Zygmunt Bauman: On what it means to be included

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Abstract
Although Zygmunt Bauman has written very little directly about education, his underpinning ideas on the transition from solid to liquid modernity, the mechanisms of social exclusion, the Other and the stranger have had a significant impact on education research. Taking his starting point from a questionable secular reading of Emmanuel Levinas's contribution to ethics, Bauman's account of social exclusion has become well respected. The social forces described by Bauman are always external to the individual in Bauman's social analysis of suffering in that it places no emphasis on the culpability of other human agents as the cause of the Other's suffering. This article identifies this underemphasis on human agency as a flaw in Bauman's analysis and evaluates Bauman's largely ignored and problematic understanding of inclusion, in which social inclusion and exclusion are based on the same mechanisms and identified as two sides of the same coin central for maintaining social solidarity.

Keywords
Agency, 'agentic' state, adiaphoria, Bauman, Levians, inclusion

Introduction

Zygmunt Bauman's ideas and arguments on the mechanisms of social exclusion have become well established within the field of inclusive education. However, his views on the nature of inclusion are problematic and remain largely ignored within the field. Those authors who speculate on what Bauman understands by inclusion assume that he offers an ethical position in relation to inclusion which suggests a more compassionate, more open and less oppressive vision of society. Taking his starting point from Bauman (2005), Nick

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Stevenson (2015) argues that if the democratic Left is to have a future in British politics, it needs to focus on Bauman's 'emancipatory agenda' – improving the quality of life of the most vulnerable people by enhancing their capacity as citizens. The role of pedagogy should be to enhance democratic learning rather than to enhance upward-mobility chances or impose discipline and authority from above (Stevenson, 2015: 536). Ghazala Bhatti and Yvonne Leeman (2011: 132–133) are of the opinion that Bauman's understanding of inclusion involves focusing on 'educational identities', helping students to 'acquire the confidence to become individuals who can think and act for themselves, who are well informed, democratic, socially responsible and culturally sensitive'. In contrast, Dimitris Anastasiou and James M Kauffman (2012) and Wayne Veck (2014) suggest that, from a Bauman perspective, inclusion means addressing and challenging the threat of a generalized deinstitutionalized attitude that gives popular support to dismantling welfare provision for excluded people. Whereas welfare was initially seen as something the community gave to individuals who were seen as victims of fate, in liquid modernity welfare provision has been recast as a financial burden on the community brought about by the excluded Other's individual failings, which make the excluded lazy, feckless, flawed consumers.

Drawing upon Bauman's (1999a) Culture as Praxis, Alexis Anja Kallio (2015) argues that a Bauman-inspired understanding of inclusion should be about moving away from national curriculum directives that focus on a single national culture and, rather, embracing 'cultural plurality' by enhancing students' abilities in terms of their cross-cultural communication, allowing engagement with the Other in a more 'culturally sensitive way'.

Taking her starting point from Bauman's (2004) Wasted Lives: Modernity and Its Outcasts, Farah Dubois-Shaik (2014) argues that people actively attempt to negotiate their identities, but in circumstances that are not of their own choosing. Identities are often restricted by networks of power and differential access to economic, social, cultural and political resources. Such networks generate a form of arbitrary binarism or dichotomy between nationals and foreigners, citizens and migrants. The suggestion from Dubois-Shaik is that, for Bauman, inclusion should be about creating the circumstances that allow for individual self-realisation and greater freedom in the process of identity formation. This view is echoed by Stevenson (2010), who argues that a Bauman-inspired form of inclusion should be about allowing young people to build a coherent narrative of self and a rejection of consumer-orientated lifestyles, and enhancing a greater understanding of what it means to live a good and meaningful life. A similar Bauman-inspired view of inclusion, which involves the rejection of consumerism, is also suggested by Gert Biesta (2009), who argues in favour of inclusion as a form of active citizenship inspired by a concern for the common good. Such an approach to inclusion starts from the exploration of private motivations, so that 'private worries' can be transformed or understood as 'public issues' and discussed within the public sphere.

Human waste/wasted lives

In a similar fashion to solid modernity, liquid modernity continues to define anyone who is 'not normal' or 'not ordinary' as requiring either assimilation or exclusion. Roger Slee (2011, 2013), for example, has incorporated a number of Bauman's ideas on the mechanisms of exclusion – most notably from Wasted Lives: Modernity and Its Outcasts (Bauman, 2004) – to develop an understanding of inclusive education. Slee draws on

Bauman's notion of 'the stranger', who enforces social and cultural boundaries and perpetuates the 'us and them' dynamic. Strangers are 'neither friends nor foe . . . [and] they cause confusion and anxiety' (Bauman, 1990a: 55). Slee also takes his lead from Bauman looking at the poor or underclass as not belonging to the community. The excluded 'are the collateral damage of the ethics of competition' (Slee, 2013: 10). Slee (2013: 7) explains: 'Capitalism produces "surplus populations", those whose labour is redundant. Unable to consume, they are estranged and become a source of fear and targets of derision and exclusion. Each society produces its own set of strangers'.

