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Production of the Self during the Age of Confessionalism

David Warren Sabean

An Introduction to the Problem

DURING the last several decades, the history of the self, its nature, essential shifts, and trajectory have undergone considerable re-examination. The Western Civilization textbook premise that the history of the West and the rise of individualism correlate closely with each other is being critically examined. There are a number of different historical, anthropological, literary, and sociological discourses about bodies, memory, conscience, subjectivity, identity, privacy, sexuality, and gender, which have developed separate narratives about the self, frequently (mostly) in isolation from one another. Some recent feminist theory finds the thesis of individualism irrelevant for women and suggests that the self as a continuing story (autobiography) is gendered. Some theorists counter the creative possibilities of forgetting to a self constructed around a memory core. Multiple selves, schizoid selves, and decentered selves challenge older ideas of identity. The dialectic between public and private produces new problems about who “owns” the self, its image, and its location. Bodies, sexualities, and desire turn out to be shaped and disciplined within hidden forms of power. Old ideas about the rise of the individual and new ones about the pathologies of the self make the self and its history a central issue for contemporary debate.

The sixteenth century has always played a central role in most genealogies of the self. Charles Taylor, in *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity*, the latest scholar to go over the ground in terms of grand theory stresses the importance of the Reformation’s role in destabilizing the medieval notions of the sacred and its destruction of old hierarchies.¹ In many, if not to say most, accounts of the construction of the modern self, an inherent idea seems to be unfolding—Charles Taylor’s Hegelianism is apparent as he locates key ideas in stoicism or Augustine, which come to

1. Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge, MA, 1989), 211–33.

fruition in the Reformation, but not yet fully, as the Enlightenment has its role to play, and so forth. This tradition, which locates the central problem in consciousness and self-consciousness is no better illustrated than in Marcel Mauss's seminal essay, "A Category of the Human Mind: The Notion of Person; The Notion of Self."² Let me quote from several passages to make my point. Talking about the category of the self, he says: "Far from existing as the primordial innate idea, clearly engraved since Adam in the innermost depths of our being, it continues here slowly, and almost right up to our own time, to be built upon, to be made clearer and more specific, becoming identified with self-knowledge and the psychological consciousness."³ And in a key passage toward the end of the essay,

It is . . . not among the Cartesians, but in other circles that the problem of the "person" (*personne*) who is only consciousness has found its solution. We cannot exaggerate the importance of sectarian movements throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for the formation of political and philosophical thought. There it was that were posed the questions regarding individual liberty, regarding the individual conscience and the right to communicate directly with God, to be one's own priest, to have an inner God. The ideas of the Moravian Brothers, the Puritans, the Wesleyans and the Pietists are those which form the basis on which is established the notion: the "person" (*personne*) equals the "self" (*moi*), the "self" (*moi*) equals consciousness, and is its primordial category. All this does not go back very far. It was necessary to have Hume revolutionizing everything . . . before one could say that in the soul there were only "states of consciousness," "perceptions." Yet he ended up by hesitating when faced with the notion of "self" (*moi*) as the basic category of consciousness. . . . Only with Kant does it take on precise form. . . . Kant posed the question but did not resolve it, whether the "self" (*moi*), das Ich, is a category. The one who finally gave the answer that every act of consciousness was an act of the "self" (*moi*), the one who founded all science and all action on the "self" (*moi*), was Fichte.⁴

Such approaches to the problem as these do not allow us to examine the alternative conceptions of the self among the great mass of the population. It is assumed by someone like Mauss that philosophers merely reflect shifts in social relationships or by someone like Taylor that the solutions put together by elites eventually drive out the problematic

2. Marcel Mauss, "A Category of the Human Mind," reprinted in *The Category of the Person. Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, ed. Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, and Steven Lukes (Cambridge, 1985), 1–25.

3. *Ibid.*, 20.

4. *Ibid.*, 22.

practices of the popular classes (take his treatment of witchcraft, e.g.).⁵ In most of these accounts the state is missing and power is left out of the equation. People assume that reflexive self-consciousness is a higher form of being in the world and that a multiplicity of choices enhances the individuality of self-realization. What is forgotten is the massive program of state and quasi-state officials in the process of producing the modern self. The emergence of the modern person, whatever the complexity of its development, is seen to be unitary—we are looking for *the* modern self, *the* Western conception of the self—either in terms of a dominant normative paradigm or in terms of a kind of person typical across classes, nations, and genders. A good example of this is Clifford Geertz who speaks of “the Western conception of the person as a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe, a dynamic center of awareness, emotion, judgment, and action organized into a distinctive whole and set contrastively both against other such wholes and against its social and natural background. . . .”⁶ Alternative possibilities, tactics of resistance, or repressed formations seem to get washed out in the teleological narratives constructed by Tocqueville, Burckhardt, Simmel, Durkheim, Mauss, Dumont, and now Taylor.

