the EMP, received only EUR 4.6 million for its first (and only) edition (EMHRN 2000).

This analysis of the three Euromed programmes, taken both separately and as a whole, shows that the employment of ICD during its initial phase was severely hampered by the vague language with which the EU and MPCs defined its scope in the EMP. However, although deprived of a specific strategic orientation, the slow, piecemeal and, at times, contradictory process of implementation, as promoted by the European Commission in particular, helped ICD to gradually gain a foothold among EMP partners. By the end of this kick-start phase, the outcome of this process was a progressive increase in the influence and reach of ICD which finally began, if still only to a limited extent, to contribute to the EU's strategic goals in the Mediterranean.

6 Funding devoted to regional co-operation under MEDA I and II ranged from 10 to 12% in that period (EuropeAid Co-operation Office 2001).

Conclusion

The analysis above has shown that, at the end of the Cold War, the EU conceived of ICD as a strategic resource with which to defuse some of the emerging social and political tensions that concern the Mediterranean area in the long term.

In light of the reluctance of some MPCs to acknowledge the relevance of the intercultural dimension to Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, the launch of ICD in the EMP, although rendered toothless, in particular by the omission of specific strategic objectives, was a foreseen move on the part of the EU. ICD was introduced to the Barcelona Process as a flexible instrument in the hands of European institutions to progressively compensate the limits of traditional political, diplomatic and economic tools in addressing the new strategic targets of the proliferation of Islamic terrorism and the social consequences of migration and other challenges.

In fact when, especially in the aftermath of the 9/11 2001 terror attacks in the US, the challenges and tensions discussed in this paper were further heightened by the resulting global scenario, European institutions, and some EU Mediterranean member states, found a 'window of opportunity' to push sceptical partner countries in the southern European neighbourhood to start developing and implementing ICD according to its original rationale. Since then, the EU has begun a new, more intense and visible phase in the promotion of ICD, which also goes beyond its Mediterranean policy, which has gradually developed into the current approach that has been adopted vis-à-vis this instrument.⁷

7 To know more about the theory and practice of ICD in EU policies on the Mediterranean after the 2000s, see, for instance, Schumacher and Pace 2007; Bekemans et al. 2007, 231-446; de Perini 2012).

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Dialogue as a Tool for Racial Reconciliation: Examining Racialised Frameworks

Elli Nagai-Rothe

In this paper, I draw on my experiences as facilitator of a seven-week intergroup dialogue on race to explore the role of dialogue as a tool for racial reconciliation, particularly in the context of domestic U.S. race relations. Additionally, I examine and raise questions about the cultural frameworks and assumptions that shape dialogue processes and methodologies: is the dialogue framework (as a conflict resolution tool) inherently racialised? How are power imbalances addressed in a dialogue setting, and how do these power imbalances influence opportunities for racial reconciliation? I posit that the dialogue framework has been constructed through a culturally/racially biased lens that privileges 'White Talk' characteristics, and does not adequately address power imbalances. As power imbalances are not effectively addressed in a dialogue setting, opportunities for genuine and comprehensive racial reconciliation (as defined by leading reconciliation scholars) are limited. Ultimately, I argue that dialogue alone is not enough to reach a genuine and sustainable process for racial reconciliation. Mechanisms to address structural inequality and power disparities at the societal level must be in place together with the interpersonal reconciliation that takes place within dialogue settings.

Keywords: Intergroup Dialogue, racial reconciliation, race relations, power imbalances, white privilege, conflict resolution.

In the autumn of 2008, I co-facilitated a sustained¹ dialogue series entitled, 'Beyond Black and White: Challenging our Assumptions about Race' as part of American University's campus dialogue programme, the Dialogue Development Group (DDG). The dialogue group consisted of American University students (both undergraduate and graduate) with a diversity of racial backgrounds, who were committed to participating in an engaging and challenging conversation about race. The dialogue endeavoured to examine our own racialised experience and assumptions about race in a supportive environment, while learning about the personal experiences of others. As facilitators, my co-facilitator and I strove for a truthful, meaningful look at how race functions in our daily lives.

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- 1 'Sustained dialogue' is a term coined by Harold Saunders. He uses it to describe dialogue series that take place over many months or years. DDG uses this term in quotation marks to indicate the dialogue group's seven-week commitment, but does so in recognition of Saunders' intended meaning for this term.

Over the course of our seven-week dialogue, several major themes surfaced which raised questions for me about the structures and dynamics of race dialogues. In this paper, I draw from my experiences in our DDG dialogue to explore the role of dialogue as a tool for racial reconciliation, particularly in the context of domestic U.S. race relations. Additionally, I examine and raise questions about the cultural frameworks and assumptions that shape dialogue processes and methodologies: is the dialogue framework (as a conflict resolution tool) inherently racialised? How are power imbalances addressed in a dialogue setting and how do these power imbalances influence opportunities for racial reconciliation?

White Privilege

A major theme that emerged during our dialogue was the topic of white privilege. White privilege is defined by Kendall Clark as ‘a right, advantage, or immunity granted to or enjoyed by white persons beyond the common advantage of all others; an exemption in many particular cases from certain burdens or liabilities’ (Clark 1997, 1). In her article, ‘White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack,’ now considered a ‘classic’ in anti-racist education, Peggy McIntosh describes the unearned privileges associated with whiteness: ‘As a white person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something which puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege which puts me at an advantage.’ (McIntosh 1988, 1)

Over the course of several dialogue sessions, it became clear that most (though not all) of the white participants were aware of the theoretical concept of white privilege at an abstract level, but had not examined this concept at a personal level and had not previously acknowledged the unexamined benefits conferred on them as individuals due to their race. In fact, I believe that despite participating in seven dialogue sessions, most white participants still have much work to do when it comes to a critical look at their own racial privilege. For many participants, our dialogue is the first step on a much longer journey of self-reflective examination regarding racial privilege.

Towards the last few dialogue sessions, a common point made by white participants was, ‘o.k., I see that white privilege exists, and I know it’s a bad thing, but I don’t know what I’m supposed to do about it.’ My co-facilitator and I encouraged, and when necessary, pushed, the white participants to go deeper into their enquiry and ownership of their privilege as a first step toward a truly honest dialogue about race. As a facilitator, I found it interesting to note (my white co-facilitator was particularly frustrated by this point) that in most of our dialogue sessions, the people of colour spoke most often, taking risks in their personal sharing, while white participants did not engage or risk at the same level of emotional vulnerability. At one point, during

a particularly tense dialogue session, my co-facilitator pointed this out: ‘why is it that the white participants are silent on this topic of white privilege?’ My co-facilitator and I saw this as another manifestation of white privilege, the choice not to speak on a topic that is uncomfortable: race. Although white participants offered the theoretical acknowledgement of white privilege, the largely unexamined and ignored aspects of white privilege in their own lives and their defensive ignorance (‘I don’t know what to do’, therefore I won’t do anything), this illustrates a key function of white privilege. Robert Jensen, the author of *The Heart of Whiteness: Confronting Race, Racism and White Privilege*, describes the rationalisation that many of the white dialogue participants made to deflect responsibility on this topic: ‘that’s part of white privilege—the privilege to ignore the reality of a white-supremacist society when it makes us uncomfortable, to rationalize why it’s not really so bad, to deny one’s own role in it. It is the privilege of remaining ignorant because that ignorance is protected’ (Jensen 2005, 10).

Who’s Responsibility?

As a facilitator of colour, I often struggled with ways to explore the concept of white privilege in a racially mixed group. I recognise that people of colour often carry the burden of responsibility (projected and assumed responsibility) when it comes to educating white people about race and racism. Indeed, many of our participants of colour expressed their frustration and exhaustion at constantly playing the role of the articulate and patient educator. Education often comes in the form of participants of colour sharing their personal experiences of race and racism, while white participants listen without offering or sharing experiences at the same level of emotional vulnerability. In an article on race dialogues in Richmond Virginia, Karen Elliot Griesdorf explains, ‘black participants tend to be put in the position of telling their stories, white tend to intellectualize the issue and react with either sympathy or disbelief’ (Griesdorf 2001, 161). In many race dialogue settings with a group of racially mixed participants, white people often benefit most from the conversation, as their awareness of race and the implications of racialised structures deepens (another aspect of white privilege: not to have to think about race unless a white person chooses to) and the people of colour (who, regardless of whether they choose to or not, face race and the implications of racism on a daily basis) leave the conversation feeling that they, yet again, occupy the role of educator, or that they are not being met at the same level of emotional vulnerability. The participants of colour gain little (compared to the white participants) that deepens their own understanding of race and anti-racism.

One particular dialogue session illustrated the challenge of responsibility in addressing issues of race and white privilege: a white participant said, ‘I don’t see any purpose to having a group of white people talk about race. We need

people of colour there to tell us about their experience, or what's the point?' His comment triggered an angry response from a participant of colour, who said: 'So it's my responsibility to teach you about race?!' Several of the participants of colour expressed frustration with the assumed responsibility that they felt was projected onto them by the white participants, to teach the white participants about race. I found this equally problematic, as the assumption was that the participants of colour were the 'experts' on all matters relating to race. This assumption leaves no room for personal exploration and critical reflection (for the participants of colour) of the nuances of race beyond a black vs. white binary construction. I felt there were certainly assumptions and issues of racism within and between communities of colour that could be explored further if the expectation of being an 'expert' on the topic of race relations were not present. Below is an excerpt from some candid evaluation feedback that we received from a participant of colour, which highlights the racialised dynamics in the dialogue circle and the unequal experience between white participants and participants of colour:

That dialogue group was not for the people of colour in the room. It was for the white people. I was asked to parade my pain around, like I'm some goddamned museum piece, so that white people could realize what their privilege really means. I did not volunteer for that and, frankly, it pissed me the fuck off. I almost didn't come back. I just want you to know what you are asking when you ask me to parade my pain so that others might suffer less. Race hurts for me. And, honestly, the black part of me didn't get anything out of that dialogue. It was not for me.

I grappled with how to create a dialogical environment that would equally benefit all participants in terms of their personal growth and learning. I am still left wondering how to create and facilitate this sort of dialogue, which effectively engages participants who are at very different places in their understanding of race and racial dynamics. My co-facilitator and I tried several specific dialogue methods and processes (race-based educational activities, 'fishbowl' exercises). However, these activities seemed to be unbalanced and ineffective in addressing the foundational power imbalance between dialogue participants (on the basis of individual racial awareness and structural issues of racial oppression and racial privilege) who were present in the dialogue. As I grappled with this challenge, I began to ask questions about the structural dynamics of interracial dialogues and the unexplored assumptions of dialogue frameworks.

A Culturally/Racially Informed Dialogue Lens

In their book, *Courageous Conversations About Race*, Glen Eric Singleton and Curtis Linton describe the challenges of facilitating interracial dialogue groups on race: 'historically and still to some degree today, racial discourse in the United States is

governed by the parameters of the dominant white population' (2005, 121). People of colour in the U.S. know more about white culture (because of the structural and institutional dominance of white culture) than white people know of communities of colour. This creates an inherent imbalance in power and information in any dialogue about race.

In their research on interracial dialogue groups, Singleton and Linton have identified eight patterns of characteristics that are common to white participants and participants of colour, which they label 'White Talk' and 'Color Commentary' (2005, 123):

<i>White Talk</i>	<i>Color Commentary</i>
-Verbal	-Nonverbal
-Impersonal	-Personal
-Intellectual	-Emotional
-Task oriented	-Process oriented

The authors don't imply that *all* white people, or *all* people of colour, behave according to these patterns that are based on their racial affiliation, but these characteristics typically emerge as patterns of racial discourse in interracial dialogue settings. Singleton and Linton's characterisation of communication patterns in interracial dialogues reflects my own observations in facilitating race dialogues, where participants of colour expressed emotional vulnerability in their sharing of personal stories, whereas white participants tended to intellectualise those of their experiences that were related to race and racism.

Singleton and Linton's research identifies valuable patterns in interracial dialogue, but their findings also raise some important questions about the dialogue framework itself. They suggest that without careful monitoring and intervention, 'all four characteristics of White Talk will be dominant in the dialogue' (Singleton 2005, 122) because of the over-representation of white dialogue educators and facilitators. I suggest that, beyond the racial affiliation of dialogue facilitators, the dialogue framework itself has been constructed within a cultural framework that privileges 'White Talk' characteristics. In my experiences in participating and facilitating dialogues (particularly dialogues on race), I began to ask: is the dialogue process and methodology inherently racialised? What assumptions are being made about dialogue as a conflict resolution framework, and which cultural/racial lenses inform the foundational notions of dialogue? In order to address these questions, I turn now to an exploration of dialogue as a conflict resolution process.

Dialogue–Racialised Assumptions

Intergroup dialogue, as described by David Schoem and Sylvia Hurtado, is a form of ‘democratic practice, engagement, problem solving, and education involving face-to-face, focused, facilitated, and confidential discussions occurring over time between two or more groups of people defined by their different social identities’ (Schoem and Hurtado 2001, 6). Schoem and Hurtado go on to say that ‘intergroup dialogue is a positive and powerful process in which different groups come together to discuss issues of community and conflict’ (15). Dialogue, at its foundation, is thus a form of intergroup understanding and conflict resolution. Dialogue has increasingly become recognised as a method and process in the International Conflict Resolution field (Saunders 2001). Amy Hubbard describes dialogue as a ‘form of conflict resolution aimed at bringing ordinary people together at the grassroots level for discussion and possible reconciliation’ (Hubbard 2001, 275).

David Bohm, who is frequently seen as a founding thinker of dialogue processes, outlines several logistical guidelines for dialogue. According to Bohm, dialogue takes place in a circle, involves direct communication and is inherently a verbal engagement where a group creates a ‘common consciousness.’ Bohm also underlines the importance of giving space in dialogue for each person to talk (no interrupting) and where emotions like anger and fear are suspended in order to move towards collective understanding. Hubbard describes the aim of dialogue as to provide: ‘a safe space where participants can work through carefully structured confrontation with each other’ (Hubbard 2001, 275). She continues, saying that dialogue and similar conflict resolution methods involve: ‘bringing people together to talk about the complexities of a situation in a quiet, safe place where they can confront each other successfully, work through that confrontation together and then formulate a plan for peace’ (Hubbard 2001, 279).

Bohm and Hubbard’s descriptions of dialogue include several core assumptions: 1. Dialogue participants sit together in a circle; 2. Dialogue is a verbal and direct form of communication; 3. Dialogue is structured within a safe, quiet space. Verbal, as opposed to non-verbal communication, quiet and safe (which seem to be synonymous with controlled or quickly transformed emotions), as opposed to loud and emotionally expressive, are the key factors that are privileged in a dialogue setting. Additionally, there is an assumption that all participants are equal in their ability and in their expectation to contribute to a collective dialogue process. This is underscored by the expectation that participants will give space to one another to speak, without interrupting. Many of these assumptions are problematic. Returning for a moment to Singleton and Linton’s findings regarding eight key patterns for white participants and participants of colour in race dialogues, we see that the main assumptions of dialogue (as outlined by Bohm, Hubbard, and others)

privilege the 'white talk' category of patterned dialogue: verbal, impersonal, task oriented. Cultural/racial bias is thus embedded in dialogue as a communication framework, based on the core assumptions that are outlined in the explicit goals of dialogue processes. When viewed through a non-Western and/or a non-white lens, dialogue may demonstrate very different structural foundations: non-verbal forms of communication, moving together in dynamic space, as opposed to being stationary and static (seated), loudly expressive, as opposed to quiet and polite. Additionally, when analysed from an intercultural communications framework, the assumptions underlying the foundations of dialogue processes highlight key assumptions regarding high and low context communication styles. Low context cultures, as Edward T. Hall describes them, display meaning through direct forms of verbal communication, whereas high context cultures value indirect and often non-verbal forms of communication (Hall 1976). Current dialogue frameworks and methodologies fall within a low context framework. Dialogue participants who locate themselves within high context cultural frameworks are therefore at an inherent disadvantage in dialogue settings.

I believe a more in depth study of the culturally and racially embedded assumptions in dialogue methodologies is important, and is needed in order to advance our understanding of the value of dialogue in settings of racial reconciliation. Additionally, I suggest further research be conducted in the area of racial and cultural bias within dialogue frameworks, research that includes an anti-racist critique of dialogue. For the purposes of this paper, I will not expand on the research that is needed to apply a comprehensive anti-racist critique of dialogue. Rather, I hope to offer questions in an attempt to explore and problematise some of the underlying assumptions of commonly used dialogue frameworks.