For Bauman, people are living in an atmosphere of ambient fear, characterised by uncertainty and instability, in which there is unqualified priority awarded to the irrationality and moral blindness of market competition, with unbounded freedom given to capital and finance, leading to a destruction of safety nets that were once provided by the state. Both Slee (2011) and Bauman (2011) view collective moral indifference and social inequality as being causes of exclusion. Individuals come to evaluate the Other by their market value or worth as a commodity in the marketplace. People who are perceived to have limited market value are identified as flawed consumers, or the unwanted strangers of the consumer society. Bauman (1998) argues that the work ethic continues to generate a 'moral economy' characterised by a deep and unchallenged discrimination. The setting for contemporary life is one of consumerist culture and individualisation, which dominates social life and at the same time prompts people to develop a fear of strangers, which gives rise to a politics of exclusion that has a tribal element, leading to a 'balkanisation of human coexistence' (Bauman, 2001: 96).

For Bauman, the generation of such human waste is the inevitable consequence of life in contemporary society. In a society of consumers, people who are 'no longer players' are no longer needed; they are seen as flawed consumers: 'It is human design that conjures up disorder together with the vision of order, dirt together with the project of purity' (Bauman, 2004: 19). The excluded human is characterised as homo sacer:

> The life of a homo sacer is devoid of value, whether in the human or in the divine perspective. Killing a homo sacer is not a punishable offence, but neither can the life of a homo sacer be used in a religious sacrifice. Stripped of human and divine significance that only law can bestow, the life of a homo sacer is worthless. (Bauman, 2004: 32)

In the era of solid modernity, the state claimed the right to make the distinction between who could and should be classed as 'belonging' and who should be classed as 'excluded'. Within liquid modernity, there has been a transformation from the social state/welfare state, based on a model of an inclusive community that cares financially for the individual who has fallen on hard times, to a 'criminal justice', 'penal' or 'crime control', exclusionary state (Bauman, 2004: 67), in which the poor are blamed for their own poverty. Refugees, in particular, are defined as human waste. When the redundant humans are already 'inside' the community, they are pushed into urban ghettoes or 'hyperghettoes' – dumping grounds for those for whom the surrounding society has no economic or political use (81). Such places are described by Bauman as prison-like, a Goffmanesque form of total institution that, in the last analysis, is little more than a 'prisonization' of public housing 'ever more reminiscent of houses of detention' (82). The social state is gradually transformed into a 'garrison state', in which the lives of poorer people and social problems in general are becoming increasingly criminalised, leading to a form of society in which '[r]epression increases and replaces compassion' (85).

Modernity and the Holocaust

Modernity and the Holocaust contains Bauman's (1989) clearest statement on the mechanisms of social exclusion. Bauman argues that the Holocaust should not be viewed as a unique event, nor a distinctly German event or mid 20th-century event. Moreover, the Holocaust should not be viewed either as abnormal within the context of modernity or as a malfunction of modernity. Rather, the Holocaust should be viewed as a product of modernity, and the Holocaust could have occurred in any modern society at any time, as genocide is rationally and technologically determined. In contrast to what Bauman (2011: 136) was later to refer to as the 'monster hypothesis', which suggests that the origin of evil action is to be found in the individual features of a perpetrator, Bauman's argument is that the immoral behaviours underpinning genocide within modernity are socially produced, and his emphasis is on the 'social nature of evil' as the product of demoralising adiaphoric processes, in which moral agency was circumvented or bypassed by the processes of rationalisation and, as such, people are not individually or personally culpable for their cruel or genocidal actions. For Bauman:

> It is true that society conceived of as an adiaphorizing mechanism offers a much better explanation of the ubiquitous cruelty endemic in human history than does the orthodox theory of the social origin of morality; it explains in particular why at a time of war or crusades or colonization or communal strife normal human collectivities are capable of performing acts which, if committed singly, are readily ascribed to the psychopathia of the perpetrator. (Bauman, 1990: 217)

The definition of the situation is defined and monitored for rather than by the individual in the agentic state by a superior in authority and, as such, 'this definition of the situation includes the description of the actor as the authority's agent' (Bauman, 1989: 162). Bauman views the adiaphoric process as the imposition of an 'alien will' onto the individual human agent. The individual may attempt to deceive the alien or rebel against the alien, but

> [t]he fact remains that in all such cases the agents are not autonomous; they do not compose the rules which govern their behaviour nor do they set the range of alternatives they are likely to scan and ponder when making their big or small choices. (Bauman, 1999b: 79)