In an earlier work, I wrote about a discovery many church superintendents made during the 1580s in their annual visitations to the towns and villages of the duchy of Württemberg.⁷ All over the realm there were individuals who refused to go to Communion because they were in conflict with someone or other in the community. Some were in lawsuits with each other, some were under magical attack, some were in dispute with the magistrates, some had had their honors impeached, some were involved in neighborhood or family quarrels, and some pointed to unspecified enemies. All of them were reflecting on St Paul’s injunction to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 11:27–30) not to partake in the Lord’s Supper while in an unworthy state and on the threat of sickness and death if they should. For villagers, Communion was a poison ritual which tested the state of their hearts.

The texts from the visitation records suggested that there were alternative or conflicting notions of the self in competition with each other.

5. Taylor, *Sources*, 192.

6. Clifford Geertz, “‘From the Native’s Point of View’: On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding,” in his *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York, 1983), 59.

7. David Warren Sabean, *Power in the Blood. Popular Culture and Village Discourse in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge, 1984), chap. 1.

Pastors and church officials were concerned with convincing peasants and artisans to disconnect their emotions from the particular social relations in which they were involved. While the language of villagers spoke of friends and enemies, envy and hatred, and agitated hearts, churchmen dwelled on forgiveness, reconciliation, obedience, and remorse. The churchmen of the 1580s were working with a distinction between subjective experience and objective position, suggesting that reconciliation was an internal state rather than an objective reality, that it could be based purely on attitude.

There are certain aspects of the villagers' conception of the self which can be teased from these texts and which I can only adumbrate here. In the first place, internal consciousness was composed of a set of discrete states more or less mirroring the concrete set of a person's social relationships. During the time when a person was part of a lawsuit, for example, the heart would be disturbed. A settlement brought peace back into the heart, and no memory of a former conflict or injustice would continue to agitate the emotions. For villagers, the ritual of the Sacrament concluded or signified actual reconciliation or settlement. And they interpreted unworthiness and agitation as essentially the same thing. The body and blood of Christ were physical poison to someone in a ritual state of envy, enmity, or hatred, and all of these emotions were but the subjective side of objective conditions. The villagers and pastors disagreed over the question of the possibility of reconciliation while the objective conditions remained unchanged.

Implied in the arguments of the villagers was a particular notion of memory. And this is interesting precisely because Communion was frequently the occasion for churchmen to talk about memory. One villager made it clear that the memory of his brother's injustice would have no bearing on his ability to forgive him once the courts had settled their dispute. A village headman suggested that after a court settled his affairs of honor his heart would be composed. And that refrain is repeated many times. In fact, memory (*Gedächtnis*—remembrance) plays an important role in Luther's understanding of Communion.⁸ *Gedächtnis* was the term used by Luther to refer to consciousness in a state of stimulation or liveliness, such as when a person takes the Sacrament. Remembrance is seen as an exercise which has the power to integrate the person into a unity in faith and good works. In this way, the Sacrament is a reminder, or a marker, or a stimulant. Neither the peasants in Württemberg in the 1580s nor Luther thought of the self as a consistent center of awareness with memory

8. *Vermahnung zum Sakrament des Leibes und Blutes unsers Herrn* (1530), in *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Weimar, 1883ff.), vol. 30, pt. 2, 616–23.

as the instrument for organizing that sense of personal unity. This contrasts very clearly with Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment exercises which schooled individuals to develop the self in a series of internal dialogues with its past. Alain Corbin has noted the discourse about smell and odor which was brought to bear on this later program: "What was really new was the power of odors to stir the affective memory; the search for the 'memorative sign' (as Rousseau put it), the violent confrontation of the past and the present engendered by recognition of an odor, could produce an encounter that, far from abolishing temporality, made the 'I' feel its own history and disclose itself to itself."⁹ "Of all the senses, smell was best able to produce the experience of the existence of an 'I' conceived as the 'contraction of the whole self around one single point.'"¹⁰

There are similarities and differences here with Luther. Remembrance or *Gedächtnis* at Communion was an exercise which could unify consciousness, or, as it was later put, contract "the whole self around one single point." But it is distinguished from memory by not being an internal examination but mediated experience. For Luther, the effects on consciousness were mediated by the fact that the elements were really Christ's flesh and blood. And this consciousness could not be kept alive except by repeated partaking of the Sacrament. Remembrance was oriented toward contemplation of Christ's sacrifice not toward the memory of one's spiritual journey, and therefore the Sacraments were not points along a constituted biography. People receiving grace could integrate their actions in the form of good works and neighborly love. But those who failed to receive the Sacrament were not the same kind of persons, and their actions were not predictable even to themselves. The point is that they have no consistency in behavior or personality structure. The above indicates some of the ways peasants in late sixteenth-century Protestant Württemberg appropriated and refashioned the occasion of the celebration of the Lord's Supper to suit their concerns. I think that Communion is a good place to start to examine the way European elites formulated conceptions of the self and sought to implement them at the local level.

In another context, de Certeau has drawn a crucial distinction, which might help us here.¹¹ He talks about the *strategic* position of producers of commodities but argues that the conditions of production of any goods

9. Alain Corbin, *The Foul and the Fragrant. Odor and the French Social Imagination* (Cambridge, MA, 1986), 82.

10. *Ibid.*, 83.

11. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley, 1984).

do not tell us anything about their use. "The presence and circulation of a representation (taught by preachers, educators, and popularizers . . .) tells us nothing about what it is for its users. We must first analyse its manipulation by users who are not its makers. Only then can we gauge the difference or similarity between the production of the image and the secondary production hidden in the process of utilization."¹² In contrast to the strategic position of producers, consumers of a commodity have a *tactical* position. De Certeau refers to the process of deflecting the functioning of the operations of technocratic structures by a proliferation of tactics arising in the processes of everyday life. "The goal is not to make clearer how the violence of order is transmuted into a disciplinary technology but rather to bring to light the clandestine forms taken by the dispersed, tactical, and makeshift creativity of groups or individuals already caught in the nets of 'discipline.'"¹³ This way of looking at the matter allows us to see how an institution like Communion is enveloped in a massive strategic intent—from the violent sorting out of definitions by theological specialists, to selection from a set of alternatives by churchmen-administrators for confessional uniformity, university training of pastoral cadres in hegemonic discourse, and mobilization of secular officials to establish the boundaries of deviation and to exclude competing voices at the strategic level of discourse. In a Lutheran village, common folk had only a tactical position with regard to the Lord's Supper. They could not control the scriptural text, nor gain access to the elaboration of theological codes, nor evade the state's demand that they attend under the watchful eye of the local pastor. On the other hand they constructed meanings for themselves which often remained unarticulated in the normal course of events.

This way of looking at the matter has implications for the historical analysis of popular culture. One could almost say that strategies have a history but tactics do not. This is not to imply that they do not work dialectically and that production of hegemonic discourse is not conditioned by resistances to it. It does mean, however, that the history of popular conceptions and uses of an institution like the Eucharist cannot be constructed in a fashion analogous to the genealogy of theological ideas or the practices of state control. Tactics are discontinuous and call for forms of analysis that are radically oriented to the specific, local context in which they occur. At this level we should not enquire about the genealogy of popular ideas, because they are embodied in social practice. The folklorist attempt to construct a set of popular notions runs up against

12. Ibid., xiii.

13. Ibid., xiv–xv.

the bricolage of everyday practices. Ideas and actions are not divorceable from their imbrication in the production of social relations. This is why the periodization of witchcraft, for example, is determined by the analysis of theological ideas, legal theory, and state practice. It is not, and cannot be, successfully constructed around the history of popular conceptions. Witchcraft provides an idiom which at the local level puts variant and inconsistent elements into play, constructs social fault lines, and connects social being to subjective experience.

A series of ways were developed during the period under discussion to introduce the values and power grids of the state and its functionaries, of the nobility (increasingly being refashioned as a service aristocracy), of the church (in Protestant countries serving the state), and of the university (the locus for training the new administrative and legal classes). Villages across Europe witnessed a massive intrusion of lawyers and surveyors concerned with land records; lawyers and notaries concerned with family property; bailiffs, pastors, and clerks to read edicts, wanted posters, and legal codes to assembled congregations; pastors and priests to preach sermons, hear confession, and to administer the sacraments. But I think that there was nothing quite so central to the state's purpose as the Eucharist. In seventeenth-century Catholic Bavaria, every household had to present a slip each year to visiting officials to prove that its members had attended. In Protestant Württemberg, it was a legal necessity to attend Communion in one's own village. To insist on going to another village would lead to permanent exile from the country. State officials everywhere were concerned to constitute the community around Communion.

A Case

Historians cannot always choose the stories available to them to illustrate the points they want to make, primarily because good stories scare up fresh hares and offer new leads which cannot be followed up immediately. The one I want to examine briefly involves a case from Württemberg in 1574. Hans Nägelin was exiled from his home village of Bissingen for refusing to take Communion there.¹⁴ The case centers on his refusal to take the Sacrament, but much of the testimony tells a good deal about the politics of the Lord's Supper in a village context. In Lutheran Württemberg before taking Communion on a Sunday, parishioners were expected to register the day before with the pastor and to attend confession. At this period, confession took place *im Chor* (as a group) and probably

14. Württemberg Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, A 206 Bü 2770.

involved working through a prayer-book liturgy which ended in the pastor's absolution. What was to be avoided was a secret, individual confession. In several instances in the text, we find groups of women going along to the parsonage to be absolved together. In fact, one of the issues running through the official investigation had to do with the location of confession—at the parsonage or at the church. Clearly many parishioners considered it illegitimate for confession to be heard at the pastor's home and suggested that it strengthened his hand to be able to confront people there rather than in the sacred—or more neutral—space of the church. And this was a concern of the investigators as well.