Power Disparities within Dialogue

The assumption that all dialogue participants are equal in their role as participants in a collective dialogue process is a common assumption in many forms of conflict resolution, and particularly in mediation and negotiation (Fisher and Ury 1991). In their book, *Intergroup Dialogue*, Schoem and Hurtado state the assumed equality within dialogue processes explicitly: 'within the confines of the dialogue, all participants have equal status' (Schoem and Hurtado 2001, 16). However, I believe this assumption is limiting and perhaps even detrimental in a dialogue process relating to race and race relations. Within the structures of U.S. race relations there exist deeply embedded notions of racial hierarchy, such that participants are *not* equal in their structural access or in the privileges afforded to them that are based on their racial background. Although it might be possible to achieve a sense of equality among individuals within a dialogue circle, I find it somewhat dishonest to premise a dialogue on a sense of equality when inherent power imbalances

and structural inequalities continue to exist outside the dialogue circle. What happens when dialogue participants leave the circle and return to their homes and communities? Does dialogue, in fact, do a disservice to the 'minority' communities by attempting to equalise the dialogue space when, in the 'real world' outside the dialogue where power imbalances and discrimination will continue? In this regard, dialogue fails to directly and adequately address the power imbalances between racial identity groups. Participants of colour, in the case of race dialogues, will be at a disadvantage. The same DDG participant of colour, quoted earlier, highlights this inherent imbalance in her evaluation feedback:

I think they should have a race dialogue group that is just white people. I really do. I think it's fucked up to pretend like the dialogue is for everybody and then have it really just be about educating white folks. I think to have people of color there is reductionist, and oppressive, and sadistic.

This participant's feedback illustrates a frustration faced by many dialogue participants of colour who enter a dialogue setting that structurally perpetuates an unequal power dynamic.

Jonathan Kuttab, a West Bank human rights lawyer, describes some of the limitations of dialogue in regard to power disparities. His findings derive from his work in Israel and Palestine, but can be applied to racial dialogue in the U.S. As Reena Bernards notes, 'Kuttab states that a key pitfall in dialogue is the assumption of a false symmetry between groups where there is actually a large power imbalance. The basic condition of the oppressor and the oppressed is ignored and members of the group are subtly pressured into an acceptance of the status quo' (Bernards 2000, 197). In his article, 'Conflict Resolution Approaches: Western and Middle Eastern Lessons and Possibilities,' Mohammed Abu-Nimer describes some of the assumptions in Western conflict resolution approaches and frameworks (Abu-Nimer 1996). As dialogue has emerged from a Western model of conflict resolution frameworks, his analysis is valuable in examining the shortcomings of dialogue to address power disparities. Abu-Nimer describes the assumption that conflict resolution 'can benefit both parties, and has the potential to satisfy conflicting interests and needs of the parties, particularly those of the underdog parties' (Abu-Nimer 1996, 39). As I have previously noted, the assumption that conflict resolution methods (in the case of dialogue) equally benefit 'both parties' in a conflict (particularly the party with least power), does not hold true. Abu-Nimer goes on to say that: 'the Western model calls for a direct method of interaction and communication. Also the language of emotions and values is perceived as an obstacle to reaching an agreement' (Abu-Nimer 1996, 40). In the case of dialogue that takes place in the West that addresses U.S. domestic race relations, Western models (namely, models developed through a white cultural lens) privilege white participants to normalise

a white cultural communication pattern over the communication patterns that Singleton and Linton describe as ‘Color Commentary.’

In a chapter entitled ‘Understanding Majority and Minority Participation in Interracial and Interethnic Dialogue,’ Amy Hubbard argues that majority and minority dialogue participants have different perceptions of dialogue and use dialogue groups differently to pursue their respective goals.² She suggests that the difference in the perception of dialogue has to do with the different power dynamics between minority and majority participants, the structural inequalities between participants, and their interest in peace and social justice. She posits that: ‘majorities are more likely to use the conflict resolution frame when describing race relations. Minorities are more likely to use the social justice frame’ (Hubbard 2001, 282). The conflict resolution frame, according to Hubbard: ‘suggests equality between the participants, in that everyone must change in some way in order to bring about peaceful race relations.’ She continues to say that the social justice frame suggests that: ‘peaceful race relations can be best achieved if those in power change their ways and justice is secured for minorities’ (Hubbard 2001, 283). Minority participants (participants of colour) thus enter a dialogue with an expectation of social change and/or political action as a result of the dialogue process. Majority participants (white participants), on the other hand, enter a dialogue in the hope of meeting and communicating with people different from themselves. They tend to view the dialogue process as a useful process in itself, without an expectation of change to social structures outside the dialogue. Hubbard’s argument rings true with my experience of the DDG race dialogue; white participants saw value in meeting new people of different racial backgrounds, whereas the participants of colour wanted to see tangible social change. In fact, during our last dialogue in the closing go-around, one of the participants of colour specifically asked the group to share the tangible and concrete action towards social change that they were going to commit to as a result of their dialogue experience. If white dialogue participants and participants of colour enter a dialogue setting with different goals, and enter into a process that has an inherent cultural/racial bias, how effective is such a process for racial reconciliation?

Racial Reconciliation – Applying Theory to Practice

According to scholars in Peace and Conflict Resolution, Reconciliation is, by most accounts, a process of redefining relationships between conflictual parties to move from what was primarily a destructive relationship to one that is primarily constructive. At its core, reconciliation processes, according to Andrew Rigby,

2 ‘Majority’ refers to participants whose people or community occupy a position of power, while ‘minority’ refers to participants whose people or community carry less power.

involve: 'the preparedness of people to anticipate a shared future. For this to occur they are required not to forget but to forgive the past, and thus be in a position to move forward together' (Rigby 2001, 12).

John Paul Lederach defines reconciliation as both a perspective and a social phenomenon that seeks to create an encounter where people can focus on their relationship and share their perceptions, feelings, and experiences with one another, with the goal of creating new perceptions and a shared experience (Lederach 1997, 30). Lederach's framework of reconciliation outlined in *Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, focuses on the development of reconciliation through four key concepts: truth, mercy, justice and peace. In the case of racial reconciliation, the same elements of truth, mercy, justice and peace remain key elements in ongoing reconciliation processes.

In the U.S. context, interracial dialogue regarding race relations has long been a process to achieve greater intergroup understanding and empathy. More recently, the concept of dialogue as a tool for racial reconciliation, with an awareness that moving beyond intergroup understanding towards racial reconciliation is imperative to heal the wounds of racism and racial oppression, has begun to take root. Hope in the Cities is a pioneer in recognising the value of applying dialogue as a means of reaching racial reconciliation and justice (Greisdorf 2001). Abu Nimer argues that dialogue is an influential means for reaching sustainable reconciliation between conflicting groups: 'carrying out or engaging in a genuine dialogue is a necessary condition for parties to reconcile their relationships' (Abu-Nimer 2001, 341).

In applying the reconciliation theory to the DDG race dialogue, many white participants began a journey towards reconciliation (at an individual level) during their dialogue experience. For many of the white participants, the DDG race dialogue was the first time they had considered the concept of white privilege. One participant said, 'I have never heard of this before, let alone thought about how it relates to my life as a white person.' Through the course of the dialogue, she deepened her understanding of structural racism and unexamined racial privilege. Ultimately, she chose to re-design a final paper for one of her classes so that she could continue her theoretical and personal exploration of white privilege and racism. Additionally, she has begun to engage her family in conversations about white privilege. Dialogue, as a methodology, has thus helped to raise her awareness (truth) and deepen her capacity for empathic understanding (mercy), aspects of dialogue which are key to any reconciliation process.

I think it is important to note the difference between forms of reconciliation (racial or otherwise) that take place at an individual level versus those that take place at a collective level. There are numerous documented cases of racial reconciliation

taking place at individual and interpersonal levels through the process of dialogue (Schoem and Hurtado 2001). Many dialogue practitioners believe that personal transformation and reconciliation through intergroup dialogue will implicitly lead to change at a societal level (Schoem and Hurtado 2001). However, in the realm of Peace and Conflict Resolution, peace practitioners must be intentional in applying dialogue as a process for reconciliation at a collective, community or societal level, beyond implicitly assuming that greater interpersonal understanding across racial groups will generate societal change. Racial reconciliation approaches at a collective, societal level carry different methodological dynamics than interpersonal reconciliation approaches.

As mentioned, there are many cases in which racial reconciliation has taken place in intergroup dialogue settings through personal and interpersonal transformation. Yet racial reconciliation at a societal level will remain elusive if structural and institutionally oppressive systems remain in place. The process of achieving racial reconciliation at a collective level and moving toward social justice, social change, and addressing power disparities thus remains the core challenge in interracial dialogues about race. This challenge continues to be especially relevant when, as I have previously discussed, cultural/racial bias is embedded within dialogue frameworks. As Abu-Nimer reminds us, 'reconciliation is associated with the value of symmetry and equality. The outcome of a reconciling interaction ought to promote full and unconditional equality between the parties' (Abu-Nimer 2001, 246). Genuine, sustainable racial reconciliation is thus not possible if symmetry and equality do not exist at both an individual and collective level. Given the assumptions that are at the core of dialogue frameworks and processes, achieving racial reconciliation (not that racial reconciliation can be achieved as an end goal, indeed, it is an ongoing process and state of being) requires additional methodologies. Dialogue alone, as a tool for racial reconciliation, will not ultimately address a core component of reconciliation: equality effectively.

Conclusion

Through this paper, I have drawn from my experiences in facilitating a DDG dialogue on race to explore and problematise the underlying assumptions and challenges within dialogue frameworks. There are several key assumptions that shape dialogue processes and methodologies; assumptions that I believe are racialised. I suggest that the dialogue framework has been constructed through a culturally/racially-biased lens that privileges 'White Talk' characteristics. Additionally, dialogue processes highlight key assumptions regarding high and low context communication styles, current dialogue frameworks and methodologies fall within a low context framework. Dialogue participants who locate themselves within high context cultural frameworks are therefore inherently at a disadvantage in dialogue

settings. Such disadvantage mirrors the power imbalance that exists outside the dialogue setting. As these power imbalances are not directly or adequately addressed in a dialogue setting, opportunities for genuine and comprehensive racial reconciliation (as defined by leading reconciliation scholars) are limited. Ultimately, I believe that dialogue plays an important role in the process of racial reconciliation at an interpersonal level, particularly in the context of domestic U.S. race relations. However, dialogue alone is not enough to reach a genuine and sustainable process of racial reconciliation, symmetry and equality need to exist at both an individual and collective level. Mechanisms to address structural inequality and power disparities at the societal level must therefore be in place in addition to the interpersonal reconciliation that takes place within dialogue settings. As processes and methodologies for reconciliation at both a collective, societal level and at an individual/interpersonal level are unique, peace practitioners must be intentional in applying specific mechanisms and processes for reconciliation that are mutually supportive of the overarching goal of racial reconciliation.

I believe a more in depth study of the culturally and racially embedded assumptions in dialogue methodologies is needed to advance our understanding of the value of dialogue in settings of racial reconciliation. Additionally, I suggest the application of an anti-racist critique of dialogue as a future area of study and research.

Through my experiences in facilitating intergroup dialogue, I have seen the possibilities for greater intergroup understanding and personal transformation, particularly regarding racial assumptions and biases. I offer my critique of the power imbalances and the racialised assumptions within dialogue frameworks to deepen our collective understanding of dialogue methodologies. In so doing, I hope to highlight the need for additional thinking and research in order to strengthen the applicability of dialogue as a valuable tool in conflict resolution and reconciliation processes.

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The Buberian Dialogical Man as a Struggler in the Field of Existential Choice

Dvora Lederman Daniely

This essay presents the perception of dialogical teaching models as one which is concerned primarily with the cognitive layers of the dialogue, and focuses on the cognitive functions of learning, information processing, interpretation and decision making. This perception is presented in the essay as ignoring the relational dimensions of the dialogue. On the other hand, the essay argues that research attempts to offer non-cognitive dialogical models which focus on the interpersonal aspect, while emphasising relations such as containment and empathy, do not necessarily contribute to the realisation of an educational dialogue and may block the creation of the 'sphere of the between,' which is essential to the development of genuine dialogue. The essay suggests referring to the existential approach and argues that the choice of dialogical relation is one that involves a powerful and continuous existential struggle between the 'I-Thou' and the 'I-it' modes of relation.

Keywords: Buber, educational dialogue, existential dialogue.

The Buberian dialogue is perceived as a source of inspiration for the creation of models of inter-subjective relations in various social fields, and in the educational one in particular. One of the declared educational goals in any educational practice which considers itself advanced and humanistic is dialogical teaching. Based on the concept of the Buberian dialogue, this essay argues that the tendency not to delve into the existential levels of the dialogue when relating to dialogical teaching may prevent the creation of a real, genuine dialogue between teacher and student.

The first two sections of the essay describe two perceptions of the dialogue, the cognitive perception and the psychosocial-empathic perception. Based on the concept of the Buberian dialogue, I argue that these two perceptions do not necessarily contribute to the development of an educational dialogue. The third section proposes Buberian existential perception as a process that involves a powerful existential struggle that lies at the basis of human existence.

The Cognitive Perception of Dialogical Teaching

The cognitive perception of dialogical teaching is perceived mainly as a communicative and conversational activity which can be researched and exercised

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as a teaching method in which students play an active role in the way lessons are conducted. The assumption is that an open conversation between teacher and student encourages independent and critical thinking, develops the thought process and enhances learning ability in addition to improving its performance.

The above perception of the dialogue has led to the creation of different models of dialogical teaching, which focus particularly on the cognitive functions involved in the conversation between teacher and student. Dialogue researchers, according to this functional focal point, focus on the question of how the learning takes place within the conversation. Their objective, therefore, is to uncover the mechanism of the conversation and its various stages, while trying to find a regularity that can be controlled and operated during the lesson in order to achieve the desired results.

One such example is the model of listening in studies conducted by Haroutunian-Gordon (1991; 2009; Haroutunian-Gordon and Lavery 2011), in which she analyses the conditions in which listening and openness to new ideas take place. The conversational process is researched thoroughly in order to identify cognitive components and processes, while deducing strategies to create similar processes in teaching and learning. The dialogue is construed as a cognitive process, a functional mechanism, and once you learn its regularity it is possible to learn how to control it, how to divert it to functional objectives and how to operate it in order to fulfill the objectives of learning. This model offers no reference to dialogue as an experience of companionship that goes far beyond the cognitive processes.

An additional model that considers dialogue as a primarily cognitive process is the model suggested by Burbules (1993), in which he relates to dialogue as a communicative technique. He writes the following, 'learning to engage in dialogue successfully is like learning a game' (Burbules 1993, 49). The dialogue between a teacher and his student is studied by Burbules as a model of 'moves' on a chess board, designed ultimately to improve the teaching and learning processes and to produce enhanced learning outcomes. Though Burbules uses the concept 'dialogical relation' and refers to the unique dynamics that take place in a dialogue, and to the companionship which is formed, the training that he suggests for this relationship focuses and amounts mostly to technical enhancement of cognitive functions by 'involvement strategies,' as Burbules describes them (Burbules 1993, 47). The dialogue as a model of interaction between the thinking and learning processes is, according to Burbules, the educational goal, while emotional and relational approaches, such as trust, affection and empathy, are mostly effective ways of reaching this cognitive interaction, setting it in motion and preserving it. Burbules' working assumption, which is typical of the cognitive approach to the study of the dialogue, is that the dialogue's educational benefit is mainly cognitive, and the educational dialogue is mainly a dialogue for the purpose of cognitive development.

An additional model of dialogical teaching that focuses on cognitive processes is that suggested by Pulvermacher (2009). Pulvermacher presents a model of 'ambiguity' that is inspired by Frankenstein's dialogic perception, which refers to dialogue mostly as a tool for the development of thinking skills. As such, it is analysed in accordance with the psycho-cognitive processes that are involved in it. Pulvermacher argues that ambiguity in dialogue means a simultaneous containment of different aspects. In her approach, dialogical teaching focuses primarily on thinking processes. Its objective, according to Pulvermacher, is to encourage the student to discover the hidden meaning of the content, to develop possible applications and promote alternative thinking.

Yechieli (2006) refers to dialogical teaching as a negotiation for knowledge. The dialogical encounter enables students to discuss their perceptions and those of the teacher in a sceptical and critical manner. The objective of the dialogue, according to Yechieli's model, is clarifying ideas, asking questions and reaching a common meaning.

Dialogue involving cognitive functions is, therefore, a perception that is widespread among scholars. These scholars will usually indicate that it is also important to have a respectful and present approach, which considers the student as a subject with personality, wholeness and a unique value. However, the question of how to develop such an approach does not arise. While the conversation principles, as cognitive principles, receive attention and careful analysis, the inter-subjective references, the presence, companionship and acceptance of the student's complete personality, still have had no profound investigation.