As such, when individuals are within an agentic state, the processes of adiaphorisation prevent the conscience from alerting the individual that they are engaged in doing wrong. Activities regulated by organisations are subject to adiaphorisation in that the individual is responsible for performing set duties and tasks, but does not bear moral responsibility for them. Such a state can be identified in the responses that Adolf Eichmann made during the course of his trial. Eichmann gave evidence that he had never personally chosen any individual, Jewish or otherwise, for deportation. Bauman explored the idea that the Nazi state was the first example of a gardening state – a state that used its monopoly of violence to introduce effective engineering solutions to what the Nazi leadership identified as social problems, influenced by scientific management's emphasis on technical efficiency, division of labour and good design to shape and control society. The Nazi state as a form of solid modernity contained within it an impulse or desire for 'societal self-improvement' based on the 'urge to construct a perfect, harmonious world for humans' (Bauman, 1995: 173). As such, for Bauman, the state acted in the same fashion as a gardener would, maintaining the borders and identifying and dealing with weeds; there is nothing wrong with a weed in itself, but it is an uninvited guest that disrupts the order of the garden. In the solid modern

gardening state, people can become identified as weeds. Any person identified as disruptive to the order will be assimilated; if they cannot be assimilated, they will be excluded, but if they cannot be excluded, they will be destroyed. Categories of people come to be viewed as disruptive of the modern design. The Holocaust was, then, an example of what Bauman (2008: 80) terms categorical murder: 'the physical annihilation of men, women, and children for reason of their belonging (or having been assigned) to a category of people unfit for the intended order and on whom, for that reason, a death sentence was summarily passed'. Adiaphoria excludes some categories of people from claiming to be moral subjects and, as such, they are treated with moral insensitivity and are more likely to be exposed to suffering. There is thus a causal connection for Bauman (1995: 197–198) between moral insensitivity and the ability to commit acts of cruelty: 'Modernity did not make people more cruel; it only invented a way in which cruel things could be done by non-cruel people'.

Bauman's interpretation of suffering has always focused on categories of people rather than on individual experiences. When Michael Jacobsen and Sophia Marshman (2008) describe Bauman's understanding of social suffering, they describe it in a passive voice; the language used disguises the agents responsible for bringing the suffering into being and, as such, avoids allocating responsibility for the suffering described. Suffering is said to be 'people falling victim to the twists and turns of social development', and Bauman's focus is said to be on providing his reader with 'a description of the social roots and origins and also the social repercussions of social, economic, cultural and other conditions . . . associated with life conditions shaped by powerful social forces' (Jacobsen and Marshman, 2008: 5). The merciless forces themselves are described as amorphous, global and, above all, adiaphorising, and are listed as 'anonymous, abstract and amorphous structural conditions' (6). As Jacobsen and Marshman rightly point out, Bauman's principal focus is on 'the experience of the victims rather than actions and abuse on behalf of the guilty parties' (5). In the last analysis, Jacobsen and Marshman make it clear that Bauman's focus is always on the concern for the Other and not the 'expectation of the I or the Self' (21).

Morality, ethics and the absence of agency

Bauman concludes Modernity and the Holocaust with a plea to renew ethics in the contemporary world. Immanuel Kant's assumption of the 'moral law inside me', is central to Bauman's view of the world [it] 'is to me an axis around which all other secrets of the human condition rotate'(2014: 68). Emmanuel Levinas, for Bauman, moral responsibility involves being for the Other before one can be with the Other. This position was to become central to Bauman's later writing on morality and ethics. In Bauman's contribution to ethics, there is a clear distinction between ethics and morality. Morality is related to those characteristics of human thought, feeling and action that are concerned with the distinction that individuals make between right and wrong. In contrast, ethics is composed of rules, codes and standards built into the culture. From Bauman's perspective, sociologists have wrongly assumed that society provides a moral code designed to prevent evil and abolish ambivalence. Taking his starting point from Immanuel Kant's assumption of the 'moral law inside me', which, according to Bauman (2014: 68), 'is to me an axis around which all other secrets of the human condition rotate', individuals are assumed to have a moral impulse, which is damaged or constrained by societal processes within modernity. The focus for ethics is, then, that of obedience to a non-ambivalent and non-aporetic code. Morality is pre-social and

exists independently of intention and human agency: 'I am moral before I think', suggests Bauman (1993: 61), and this is the first reality of the self. For Bauman, morality revolves around issues of inclusion and exclusion; inclusion is the task of making the world moral, but also, surprisingly, given the central thesis of Modernity and the Holocaust, the act of exclusion is central to the maintenance of any social formation.

In his transition from Marxist to postmodernist, to sociologist of postmodernity and, finally, to his liquid turn as a sociologist of liquid modernity, Bauman has never lost his emphasis on factors eternal to the individual that shape or determine the actions of a person within a given context. Matt Dawson (2012) is of the opinion that, for Bauman, agency is revealed in the ethical relationship between self and Other. This view is reflected in Bauman's comments, such as:

> Awakening to being for the Other is the awakening of the self, which is the birth of the self. There is no other awakening, no other way of finding out myself as the unique I, the one and only I, the different I from all others, the irreplaceable I, not a specimen of a category. (Bauman, 1993: 77)

Unlike Poder (2008: 97), who argues that agency in Bauman's work is to be found within his discussion of freedom and the ability to act with the resources available, Dawson (2012) rejects this view on the grounds that the freedom to act does not come from freedom itself, but from the security to act (Bauman, 2008: 58, 62–67). From this perspective, individuality is a product of institutionalised forms of security (Bauman, 2007b: 62–67; Marotta, 2002: 49–52; Poder, 2007: 108). While not wanting to downplay the significance of what Bauman has to say about freedom, Dawson, Poder and others who suggest that Bauman's conception of agency is found within his understanding of freedom do not answer the question of why people act in one way rather than another, and how and why such actions are effective. Dawson (2012) argues that, in Bauman's work, morality is assumed to reduce the impact of adiaphorisation, and the 'heroes' of the Holocaust were those people who resisted – those people accepted the inalienability of moral concerns (Bauman, 1993: 249–250, 2008: 95–98). For Dawson (2012), agency is found in the ability of the individual to draw on their character to make an ethical choice against the adiaphoric processes within a given context.