According to Nägelin's own testimony, his wife, while attending confession, had been told to stand aside and wait to talk to the pastor after he was finished with the others. Then he angrily began to yell at her. She responded by saying that she was there as a poor sinner to be heard with the others and not to quarrel with him, which made him all the more furious. He attacked her with horrible words and upbraided her inappropriately, alleging that she was like her husband and aided him in his ways. Only then did he hear her confession and absolve her. Returning home she was so upset that she tore her hair and complained bitterly about the pastor. She was afraid that he would exclude her the next day from Communion before the entire congregation as he had recently done to four other people. As a result of all of this, Hans Nägelin got so angry that he said that if he ever again took Communion from the pastor God should punish him and the devil should tear his soul from his body. Although he had been moved to say this by an angry temper (*Gemüt*), out of conscience he could not later retract it even though he behaved as a Christian otherwise and under other conditions was prepared to take Communion.

After correspondence between the ducal council and the chief regional and ecclesiastical church officials in the district of Kirchheim, the Ober- and Untervögte and Superintendent, in this matter, the council ordered an investigation to be carried out by the Vögte and Superintendent, providing a list of questions they were to ask. Various witnesses dealt with the pastor's behavior and the way he used Communion in situations which concerned himself and in village politics. Magdalena Hützer said that the pastor frequently heard individuals outside of the assembled group who subsequently then did not receive Communion. And Albanus Gienger, a member of the village court, said that the pastor regularly refused Communion to those women with whom he quarreled. There was a great deal of testimony about the rumor that the pastor had affairs with various women, and one young maid talked about his kissing her and fondling her breasts. Indeed, her master and mistress had warned her never to let

herself be caught alone with him. Anna Käblin had gotten into a shouting match with one of the pastor's women friends and called her a "priest's whore" (*Pfaffenhur*). The pastor punished her by denying her the right to come to the Lord's Supper. There was a report of a man who had died while excommunicated by the pastor. Jacob Schifer's father had been refused Communion ten years earlier because his sick wife had sent for a fortune-teller. He even had to get an order from the duke to be able to communicate again. Michael Schmidt, member of the court, knew about a man who had quarreled with the pastor and did not frequent the Lord's Supper, although he did not know who refused whom. Barbara Schebelin testified that her husband's brother had sold a garden to the village headman (*Schultheiss*), which she disallowed. She was called in to discuss the matter with the *Schultheiss*, two members of the court, and the pastor, who threatened not to let her participate in the Lord's Supper if she continued to block the sale. And finally Adam Moyningen said that Hans Nägelin, the subject of the case, had told him that because the pastor did not frequent his bathhouse, he, Nägelin, would not frequent the pastor's Communion.

The testimony gives us a view from inside the village itself. We know from other evidence that the celebration of the Eucharist could be a point of deadly seriousness in village life. Neighbors came along to a private Communion for people who were in danger of dying in order to prove that they were not responsible for the illness. And in many villages, richer people shared food and drink with poorer people during such a private Communion to heal any rifts which might cause sickness and death in the community.¹⁵ In at least one instance a pastor was murdered for denying access to the Lord's Supper.¹⁶ In the Bissingen examples, we encounter Communion used to drive out rival spiritual powers—the fortune-teller. And it was used by the pastor to get control of the round of reputation—dispensing gossip. The fear of being publicly exposed drove Hans Nägelin's wife to despair and himself to taking an oath which brought into play the heavy apparatus of the state and its leading theologians. There are also indications of a more pragmatic use of the power of the pastor to control the means of grace. In this case, the pastor brought his spiritual power to bear on the property transactions of the *Schultheiss*. The woman in the case had to confront the village headman and two members of the court, taking the transaction out of the context of a private deal to one of public substance—and then the pastor backed up that form of power with his own. Finally there are

15. Sabeau, *Power in the Blood*, chap. 1.

16. *Ibid.*, chap. 5.

hints of an exchange system between the secular and the sacred. Hans Nägelin was the bathhouse proprietor and said to be crucial for village health during an epidemic. He was a central figure for handling the pollution associated with physical dirt and cutting short the circuits of contagion—just as the pastor cut short the circuits of gossip. The bathhouse, of course, was a village institution or at least a necessary service even if owned by Nägelin. In the particular formulation of the text, it was his, just as the service of the Communion was the pastor's. And one level of interpretation of the dispute saw it as a business transaction: the pastor did not frequent his establishment, so he would not frequent the pastor's.

Nägelin was cited before the regional officials and eventually before the chancellor in Stuttgart. The whole case was also presented to the Church Consistory for theological opinion. Nägelin insisted that he had taken the vow before honorable witnesses and that it would therefore be dishonorable for him to retract it. He also adopted the language of conscience to counter any demand that he take it back. He did not cease to consider himself a good Christian and continued to take Communion but in another village. In the various hearings, Nägelin was lectured about his godless, unchristian vow. It was illegitimate to fulfill an oath with the devil as the guarantor. If such an oath occurred out of human weakness and the sinner regretted it and was penitent and threw himself on the mercy of God, he was freed from the promise and was not obligated to the devil in any way. The exchange turned around the concept of conscience in the case of an objective mistake in doctrine. The theologians took the traditional Christian position about the distinction between the Sacrament and the officiating priest. As long as the pastor offered the Sacrament according to pure doctrine as instituted by Christ, it was the substance of the Sacrament and not the person of the officiator that counted. A Christian was only permitted to pay attention to the Word and ordinance and had no right to exclude himself from his community and receive it in some other place. Nägelin's refusal to take Communion from the pastor was understood as a public testimony of secret envy and hate against the pastor, and according to Christian doctrine no one who had envy and hate in his heart was worthy to receive Communion. One of the problems with receiving Communion in another village was the fact that the pastor there would have no detailed knowledge of a communicant's faith and behavior. And even if everything alleged by Nägelin were true, his absence from Communion in his own village caused confusion and disorder. And by not having to take Communion from his own pastor he did not have to deal with his own rancor and aversion, which he ought to have dealt with to clear his