As a result, the area of dialogical relation or, as Aloni (2008, 102) calls it, 'the area of pedagogic presence and empowering dialogue', remains an area that is discussed unendingly, but that is not necessarily being realised. Aloni (1996) points to the gap between humanistic statements on the importance of dialogical teaching, and the lack of implementation in practice. The declarations remain hollow, and the dialogue exists only on the declarative level, according to Aloni (1996), since there is a lack of adequate training in its application in the teaching field. The humanistic values are voided, and teachers are not taught how to apply them in reality. Aloni considers the emphasis on the functional-instrumental aspect of dialogue as a process that turns the teacher into a teaching technician. In this case, the teacher devotes less to his/her presence and so the human companionship, which is essential to humanistic education and the nurturing of the full human potential, becomes absent in educational practice.

The Psychosocial-Empathic Perception of Dialogical Teaching

As opposed to the techno-functional approaches to dialogue, one might think that the answer to distress relating to the development of dialogue is found in educational approaches that focus on dialogue as an interaction based on emotions, such as empathy and sympathy. An example of the psychosocial-empathic perception of dialogical teaching is the pedagogy of caring suggested by Noddings.

Noddings (1984; 2003), inspired by Gilligan's feminist philosophy, goes against the functional-instrumental approach, which, according to feminist philosophy, is associated with a masculine means of relation and male ethics. As opposed to this ethics, she presents a feminine ethics which relates to interpersonal interaction. Noddings argues that the male ethics stems from the point of view of the separate person. It creates a clear-cut hierarchy and a principled priority between informed thinking, logic and rationality, and between the world of emotion and relationships. Male ethics emphasises individualism and individual autonomy, and values the relational context much less. On the other hand, feminine ethics places as top priorities the relation to the other, the basic caring for him/her and concern for him/her. Pedagogy based on this ethics emphasises one's responsibility for the other, while the social context in which the student lives is of great importance. According to Noddings, a person is educated through, and out of, the interactions that s/he experiences. S/He grows from caring and thus learns to display a caring approach towards other people and the environment. The dialogical-caring aspect, is therefore crucial for educational work, and is as important as imparting knowledge, developing thinking skills and cognitive abilities.

When trained for a pedagogy of caring, a teacher is required to learn how to relate in a caring manner, and s/he has to learn how to be open and receptive, and not to focus just on one pre-defined absolute ideal, or on one structured process of measurement and evaluation. In his class, s/he should strive to create a reality of caring for the individual needs of each student.

When writing about the caring relation, Noddings was largely inspired by existential philosophy, while relying, among others, on Heidegger's definition of caring, and through examining how Sartre described emotion and its relation to the human choice. In particular, Noddings relies on Buberian philosophy, as she considers dialogical thinking and *I-Thou* relations to be the key to understanding the caring relation between people, as well as between a person and his world.

Similarly to Buber, Noddings emphasised the need to listen to the call of the 'Thou' to whom one relates. She warned against the imposition of the teacher's will on the

student. Noddings, like Buber, stressed that in the caring encounter one cannot rely on an organised regularity or on prediction attempts. The encounter has no ready-made formula and the teacher is required to find a unique way to the heart of the student.

From the similarity between Noddings' ideas and those of Buber, it might be concluded that the pedagogy of caring and empathic relation may be the way to direct teachers towards dialogical relations and dialogical teaching. However, in spite of the great similarity there is in fact a major difference between them, in terms of how they perceive the dialogic relation. Noddings considers dialogue to be empathic caring. She suggests a feminine interpretation of the empathic approach, as acceptance and containment of the emotions of the other. She writes: 'Caring involves stepping out of one's own personal frame of reference into the other's. Our attention, our mental engrossment is on the cared for, not on ourselves' (Noddings 1984, 24). Education, according to Noddings, is required to foster a dialogue which represents a departure from the frame of the teacher relating to oneself, to exclude and diminish oneself, for the benefit of the needs and desires of the student. She describes the empathic experience as follows: 'I have been invaded by the other. I shall never again be completely without regard for him' (Noddings 1984, 31). From the moment of empathic acceptance, the other becomes part of the one that relates to him/her.

Buber, on the other hand, strongly disapproved of the identification of the dialogic 'I-Thou' relation with the psychological perception of the interpersonal relation in general, and the empathic perception, in particular. Generally speaking, Buber criticised the therapeutic approach, and warned that in the therapeutic relation there is not necessarily an inter-human encounter. He distinguished between the therapeutic relation and the 'I-Thou' relation. He did not consider therapy to reflect the implementation of dialogical thinking. His explanation, referring to the Heideggerian relation to the other, is as follows: 'For the relation of solicitude which is all he considers cannot as such be an essential relation, since it doesn't set a man's life in direct relation with the life of another, but only one man's solicitous help in relation with another man's lack and need for it' (Buber 1947, 169).

Buber explains that in the therapeutic relation, there is no encounter between one being and another. Basically, the therapist does not offer her/his presence and her/his entire being and self, and does not open wide the barriers of his/her being. As opposed to the therapeutic relation, in the essential relation in which the 'I-Thou' encounter takes place, one complete presence stands before the other complete presence, the barriers fall and a human companionship of the beings is formed.

Further to Buber's reluctance to generalise psychological concepts to his ontology of relation, he also strongly criticised the prevalent use of the term 'empathy' among education researchers and educationalists. He coined empathy an 'empty term' (Buber 1947, 97), signifying distance from the live and concrete situation. According to Buber, the empathic attempt is an attempt to feel the other through dismissing or diminishing the self in his/her presence. This means that the self is not fully present, and this, in fact, does not enable a dialogical experience.

Standing in front of the other, accepting her/him and her/his entire concreteness, while relating to her/him in a way that stems from the complete concreteness of the person that relates, this face-to-face existential position is essential for the presence and the encounter. For Buber, dialogue is formed in the 'between', which is the space between the relating 'I' and the 'Thou' to whom the 'I' relates. The sphere of the 'between' is not created between the containing and caring 'I' and the other, who is the receiver of an empathic relation. It is formed within the space between the completely present 'I' and the complete presence of the other that meets him as his 'Thou.'

According to Buber, in the 'sphere of the between,' the 'I' that relates allows her/himself to be known to the other as a complete unit and therefore, in the 'I-Thou' relation there is no reduction of the 'I,' as it exists in Noddings' empathic relation. In fact, it is quite the opposite. In the 'I-Thou' relation there is an expansion of the experience by inclusion. The one who relates does so as an 'extension of one's own concreteness without forfeiting anything of the felt reality of his activity' (Buber 1947, 97).

Buber considers the moment of inclusion to be a defining moment in educational practice. The inclusion is formed within the 'sphere of the between' in which a transfusion occurs, when the teacher, in his own skin, experiences what the student experiences as a result of the teacher's own actions. In this way, he can criticise himself, filter actions which are not aligned with the needs of the student, and provide the student with what s/he needs in order to come into being and materialise.

From this, we can understand that the danger of the caring relation, according to Buber, is that the empathic teacher who diminishes himself will not turn towards the other as a complete person, with his entire being and concreteness. He will be a tool of support, mediation or assistance, but he will not stand in front of the student as an existential partner, i.e., 'as a fellow creature lost in the world' (Buber 1947, 87). No companionship of being, no 'sphere of the between' and no moment of inclusion will be formed.

It can be deduced that, according to Buber, education must go beyond the focus on caring, empathy or containment. In educational practice, what should be emphasised is the creation of the 'sphere of the between'. When training teachers, the teacher should be developed as a person who can stand in his entirety, his/her entire concreteness, self and presence, in front of the student in order to create the possibility for the formation of the 'sphere of the between', that leads to the creation of a dialogical encounter.

How to Develop the Teacher's Ability to be Present in the 'Sphere of the Between' when Relating to the Student: The Existential Approach

Anyone who investigates the Buberian ontology and dialogical philosophy in depth, discovers that the choice to relate dialogically and to exist in the 'sphere of the between' is a choice that involves a powerful struggle, one which lies at the basis of human existence.

In order to understand just how complex, difficult and not quite obvious the choice of dialogical relation is, this essay will attempt to go beyond the common presentation of the 'I-Thou' vs. the 'I-It' relations, and their clear and distinguishing characteristics, and will focus on clarifying the inherent difficulty in this ontological duality.

Between 'I-Thou' and 'I-It' –The Buberian Relation Ontology

Martin Buber's philosophy of relation focuses on the way in which the human turns to the world and to the other. At the core of his philosophy is the dialogical relation, namely a present and holistic relation, which consists of openness, listening, devotion and responsiveness. In the sphere between one person and another, which Buber calls the inter human sphere, humans live *with* each other, as opposed to the social sphere in which humans live *side by side*, but there isn't necessarily a dialogical relation between them. In the inter-human sphere, one turns to the other as a whole, tunes in to the other whole heartedly, and opens up when encountering him. His/Her appeal is free of image and impression calculations, it is direct, immediate and personal. This type of contact opens the door to the formation of an 'I-Thou' encounter between one human being and another, one being authentically and profoundly touching another, and this encounter is what gives human life its meaning and fullness.

As opposed to the 'I-Thou' relation, there is the 'I-It' relation, which focuses on a feature, a need or a use, based on a regulated knowledge, category or pattern. Man/Woman has the choice to turn to the other in a present and complete dialogical

manner, as an 'I' turning to meet the other as 'Thou', or not, or to turn to the other as 'It', which is an indirect reference, limited to a specific aspect of the other.

Buber sees the two ('I-Thou' and 'I-It') modes of relation as 'profoundly twofold' (1937, 18), a duality that is an essential part of man's daily existential struggle. He argues that man's 'melancholy of our fate' (Buber 1937, 23) is that although the 'I-Thou' existence is a form of existence that gives human life its full meaning, he cannot escape from the 'I-It' existence. Moreover, he is not even required to do so. We study our world through our senses, minds and concepts. Surviving and functioning in daily life require references through structured frameworks and defined concepts, features and needs. However, as we learn to function in our world through frameworks and concepts that regulate and structure our perception and way of thinking, we lose the reality of the present, direct and one-time encounter. In fact, the realisation of what is revealed in an 'I-Thou' encounter transforms the 'Thou' into 'It'. For example, if during an 'I-Thou' encounter, man experiences the other as a partner in existential distress, he will transition to the 'It' mode of relating, in order to help to solve this distress and to arrive at structured solutions and the means to implement these solutions. . If he encounters the same person again, he may define him/her by means of the distress that was revealed to her/him, and will not experience her/him as newly present before him/her. Her/His definition of that person will become a mediating factor in the encounter, and so, a direct encounter will not take place. The same applies to an idea or vision that is revealed during an 'I-Thou' encounter. It will inevitably transition to the 'It' level, once the human strives to fulfill that vision in his/her life's reality. Buber wrote: 'The stronger the response the more strongly does it bind up the Thou and banish it to be an object (Buber 1937, 41).' This is, according to Buber, man's sorrow, but also his greatness. Man is required to learn how to move within this existential duality, to accept the revelation, guidance and vision from the moment of the encounter, and to fulfill it in the 'It' world.

A movement in this duality occurs, for example, at the moment of inclusion that takes place in the dialogical sphere of the between, when a teacher discovers what the child needs in order to overcome a certain difficulty. S/He then chooses to implement a teaching method that provides a solution to that child's need. The discovery of the child's mental need occurs in an 'I-Thou' moment, but the response to that need causes the teacher to transition to the 'I-It' sphere while employing a structured method with pre-defined steps.

A more blatant example can be found in an essay written by Gordon (1985). Gordon studied Buber's philosophy and dealt with education for peace following Buber's ideas. He claims that in order to receive funding to realise his dialogical peace vision, to which he had felt spiritually committed, he was forced to use

different manipulations with the powers that be, who were supposed to transfer funds to him, but refused to do so. Gordon illustrates how sometimes fulfilling the 'Thou' calling is actually realised by 'It' actions of aggressive strategies, in a world that is run in an aggressive, self-serving and manipulative way.

This raises a question: if each 'Thou' is destined to turn into 'It', how can one preserve 'I-Thou' encounters, and the present and holistic quality in one's life, when relating to one's world and to the other? Buber replies by pointing to another transformation, that occurs and completes the transformation from 'Thou' to 'It', the additional transformation to the 'Thou'. Indeed, the 'Thou' is transformed into a defined and organised 'It', and the sense of direct exclusivity disappears, while the other is experienced as a network of definitions and features. Yet, that same 'It' may be transformed again and revealed as 'Thou', when the rays of the 'Thou' penetrate and dissolve the order of the 'It'. What has already turned into 'It', is required to be transformed back again into 'Thou'. Buber says that this is how the 'spark' of human existence is purified again in the fire of the 'Thou'. The man whose 'Thou' has transformed into 'It' in mundane routine life, should continue and should choose to open himself up to a dialogical relation towards his world, in order to offer a chance for the 'Thou' to reappear to him. The moments in which the 'Thou' is encountered will appear and will release the regulating 'binding' of the 'It', to reveal the other again in the light of the 'Thou', in a full and direct presence.

This dynamic movement of concealing the 'It' and revealing the 'Thou', 'binding' the other in the 'It' and releasing him as the holistic and complete 'Thou', is the heart and secret of the normal course of human life according to Buber. In the 'It' world, in which man lives and functions, he has to sustain the 'Thou' as it is revealed to him in his dialogical encounters. This is, according to Buber, the right route: 'Thou in its purity yet daily confirms its truth in the It, in accordance with what is right and fitting for the day, drawing – disclosing – the boundary line anew each day...' (1937, 49)

According to the example described above, the teacher who employs the teaching method with the student in the 'I-It' sphere, is required to continue and also to try to meet the student in the 'Thou' sphere. In other words, the teacher must, as much as possible, attempt to remain present, open, attentive and complete when turning to the student. S/He must try to meet him/her beyond the system and its organised steps. It is possible that, at a certain moment, he will feel that the student needs something else. Then, he must be able to break out of the 'It' framework and transition to the dialogical sphere of the between, while responding to the demand of the encounter in any way that he deems necessary from his/her experience of mutuality with the student. In fact, his/her leap and his/her breaking into the 'I-Thou's' sphere of the between, again 'purifies' the educational practice, taking it

back to its basic source, to the educational 'core' of the existential dialogue and its right and proper track.

On the other hand, if the teacher remains firm in the 'It' practice, i.e., continues to employ the teaching methods without being present and attentive to the student, unknowing how to occasionally break into the dialogical sphere of the educational practice, then the educational practice remains stagnant, bound by automatic actions, and is impersonal, non-nurturing, and untrue to the teacher's educational and spiritual commitment to his students.

Another example of a dialogical break into the 'I-Thou' sphere, within the dogmatic practices of the 'It' world, can be found in Dasberg's essay (1992), in which he describes a scene that is taken from his therapy room, which becomes significant only when his relationship turns, for a moment, from a dogmatic therapeutic relation into a dialogical relation, as Buber described. Dasberg describes the story of Mr. K. who grew up as an adopted child, because his parents had been sent to the death camps in 1945. At some point, people who claimed to be his real parents had come to take him, and this transition, for him, became a crisis. Later, he was told that those who had claimed to be his parents, were actually his aunt and uncle. The rage that was bottled up inside him created a sense of emptiness that was devoid of any sense of identity and roots. Questions such as who he was, and who was his father, tormented him, but he refused to deal with these issues and remained entrenched in his distress. For six meetings, the therapist has tried to reach him, but had failed. At the end of the sixth meeting, Dasberg writes, he unintentionally glanced at a picture of a zebra on the Kenya plains, which was in the room. The picture triggered a memory of what his zoological guide had once told him, that the face of a zebra resembled a mask. The following is his account of what took place in the room: 'As a daydreamer, I looked again at the patient's expressionless face, and it was as if he was also hiding behind a mask. I was scared, because I suddenly realized that we were both hiding something behind our masks' (Dasberg 1992, 150). At that moment, Mr. K. said that, during family gatherings, no one had asked him about his father's identity and he remembered feeling lost and full of guilt. Dasberg writes that, at that moment, he could have related to the memories in many professional ways, but he responded precisely from the dialogical mutuality that prevailed in the room at that moment. Dasberg expressed anger at the family's response, which ignored the memory of the real father, because the memory of his own father had surfaced. He found himself completely there, *with* the patient, and not *just next to him*. At the crucial moment, they both stood on a human-existential common ground, while: 'above them expanded the horizon of an intimate and direct relation' (Dasberg 1992, 150).

In fact, this description illustrates the creation of the sphere of the between, as described by Buber, which is created from the holistic revelation of the I in front of the other, and the opening of the barriers of his being. In face of the intensity and mutuality of the moment of the encounter, Mr. K.'s mask had ruptured, and it was possible to continue with the structured therapeutic process in light of this defining moment of grace.