Within the social sciences, there is general acceptance of Bauman's argument that modernity's search for societal order leads to the creation of boundaries and exclusionary practices; that modernity is associated with oppressive social practices and morality is something that we inherit from pre-modern times is also widely accepted. Modernity is about the production of symbolic and cultural boundaries or order, and the maintenance of order is the central role of the gardening state; modernity contains a will to order and, as such, the modern project is to work towards the eradication of disorder and ambivalence. Modernity is about the production of symbolic and cultural boundaries or order, and the pursuit of order is given to the gardening state; modernity contains a will to order and, as such, the modern project is to work towards the eradication of disorder and ambivalence. The drawing of boundaries between the insider and the outsider reinforces the identity of the locals and, at the same time, demonises the stranger.

Levinas's philosophy

In his ethical writings, Bauman takes his starting point from the work of Levinas. For Levinas, ethics is based on the assumption of the importance of the individual.

Every single individual is unique and maintains a quality or state of Otherness, to which Levinas gives the term 'alterity'. By alterity, Levinas means that the Other transcends all categories and concepts, including such concepts as identity, affirmation and negation. For Levinas, ethics is the first philosophy, which goes before all other philosophical ideas. For Levinas, when the self comes across the Other, we encounter the Face of the Other. The attraction of the Face is completely separate and free of the self, and yet it is the encounter with the Face that underpins social and political structures, and also forms the basis of religion and the first principle of metaphysics, in which the individual represents a concrete instance of the Idea of Infinity. No matter how we may try to think about the nature of the Other and understand them, the Other is always in part unknowable to us. Alterity forms the basis for a moral relationship with the Other. The self has responsibility for the Other. However, this responsibility can never be fully completed. Nevertheless, it is this failure fully to complete our responsibility for the Other that provides us with the motivation to continue to strive in an effort to fulfil our responsibility. When we encounter the Face of the Other, the ethical relationship that we enter into is described by Levinas as one of intense asymmetry.

For Levinas, traditional philosophy functions by trying to understand the world by categorising everything that it comes across into a classificatory system of the 'Same', within which all objects are defined and placed in relation to all other known elements within that system. It is this process of categorising and placing that determines the value of the objects – what Levinas terms a 'totality', the one complete, interrelated, systematic description of everything. This totalising process is described by Levinas as 'ontology', and its philosophical purpose is to define things as valuable by identifying their place within the system. Levinas considers totality to be potentially very dangerous on ethical grounds, because when all value is based on its relationship to categories within a system and thereby determined by the system itself, the system itself provides the rationale to reject the basic call of morality by reference to the system's own categories. The totality, then, has no place for the alterity of the Other because alterity will always place the Other outside of the Same and outside of the totality.

Again drawing upon Levinas, Bauman argues that the primal scene of morality is to be found in the sphere of the Face-to-Face. We encounter the Other as the naked and defence-less face of another human being, not an abstract Face or a category of Face, but the Face of another person, which dissolves alterity and individuality. Being with and for the Other is 'the first reality of the self, a starting point rather than a product of society' (Bauman, 1993: 13). This principle for engagement with the Other is said to have no foundation, cause or determining factor. For Levinas, there is much to be discovered within the individual inter-personal encounters with the Other; the relationship with the Other is one that involves learning from the Other, without the purpose of placing one's own interpretation of need onto the Other. It is this unknown content which the self uncovers in the encounter with the Other that initiates the ethical quality or the association between self and Other. Proximity becomes important for the link between self and Other. We become isolated individuals reaching to a state of being for the Other – a we-relationship in which we are better with each other than without. We are better when we are side by side and physically close. As a moral person, I have to take responsibility for the Other, and it is this taking of responsi-bility, triggered by the gaze of the Other, that creates the I as a moral self.

As with Levinas, Bauman's postmodern ethics is the ethics of love and caress. Bauman looks at caress as a metaphor for a moral relationship, reflecting a gesture like lovingly

stroking the contours of the Other's body. The passage from being with the Other to being for the Other involves love, which Bauman describes as resistance to objectification or an awakening to the Face by the removal of masks that hide empathy and emotion, which allows us to see the nakedness of the Face and hear the inaudible call for assistance that allows us to comprehend the vulnerability and weakness of the Other. The Other becomes my responsibility, a target for emotion, with responsibility for the Other, power over the Other and freedom vis-à -vis the Other identified by Bauman as the component parts of our 'primal moral scene'. Bauman explains that, to act morally, the self has to come to terms with what was thought to be incurable ambivalence. He makes clear what this relationship and commitment to the Other's welfare involves in practical terms:

> My responsibility for the Other . . . [i]ncludes also my responsibility for determining what needs to be done to exercise that responsibility. Which means in turn that I am responsible for defining the needs of the Other; what is good, and what is evil for the Other. If I love her and thus desire her happiness, it is my responsibility to decide what would make her truly happy. (Bauman, 1995: 64–65)

In practical terms, what this means is that when we are Face-to-Face with another person, it is difficult to be cruel to that person. What the Nazi bureaucracy did, for example, was to break this moral proximity. This bureaucratic social organisation neutralised the moral conscience of those involved by, firstly, 'stretching the distance between action and its consequences beyond the reach of moral impulse' (Bauman, 1990: 215). Stretching the distance between self and Other so that the relationship between self and Other was no longer face-to-face, in close proximity, allowed inhuman actions to be taken against the Other at a distance – an action described as the 'effacing of the face'.

Adiaphora is a product of the agentic state and includes stratagems for placing action outside of the moral–immoral axis, outside of moral evaluation, and, as such, preventing the individual from exercising moral judgement in relation to those acts that individuals themselves have engaged in. In terms of Christianity, such adiaphoric acts are not understood by the agent as sin and, as such, people can perform such acts free from stigma and moral conscience. Bauman (1989: 155) explains: 'The more rational is the organization of action, the easier it is to cause suffering – and remain at peace with oneself'. When Otto Ohlendorf (the commander of Einsatzgruppen D from June 1941 to June 1942) was asked at his trial why he obeyed orders from a superior of whom he claimed to disapprove, Bauman reports that Ohlendorf replied:

> I do not think I am in a position to judge whether his orders were moral or immoral . . . I surrender my moral conscience to the fact I was a soldier, and therefore a cog in a relatively low position of a great machine. (Bauman, 1989: 22)

The moral party of two

Again taking his starting point from Levinas, Bauman and Raud (2015) explains that, in its perfect or pure form, the moral impulse is found in the moral party of two, in which the self is in close proximity to the Other, face-to-face. However, '[t]he presence of more than one "Other" would inevitably raise quandaries that the moral impulse is unprepared to tackle' (Bauman et al., 2015: 11). Modernity has taken away people's obligations in relation to the

moral responsibility they once had towards other human beings. This condition came about because, within modernity, there was the creation of a public space that emphasised codified rules within an abstract 'imagined totality', in which there was no moral proximity. Proximity is described by Bauman as sous rapture in that proximity is not based on the physical space between two individuals, nor is proximity a social closeness. Rather, proximity is 'the density of mutual knowledge', a 'unique quality' which 'forgets reciprocity' and is rooted in love and caress (Bauman, 1993: 87).

As we have seen, Dawson (2012) suggests that Bauman's conception of agency is uncovered in the ethical relationship between self and Other. However, Bauman does not identify the awakening of the 'agency' or the birth of the 'agency' in the moral party of two, but rather that a 'self is awakened or uncovered in this relationship. Self is not agency. Baumans awakened self in his moral and ethical writings lacks agency. Within the encounter of the moral party of two, the self identifies with an individual as Other and an essential or innate impulse, and this induces the self to take responsibility for the needs of the Other. However, it is important to keep in mind that when it comes to identifying the unique individual before us as Other, the self has to identify the unique individual as belonging to a category of persons that are culturally labelled as Other. In Levinas's terms, Bauman places the unique human individual Other within the Same. The self feels compelled to follow their internal essential impulse and provide what the self feels the Other needs on the basis of the self's own preferences.

The identification of a unique individual as a category of culturally defined Other involves the transition from the moral party of two to the third. When the third appears, the intimate moral party of two gives way to society, and the treatment of the Other becomes rule-governed. The Other becomes the many and faceless – in other words, a category of person. The essential or innate impulse to act in relation to the Other involves the definition of a unique individual as a culturally defined Other, different from the self. Our moral impulse may be pre-social, but at the point of defining a unique individual as Other, the relationship with the Other becomes culturally or socially defined. The act of defining the Other and identifying a unique individual as a category of person takes the self out of the moral party of two. We inevitably find ourselves drawing on the socially and culturally defined ways in which the Other should be treated within the situation. Such social definitions imposed on the Other morally adiaphorise the self's social action in that the Other becomes dissembled into a collection of traits rather than a person in themselves. Surprisingly, in Management in a Liquid Modern World, Bauman's co-authors draw on the relationship between self and Other by use of a gardening metaphor (Bauman et al., 2015). In the relationship between the self and generalised Other, the self becomes a compassionate, benevolent and caring gardener, but a gardener who allows 'luxuriant roses [to] reach out in all directions, green shoots [to] whisk almost orgiastically throughout the whole area, not stopping for paths modestly designed for human feet' (Bauman et al., 2015: 146).