conscience for safe communication. Think of the problems that would arise if the sheep could choose their shepherd. Despite all the pressure from the authorities and several months in jail, Nägelin chose forced sale of his property, condemnation to pay court costs, and exile in order, as he put it, not to compromise his soul by taking Communion from his pastor.

It seems clear that the authorities considered the Lord's Supper as a crucial institution for constituting the community. Each member of a parish was obligated to attend the local church and take Communion there. And the Lord's Supper was the institution around which the state and its church organized objective discipline in the community. The pastor had the power to deny people access to grace and in a very real sense to the community for violations of social values and cultural rules as understood by those in authority. He could shame them, dishonor them, and put them in a spiritually dangerous state, one which re-sorted their position in the social world. Beyond this were the dynamics of subjective discipline. The state required that the communicant learn to control resentment and anger against the authorities—pastor, *Schultheiss*, *Bürgermeister*, and higher officials up to the duke himself—in order not to be poisoned by taking what the Lutheran Württemberg church establishment considered to be the real body and blood of Christ. The objective discipline was coupled with an attempt to reform the consciousness of individuals, to school them in the practice of distancing their inner selves and their emotional experience from the social and political relationships they lived through. At the strategic level the theologians had control of biblical hermeneutics (at his hearing, the authorities proved everything to Nägelin to their satisfaction from the Bible, the church fathers, and the politically correct Lutheran theologians) having to do with dispensing the Eucharist. And they knew to their satisfaction just where conscience was to be located. Nägelin jerry-built out of disparate elements of their strategic intervention a tactical space for himself. Drawing on the power of his honorable witnesses, he appropriated the power of the oath for himself. And he used the Lutheran language of conscience to support his maneuverability—he did this so well that the consistory was reluctant at first to procede too severely—since precisely this was a matter of conscience. And in the period of his open challenge to the spiritual authority of the pastor, he exposed the internal dynamics of pastoral lechery, class politics (the pastor did not deliver burial sermons for the poorer members of the village), and partisanship to the authorities in Kirchheim and Stuttgart. Even the duke knew that the pastor Johann Caspar had fondled the girls and compromised himself with several women of the village of Bissingen.

Curing Souls and Cleansing Thoughts

This is as far as I have gotten in my thinking about the discursive confrontation of pastors representing the church and state establishments and parishioners making use of the goods they have produced. The overall project, however, aims at understanding the complex ways the self was subject to intentional and unintentional interventions during the period we can roughly label as “Confessionalism,” 1550–1660. I am less interested in following high text discourse about the self through the likes of Montaigne, Descartes, and Pascal than I am in establishing the massive programs of state and church intervention which were formulated by churchmen, moralists, and officials and to understand institutions which provided points of entry to the various villages and towns across Europe. It seems to me that a good place to start is the very voluminous literature written by pastors, theologians, and church careerists on preparation for Communion. In what follows, I want to examine a series of seventeenth-century texts (Anglican, Puritan, and Lutheran) to examine three well-worked out models for connecting (or not connecting) the discipline of memory to the fashioning of self. Although there would be some justification for remaining within the German cultural area in order to draw out my contrast with local practices arising from the Nägelin story, some of the books from England I will discuss were freely available at the Frankfurt book fair and an important one by Jeremiah Dyke was translated into German.¹⁷

John Dod (with Robert Cleaver) in *Ten Sermons tending Chiefely to the fitting of men for the Worthy receiving of the Lords Supper* (1621) was concerned with gaining discipline over the inner self.¹⁸ This nonconformist, Puritan pastor understood the binary opposition between purity and sin in terms of controlled and uncontrolled thoughts. Preparation for Communion involved bringing order and discipline into the imagination. Jeremiah Dyke, another Puritan pastor, in *A Worthy Communicant* was also concerned with wandering thoughts and saw the Lord’s Supper as an institution for disciplining the imagination.¹⁹ It was an occasion for bringing

17. On the mass translation of English devotional literature in the seventeenth century, see Udo Sträter, *Sonthom, Bayley, Dyke, und Hall: Studien zur Rezeption der englischen Erbauungsliteratur in Deutschland im 17. Jahrhundert*, Beiträge zur historischen Theologie, 71 (Tübingen, 1987).

18. *Ten Sermons tending Chiefely to the fitting of men for the worthy receiving of the Lords Supper. Wherein amongst many other holy Instructions, the Doctrines of sound Repentance and Humiliation, and of God’s speciall favors unto penitent sinners, and wealthy Communicants, are largely and effectually handled* (London, 1621).