An additional example, taken from the field of special education, can be found in the account by Rothenberg (1977), a teacher and therapist, from her work with a boy named Danny. Danny was a six year old boy, diagnosed with autism. He avoided all contact with others, and his behaviour was extremely destructive, full of rage and violence. The relationship between Mira and Danny was slowly being built, but she could not fully understand the experience of horror and fear with which he was confronted and, therefore, she could not truly help him. Then, Mira says, on one rainy day, during the meeting, Danny suddenly started shaking and screaming. He ran over to her and clung on to her. Mira writes: 'And then it happened, this awesome thing that happens between two people. No words, no conscious knowledge but a knowledge that makes one suddenly know, feel the other' (Rothenberg 1977, 176).

Rothenberg describes the moment of complete presence, as Buber had described it, as a moment of inclusion, which takes place in the 'I-Thou' encounter. She felt Danny and she felt her actions affecting him. At that moment, it was clear to her what his soul needed in order to be saved. She understood how she could help him free himself from his anxiety, and the terrible sense of helplessness that he was facing. The next step was to choose a role play in which the traumatic experience was reconstructed, while creating a corrective experience. That is to say, from the revelation and purification in the 'I-Thou' encounter, she understood which tool she should choose from the 'I-It' world.

Buber claims that when the human remains trapped in the 'It' world without occasionally breaking into the 'Thou' world and the sphere of the between, the liberating and purifying dynamic movement does not occur, and the process of binding and existential stalemate gradually takes over. The 'I-It' relations multiply and expand in our lives, the dialogical encounters diminish, and our lives are diverted from their correct human-existential track. We are gradually losing the ability to experience dialogical moments, and are thus losing the chance to experience 'I-Thou' encounters.

The Basic Problem with the Twofold Relation

According to Buber, the seed of the destruction of this reductionist process is found in the problematic nature of the twofold relation, the difficulty to relate in an 'I-Thou' relation, as opposed to the relative ease and temptation that are found in the 'I-It' relation. The difficulty in employing the 'I-Thou' relation stems firstly, from the unique nature of relating to the 'Thou', and from the 'exit' point that it requires. When one chooses to turn to the other in a dialogical manner, s/he: 'may withhold nothing of himself' (Buber 1937, 10). This means that s/he must, with tremendous intensity, put his/her entire self into the encounter; into the other. The 'I-Thou' encounter does not 'permit' this intensity to be let go, and once one lets go, the real encounter with the 'Thou' is ended. The intensity means delving into the other, when the 'I' is fully and completely present. The presentation of the self takes place in front of the presence of the other, and so the demand is twofold and highly intensive.

An example of such intensity can be found in the account of the teacher Mary McCracken (1976), about her first meeting with her student, Hanna, who was diagnosed as being mentally retarded and with suspected Schizophrenia:

'I watched Hanna... The moans and screams were stronger and deeper than before. How can she go on this way for so long? I walked towards the playground ladder, not knowing what to do. I only tried to feel something for her, feel her... How does it feel to be a hurt, angry and confused 8-year old girl? If I were Hanna, what would I want? What would I need?... with no plan, I climbed and lay flat on the top surface, while trying to listen not only with my ears, but with my entire being...' (McCracken 1976, 12-13)

On the other hand, turning to the other in an 'I-It' manner, through examining impaired functions, categories of irregularity, or through a defined mediation system, does not demand the burdening intensity, as well as entering and delving into the experience of the other. It requires knowledge and schemes of coping that the teacher or therapist learned and in which she specialised, yet it does not demand his total devotion to the encounter with the student, with all his/her differences and irregularities.

Apart from the relational exit point, the 'I-Thou' relation demands that you do not rely on any intermediary measure, nor do you have to hold on to anything other than the presence of the encounter. At the time of the encounter itself, no definition, label, method or tool, are to be applied. The person relates to the other without the mediation of a strategy or a technique.

An additional difficulty is that the 'Thou' world unties the proven contexts that provide certainty in human life. It exposes a world of uncertainty and a lack of

control. When meeting the 'Thou', one discovers the demands of the living, pulsing encounter, which sometimes contradicts the behavioural model or the choice and the relational model of what is expected of one throughout one's life. These 'spiritual I-Thou' demands sometimes force one to let go of one's defences and safe psychological space, and to be stripped of any image, while devoting oneself to the encounter. This stripped exposure can therefore, be intimidating and daunting. one must respond as one aligns oneself and authentically determines, while risking vulnerability, and having nothing to cling to or rely on, other than the power of the encounter and the belief in what is revealed to one during the encounter.

Such an example can be found in Stekrling's book (2002), in which she describes a therapeutic process following the breaking of the boundaries of therapy and leaving its territory, while devoting herself to the calling heard in the encounter. She admits that she has taken a risk by leaving the safe and marked boundaries and by exposing herself to the shared experience. She shares the pain and helplessness of the patient and describes it as follows:

'I am sitting next to her, and with my words or maybe with their melody, I give her pain and burden a right to exist. Maybe like in the story 'Hanna's Shabbat Dress', if I support the heavy bag of charcoal, even with a fluttering touch, it will be easier for her to carry this burden. And then, like little Hanna, I will look at the dress and at my hands, and the spots of the charcoal will be there, joining other spots, and I will see that my dress and my hands are unclean and are not unaffected...' (Stekrling 2002, 54)

One more example can be found in another educational-therapeutic account by Rothenberg (1977), who describes her meetings with a group of girls who had lived in an institution where she worked as a teacher. Rothenberg describes a by-the-book, reasonable educational climate, in which she defines the boundaries and keeps herself slightly apart, refraining from taking a risk, since she was afraid to approach them and to be exposed to a feminine wound that she also shares with them. The change occurs when she finds herself in a violent quarrel between the girls and, in a moment of rage, she bursts out of her 'okay' shell and shares with the girls her own personal, painful experience. She moves out of her defined boundaries and enables the girls to also move out of their own boundaries, and yet she risks being vulnerable herself.

The dialogical mutuality of the experience is also the mutual sharing of pain, as the teacher does not stand outside, but together with... open to meeting the student as 'Thou'. S/He takes part, and is sometimes even bruised as a result of exposure to the student's experience and pain, which often joins his own pain.

Escape Mechanisms from the 'I-Thou' Relation

In light of the difficult and demanding nature of the 'I-Thou' relation, a temptation to run away from the heaviness of the encounter may emerge. Buber indicates several escape mechanisms. One such mechanism is a declarative use of the 'Thou' language, when the reference is in fact an 'It' reference. Declaring dialogue to be an idea does not necessarily guarantee a true dialogical relation. The world of the idea is sometimes chosen as 'a refuge and repose from the oncome of nothingness' (Buber 1937, 13), but this is an illusion and an existential escape. Buber condemns the use of 'Thou' declarations and statements as ideas, without truly being in the 'I-Thou' sphere. Like Buber, researchers of dialogical education, such as Aloni (1996), as mentioned earlier, and Sigad (1999), criticise the gap between nice humanistic statements about dialogue and listening, and the lack of their implementation in educational practice. Sigad refers to the widespread use of the concept 'dialogue' as fraud and deception, with nothing behind it. She claims that there is a big gap between the meaning of dialogical education and dialogical teaching, in the way it is practised in reality. The term 'dialogue,' according to Sigad, has turned into a pleasant idiomatic expression. Yet, it is the declarative use of this term which allows educationalists to implement its opposite, while maintaining a nice, flattering feeling. At best, Sigad argues, dialogical teaching today is, in effect, an alternative approach for technical preparation for the lesson (Sigad 1999).

In addition to the mechanism of declarative use, which covers up for the lack of actual implementation, Buber, as mentioned before, warns against the use of emotional terms as being those that correspond to the 'I-Thou' relation. Many humanistic teachers use the term 'love' as being similar to the 'I-Thou' relation, while Buber believes that emotions are part of the 'I—It' world (1937, 12). Buber differentiates between emotions and the experience of mutuality and presence. The emotion is 'mine', it takes place within the self, while the encounter contains both the 'I' and the 'Thou'. In addition, the use of emotional terms, such as affection and love, is often accompanied by a superficial relation that does not tackle the problematic and less flattering facets of confronting these emotions. Buber's dialogical philosophy warns against the use, prevalent among teachers and humanist thinkers, of flattering, 'nice' emotional expressions in the context of the dialogue. The statement of the need to love the student, care, worry or contain him/her, with no reference to the complex, problematic, dull, and not always flattering, existential levels of these emotional expressions, leaves these expressions insubstantial, serving the teacher's self-esteem and not necessarily the student or the educational work. Buber explains that this situation stems from the takeover of the 'Eros' in education. The 'Eros' is manifested in the teacher's infatuation with his/her own self-image. When s/he is preoccupied with his/her image of the 'loving', 'receiving' and 'containing' teacher, s/he loses the ability to criticise his actions and behaviour towards the student. This

preoccupation with images, or as Buber called it 'seeming', as opposed to 'being', is one of the major barriers to authentic dialogue. Beyond the declaration of love and containing, it is therefore also necessary to refer to human situations, in which there is a lack of the ability or will to love. There is a need to examine the situations in which there is reluctance, fear, or unwillingness to contain, or a difficulty to face failures. The lack of attention to the less flattering or pleasant layers of the educational encounter leads to a purely partial experience. This partialness, in effect, creates a lack of presence, a lack of authenticity, and a lack of attention to the student's whole being and needs. The encounter's intermediate sphere becomes limited, where the 'self' of the teacher focuses on her/himself and his/her delight, and so, there is no real possibility of the formation of a dialogue.

Existence in a Technological Era as a Stumbling Block to Choosing the 'I-Thou' Relation

Buber claims that, in addition to the problems that stem from the demanding and weighty nature of the dialogical relation, living in a world of technological progress makes it even more difficult to choose the 'I-Thou' relation.

In his philosophy, Buber draws a parallel between the technological principle and the 'I-It' relation. The technological principle, according to Buber, is based on using knowledge to fulfill needs. The components of the technological relation are, therefore: 1. Knowledge 2. Usability and functionality 3. Focus on benefit, profit and interest. According to Buber, the 'I-It' relation essentially revolves around these components. The technological relation is a relation, in which the knowledge about the world (knowledge about features and components, their definitions, uses and arrangement) is found at the centre of the relation to the world and to the other, rather than to the direct and complete encounter.

The technological man is in pursuit of perfecting knowledge, its applications and uses. As the perfection of knowledge increases, the power of dialogical relation diminishes, that is, the more the human relates to his world through knowledge about it and its refinement by use of categories, features and functions-namely as the 'I' of 'It', he draws away further from the ability to relate to the 'Thou', holistically and completely.

This leads to immersion in the technological world, since the contemporary human is in pursuit of the control and conquest of the world through the 'It' world, abandoning existential dialogue, which, according to Buber, can only itself save wo/man from the alienation and binding force of the 'It' world. The technological way of relating is not ineffectual of other relations, but is of a growing and expanding nature. The more one chooses to relate as 'I-It', the more s/he shapes her/himself

as a different 'I'. The 'I' that turns to the 'It' is different from the 'I' that turns to 'Thou', and s/he creates a different form of existence for her/himself. The more one experiences 'I-It' references, the more one changes one's form of existence and is transformed as a person. He becomes the 'I' of 'It', and abandons the 'I' of the being that knows how to turn to his/her 'Thou'. S/He increasingly shapes her/himself as a partial human who increasingly turns to more and more objects in his/her life, and knows less and less how to meet the other in a dialogical encounter. This is how the 'I-It' relation increasingly seeps into extensive areas of thinking and relating.

In addition to the movement of seeping in and expanding the world of technological uses, Lederman-Daniely (2013) argues that Buber describes an effect of immersion in relational subjugation that takes place beneath the technical trends. This subjugation is manifested in a decrease in the ability to choose, and a difficulty in releasing oneself from the 'I-It' world in one's ways of thinking, relating, and turning towards the other. This tendency to technicisation creates a perception of life, which is limited to formulas, dogmas and regulated systems, and which diminishes freedom and creates subjugation to the life of 'I-It', life that revolves around the constant effort to regulate, structure, fix and create a solid certainty. This tendency comes at the expense of the 'I-Thou' world, i.e., at the expense of an encounter of presence, spontaneity and directness. This subjugation grounds the 'complete ontological circle', there is no 'purifying' untying of the one who is bound, there is no liberation from the 'It' to the world of the 'Thou', as has previously been described, and man draws further and further away from real and living contact with the other.

Atzmon (2008) argues that this tendency can be seen in the area of educational research, which becomes increasingly focused on production, achievements, strategies and techniques, and less on the spirit, dialogue and inspiration of education. Lederman-Daniely (2013) suggests that the inability of education researchers to notice that the techno-instrumental tendency has gained control over their research stems from the socio-cultural subjugation of all of us to thinking and relating in an 'I-It' manner in the technological era. This subjugation is expressed in the ever increasing technical bias in the educational field, in which the teacher becomes a technician rather than a person who meets and nurtures the wholeness of the student. Teacher training is predominantly technical and instrumental, and lacks training for a relation that develops and nurtures presence, complete relation and turning to the other in a mutual manner.

Conclusion

This essay has described the Buberian dialogue as being created from the manner of turning towards the other, as well as from a way of being that involves the whole human being, that chooses at any moment its manner of relating. This choice is not obvious, man is faced with the two-faced nature of his options of relation, the 'I-It' and the 'I-Thou' modes of relation, while fears of a lack of control, helplessness, defences, escaping from existential demands, temptations and different counter-forces that all stir within him and influence his ability to choose, together with his way of relating. In addition to the basic ontological dynamics of moving between the two types of relation, the choice becomes increasingly complex and difficult in the technological era, which particularly encourages, according to Buber, the 'I-It' relation and its subjugating forces.

So, someone who tries to relate in a dialogical manner to his world and to the other, is someone who confronts in a mental-existential arena, fighting forces and obstacles that are anchored in his/her ontology, and that are intensified by technology. The conclusion is therefore that, in order to promote a true dialogical relation in various areas in life, and the educational field in particular, it is important to better understand the processes that enable us to face the dynamics of internal and external forces, the difficulties, temptations, obstacles and threats, and yet to choose the dialogical way, in spite of these. It is therefore vital to identify and indicate relational-personality training processes, which are required for training and establishing the teacher as a 'dialogical struggler', who is capable of choosing the dialogical relation and maintaining it in his/her life, as well as when facing his/her students.

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Tribal Morality and the Ethical Other: The Tension Between Modern Moral Aspirations and Evolved Moral Dispositions

Charles Wright

Scholars concerned with dialogical understanding and the negotiation of fundamental ethical disagreement in pluralistic modern societies have drawn attention to the intimate relationship among dialogue, perspective taking and mutual understanding. However, while these capacities endure as modern moral ideals, evolutionary biological accounts of social cooperation and social scientific investigations of human behaviour both suggest that humankind's ideals may have outstripped its evolved moral sensibilities. While these sensibilities are well suited to maintaining co-operative relations among members of the same social group, in the case of outsiders, the propensity is instead to withdraw moral recognition and to treat the outsider as a thing.

This essay first considers twentieth and twenty-first century scholars' attention to the relationships among dialogue, perspective taking and mutual understanding, noting this work's trajectory towards a robust endorsement of perspective taking as an essential feature of dialogical and intercultural understanding. It then turns to the work of evolutionary biologists and social scientists, whose research into the tribal character of human morality explains why dialogue with, and taking the perspective of, members of different groups is so hard. The essay finishes by reviewing findings from a particular research tradition in social psychology: intergroup contact theory. This has identified the conditions under which people's evolved propensity to show favouritism towards their group members and to discriminate against outsiders may be overridden.

Keywords: Dialogue, Perspective taking, Tribal morality, Evolved moral dispositions, In-group/out-group, Intergroup contact hypothesis.

The role of dialogue as a means for reaching mutual understanding has received scholarly attention since at least the time of Plato. Similarly, possibly since the Golden Rule was first articulated (Wattles 1996) people have been aware that perspective taking is a fundamental root of moral regard for others. Given the deep roots that dialogue and perspective taking have in the ethical life of human beings, it should come as no surprise that modern scholars from a wide variety of disciplines have endorsed their significance. During the last century, theorists concerned with dialogical understanding and the negotiation of fundamental ethical disagreement in pluralistic modern societies have drawn attention to the intimate relationships

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among dialogue, perspective taking and mutual understanding. However, while these capacities endure as modern moral ideals, evolutionary biological accounts of social cooperation suggest that humankind's ideals may have outstripped humankind's evolved moral sensibilities. These sensibilities, as we will see, are well suited to maintaining cooperative relations among members of the same social unit, be it a village, clan or tribe. However, with regard to the outsider, the stranger, the ethical other, the opposite propensity has evolved, a propensity to refrain from efforts to reach dialogical understanding and to withhold efforts to engage in perspective taking; to withdraw moral recognition and to treat the ethical other as a thing. This disposition towards those different from oneself is well enough known through casual observation of human affairs, but it is also something predicted by evolutionary theory and amply documented by social scientific research.