The gardener remains a gardener, shaping the Other into the garden design. In addition, taking his starting point for his ethical account of the relationship between self and Other from Levinas is itself problematic for Bauman. What is problematic about taking a starting point from Levinas is that he is unclear in terms of defining the fundamental concepts that his analysis is based upon – notably, his understanding of the Face, which is sometimes presented as the physical Face and at other times a metaphorical conceptual

device: 'In the face the Other expresses his eminence, the dimension of height and divinity from which he descends' (Levinas, 1969: 262) or:

> The skin of the face is that which stays most naked, most destitute … [T]here is an essential poverty in the face; the proof of this is that one tries to mask this poverty by putting on poses, by taking on a countenance. The face is exposed, menaced. (Levinas, 1996: 86)

Being with the Other and for the Other, for Bauman, means listening to the Other's unspoken command; as the command is unspoken, it is Bauman who gives voice to the Other, and Bauman assumes unlimited responsibility over the Other on the basis of his own interpretation of the needs of Other. As Bauman makes clear:

> it is I who must give voice to that command … if I want to make sure that my responsibility has been exercised in full, that nothing has been left undone, overlooked or neglected, I will feel obliged to include in my responsibility also the duty to overcome what I can see as nothing else but her ignorance, or misinterpretation, of 'her own best interest' … I must force the Other to submit to what I, in my best conscience, interpret as 'her own good'. (Bauman, 1993: 90–91)

In his later writings, such as *Of God and Man,* the importance given to dialogue is dismissed by Bauman with the comment that '[d]ialogue and interaction become not only unnecessary, but even redundant, interfering with the bliss of the possessed truth' (Bauman and Obirek, 2015: 23). In his ethical writings, then, the relationship between self and Other is not built on dialogue with the Other. There is no engagement with the Other in terms of reaching an understanding by discussion of the Other's perspective of their needs and desires. The Other is identified, and culturally defined appropriate ways of behaving towards the Other are applied unthinkingly. The definition of the situation – the application of the natural attitude or the rules of typicality in relation to how the category of Other should be treated – is accepted without question or reflection by Bauman's self. Again drawing on the logic and Again drawing on the gardening metaphor, for Bauman (1993: 97), in the face-to-face and one-to-one relationship between self and Other, people 'tend to turn themselves into artist-gardeners, and their partners into gardens'. The relationship between self and Other involves the changing or the converting of the Other so that the unique Other person becomes, by design, similar to the generalised conception of the self in society – what Bauman and Obirek (2015: 27) describe as the 'urge to convert' the Other and the exclusion of or the urge to leave out, reject or ignore the Other, who cannot be converted.

   Love is said to have an 'aporetic character' in that it has at its core a conflict that cannot be resolved, whereas 'caress', for Bauman, is rooted in ambivalence, and without ambivalence there is no love. The underpinning intention of love is the care of the Other. Love legitimises the treatment of the Other by the self. What we do to the Other to make that person more like the self is legitimate because such action is in the best interest of the Other. Unlike other contributors to proximity ethics – most notably Martin Buber, who argues that it is only through dialogue that I and You can interact and fully meet – as we have seen, Bauman places no emphasis on dialogue with the Other in order to come to an understanding of the wants, needs and desires of the Other. The absence of dialogue with the Other, even when the self is doing something to the Other such as engaging in love and caress, is to treat the Other without humanity and without individuality. Bauman does not view the Other as a unique individual, but as a category of person and, as such, this act of defining and categorising contributes to the powerlessness of the Other. How did this situation come about? The answer is that ethical problems are framed within a culture; it is our socialisation

into a culture that the self comes to understand, and thereby gain an insight into what is understood as right and wrong: 'the moral self is not made by commandments from on high, or by presumptions of reason, but from the indomitable fact of our dependence on the other humans and on our solidarity' (Bauman and Obirek, 2015: 44). The moral party of two is, at best, an abstract conceptual device, whereas we all live within social arrangements with a third. Individuals cannot exist independently of society; individuals cannot communicate even with themselves, except by drawing on the societal resource of language; and our understanding of what it means to do the right thing for the Other is culturally shaped.

Keith Tester identifies a distinction in Bauman's work between culture and civilisation, and expresses the opinion that:

> Bauman is too aware of history not to know that hatred cannot be ignored. But his commitment to a narrative of Culture which stresses universal and almost spiritual human qualities and capacities means that he gives the chance of hatred rather less weight than it merits. (Tester, 1997: 140)

In Bauman's ethical writings, the degree to which morality is pre-social or pre-societal is unclear. Morality is social but pre-societal, suggests Tester (2004: 144), in that morality has its roots in 'inter-human togetherness' but not necessarily societal agencies and institutions that manage people. In Levinas's terms, we can never escape the life with the third.

Character and fate

The interplay between agency and context is discussed by Bauman with reference to the concepts of character and fate. Fate is described as 'the collective name for everything that happened/happens/will happen to us but is not of our own making, or due to our influence or choice', whereas character is described as 'the collective name for such aspects of ourselves as we can and ought to work on – even if they are not entirely obedient to our efforts . . . Fate determines the range of realistic options; but character chooses among those options' (Bauman and Obirek, 2015: 56).