19. Jeremiah Dyke, *A Worthy Communicant: Or, a Treatise, Shewing the Due Order of Receiving the Sacrament of the Lords Supper* (London, 1636). This was translated by Conrad Neuber as, *Der würdige Disch-Genoß an der heyligen Gnaden-Tafel unsers Herrn und Heylands*

unity into the psyche, a moment of concentration where the self could be unified. As in Luther, the unregenerate had no consistency of personality, no basis for controlling their behavior, and no center around which their consciousness could be organized. The regenerate, on the other hand, had continually to discipline their imaginations periodically in preparation for Communion.

With Dod and Dyke there is the same kind of internal distancing mechanism with regard to the issue of enmity, conflict, and forgiveness which we have found within German Lutheran pastoral discourse. Both of them testify to the fact that their parishioners treated the Sacrament in the same way that Württemberg peasants did. As Dyke puts it, they make a "scruple out of charity." Whenever there is a breach or falling out between them and others, they find it impossible to attend Communion.²⁰ In fact, they treat the matter in exactly the opposite way from how they should. Personal sins like drunkenness and swearing were not taken by parishioners as any cause for great alarm. It was only when a social rupture took place that the danger in the Eucharist was operative. Precisely this illustrates Dyke's project. Sins like drunkenness and swearing were above all what should prevent a person from attending Communion. They were evidence of disunified thoughts and ill-disciplined imaginations. And repeated offences of this nature were signs that the Lord's Supper had not been the occasion for inculcating order. Breaches in the social fabric, which the population took as the far more serious problem, were subject to internal psychological manipulation. Preparing for Communion was to be an exercise in composing the heart in a sincere forgiveness. "A man is bound to forgive whether the offending party ask forgiveness or not and do so in a way that there is no malice or thought of revenge."²¹ And whether the enemy sought to repair the rupture or not, "I must forgive him in regard of malicious and vindictive thoughts. But I am not bound to testify my forgiving him, and to say to him, I forgive thee, unlesse he say, I repent. To forgive is one thing, and to say I forgive and make a solemn profession of resission is another."²²

Jesu Christi zur rechtsschaffenen Aufmunterung/herzlichem Trost und beständigem Hülff/ diejenige Tugenden Klar vor Augen stelt/ so zum Gebrauch des heyiligen Abendmahls hochnöthig erfordert werden (Hanau, 1670).

20. For a German Lutheran example, see Georg Albrecht (Superintendent in Nördlingen), *Coena Domini, Das ist: Gründliche und Schrifftmässige Erklärung des Artickels vom H. Abendmahl/ In neun und funffzig Predigten/ auß den Worten der Einsatzung/ und andern Biblischen Texten/ ordenlich abgehandlet/ und allen Geistlich-hungrigen und durstigen Seelen zur kräftigen Labsal und Erquickung vorgestellt* (Ulm, 1656), 33–36, 67.

21. Dyke, *Worthy Communicant*, 311.

22. *Ibid.*, 311–2. The same point was made by Ahasver Fritsch, *Beicht- und Communion Andachten. Denen Armen/ Unwissenden und Einfältigen Christen zum Besten/ aus Liebe/ Mitleyden und Hoffnung ihrer mercklichen Besserung und Erbauung* (Zerbst, 1675), 6–24. Also Cajus Arend

Despite the fact that social relations did not change, the inner states of the individual were subject to manipulation. Whether an enemy existed or not had no relevance for inner states and people were enjoined to go to the Sacrament without reestablishing social bonds. Dyke makes it clear that internally directed thoughts are more important than those concerned with social ties. "There should be a greater sorrow in repentance for sin than of natural affection for the loss of our dearest friends at death."²³ And an Anglican contemporary, Theophilus Field, argues that the self should not be formed in a socially constructed dialectic but from an internal examination.²⁴

I want to conclude by adumbrating an argument about what appears to me to be three different directions that considerations of memory took in pastoral discourse. The Anglican Jeremy Taylor in *The Worthy Communicant* was concerned with the progressive creation of a consistent personality. And for this the construction of a conscious biography was central. Visiting a succession of Communion offered way stations, the contemplation of which provides the important sense of who one is. One should not simply look at the sins committed during the interval since the last Communion. "Those who so limit their examination, suppose that at every Communion they begin the world anew; whereas our future life is to be a progression upon the old stock, and judgment is to be made of this that comes after, by that which went before."²⁵ "We are not to limit our examination to the interval since the last Communion, because much of our present duty is relative to the first parts of our life."²⁶ Taylor argues here for the organization of the self around a memory core. Things that happened to us twenty years ago are still operating principles of our selves, even those sins which occurred before regeneration took place. The centrality of memory is summed up nicely in the essential exercises of examination before Communion: "Compare day with day, week with week, Communion with Communion, time with time, duty with duty, and see if you can observe any advantage, any ground gotten of a passion; any further degree of the spirit of mortification, any new fires of

(pastor in Dithmarsch), *Wegweiser Christlicher Communicanten/ Was ein Christ Vor- Bey-und nach dem Heil. Abendmahl in Acht zu nehmen/auch wie oft er soll hinzugehen* (3rd ed., Lüneburg, 1679), 98–195.