In what follows I will briefly trace a development to be observed among twentieth and early twenty first century scholars of dialogical, hermeneutic, and intercultural understanding in which an early but underdeveloped acknowledgement of an intimate relationship between dialogue, perspective taking and mutual understanding evolves into a consistent endorsement of perspective taking as an essential feature of successful intercultural dialogue, understanding, and conflict resolution. Then I will turn to the work of evolutionary biologists, whose theories predict, and the work of social scientists, whose research confirms, that human beings have evolved in such a way as to selectively extend such forms of moral recognition to members of their own social group. After this discussion of why dialogue with and taking the perspective of members of different groups is so hard, I'll finish by reviewing findings from a particular research tradition in social psychology, intergroup contact theory, that has identified the conditions under which people's evolved propensity to show favouritism towards their group members and to discriminate against outsiders might be overridden.

An Evolving Recognition of the Relation Between Dialogue and Perspective-Taking

Let us start with one of the Twentieth Century's definitive religious and philosophical advocates of the 'life of dialogue,' Martin Buber. His conception of dialogue (Buber 1947, 1965) was developed in response to prevailing historical and intellectual trends of his day, e.g., logical positivism and German idealism, which, he thought, tended to overlook or misunderstand the nature of genuine human encounter. He also resisted the idea that the increasing displacement of traditional communities in the modern world and the rise of bureaucratic institutions, dominated by the roles of the employee, the worker, the manager, and the government official, eliminates the social space for dialogue. Buber replies that with a genuine opening and turning to the other, a worker 'can experience even his relation to the machine

as one of dialogue' (1947, 43) and the manager of a great enterprise can encounter a subordinate in such a way as to be 'aware of him...not as a number with a human mask but as a person.' (1947, 44)

The turning towards another that defines dialogue for Buber, need not take place through words or conversation (1947, 3 and 115). It can consist in as little as 'a creative glance' that flies up 'from one working place to another, from desk to desk, a sober and brotherly glance which guarantees the reality of creation which is happening.' (1947, 42) Rather than being a form of *speech*, dialogue consists in a stance of fundamental moral regard for another, a moral regard that acknowledges the other as just the particular, concrete, culturally and historically situated person that s/he is, a regard that demands that the other be encountered with resolute directness: 'The chief presupposition for the rise of genuine dialogue is that each should regard his partner as the very one he is. I become aware of him, aware that he is different, essentially different from myself, in the definite, unique way which is peculiar to him, and I accept whom I thus see, so that in full earnestness I can direct what I say to him as the person he is.' (1965, 79) It is in his discussion of the educator that Buber makes the dimension of perspective taking that is involved in dialogue most evident. The key concept is *inclusion*, a process he identifies as including three elements: a relation between two persons, an event experienced by them in common, and 'one person, without forfeiting anything of the felt reality of his activity, at the same time liv[ing] through the common event from the standpoint of the other.' (1947, 115) Every relation between persons that bears the form of inclusion, Buber asserts, 'may be termed a dialogical relation.' The fundamental moral regard comprising dialogue is, on this account, woven together with the capacity to experience the world from the standpoint of another.

Sharing with Buber a common scholarly source in Wilhelm Dilthey (Kepnes 1988), it will come as no surprise to us to find a similar *DenkFigur* in Hans Georg Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics. In *Truth and Method*, a text that exercised a decisive influence in 20th century philosophy, Gadamer (1989) incorporated the idea of dialogue into his conception of the hermeneutic encounter with a text that, as a result of cultural and historical distance, is 'other' to the interpreter. While Plato's dialogues were an important formative influence for Gadamer's thinking, he also construes of the relation between an interpreter and a text on the model of Buber's I-Thou. Hermeneutical experience, he tells us, approaches tradition as a language, something that 'expresses itself as a Thou. A 'Thou' is not an object; it relates itself to us.' (1989, 358) The interpreter who approaches tradition as an object, relying on method to maintain distance between the investigator and the text so that all subjective biases can be excluded, establishes an I-It relation with the text and fails to engage tradition as a genuine partner in dialogue. Just as a person

who reflectively removes himself out of the mutual regard of the I-Thou relation transforms it and abandons the moral bond it creates, so one who removes himself from an open, receptive engagement with tradition also destroys the opportunity to encounter tradition as a meaningful human reality. In hermeneutical experience, 'I must allow tradition's claim to validity, not in the sense of simply acknowledging the past in its otherness, but in such a way that it has something to say to me.' (1989, 361)

Like Buber, Gadamer also understands the dialogic encounter as involving a moment of perspective taking. This is made clear in Section I of Part III of *Truth and Method*, 'Language as the Medium of Hermeneutic Experience.' Here, Gadamer emphasises the relationship between conversation and coming to an understanding. He again develops his perspective through an analogy between a conversation between two people and a conversation between an interpreter and a text. Between people 'it belongs to every true conversation that each person opens himself to the other, truly accepts his point of view as valid and transposes himself into the other to such an extent that he understands not the particular individual but what he says.' (1989, 385) This transposition is not to be understood in terms of the Romantic model of *Einfühlung*, which both Gadamer and Buber repudiate. Transposing oneself into the other, as Gadamer understands it, does not entail a relinquishing of one's own subjectivity, an abandonment of self, so that all that remains is a vivid experience of the imaginatively reconstructed individual subjectivity of the other. Rather, the interlocutor grasps the point of view of the other in order to bring it into relation with his own perspective: in Gadamer's words, 'if we put ourselves in someone else's shoes... then we will understand him – i.e., become aware of the otherness, the indissoluble individuality of the other person – by putting *ourselves* in his position.' (1989, 305)

Gadamer acknowledges that the conversation between interpreter and text involves asymmetries that keep it from being identical to a conversation between two people. Nonetheless, at the same time, he insists that it is appropriate to speak of a *hermeneutic conversation* that, like an ordinary conversation, aims to find a common language and a shared understanding of a subject matter. Similarly to a conversation between people, the encounter between interpreter and text also involves a *transposition* in which the interpreter brings his/her horizon of understanding into relation with the horizon emerging from the text. This meeting of horizons aims to rise 'to a higher universality that overcomes not only our own particularity but also that of the other.' (1989, 305) This process is described as a 'fusion of horizons' in which the interpreter allows the truth of tradition to test the prejudices s/he brings to his/her encounter with the text. In this back and forth between interpreter and text s/he considers the truth of her/his own prejudices from the perspective of the understanding that emerges from her encounter.

While we can see that both Buber and Gadamer recognised the intimate relation between dialogue and perspective taking, their conceptions of the relation remain undeveloped. While, for them, dialogue remained the preeminent model of an authentic moral relation between humans, as well as between humans and the rest of the world, the relation between dialogue and perspective taking remained implicit in their respective philosophical projects, an undercurrent that shaped their thinking but which seldom received explicit attention.

In the case of Jürgen Habermas's work, by contrast, we encounter a model of dialogue, which he calls 'communicative action,' that explicitly incorporates a conception of mutual perspective-taking. Like Gadamer, Habermas was concerned to specify the conditions under which mutual understanding between participants in a conversation might be achieved. Like both Buber and Gadamer, he also supposed that the fundamental model of human morality was in some sense to be found in dialogical encounters between subjects, but Habermas developed his thinking on the basis of different theoretical traditions than Buber and Gadamer, traditions that highlighted formal structures of communicative interaction.

In his theory of communicative action, Habermas (1984, 1987) creatively appropriates Anglo-American speech act theory, particularly as found in the work of John Searle (1969) and J. L. Austin (1962). Habermas suggests on the basis of this philosophical conception of linguistic interaction that the possibility of human co-operation is to be explained via a model of communicative interaction. Speech is the means by which one actor reaches understanding with another about something in the world so that the two might consensually co-ordinate their respective efforts to act in the world. The core claim is that co-operation is made possible when the person who is spoken to accepts the speaker's saying on the strength of the speaker's implicit guarantee that, if requested, s/he can provide good reasons in support of each of a series of 'validity claims,' assumptions about the speaker's intentions, the moral acceptability of the action under consideration, and the way the world actually is, that are embedded in the speaker's statements. The readiness to engage in a dialogical give and take of such reasons, Habermas argues, is the cement that holds together co-operative social relations and that forms the foundation of more complex social institutions.

Habermas considers moral dialogue, 'moral-practical discourses' in his lexicon, to be a kind of hermeneutic repair practice that becomes necessary when assumptions about the moral acceptability of a plan of action are called into question. Under such circumstances, speakers set aside their everyday communicative orientation (the attitude of *getting things done*, one might say) and engage in a dialogue in which a condition for the possibility of everyday co-operation, in this case, moral agreement, becomes the subject of discussion. (Habermas calls this 'communicative action in

a reflexive attitude.’ (1990, 67) This conception of discourse, as a conversation aimed at resolving conflicts, uncertainties and disagreements that impede everyday co-operation, is a defining feature of moral dialogue, as Habermas understands it.

While Buber and Gadamer acknowledge the interdependence of dialogue and perspective taking, as we have seen above, Habermas investigates this relationship in greater depth. This is especially evident in his efforts to weave Lawrence Kohlberg’s theory of moral development with his own model of language use (see, especially, Habermas 1990). For our purposes, the relationship between dialogue and perspective taking can be seen most clearly in the idea that mutual understanding and reasoned agreement are to be reached through a process of reciprocal perspective-taking. In this model, each participant ‘project[s] himself into the perspectives of all others’ (Habermas 1993, 52) in an effort to reach an understanding of their shared normative obligations, that is, that are equally acceptable to all concerned. Habermas borrows this idea from Kohlberg’s conception of post-conventional moral judgment, which the latter understands as a role taking procedure that can be expected to produce a fully reversible judgment, one where each participant ‘must be willing to live with [her] judgment or decision when [she] trade[s] places with others in the situation being judged.’ (Kohlberg 1981, 199) However, while Kohlberg supposed that this role-taking was conducted privately in the mind of each social actor, Habermas concedes that it must be a public procedure involving explicit spoken dialogue.

The theoretical tools that Habermas uses to develop his model of dialogical interaction, as well as his scholarly standing as a *political* theorist, can obscure the affinities his work has with Buber and Gadamer. For this reason it may be worthwhile to pause for a moment to attend a little more closely to a few of their shared concerns. In the case of Buber and Habermas, for instance, we should note that both direct their attention to the same basic phenomena. The fundamental event of concern for Habermas is the attempt by two or more people to use language to establish a co-operative working relation with one another, the most mundane sort of human action, but one that is dependent on a dialogically mediated meeting of minds. Buber, in addition, insists that his understanding of dialogue is rooted in the mundane: ‘I am concerned with the turbid, the repressed, the pedestrian, with toil and dull contrariness – and with the breakthrough...into nothing exalted, heroic or holy...only into this tiny strictness and grace of every day...’ (1947, 41) Like Habermas, Buber imagines the origin of language to rest in a situation of shared labour, where unanticipated developments may arise that require one to direct a meaningful utterance to the other, where ‘one man turns to the other in order to lead him to take notice of something existing or happening.’ (1965, 117)

In his early engagement with Gadamer's hermeneutics, Habermas was largely concerned with what he perceived to be the culturally conservative implications of the method (Apel, 1971). However, in his later theory of communication he came to rely on a conception of a lifeworld that is rooted in the same hermeneutic and phenomenological traditions from which Gadamer's work emerged. For Habermas, the lifeworld represents a 'culturally transmitted and linguistically organized stock of interpretive patterns,' 'a reservoir of taken-for-granted, of unshaken convictions that participants in communication draw upon in co-operative processes of interpretation.' (1987, 124) In other words, Habermas accepts Gadamer's insight that 'all understanding inevitably involves some prejudice,' (1989, 270) where *prejudice* refers to the 'fore-structure of understanding' that people necessarily bring to a situation when trying to reach understanding with one another, or with a text. There is a striking parallel between Habermas's and Gadamer's thinking when it concerns the failures of understanding that can arise as a result of this fore-structure. For Gadamer, the mark of hermeneutically trained consciousness is its awareness of its own bias and its sensitivity to a text's resistance to the fore-meanings that the interpreter brings to it. For Habermas, it is when the fore-meanings that people bring to a situation impede rather than enable their efforts to co-ordinate their action via a shared understanding that it becomes necessary for them to engage in some kind of discourse, the patient process of reasoned dialogue by which understanding might be restored, a process that bears a striking resemblance, despite the equally striking differences in language, to what Buber calls *genuine dialogue*.

While Buber, Gadamer, and Habermas are obviously not the only significant thinkers in the twentieth century to have investigated the role of dialogical communication in human affairs, they are important for our purposes because of their recognition of the intimate relationship between dialogue and perspective taking. For this reason, we will frequently have occasion to return to their ideas in the discussion that follows, but their work also anticipates later scholarly investigations that tend to highlight the essential role of reciprocal perspective taking in processes of political and cross cultural dialogue. In the next few paragraphs I briefly review these developments in an effort to further motivate this inquiry.

In one instance, recent accounts of cosmopolitan understanding and deliberative democratic decision making have emphasised the idea that perspective taking will be a necessary feature of dialogues aimed at resolving disagreements among groups with differing conceptions of the good in pluralistic societies. The political theorists Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson (1996, 2004) have proposed that deliberative democratic governance requires citizens and their representatives to cultivate what they call 'civic integrity' and 'civic magnanimity,' an ensemble of moral dispositions that, among other things, requires parties to a moral disagreement to acknowledge

and recognise the reasonableness, as well as the merits of positions, with which they disagree, a practice that could scarcely go forward in the absence of reciprocal perspective taking (Wright 2009). Similarly, Habermas (1996, 1998) proposed a model of deliberative democracy in which the deliberations of both elected representatives and members of the judiciary are expected to take the perspectives of the various parties to an issue into account so as to best ensure the justice of legally enacted statutes and the impartiality of judicial rulings.

Scholars of intercultural communication and conflict resolution are similarly concerned with the question of how individuals from different cultural backgrounds might negotiate incompatible social and ethical expectations. In some accounts, perspective taking serves as a vehicle that makes cross-cultural communication and the development of interethnic identities possible. Milton J. Bennett (1993, 1998), a leading theorist in this field, has proposed a developmental model which places increasingly sophisticated forms of perspective taking at the heart of advanced stages of 'intercultural sensitivity'. At the most developed stages of intercultural awareness, an individual is capable of moving freely between a variety of internalised cultural perspectives while deliberating about an appropriate response to a particular situation. Similarly, in his examination of ethical issues arising in contexts of intercultural communication, the philosopher Richard Evanoff (2004) advances a constructivist theory of ethical judgment that is built around dialogical principles of mutual agreement and reciprocal perspective-taking. He also investigates the process of integration by which individuals are able to 'transcend their own cultures and internalize perspectives gained from a different culture' (2006, 426) as a result of repeated intercultural encounters. Finally, in describing the conditions that facilitate the resolution of ethnic conflicts, Wsevolod W. Isajiw (2000) argues on behalf of a principle of identity recognition, according to which opposing parties in an ethnic conflict will only be able to achieve the mutual understanding necessary to resolve their disagreements when they are prepared to engage in a kind of reciprocal learning of the basic assumptions of each other's cultural perspective.

This work differs from that of Buber, Gadamer and Habermas (prior to his turn to the political) in that it seems less concerned with investigating the defining characteristics of dialogue in itself, and more interested in illuminating the function of perspective taking as being a necessary condition for the success of certain kinds of dialogue. In either case, we see a consistent affirmation that dialogue and perspective taking are intimately connected to one another. Despite the readiness of this broad community of scholars to affirm the close relation of dialogue and perspective taking, this affirmation has not been accompanied by careful consideration of how well equipped ordinary human beings might or might not be to engage in these processes. As it happens, though, even as philosophers of dialogue, moral and

political theorists, and scholars of intercultural communication have incorporated the idea that there is an intimate relationship between dialogue, perspective taking and mutual understanding into their theories, scholars in other disciplines have developed theoretical perspectives and obtained empirical insights that offer far reaching insight into how unprepared human beings may be to engage in dialogue with, or to take the perspective of people from different ethnic, cultural or religious backgrounds. In other words, extending such moral concern to people from groups that differ in these ways isn't something that comes naturally to human beings.