The individual, for Bauman, comes to know who they are and the meaning of their life by participating in a culture. The underemphasis on agency in relation to action is to be found in the statement where Bauman describes himself as

> a sociologist first . . . interested primarily in social settings (rather than trying to fathom the essentially recondite, impenetrable/inscrutable as we've already agreed, depth of the 'interiority'); the settings that enhance the likelihood of one rather than another of the alternative possibilities occurring. (Bauman and Raud, 2015: 28)

This means that the intentionality of the individual within a given context is hidden, esoteric and mysterious. However, what is not 'impenetrable' and 'inscrutable' is the context in which a person finds themselves and the impact that the context has on the behaviours of the individual.

Bauman and Raud (2015: 103) also draw on the distinction between 'fate' and 'character', with fate described as 'the accumulation of factors on which one has no influence, able neither to modify them nor to wish them away'. Fate provides the 'fixed assortment' of realistic options that the person is 'locked' into: 'fate reaches the actor not only as an alien force, but also (and probably mainly) in the form already processed into a set of adopted and internalized predispositions and preferences'. Character is not 'agency', but the ability of the

individual to reflect on their fate. Culture is a set of norms that we regard as having a degree of obligation to fulfil. Bauman does not attempt to describe or analyse the lived experience or claim to have access to the lived subjectivity of the individual. Rather, he employs a set of analytical concepts to explain motives and intentions without describing the immediacy of the individual experience. Bauman attempts to understand social actions in an objective fashion by looking at social forces external to the individual within the context that the individual finds themselves and with no reference to a first-person perspective or self-awareness. Agency has no explanatory role to play in Bauman's ethical analysis. Bauman's rejection of the 'monster hypothesis' (personal culpability for evil actions) and search for the social origin of evil means that questions such as 'Who did this?' and 'Who is responsible for this?' are irrelevant for Bauman. The relevant questions for Bauman are: 'What external social processes made a person unaware that their actions were evil?' or 'What are the causal links?'. Adiaphoria prevents actions and events from having any significant moral or ethical intelligibility for the people who are involved in carrying out the actions. Adiaphoria introduces a notion of a deterministic non-agency into the self, meaning that we do not have to self-attribute immoral actions to our self, but can point to something outside of the self. The ethical content of an action or experience does not have the quality of a first-person action with an experiential mineness.

Character is described by Bauman as providing the individual with a test of moral acceptability. However, character is not agency for Bauman (2008: 53), but a concept that describes the totality of our individual dispositions, traits and inclinations that are acquired from nature and constitute our distinctive personality: 'Being an individual is not itself a matter of choice, but a decree of fate' and, as individuals, we have to exercise our agency and make our life choices 'under conditions that entirely elude one's own intellectual as well as practical grasp'. Conditions external to the individual defy human agency to the extent as to 'lay our personal destiny at the doorstep of impersonal fate' (Bauman, 2008: 39). Fate is beyond the individual's control and makes 'some choices more probable than others' (Bauman, 2010: 45). It is something 'we can do little about' (Bauman and Nazzeo, 2012: 5).

Why is proximity moral?

For Bauman, proximity shapes the decision-making of the self in relation to the Other. The self chooses to be moral because of the impact of proximity on the inherent moral impulse, rather than by the active choice of the self to exercise their moral agency. In Levinas's (1989: 124) terms, proximity is 'not reducible to phenomena of consciousness'. Moreover, proximity is important for Levinas because the self observes something of themselves in the face of the Other and, at the same time, sees something of the face of God in the face of the Other, as God made the Other in God's own image. For Levinas, in traditional philosophy, ontology is the relation between people/beings on which all philosophy is based. We understand ontology as a fact that the mind knows. Levinas wants to question traditional ontology and suggests that ontology is not a fact, but does have a facticity of temporal existence. Traditional ontology makes us confused in that we read the particular by use of the totality; we mistake the unique qualities of a given individual by viewing and making sense of the Other as a category presented to us within the totality of the Same. Ontology strips the Other of their independence and uniqueness. Ontology is experienced as a fact that is beyond our intentions but is based on an 'act of intellection'.

Understanding the Other in traditional philosophy involves drawing on our knowledge of the universal, looking beyond the Other and placing that Other on a horizon of being. We do not understand the Other as a particular person, but we believe that we understand the Other before we speak to the Other – but we do not; we only name the Other. In contrast, for Levinas, the relationship with the Other should involve an invocation of a Face. This invocation is used to look into the Face of the Other with depth and for the placement of the Other on a horizon.

Although he acknowledges that religions have lost their regulatory role within the modern consciousness, without God the totality is incomplete for Levinas. It is the existence of God that our understanding of guilt and innocence is derived from: 'Guilt and innocence presuppose a being... guilt and innocence presuppose that a free being can injure a free being and suffer the repercussions of the wrong it has caused' (Levinas, 2006: 15).