23. Dyke, *Worthy Communicant*, 342.

24. Theophilus Field, *Parasceve Paschae: or A Christians Preparation to the Worthy receiving of the blessed Sacrament of the Lords Supper* (London, 1624), 8.

25. Jeremy Taylor (bishop of Down and Connor), *The Worthy Communicant: or, A Discourse of the Nature, Effects, and Blessings consequent to the Worthy Receiving of the Lords Supper; And of all the Duties required in order to a Worthy Preparation* (London, 1686), 125.

26. *Ibid.*, 125.

devotion, for by volatile, sudden and transient flames, we can never guess steadily. . . ."²⁷

For the Puritans, it appears that remembering and forgetting are much more closely linked together. Examination recalls the sins so as to place them outside of remembrance. The switch mechanism is described in terms of relative positions of memory for man and God. What the person recalls in preparation for Communion, God forgets, but what is repressed is remembered by God.²⁸ The issues of memory here are too complex to develop fully, but the Puritans seem to rely on a mechanism of forgetting, an act of purging, by which sins are recalled to memory and then expunged. In fact, as Dod puts it, since we cannot really recall all our sins, sorrow for one in depth can have the necessary effect of composing the heart.²⁹ But how does a Puritan construct a biography, since memory is something to be overcome. Just as it is a mistake to measure one's path by comparison with others, so it is a mistake to compare the present self with past selves. "He was not as a vaine and foolish man, who running in a race will be ever looking backe how much ground he hath rid: but his eye was upon the marke, considering how much he had yet to runne, how farre off he was from perfection."³⁰

By contrast with the English theologians, orthodox German Lutherans showed little interest in memory at all. Johann Förster, Professor of Theology in Wittenberg, argued against the very idea of preparing for Communion by identifying and listing individual sins.³¹ Going into detail just minimized sin. Like many Lutherans, Förster was concerned primarily that the individual experience him or herself as totally sinful. For Stephan Clotz, Superintendent in Schleswig/Holstein, self-examination was oriented toward convincing the individual that he or she was full of evil lusts.³² Counting sins was a hopeless task. In preparing oneself, the point was to integrate physical gestures (tears, cries, moans, prostration, shaking, and supplicating hand movements) with internal feelings of remorse and devotion. Many of these Lutheran pastors were in fact providing practical guides to ways of "hyping" the self less through soul searching than through mystical and ecstatic contemplation. All of them assumed a cycle of repentance and confession, leading to partaking in the Lord's Supper, followed by a relapse into the earlier state of uncertainty and bad

27. Ibid., 351.

28. Dyke, *Worthy Communicant*, 199.

29. Dod and Cleaver, *Ten Sermons*, 92.

30. Ibid., *Ten Sermons*, 195.

31. Johann Förster, *Aus des Bußfertigen Sünders Manasse Beicht und Buß Gebethlin/ Inn Sieben Predigten/ Durch gewisse Regeln richtig und deutlich gelehrt und erkläret: In der Schloßkirchen zu Wittenberg* (Wittenberg, 1611).

32. *Praxis Pietatis oder Übung der Gottseligkeit* (Schleswig, 1670).

conscience, necessitating a renewed spiritual preparation. Although many of them gave lip service to growth in God's grace and sanctification, their handbooks (sometimes over 1,000 pages long) were treatises presuming a repeated cycle of psychological depression and doubt followed by elation and security.³³

Where English Puritans and Anglicans, both influenced by Calvinist theology, lay stress on ordering thoughts and examining individual motivations and acts, Lutherans developed practices for overriding illicit thoughts with noisy piety. For Superintendent Tobias Canstatter from the Württemberg town of Brackenheim, the Christian continued to be mired in the mud and dirt of the Old Adam.³⁴ Although always attacked by evil thoughts, he or she should learn to meet them with defensive (*Stoss*) prayers, crying from the heart and groaning from the soul.³⁵ He thought it was good to mix in an assortment of aphorisms or sayings of praise. It also helped to sing Psalms, and prayers should be continually repeated while varying the formulae. A person could think out, write down, and memorize prayers to have at the ready. Repeating the Ten Commandments crowded out competing thoughts.³⁶ And all of this was to be worked into a continual daily, obsessive ritual—when one got up or went to bed, went through a doorway, sat down or stood up.³⁷ Whenever alone a person should use