In what follows, I shall review the biological theory and social-scientific research that bear on this issue. We start with explanations of the development of social co-operation based on the theory of evolution by natural selection. These theoretical accounts will together suggest that human beings should be expected to possess a basic, innate disposition *against* engaging in dialogically mediated perspective taking with members of ethnically, culturally, or religiously different groups. Following this review of evolutionary theory, we will then briefly consider some empirical findings from the social sciences, predominantly social psychology, where theorists have paid close attention to intergroup relations, dialogue and perspective taking. Together, I shall suggest, these two bodies of research show that philosophical and social scientific theories that are built around the expectation that one group of people will take the perspective of people from different ethnic, cultural or religious groups, *out-group members*, in the lexicon of these disciplines, in effect, they ask human beings to conduct themselves in a manner contrary to species-wide evolved dispositions. However, while requiring citizens to engage in perspective taking is requiring them to do something that comes only with difficulty, it is not, I shall finally suggest, to ask the impossible. In the last section of the essay I will briefly consider research into the conditions under which humankind's evolved propensities might be counteracted, but before I turn to a review of explanations for the origin of social co-operation, it will help if I clarify what I mean by the term 'perspective taking'.

Perspective Taking

There are a variety of cognitive and affective capacities that have, at various times and places, been discussed under the rubric of perspective (or 'role-') taking. When considering capacity as a matter of information processing, moral psychologists have distinguished between three different forms of perspective taking: visual (or spatial), cognitive (or communicative), and affective (Eisenberg et al 1991, Strayer 1987). These consist, respectively, in the abilities to infer what another person who is situated differently than oneself will, or will not, have in her visual field, to infer the beliefs and intentions of another person, and to infer another person's emotional states. We should note here that people can, and routinely do, exercise

such cognitive and affective perspective taking capacities in relation to members of out-groups, but not necessarily in pursuit of mutual understanding. American Christian soldiers at Abu Ghraib Prison in Iraq, for instance, were exercising these capacities when they inferred that desecrating copies of the Qur'an would outrage and demoralise their Muslim captives.

This example points towards the affective capacities of empathy and sympathy, the first of which is often also included under the general heading of perspective taking. A conception of empathy that is widely accepted by moral psychologists holds it to be an affective state in one person that is elicited by, and that is congruent with, an affective state experienced by another (Eisenberg, et. al. 1991; Strayer 1987). Sympathy, in contrast, while also being an affective state in one person that is elicited by the feelings or condition of another, is distinguished by sorrow for, or concern on behalf of, the other (Wispe 1986, 1987). It was these dimensions of perspective taking that were, presumably, absent in Abu Ghraib, in particular, as well as in most instances of violence against others.

Distinguishing between these cognitive and affective dimensions of perspective taking enables me to specify with more precision the disposition with which I am concerned. The capacity in question can be specified as being: *empathetic responses to members of out-groups that are mediated by culturally informed cognitive and affective perspective taking*. The claim I shall be advancing below is that, given the social environment in which the cognitive and affective dispositions of humankind evolved, it is plausible to suppose that people possess an innate disposition *not* to engage in perspective taking so understood.

The discussion of evolutionary biological and social scientific research that follows will focus on perspective taking as it has just been defined. Dialogue on the other hand, will tend to recede into the background in these sections, though we will return to it towards the end of the essay. This shift in emphasis arises because in much of the scholarly literature that I will be considering below, the question that has occupied researchers concerns the origin of the capacities that are involved in reciprocal perspective taking. For evolutionary biologists, such capacities are generally assumed to have evolved prior to linguistic capability. In a similar vein, the social scientists whose work we will consider take the capacity for speech as being a background condition, while investigating the conditions under which people do, or do not, engage in perspective taking.

However, this shift in emphasis should not be taken to mean that the discussion no longer concerns dialogue. This is because a conversation between members of different groups that includes an empathetic response to one another that is mediated by culturally informed cognitive and affective perspective taking will satisfy the

conditions for genuine dialogue (or: hermeneutic consciousness, or moral-practical discourse), not because perspective taking is identical to such dialogue, but because such dialogue *cannot be carried out in separation* from perspective taking.

In support of this claim, consider the following. We have just seen above that, when understood simply as a *cognitive operation*, the capacity to take the perspective of another can be put to malevolent purposes. The perspective taking with which I am concerned, by contrast, is marked by an indelible dimension of empathetic concern for the other. Similarly, not all dialogue is a genuine turning to the other, or a sincere effort to reach understanding. Buber distinguished among monologue (self-centered conversation), technical dialogue (information-centered communication) and genuine dialogue (Arnett 1986). Gadamer contrasted an encounter with the text where ‘the tyranny of hidden prejudices ... makes us deaf to what speaks to us in tradition,’ with one where a ‘hermeneutically trained consciousness’ is aware of its own bias ‘so that the text can present itself in all its otherness and thus assert its own truth against one’s own fore-meanings.’ (1989, 269-270) Similarly, Habermas distinguished between strategic communication (intended solely to influence others), communicative action (that facilitated everyday co-operation) and discourse proper. All three thinkers recognise, more or less explicitly, that genuine dialogue (or: hermeneutic consciousness, or: moral-practical discourse) is inseparable from empathetic responsiveness to another that is mediated by culturally informed cognitive and affective perspective taking.

Insofar as we have reason to suppose that humans possess an innate disposition *not* to engage in such perspective taking with out-group members, we have equal reason to suppose that we will possess an innate disposition to refrain from engaging in genuine dialogue with such people also. To see what these reasons are, let us now turn to evolutionary accounts of human social co-operation.

Evolutionary Biological Explanations of Social Cooperation

William Hamilton and Inclusive Fitness

The first account to which we shall turn is William Hamilton’s (1964) theory of inclusive fitness (also known as ‘kin selection’), which was developed in an effort to explain altruistic behaviour observed among social animals, warning calls among certain species of birds and ground squirrels, for instance. Hamilton’s account suggested that what matters is not how many offspring any particular *organism* leaves behind, but how many copies of a particular bit of DNA are left behind. Genes are just replicators whose function is to generate more copies of themselves. For theoretical purposes, all the physical and behavioural traits that are characteristic of living organisms can be regarded as being so many devices and

strategies that have evolved to allow genes to replicate more efficiently, an idea most successfully popularised by the writings of Richard Dawkins. Reproductive success thus depends not so much on how many offspring survive to reproductive age, but rather on how many of an organism's siblings, nieces and nephews and *their* offspring survive and reproduce as well. From the perspective of genes, it is a matter of indifference whether two direct offspring or four nieces and nephews survive to reproductive age. The number of gene copies in the two instances will, on average, be the same. What Hamilton's insight boils down to is the idea that if an organism possesses a behavioural trait that benefits sufficiently close relatives, the probability is that the organisms benefitted will also possess the genes that hold the code for that particular trait. If the inclusive fitness benefits that are associated with the trait outweigh the costs, it will spread through the population.

For our purposes, the salient feature of Hamilton's theory is that it will account only for co-operative behaviour that is directed towards members of an extended family network. This outcome has been highlighted by a currently influential hypothesis (Brockway 2003; Hrdy 2008), which suggests that cognitive and affective perspective taking are information processing capacities that conferred fitness enhancing benefits on mothers and infants in populations of co-operatively breeding primates by allowing mothers to better interpret and respond to infants' vocal and gestural signals and enabling infants and juveniles to better interpret and predict their caretakers' responses.

If these hypotheses are correct, we should expect that the perspective taking capacities that evolved through the processes of kin-selection would be preferentially directed towards close kin and not towards members of out-groups. In other words, explanations for the origin of human social co-operation that are built on Hamilton's model of inclusive fitness predict a *nepotistic pattern* of empathetic responses to others informed by cognitive and affective capacities for perspective taking. However, Hamilton's model is not all there is to the story, so let us turn now to the next.

Robert Trivers and Reciprocal Altruism

While Hamilton's model of inclusive fitness successfully predicts co-operative behaviour among closely related organisms, it was Robert Trivers (1971) who offered a convincing theoretical model for co-operation among unrelated organisms. He hypothesised that under certain conditions the propensity to engage in simple reciprocal exchanges with unrelated organisms could evolve. In the first instance, the fitness cost to the helping individual would have to be small in comparison to the fitness value of the benefit offered to another. A small price to the helper, in other words, for providing a comparatively larger benefit to the recipient. Further

conditions consisted of many opportunities for reciprocal exchanges, repeated interaction with a limited number of individuals, and symmetrically structured reciprocal situations, that is to say, when interacting pairs can offer one another roughly similar benefits at roughly similar costs. In terms of the biological characteristics of organisms, these conditions translate to such features as a relatively long lifespan, a low rate of dispersal, a high degree of mutual dependence, a relatively weak dominance hierarchy, and the availability of benefits that are made possible only through coalition formation.

Trivers also hypothesised that under such conditions networks of reciprocal relations would most likely be stabilised and sustained through a psychological system built around certain basic emotional responses, such as liking and disliking, moralistic aggression, gratitude, sympathy, guilt and reparative altruism. (1971, 48-51) According to this account, people do not punish cheats, make amends for misdeeds, and prefer to associate with trustworthy individuals because of some conscious or rational calculation of the fitness advantages of such behaviour. Rather, such reactive emotional dispositions evolved simply because getting angry with people who do wrong, feeling guilty about one's own wrongdoing, and being particularly nice to one's friends happened to stabilise networks of reciprocal relations, which, in turn, ultimately provided a fitness advantage for individuals possessing such dispositions. Evidence from the social dynamics of primates (DeWaal 1996, 2005), from the archaeological record (Aiello and Dunbar 1993; Dunbar 1996), as well as from existing foraging societies (Boehm 1999), all support Trivers' suggestion that humankind's early hominid ancestors lived in tightly knit social networks in which behaviour was regulated by moral emotions such as guilt, anger, empathy, gratitude and a sense of fairness.

From Hamilton's (1964) theory of inclusive fitness we learned that the capacities for cognitive and affective perspective taking may have originated as kin selected traits. This would lead us to expect that humans would possess an evolved propensity to exercise these capacities in relation to close relatives, but not members of out-groups. From Trivers' (1971) theory we now see that networks of reciprocal exchange represent another dimension of the social environment exercising selective pressure in favour of developing these capacities. There would be clear fitness benefits for individuals better able to understand the plans and intentions, and better able to predict the choices, emotional responses, and actions of their partners in reciprocal interaction. The so-called Machiavellian intelligence hypothesis (Whiten 1997, 1998) has proposed that humanity's capacities for social cognition evolved for just these kinds of reasons. Trivers' model would thus seem to yield conclusions similar to Hamilton's. We can expect that humans will possess an evolved disposition to engage in perspective taking with others who live in close proximity to themselves,

and with whom they interact on a regular basis, but not with out-group members.

Richard Alexander and Indirect Reciprocity

Trivers' model explained the conditions under which *pairwise* interactions could be expected to evolve. His model received elaboration by Richard Alexander (1985, 1987), whose concept of *indirect* reciprocity extended Trivers' model by incorporating social observation and reputation formation, factors enabling stable networks of exchange to develop among relatively larger groups of individuals. Direct reciprocity takes place when an individual who provides a benefit to another receives a benefit in return from the same individual, whereas indirect reciprocity arises when the individual who provides the initial benefit receives repayment from individuals *other* than the one initially benefitted. One person helps a neighbour to repair damage to his dwelling, for example, and then later receives assistance with a broken tool from the neighbour's brother, where the subsequent assistance is forthcoming only because of the initial offer of assistance. Such patterns are intuitively familiar to us because they are so intimately woven into the fabric of the everyday social life of humans.

Reputation enters into the equation because social observation ensures that an individual's propensity to co-operate, or not, will be known to a wider community. There will be clear fitness benefits for any individual known among members of his immediate community to be a reliable partner in co-operation, as well as costs for those known to be unreliable. Alexander thinks that the fitness benefits accruing to an individual who is generally known to be a generous and reliable person can explain the propensity for what he calls indiscriminate social investment in human communities. By this he means a 'willingness to risk relatively small expenses in certain kinds of social donations to whomever may be needy, partly because of the prevalence and keenness of observation and [partly because of] the use of such acts by others to identify individuals appropriate for later reciprocal interactions.' (1987, 97 and 100) In other words, people's readiness to offer low cost assistance to almost any member of their local community, charitable contributions, for instance, can be explained by the fitness benefits that accrue *indirectly* to people with reputations for such helpful dispositions.

The same conclusions that are reached in relation to Trivers' model of reciprocity can be seen to proceed fairly directly from Alexander's model of indirect reciprocity also. Social observation and reputation formation allow for the development of more extended face to face communities of reciprocal cooperators. However, the evolved psychological dispositions that ensure the extension of moral concern to members of an individual's own community cannot be expected to move that same individual to show comparable concern to persons outside her community.

Alexander (1985) suggests that this difference in attitude towards familiars and strangers can be observed in large urban settings, where the sheer number of inhabitants impedes effective social observation and where the resulting anonymity impedes the successful functioning of reputation formation. The model of indirect reciprocity predicts that under such conditions deviant behaviour would increase, a prediction that seems to receive straightforward support in the problems of social order facing large cities.

In sum, widely accepted evolutionary biological explanations for the origin of social co-operation together suggest that the capacity for empathic response that is mediated by cognitive and affective perspective taking would have evolved because of the selective advantage it offered in an environment marked by prolonged infant dependence, co-operative breeding, and frequent social interaction accompanied by social observation and reputation formation. None of these theories supposes there to have been selective pressure *favouring* the development of a disposition to engage this kind of perspective taking with members of out-groups. In the next section, we shall see that there are compelling reasons to suppose that the social environment of evolutionary adaptation would have exercised selective pressure *against* the evolution of such a disposition.

Intergroup Conflict and the Evolution of Social Co-operation

Let us now turn to the matter of intergroup competition. This feature of the social environment of evolutionary adaptation, I want to claim, would have ensured that natural selection would favour the evolution of an innate psychological propensity that is *opposed* to taking the perspective of out-group members. Paraphrasing the social psychologist Jonathan Haidt, from an evolutionary perspective it would indeed be strange if humankind's evolved social dispositions encouraged people periodically to side with their community's enemies and against their relatives, friends and neighbors (2001, 821).

To find a thinker who is convinced that dispositions supporting social co-operation evolved in response to the selective pressure exercised by intergroup competition, we need look no farther than Darwin himself. In *The Descent of Man* he articulates this hypothesis with admirable clarity:

When two tribes of primeval man, living in the same country, came into competition, if the one tribe included (other circumstances being equal) a greater number of courageous, sympathetic and faithful members, who were always ready to warn each other of danger, to aid and defend each other, this tribe would without doubt succeed best and conquer the other...Selfish

and contentious people will not cohere, and without coherence nothing can be effected. A tribe possessing the above qualities in a high degree would spread and be victorious over other tribes; but in the course of time it would, judging from all past history, be in its turn overcome by some other and still more highly endowed tribe. Thus the social and moral qualities would tend slowly to advance and be diffused throughout the world. (1981/1871, 162-163)

Alexander puts it more bluntly:

Most of the evolution of human social life, and I will argue the evolution of the human psyche, has occurred in the context of within- and between-group competition, the former resulting from the latter...so far as we know, in no other species do social groups have as their main jeopardy other social groups of the same species – therefore, the unending selective race toward greater social complexity, intelligence, and cleverness in dealing with one another. (1987, 79-80)

Social co-operation and morality evolved, in other words, because it gave one group an edge in its competition with others. The ‘more moral’ groups vanquished the less moral. As a result, Alexander (1985) suggests, the evolutionary function of morality *opposes* the moral teachings of modern universal and egalitarian moral philosophies.

More recently, the economist Samuel Bowles (2007, 2009) has developed mathematical models that explore the possibility that ‘parochial altruism’, the propensity of individuals to benefit other members of their group by risking injury and death in hostile encounters with other groups, may have co-evolved with warfare. While acknowledging both the fragmentary nature of existing archaeological and anthropological evidence, as well as the provisional nature of his models, Bowles argues that ‘taking all of the evidence into account, it seems likely that, for many groups and for substantial periods of human prehistory, lethal group conflict may have been frequent enough to support the proliferation of quite costly forms of altruism.’ (2009, 1297) Or, as the philosopher and neuroscientist Joshua Greene (2013) recently put it, ‘morality did not evolve to promote universal cooperation. On the contrary, it evolved as a device for successful intergroup competition.’ (2013, 26)

These evolutionary perspectives on the development of human co-operation all suggest, more or less, that human psychology evolved to regulate networks of co-operative interaction among close kin and small face to face communities of friends and neighbours. They suggest also that the propensity to show empathetic concern is mediated by the cognitive and affective perspective taking that has evolved in this environment. Now if, as Darwin and Alexander suggest, competition between

groups formed a persistent feature of the ancestral social environment, and if, as I am suggesting, this would have fostered the development of a disposition against engaging in perspective taking with members of out-groups, we should expect to find evidence consistent with this evolutionary story.