Forgiveness is only possible in an intimate society that resists universality – a society of beings who are present with one another because they have chosen one another, a society of two people with third parties excluded. When the third person is present, this presence disrupts the intimacy, as the third represents the true nature of the social. Moreover, for Levinas (2006: 31), the totality is 'constituted by violence and corruption'. However, as Levinas (2006: 18) also makes clear: 'we cannot act on a daily basis in approaching our fellow man as if he were the only person in the world'. Love, justice and legitimate judgment are only possible when the third party is present if God is included in the totality, as God is the infinite source of forgiveness. It is God who provides the moral consciousness; it is God who turns the Face of the Other towards us. Without God, person-to-person discourse would not be possible, as the totality would impose impersonal reason on the Other, suppressing their unique qualities. For Levinas, the imposition of impersonal reason on the Other is to treat the Other as a 'concept' and as 'without a Face'.

For Levinas, the humility of God is essential in terms of the construction of human subjectivity. In Face-to-Face proximity, God presents himself as humble, poor and persecuted – as the absolute Other and the source of moral value: 'the proximity of God which can only occur in humility' (Levinas, 2006: 48). God is 'inscribed in the Face of the Other' (92). There is a covenant between God and the persecuted, and this covenant is represented as a Thou 'inserted between the I and the absolute He [God]' (50). The presence of God inscribes morality into our subjectivity, and this can then be seen in the Face of the Other. Levinas explains that there is the real presence of God in our relationship with the Other: 'It is not a metaphor; it is not only extremely important, it is literally true. I am not saying the other is God, but in his or her Face I hear the Word of God' (94). God provides an awakening of me by the Other. Awakening is not based on any universal principles, but occurs by recognising the Other as a fellow human being. Awakening involves a questioning of the Same and is brought about by the 'idea of God in us, going beyond our capacity as finite beings' (76).

There is a difference between the suffering of the Other and the suffering in me or my own experience of suffering. When our attention is directed to the suffering of the Other, this brings about a connection between self and Other, and this binding forms the basis of an absolute ethical principle: the obligation to assist the Other. 'The consciousness of this inescapable obligation brings us close to God in a more difficult, but also a more spiritual, way than does confidence in any kind of theodicy' (Levinas, 2006: 81). The central role of God in making the relationship with the third moral is a recurring theme in Levinas, and this is problematic for Bauman, who is an agnostic and makes his agnostic position clear in the opening pages of Bauman and Obirek (2015). For Levinas, the one-to-one, Face-to-Face

intimate relation between self and Other is a practical impossibility for a person who does not allow God into their life because, without God, all relationships are social relationships, with the third, and are mediated by a culture of the Same.

For Bauman, inclusion is the task of making the world moral, but the act of exclusion is also moral, and both processes are central to the maintenance of any social formation. Bauman explains that social capital is a universal building block of social organisation that defines the durability of our social ties and the mutual trust between people. Taking his starting point from Putnam (2000), Bauman differentiates between two ways of utilising social capital, which he terms 'bridging' and 'bonding'. Bridging can be viewed in terms of our efforts to achieve social advancement, whilst the lack of bridging can be seen as a factor underpinning social degradation. Bonding is the use of social capital to cement groups and entrench oneself in an inherited or attained position, 'limiting outsiders' access to the group, excluding intruders or limiting the right to free choice accorded to the group's members' (Bauman and Obirek, 2015: 26).

Social capital is a resource that we draw on to both include and exclude the Other. It is, suggests Bauman, 'just as crucial for throwing the gates open as it is for digging moats . . . it is used for both goals' (Bauman and Obirek, 2015: 26). Moreover, all social groups 'derive their capacity of survival from a dialectic of integration and separation . . . inclusion and exclusion . . . neither of the two processes can be entirely eliminated' (26–27). Bridging and bonding, inclusion and exclusion are, then, what Bauman and Obirek describe as two sides of the same coin: 'they cannot get by without each other'; underpinning inclusion is the 'urge to convert' the Other, whilst exclusion is the urge to leave out, reject or ignore (27).

Conclusions

Bauman's conception of the mechanisms of social exclusion is well known and widely accepted. His understanding of inclusion is less well known, often speculated about and problematic. Taking his starting point from a secular reading of Levinas, for Bauman, to include is to make use of love and caress in an effort to provide the Other with what is culturally defined as lacking in the Other compared to ourselves. We have no dialogue with the Other as to their wants and desires, but because we live in a culture or totality that allows us to understand the needs of the Other, our inner impulse to be moral informs us on how to act inclusively. To include, for Bauman, is to cultivate the Other, to take away their distinct Otherness, and we do this by treating the Other as would a benign or caring gardener. To include the Other is to make the Other like ourselves. Our moral impulse, argues Bauman, is pre-social, meaning that it exists before agency and individual intentionality and, as such, cannot be questioned or interpreted by the self. For Levinas, to be moral is to include rather than to exclude; in contrast, for Bauman, all forms of social formation are dependent on acting on the desire both to include and to exclude. Moreover, Levinas places God between I and Other to provide justice and morality in the presence of the third. It is God who allows self, Other and the third to treat each other inclusively. However, the absence of God in Bauman's analysis potentially leads the self to engage in the imposition of unwanted and undesired love and caress on a generalised Other – an individual who has lost their distinct individuality and has become defined by the imposition of a set of abstract characteristics. It is this imposition of a set of abstract characteristics that provides an opening for Bauman's understanding of social inclusion to generate unthinking cruelty in the world.

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