33. Besides the literature already cited, see Johann Crüger (pastor in Bössow/Mecklenburg), *Delineatio Interioris Hominis, Das ist: Abbildung des Inwendigen Menschen/ Worinnen Desselben Wesen und Beschaffenheit/zusampt seinen Kräfften/Wachstumb und endliche Vollkommenheit/ Aus dem Wort der Warheit vor Augen gestellt wird* (Lübeck, 1664); Tobias Canstetter (Superintendent in Brackenheim), *Trüber Brunn und verderbte Quelle Menschlichen Hertzens/ Das ist/ Schriftmässiger oder Christlicher Bericht von Bösen Gedancken. Angefochtenen bekümmerten und versuchten Hertzen zur Lehr/ Warnung/ Erinnerung/ Besserung und Trost auß Gottes Wort verfasst/ und mit Lutheri Zeugnissen bey allen HauptPuncten erleutert und vermehret* (Frankfurt am Main, 1673), 195–96 (expressly quoting Luther); Erdmann Neumeister (Superintendent in Hamburg), *Tisch des Herrn in LII. Predigten über 1. Cor. XI. 23–32. Da zugleich in dem Eingange unterschiedliche Lieder erklärt werden, und statt der Vorrede D. Balthas Bebet[ii] Bericht von der Messe voran gesetzt ist* (Hamburg, 1722), 999; Johann Heermann (Pastor in Cöhen/Niederlausitz), *Buß-Leyter: Beicht-Büchlein und Communicanten-Büchlein* (Frankfurt, 1652), 250–51, 511; Johann Rittmeyer (pastor in Helmstedt), *Himmliches Freuden-Mahl der Kinder Gottes auf Erden. Oder Geistreiche Gebehte/ so vorbey- und nach der Beicht und heil. Abendmahl/ kräftig zu gebrauchen. Nebenst einem Heilsahnen Unterricht/ wie wir uns dabey zu verhalten; und einem ausführlichen Sünden-Register/ darnach wir uns zu prüfen/ wie wir mit Gott/ mit uns selbst/ und dem Nächsten stehen. Wie auch hundert christl. Lebens-Reguln. Mit einem Anhang einiger Geistreichen Gesänge und Lieder* (2nd ed., Helmstedt, 1684); Friederich Roth-Scholtzen, *Wehmütige Klage des bußfertigen Sünders/ mit welcher er Seine Sünde bey den Füßen des gecreutzigten Heilandes beweinet und bereuet. Nebst etlichen andern geistreichen Betrachtungen ans Licht gestellt* (5th ed., Nuremberg, 1725).

34. Canstetter, *Trüber Brunn*, 112.

35. *Ibid.*, 178.

36. *Ibid.*, 181–85.

37. *Ibid.*, 191.

gestures, weep, and cry out.³⁸ Conceptualizing religious practice in this manner precluded any self-fashioning through memory exercises. Nor could one reorient the self in a revolutionary direction through a mechanism of remembering/forgetting.

To conclude then, I want to suggest that a thorough examination of the practices associated with the Sacrament of Communion will go a long way toward enriching our understanding of alternative possibilities for constructing the self in the seventeenth century. Just to take the issue of memory as an example, I think there are four models which can be located in the texts I have looked at. In many village situations, memory was not a disciplined exercise which took an internal route to produce a consistent, unitary self. Rather memory was embedded, embodied, *in* social relations, and the ritual of Communion marked the fissions, shifts, and alliances which composed them. The self was not isolated, but its powers and connections were not amorphous either even if open in several directions. Communion could mark the trajectories of selves which were constituted in concert with other selves. Opposed to this, churchmen-administrators of all the confessions we have looked at here suggested disciplinary techniques for relocating the constituting matrix from without to within. But they divided on the question of trajectory. One set—in this story, the Puritans—saw memory tied to moments of regeneration, the self being recreated, regenerated, destroyed, and refashioned. In a very real way, a person traversed a series of points which marked discontinuities of the self. The exercises developed by those I am calling Anglican parsed the doctrine of sanctification in such a way as to think of memory as the core around which a consistent, unitary, but slowly reformed personality could be constructed. Such a self unfolded in an internal dialogue with itself, abstracted from relations with its fellows. Orthodox Lutherans provided neither the grounds for a constantly refitted interventionist personality nor the foundation for a self in a dialogue with its past. The lack of interest in detailed examination of a recovered past fits Max Weber's view of Luther's notion of the conduct of life as "an ethically unmethodical sequence of discrete acts."

I am suggesting that Luther's description of a non-consistent self with no particular center apart from divine intervention but which could be periodically contracted around a single point was not just a theological abstraction but a true description of the way he perceived people around him. In modern parlance, they had no superego. One of the grand projects of the ecclesiastical state of the seventeenth century involved the imposition of a grid over society which projected each person as radically indi-

38. Ibid., 192–94.

vidualized. Some dogmaticians developed the construct in a revolutionary direction, thinking not just in terms of a self withdrawn from the social conditions of its production but also of a self which continually broke with its own past and reconstructed itself. The idea was to produce a kind of person who was intensely aware of him or herself, organized around a single point. An alternative elite project was just as concerned with a unified self—also abstracted from its social relations—but understood wholeness and pathology in terms of a consistent inner trajectory. A third project attempted to refit a “cyclical personality structure to the new model of a self abstracted from social relationships. The three poles of this elite conception offered variants to a disciplinary project developed to produce new kinds of selves empowered to act in new constellations of authority. It seems to me that one of the important desiderata of social and cultural history is to determine how successful these programs really were, what forms of human experience were suppressed and lost as a result, what alternatives remained viable underneath hegemonic practices, and what resistances could be marshalled by people subjected to the strategies of confessional states.

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