Early Evidence in the Social Sciences

Let me start with a few classics from the social scientific literature. During the 1950s the sociologist Muzafer Sherif and his colleagues reported on the ease with which prepubescent boys with no prior social contact could be induced to form in-groups with differentiated status positions and reciprocal role expectations. In one remarkable experiment they found that just the opportunity to participate in engaging activities over the period of one week fostered in-group cohesion, and that mere knowledge of the existence of another group in the area elicited strong desires for competitive interaction. When on site counsellors arranged for a series of intergroup contests, agonistic relations quickly developed, leading to such behaviour as name-calling, the stereotyping of out-group members, the destruction of out-group property and raids on out-group living quarters (Sherif et al 1961). During the 1970s Henri Tajfel demonstrated experimentally that people categorised into groups on the basis of factors as trivial as visual judgments or aesthetic preferences were then disposed, when given the opportunity, to behave preferentially towards members of their perceived 'in-group' (Billig and Tajfel 1973; Tajfel et al 1971). These authors emphasise that this tendency to favour the in-group was not, in all circumstances, accompanied by hostility towards the out-group. Such hostility required the presence of additional factors. Philip Zimbardo's Stanford Prison Experiment is a dramatic case in point. In an experimental setting, ordinary young college-age males were induced to adopt the roles, attitudes and self-concepts of authoritarian guards and subjugated prisoners. By being placed in a simulated prison environment and assigned specific roles as guards or prisoners, participants' self-identification with these roles became so complete that the experiment had to be ended early due to concern for the participants' wellbeing. For the authors it was the student-guards' self-perceived gains in power, social status and in-group identification was particularly striking (Haney et al. 1973).

As a final example, let us turn now to Gordon Allport's *The Nature of Prejudice* (Allport 1954), one of this earlier era's definitive explorations of intergroup relations. Universally acknowledged by social psychologists as a foundational work in their discipline (Dovidio et al 2005), this work introduced a series of pioneering insights that, in a way, anticipated Gadamer's own reflections on the role of prejudice in human understanding. Like Gadamer, in defining the concept of *prejudice* Allport attended to the Latin root of the word (*praejudicium*) which meant *precedent*. However, Allport also took into consideration the subsequent English usage, which

meant a preliminary judgment based on incomplete consideration of evidence, as well as the recent vernacular meaning, which attributes positive or negative emotional colouring of such a pre-judgment. For this reason, Allport distinguishes between *prejudgment* and *prejudice*, stating that 'prejudgments become prejudices only if they are not reversible when exposed to new knowledge.' (1954, 9) Both thinkers agree that people unavoidably and necessarily bring fore-meanings or pre-conceptions to their encounters with another, but while Gadamer calls such fore-meanings prejudices, Allport prefers to call them prejudgments. Prejudice, as Allport understands it, 'is an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalization.' (1954, 9) He emphasises that the prejudgments that form the basis for prejudice, as he understands it, arise as a result of normal and necessary processes of human categorisation, when the human propensity to engage in 'over-categorisation' combines with people's ubiquitous tendency to form their personal identities on the basis of in-group identifications (Allport 1954 Chs. 2 and 3; Fiske 2005).

While there are thus some surprising affinities between Gadamer's and Allport's conceptions of prejudice, their terminological differences may lead to dissonance for readers who accept Gadamer's rehabilitation of the concept of prejudice. Allport's use, which persists in a more or less modified form among researchers who have followed his lead, would seem merely to reinforce the Enlightenment prejudice against prejudice that Gadamer so carefully deconstructs, when, in fact, he is cognisant of the same processes of understanding that prompted Gadamer's reflections. In an effort to minimise the dissonance arising from these two different concepts of prejudice, in what follows, wherever it is stylistically feasible, Allport's notion of prejudice will be rendered as a *prejudiced attitude*.

For our purposes, though, Allport's essential contribution was what has come to be known as the *intergroup contact hypothesis*, a statement of the conditions under which interaction between members of differing groups is likely to result in a reduction of prejudiced attitudes. In relation to this hypothesis, it is worth noting here not just that there are further affinities between Allport and Gadamer's thinking, but also that we can see a connection with Habermas's work too.. In relation to Gadamer's notion of hermeneutic consciousness we might say that the intergroup contact hypothesis identifies the conditions under which one group's sensitivity to the resistance offered by the being of another to the fore-meanings they have brought to a social encounter may be enhanced, and as a result of this people may be brought to an awareness of the inadequacies of those fore-meanings to disclose the meaning of the others as they really are. For Habermas, the intergroup contact hypothesis can be seen to specify the conditions under which people from different groups can become aware of how the fore-meanings they bring from their inherited lifeworld to the social encounter impede, rather than enable, efforts to co-ordinate

their action in pursuit of a common goal. It is precisely in such circumstances, according to his theory of communication, that people may be prepared to engage in the deliberative processes by which mutual understanding may be fostered. These brief observations suggest that the insights into intergroup relations that emerge from the tradition of research launched by Allport's work are likely to have direct relevance for philosophers of dialogical and intercultural understanding.

Below I will consider how findings that are related to this hypothesis have a bearing on the problem of taking the perspective of outgroup members, but before moving to avenues through which the problem of prejudiced attitudes may be managed, I would like first to review recent social psychological research findings that build on his legacy and that are consistent with the predictions emerging from evolutionary perspectives on the development of human co-operation.

Recent Evidence in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations

To begin, in an extensive discussion of the literature examining intergroup bias, Davido and Gaertner (2010) review the work of scores of researchers who have found that intergroup dynamics affect social cognition in a variety of ways. For instance, once in- and out-group membership has been established, people tend mostly to favour those in-group members who fit the group prototype. Further, in-group members are believed to be more capable of expressing uniquely human emotions than are out-group members. In addition, when provided with information about in-group and out-group members, people tend to process information about in-group members more deeply than that about out-group members. Researchers also report that information about in-group members is also retained with more detail than that about out-group members. Further, people tend to remember better how in-group members are similar to themselves and how out-group members are different than themselves. Finally, people tend to remember less positive information about out-group members. All of these findings are consistent with the hypothesis that human moral dispositions evolved to secure in-group co-operation in an environment marked by intergroup conflict.

This feature of the evolutionary account leads to the further prediction that the level of threat a person experiences in relation to a particular out-group will be related to their readiness to take on the perspective of out-group members and to respond to them with empathy. Research outcomes relevant to this prediction are found in a widely cited publication (Stephan and Stephan, 2000) that introduces an *integrated threat theory of prejudice*. With this theory, Walter G. Stephan and Cookie W. Stephan seek to develop a systematic explanation of the relationship between in-group members' perception of threat from an out-group and the likelihood

that in-group members will express a prejudiced attitude towards the out-group. They weave the efforts of over a dozen different investigators into a theoretical model that is constructed around four different dimensions of out-group threat: *realistic threats* to the in-group's political or economic power; *symbolic threats* to the in-group's religious beliefs, cultural values or social norms; *intergroup anxiety* arising from feelings of personal threat experienced during interactions with out-group members; and *negative stereotypes* which, because they create expectations of aversive interaction with out-group members, tend to elicit experiences that foster anxiety and reinforce perceived threats. The authors review a series of studies investigating the relationships between these four components of threat and the attitudes of participants' from a variety of cultures towards various out-groups. In every case, for at least three of the four threat components, and frequently for all four, statistically significant relationships were found amongst participants' reported levels of threat and the likelihood that they would endorse prejudiced attitudes towards out-groups.

This evidence is indirect, of course. A propensity to favour one's in-group in a variety of ways while harbouring prejudiced attitudes towards out-groups is not the same as refusing to engage in genuine dialogue with members of that group. An association between perceived threat and the likelihood that a person will endorse stereotypical and prejudiced attitudes towards out-groups is different from a refusal to engage in perspective taking by the members of such groups. Nonetheless, the relations among these propensities are intuitively plausible. It is hard to imagine that prejudiced attitudes towards others would *not* impede dialogue with them. It is equally implausible to suppose that perceiving others to be a threat would not obstruct a person's capacity to respond to them empathetically. Consistent with these intuitions, Cikara and Van Bavel (2014) review recent behavioural and neuroscience research that has found people to show lower (and sometimes no) empathetic response to the physical and emotional pain of out-group members, if compared to their responses to in-group members.

The Intergroup Contact Hypothesis

Allport (1954) hypothesised that intergroup contact that took place when four conditions were satisfied was likely to lead to reductions in prejudiced attitudes and stereotyping. Those conditions were a) equal status between the groups, b) common goals, c) intergroup cooperation, and, d) authoritative sanction for the contact. Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) recently demonstrated, through an exhaustive and methodologically sophisticated meta-analysis of 713 independent samples from 513 studies, that when Allport's conditions were satisfied by the research model, robust and statistically significant decreases in prejudiced attitudes occurred among participants. In further analyses of the same dataset, Pettigrew and Tropp

(2008) and Tropp and Pettigrew (2005) determined that reductions in anxiety and the exercise of empathy and perspective taking were the factors most responsible for these decreases.

This finding brings us back to the central concerns of this essay, the intimate relation that dialogue has with perspective taking and humankind's evolved propensity to withhold these forms of moral recognition from members of out-groups. Here, we should remember that while empathy can consist of a kind of feeling, it can also consist of an imaginative placing of oneself in the other's situation and the experiencing of the world from that vantage point. While Pettigrew and Tropp (2005, 2008) show that empathy and perspective taking are important factors in leading to reductions in prejudiced attitudes, their analyses do not distinguish cognitive and affective forms of empathy. By contrast, C. Daniel Batson et al (1997) do keep these forms of empathy distinct in a series of experiments that investigated whether engaging in cognitive empathy (i.e., perspective taking) would affect people's *felt* empathy towards members of stigmatised groups. They found that when participants were instructed to imagine how out-group members feel when recounting the difficulties they experienced as a result of their marginal status (i.e., to engage in perspective taking), they were more likely to report empathetic feeling in relation to these individuals than those participants who received instructions to listen to the same accounts 'objectively'.

The experimental design of Batson's research disentangles perspective taking from face to face dialogue. Given the close relation that Buber, Gadamer, and Habermas all suggest is to be found between dialogue and perspective taking, we would expect to find that intergroup contact that consisted of face to face dialogue would also significantly reduce the incidence of prejudiced attitudes towards out-group members. One clear indicator of such contact would be friendship. Buber, we should remind ourselves, considered friendship to be the preeminent form of dialogical relation: 'the true inclusion of one another by human souls' (1947, 119). Tropp and Pettigrew (2005) review the findings of a number of researchers which indicate that cross-group friendships were 'consistently and negatively associated with prejudice' and that 'feelings of closeness to individual out-group members correspond with less prejudice towards the out-group as a whole' (2005, 1146). Consistent with these findings, Aberson et al (2004) disentangle the effects of *explicit* and *implicit* biases while also controlling for social desirability bias. Their findings show that while explicit reports of out-group bias did not appear to be strongly related to participants' reported cross-group friendships, implicit measures of unconscious bias clearly showed reduced incidences of prejudiced attitudes towards out-group members among participants who reported cross-group friendships.

In their monograph *Improving Intergroup Relations*, W.G. Stephan and C.W. Stephan (2001) review a wide variety of strategies that are thought to reduce prejudiced attitudes, stereotyping and discriminatory behaviour, and the results of research that was aimed at measuring their effects. Space constraints rule out a detailed review, so I will consider here just the two most closely connected to the concerns of this essay. The first is dialogues between groups with a history of tension or conflict. Such *intergroup dialogues* involve trained leaders and clearly established rules for conversation. Consistent with Buber's (1947, Ch. 1) insistence that genuine dialogical encounters depend upon unreserved engagement, participants in intergroup dialogues are encouraged to express their thoughts and feelings honestly and openly. Stephan and Stephan (2001, Ch. 5) report that such dialogues typically satisfy the conditions Allport (1954) identified this as being necessary for successful intergroup contact, and that one outcome frequently documented by researchers is an increase in participants' ability to take the perspective of out-group members and to empathise with their feelings.

A second strategy relates to Buber's (1947, Ch. 3) thoughts on education. Stephan and Stephan (2001, Ch. 7) discuss *co-operative learning groups*, an educational technique in which students are placed in learning groups of four to six individuals, are assigned a task which requires face to face interaction and the successful completion of this task fosters interdependent relations among the students. Research shows that this educational strategy achieves superior academic outcomes if compared to traditional, individualised, and competitive approaches to teaching. Further, students in co-operative learning groups not only report more positive feelings towards racial and ethnic out-groups, but also tend to form significantly more cross-group friendships than do students in comparison groups.

The research literature on intergroup contact is quite large and is marked by a variety of competing theoretical perspectives and explanatory frameworks. For our purposes, the rich diversity of perspectives and divergences among them need not concern us. In relation to the themes that motivate this essay, what this research tradition shows, firstly, is that humans are capable of taking the perspective of, and responding empathetically to, members of out-groups, but it also confirms that the development and exercise of these capacities requires very specific conditions that, typically, must be carefully and intentionally cultivated. Both intergroup dialogue and co-operative learning groups, for example, require *trained leadership* and *robust institutional support* (Stephan and Stephan 2001) if the desired goals are to be the result.

Concluding Observation

To draw these reflections to a close, let us pause for a moment with the following observation: the social-scientific research we have reviewed shows that the conditions under which people seem to be willing to show empathetic responses to members of out-groups, and that are mediated by culturally informed perspective taking, bear a close structural similarity to the conditions for which these capacities originally evolved. Let us recall that from the evolutionary accounts of the origin of social cooperation we learned that this nexus of mental capacities evolved because of the selective advantage it offered members of social groups who depended on each other for child rearing, the exchange of benefits that were valuable for ensuring subsistence, and defence against both human enemies and animal predators. Within such groups we can see that all four of the conditions for Allport's intergroup contact hypothesis are satisfied: relatively equal status among group members, common goals, co-operative pursuit of those goals, and an authoritative sanction for such co-operation (which would never be lacking *within* the group). Similarly, in Sharif et al.'s (1961) Robbers' Cave Experiment, mutual antagonism between the two groups of boys was only reduced and replaced by co-operative attitudes when the boys were encouraged to engage in the pursuit of intrinsically desirable goals, the achievement of which required the co-operation of both groups. Consider, finally, the quotidian function to which Buber and Habermas attribute the origin of language and dialogue, one person drawing another's attention to some feature of a situation, a shared understanding of which will allow them to achieve a jointly desired goal. What social psychological experimenters seem to have done is to find ways to insert people from different groups, each of which harbours certain prejudiced attitudes towards the other, into situations that encourage them simply to *work together* at some task that is meaningful and valuable to all parties concerned. Authentic dialogue and the mutual perspective taking this entails, it would seem, rest on a foundation of shared endeavour undertaken in an environment that encourages mutual understanding.

The far reaching ramifications of this insight are vividly illustrated in Ashutosh Varshney's (2001) study 'Interethnic Conflict and Civil Society,' which seeks to answer a straightforward question: during times of inter-ethnic crisis in India, why do some cities experience convulsive violence between Hindu and Muslim groups, while other cities with similar populations of these two groups do not? The answer Varshney offers is remarkable in its simplicity. Cities with traditions of interethnic engagement structured by formal associations of workers, tradespeople, businessmen, and educated professionals (such as teachers, doctors and lawyers) were able to regulate inflammatory rumours spread by local news organisations and opportunistic politicians, whereas in cities that lacked such organisations, these factors led to an escalation in conflict and violence. Writing as a political scientist,

Varshney has emphasised that these organisations have constituted an interethnic *civil society* but, for our purposes, the salient feature of these organisations is the extent to which they also satisfy the conditions specified by Allport's intergroup contact hypothesis. It is plain to see that members of such associations participate as equals who co-operate with one another in the pursuit of common goals. The nature of the 'authoritative sanction' for the contact is more complex, involving, as it undoubtedly does, the social and political status of the organisations themselves, the market advantages they offer, as well as local history and cultural tradition.

The example of the urban civic associations that Varshney investigates also provides indirect evidence. He does not describe the social interaction within these groups in sufficiently fine grained detail to allow us to know whether genuine dialogue, hermeneutic consciousness or moral-practical discourses are taking place in them. At the same time, by virtue of knowing that they tend to satisfy the conditions specified by the intergroup contact hypothesis, the kind of research we have considered above allows us to predict with some confidence that members of such associations probably do engage in the kind of perspective taking characteristics of such forms of conversation.

The conclusion to which these considerations point is that while humans are innately disposed to avoiding engagement in the perspective taking characteristics of genuine dialogue, hermeneutic consciousness, and moral-practical discourses, this disposition can be overridden. We have good reasons to suppose that formally structured patterns of interaction: experimental, academic, and civic, that encourage and reward social interaction between members of different groups can foster such perspective taking. Natural selection need not be destiny, but resisting our evolved heritage takes no small amount of time, effort, and ingenuity.

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REFLECTION

What does Ethical Dialogue Look Like? A Reflection

Julian Bond

Some, particularly Evangelical,¹ critiques of or opposition to inter faith dialogue are based on its inappropriateness from a confessional perspective. This position argues that the committed Christian should not be involved in the dialogue of exploring commonalities without also, firstly, being clear about the difficulties of dialogue and its scope for doctrinal confusion. There cannot thus be full and meaningful dialogue about the love of God and neighbour without defining or describing God at the outset. Within this environment, although the words themselves – God and neighbour – unite, doctrine divides. For the Christian who shares this position, the first step in opening dialogue is through a confrontation between Trinity and Tawhid.

The reader will be aware that Trinity and Tawhid are confessional watchwords. The two religions, Christianity and Islam, could hardly be further apart than when they proclaim these distinctives which safeguard the core and the boundaries of each of the faiths. Proponents of confrontational dialogue can be found in both faiths, often leading to the expression that dialogue is impossible, unwelcome or inherently flawed. Yet, although these imposing theological superstructures tower intimidatingly over more gentle conversations, they do not speak for either tradition. In fact, the famous ‘Common Word’ verse in the Qur’an is an invitation to dialogue that is based explicitly on Tawhid:

Say: O People of the Scripture! Come to a common word between us and you: that we shall worship none but God, and that we shall ascribe no partner unto Him, and that none of us shall take others for lords beside God. And if they turn away, then say: Bear witness that we are they who have surrendered (unto Him). (Aal ‘Imran 3:64)

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1 This is not to suggest that Evangelical Christians cannot be involved in inter faith dialogue.

Likewise, in Christianity, we have the example of the Apostle Paul who uses the texts and philosophies of other religions and cultures to establish common ground, including when he is talking about God, and does so adventurously. At their core, both religions are thus inherently dialogical.

Real dialogue always involves some risk, although, given the levels of certainty expressed in our scriptures, this is hardly mentioned. However, in conservative manifestations of our religions, possibly an alien concept in comparison with the radical messages of our founders, we have become risk averse. It is this risk aversion which leads to bipolar anxieties about compromise and confrontation.

As a concrete example, there is the Christian, and sometimes Muslim, obstacle that we do not share the 'same God'. Given the openness of both traditions and of their leading figures, it is hard to see this 'same God' problem as anything other than a distraction. A greater awareness, gained through dialogue, of how different scriptures and doctrines do point to a shared belief in the Abrahamic God addresses this anxiety. To avoid, condemn or derail such a possibility is surely contrary to the imperative to witness to one's faith, which is strong in both traditions. The 'Common Word' Declaration of 2007 fits neatly into this space, although theological, or cultural, suspicions in some quarters mean that it has not always been accepted as being either genuine or valid.

Often, when the question of whether to dialogue is being discussed and ethical issues are raised, these relate to the risk of theological compromise. This kind of concern, however, has more to do with pessimism than with protecting one's creed. How ethical is it, when a loving and faithful overture is met by the recipient turning his/her back? This is exactly what theological reservations convey if we judge the warm approach of others by our doctrinal hurdles and put a lid on our own warmth by constraining it within religious boundaries. If we do that, how are we supposed to talk to anyone? This is where such strictness can lead.

As an alternative I offer patience. There is something essentially impatient about saying to a dialogue partner: 'I am not going to listen to you until I have explained my theological system to you', to do so takes time. I see this impatience and dialogical dissatisfaction when I attend events where Muslim speakers have given a perfectly reasonable and encouraging picture of Islam and the QandA session that follows begins with Christians asking: 'But why doesn't Islam say this or that? Why is it not as developed as Christianity in this area?' It may be that these are valid questions and observations, but are they asked with humility, with good grace, do they give an opportunity to expand, or are they veiled, or not so veiled, criticisms? Have the questioners fully understood the Islamic position that they seem ready to judge?

My own experience in this area, of getting it wrong, was an early attempt to dialogue with an imam in a mosque about the meaning of the Prologue to John's Gospel. Beginning with the phrase: 'In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God and the Word was God' (John 1.1). I don't recall now why I particularly wanted to convince my friend of the Christian (Trinitarian) significance of these words. However, he didn't read them in the way that I did, and said that he could accept them as a description within his own thinking, without taking them as an exposition of the Trinity.

Looking back at my hasty experiment I can see that I was motivated by ego (and ego is driven by impatience). One thing that I have learnt about meaningful and genuine, deep inter-faith interaction is that it is incompatible with ego, whether we recognise it or not. One national inter-faith initiative, and local inter-faith relationships, were derailed and soured by ego – wanting the other to be more like us or, God forbid, seeking to 'reform' the other to fit our outlook and values. How can we look down on the other if we are suspicious and do not engage in a genuine and open way?

This is the difficulty with making an uncompromising 'ethical' stand, it can blind us to our own ethical behaviour, since we do not fully listen to or recognise the other. This is why one of Jesus' important parables, 'the plank and the speck', is so relevant. In Jesus' story one man wants to tell the other something important and beneficial (that he has a speck in his eye and may be able to remove it), but in doing so he ignores the huge plank in his own eye. This is what we do when we use our own religion to make judgments on another religion. Even if we have that right, have we applied similar criticisms to our own?

The big challenge, if we are to have a deeper encounter, is to open ourselves, to share our vulnerabilities and to listen, without too much desire to speak. It requires patience and that the ego be set to one side. Dialogue is supposed to be risky, it is more than the simple exchange of views. We should gain the trust of our dialogue partners first, letting them know that we are friends and not enemies, that we are interested in what they have to share. This creates a trusting and confident space in which to open up the bigger questions. It requires maturity and a sense of our shared history together.

One Sufi Muslim friend was not troubled by his ego, he was happy, a couple of years ago, to exchange thoughts on the Trinity and Incarnation without their becoming yet another of those internet debates that are full of argument and negativity.

Where our ethics are really needed are in the building of serious trust, showing the best of our religions instead of the worst, and taking a genuine interest in each other.

Inter-faith engagement is not about confrontation, even in its mature versions. Yes, there is a place for debate, but we must recognise the limits of that debate in the area of belief. Our engagement as people of faith should be characterised by Faith – by good faith if you like – by love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness. Wherever these are missing, we have lost our own way and become unethical.

In conclusion I offer these suggestions to develop skills:

- Ethical debate training: a key aspect of proper debate is listening to the other person and responding to their key concerns, this translates well to the practice of dialogue.
- Conflict Resilience: this develops the ability to live with conflict by helping us to reflect on our attitudes to conflict and practising through the use of case studies.
- Scriptural Reasoning: the practice of reading and studying scripture together offers an opportunity to listen to each other on an equal basis, with nothing to prove to each other, sharing thoughts on our own scriptures and inviting others to tell us about theirs.

BOOK REVIEW

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The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Inter-Religious Dialogue
Edited by Catherine Cornille
Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley Blackwell (John Wiley and Sons), 2013
Hardback, 478 + xvii index, £125.00, ISBN: 978 0 470 65520 7

This volume is a welcome addition to the growing literature on Inter-Religious Dialogue, and among its thirty contributors are some leading figures, and indeed pioneers, in the field (for example, Leonard Swidler, Frank Clooney, Paul Knitter), although, from a British perspective it has a strongly North American feel, twenty two of the writers are mainly or wholly based in the USA and Canada. Given the depth and range of experience developed in the UK over the last forty or fifty years, it seems a pity that there was no space for any British-based contributor (such as David Ford, Gavin D'Costa or Ataullah Siddiqui). Nevertheless, many of the authors do have good experience of the dynamics of inter-religious relations in different parts of the world. This is important in my view since, as many of the articles evidence, contextual factors are vital in both the origins and development of the practice of dialogue. As is perhaps inevitable in such a collection there is a good deal of overlap and repetition between articles, and since for most people it will serve as a reference work rather than a text book that is probably no bad thing.

The volume is structured in two main sections, Part I Focal Topics, and Part II, Case Studies. The Focal Topics include essays on the history of dialogue (Swidler), which although helpful, makes no reference to what I would consider the most comprehensive account of the topic, in Marcus Braybrooke's *Pilgrimage of Hope* (1992), together with discussions of topics such as the conditions for dialogue (Cornille), Comparative Theology (a typically lucid essay by Frank Clooney), the place of Scriptural Reasoning, Inter-Religious Worship, Art, Dialogue and Social Action (Knitter) and Peacebuilding. Concluding this section Jeannine Hill-Fletcher contributes an important essay on the frequently over-looked role of Women in Dialogue. What is perhaps missing from this section is a comprehensive discussion of the nature of dialogue and the often contrasting, and sometimes competing, understandings of what is truly at stake in inter-religious encounter. Of course, various contributors (including the Editor, briefly, in her introduction) touch on this theme, but I think the volume would have been enriched by a fuller and more focussed discussion on the nature and ramifications of dialogical method and approach.

Part II offers a very comprehensive range of case studies, all focussed on bilateral dialogues. This is a varied section, since some essays focus more on historical processes whilst others offer a more contemporary perspective. As well as the 'usual suspects' one would expect in such a collection, for example a very helpful analysis of the historically and contemporarily vexed question of Christian-Muslim encounter, written by Daniel Madigan, there are also useful discussions of less frequently discussed areas, for example, the essays on Native American Spirituality and Christianity (Achiel Peelman) and the dialogue between Mormons and Evangelicals (Robert Millet), although these also serve to reinforce the North American feel of the volume, to which I have already alluded. On the other hand, this is countered by other contributions, for example, on Shinto-Buddhist Dialogue (Aaslav Lande) and John Azumah's discussion of the engagement of Islam with African Traditional Religions.

A number of the essays touch on the issue of the origins of many inter-religious encounters in the context of mission and/or colonial enterprises and, again, this might have been an interesting theme for a more focussed treatment. Despite such quibbles, there is much to admire in this volume and it will certainly take its place on the library shelves of institutions where dialogue is treated seriously, although I suspect the price (£125 hardback and, even as an E-book, £122.99) will mean it has a limited reach beyond institutions.

BOOK REVIEW

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Interreligious Studies: A Relational Approach to Religious Activism and the Study of Religion

By Oddbjørn Leirvik

London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2014

Hardback, 208 pages, £65.00, ISBN: 1472524497

On first reading this book felt uneven and repetitive, more a selection of discrete essays in search of a theme than a cumulative whole. Theoretical questions about interreligious hermeneutics and political theory rub along with the more immediate practical questions that arise from community relations, schools curricula and religious literacy. It does, however, repay perseverance. Its main theme – the religious dimension of all human relations – makes it very much a book for our times. Although presented in the measured tones of an academic work, it is also severely practical, paying careful attention to the many complex ways in which religion impinges on the life of the secular West.

Currently professor of interreligious studies at the University of Oslo, Oddbjørn Leirvik writes from the Norwegian experience, a context struggling to craft an informed and tolerant multiculturalism in face of the identity politics that threatens to take over the ever-contested space of civic society. Haunting the text is the figure of Anders Behring Breivik, Norway's notorious Islamophobe, who was so convinced that Islam was at the heart of a conspiracy to take over Europe that he ended up murdering 69 young people in a mass shooting on the island of Utøya in July, 2011. Leirvik does not attempt to lay this particular ghost until he briefly raises the hard questions of religiously inspired violence in a final postscript, but the building blocks of a response are there in the nine tightly organised chapters that make up the body of the text. He begins and ends with the more philosophical side of current debate, taking his primary inspiration from three 'classic' masters of the genre, Buber, Levinas and Habermas. They are supplemented by other important theorists, such as Paul Ricoeur, Homi Bhabha, Rowan Williams, and a whole host of Scandinavian thinkers, who together bring sharpness into a debate that all too easily becomes stuck in the blandness of grand concepts like secularisation and globalisation. Leirvik is clearly sympathetic to Buber's notion of the 'in-between', where human identities are formed. However, his approach is also marked by Levinas' theme of the 'face' that challenges the self-centred desire for control with

the epiphany of 'the other'. He is therefore keenly sensitive to the asymmetrical nature of all inter-personal relations and notes how particular issues of power, as much as more general concerns for truth, dominate and form all inter-communal relations. Not the least of the merits of this book is that it never loses sight of a public forum in which ordinary folk are not just victims of a handful of crazed extremists, but are also important actors in debates and practices that transcend particular allegiances and group loyalties.

In this regard, two contrasting chapters deserve special mention. The first relates to education for life in a pluralist society. Within the context of Christian and Muslim schooling, in Palestine and Egypt as much as in Scandinavia, Leirvik draws out some important reflections on how such 'globalized concepts' as tolerance, conscience and solidarity may become embedded in the lives of young people. 'Dialogical learning', in which the terms of a values-based education come up against the demands of a more confessional religious education, is not just about managing difference, but also about creating a different sort of discourse. At stake is the question of how religiously inspired language and the more 'extra-religious' language of human rights and secular politics can be brought into a correlation. In the course of dialogical engagement, Leirvik argues that human beings learn from a 'group-transcending sympathy' a certain practical skill in opening up to other ideas and concepts and, above all, other people. This raises the intriguing possibility that what Charles Taylor has identified as the modern 'buffered self' is now being challenged by an eclectic post-modern capacity to navigate between fixed positions.

The penultimate chapter bears the intriguing title, 'The Sacred Space between: a Relational Theology in Dialogue with Islam'. Leirvik sketches a 'relational theology' which deftly plots a path between what he calls the 'double experience of joint blessings and challenging differences' (p129). He wants to know whether Christ can be a 'common sign' who speaks to both Muslims and Christians. Here, the visionary voice of Buber seems to join forces with the more hesitant strains of Levinas to create a Christology that is predicated on the ethical space that opens up wherever power is eschewed in favour of vulnerability. This, Leirvik hastens to add, has nothing to do with smoothing out differences but recognising a variety of 'painfully different ways' which put one's monological sense of self-sufficiency into question. It is not that Christians and Muslims facing each other – whether in political confrontation or in the equally testing experience of reading scripture together – build points of agreement. Rather, they rely on seeking the signs of a compassionate Creator who speaks to both, most especially in experiences of vulnerability. Different peoples, working from different contexts, are bound to interpret such signs differently.

Leirvik's 'relational pneumatology', invoked to explore the Buberian 'in between', is suggestive rather than convincing. The 'humanization' of theological ethics seems plausible; everyone, whether a religiously practising 'insider' or not, is a 'participating agent' with a responsibility to explore that space with sensitivity and integrity. Leirvik is undoubtedly right to question the ease with which religious 'extremism' is tidied away as an unacceptable fringe activity on the part of a few deranged individuals. 'Strong faith' does not have to lead to violence against perceived threats; it can, however, all too easily overplay the distinction between 'true believers' and 'the others'. When the stereotypes that are perpetuated by an uncritical history are brought into the picture, one person's 'mainstream' can seem to be another's extreme view – and no doubt another's limp liberalism too. Hence the plea that runs through the book for an intelligent self-awareness in any practice or form of dialogue. Nonetheless, correlations between the experience of vulnerability and the renunciation of power are never that straightforward. Some doubt must remain as to whether pneumatology can ever be strong enough to articulate, let alone resolve, the traumas as well as the tensions that attend life in a fractured pluralist society.

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The Journal of Dialogue Studies is a multidisciplinary, peer reviewed academic journal published twice a year. Its aim is to study the theory and practice of dialogue, understood provisionally as: meaningful interaction and exchange between people (often of different social, cultural, political, religious or professional groups) who come together through various kinds of conversations or activities with a view to increased understanding. The Editors welcome vigorous discussion of this provisional description, of dialogue's effectiveness as a means of increasing understanding, and of other fundamental questions.

The Journal brings together a body of original scholarship on the theory and practice of dialogue that can be critically appraised and discussed. It publishes conceptual, research, and/or case-based works on both theory and practice, and papers that discuss wider social, cultural or political issues as these relate to the evaluation of dialogue. In this way, the Journal aims to contribute towards establishing 'dialogue studies' as a distinct academic field (or perhaps even emerging discipline).

This edition of the Journal seeks to open up and critically explore some of the ethical dimensions of dialogue, from various disciplinary perspectives and with reference to various contexts. In addressing this, contributions are made by writers with backgrounds in various national contexts including Israel, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

The Journal is published by the Institute for Dialogue Studies, the academic platform of the Dialogue Society. For further information and instructions for paper submissions, including the Journal Style Guide, please visit www.dialoguesociety.org/journal.



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