

Untangling integrity

A search for a basic framework



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Cover illustration: Photograph taken by Lewis Hine for the Tennessee Valley Authority: “Setting up a sleeping tent at CCC Camp, TVA #22, near Esco, Tennessee, to accommodate replacements who arrived from New York on November 17, 1933. The nucleus of this camp arrived on October 19, 1933, from Idaho, where they had been working during the summer. They had re-enrolled for a further period of six months just before coming here.” Edited by Myrthe Lenselink.

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Preface

It has been very interesting to analyse the concept of integrity. In February this year, five months ago now, I started with a rather vague notion of it and then just started reading. For five months – both for my thesis and internship at the Centre for Ethics and Health¹ - I read about integrity, thought about integrity, discussed integrity, interviewed people about integrity, dreamed about integrity and wrote about integrity. It has become a tremendously fascinating quest: it is striking how a concept can be interesting just because it is vague. I have tried my best to untangle the concept and this thesis is a result of this attempt.

I would like to thank Dr. Mariëtte van Hoven, who was of great support, not only by supervising my thesis and internship but also by teaching several of the inspiring courses in the master program. I would also like to thank Dr. Ineke Bolt for what I learnt in the courses and for supporting me when taking the first steps towards a professional career. Both Mariëtte and Ineke have been of great support throughout the 1,5 year that I studied Applied Ethics.

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Myrthe Lenselink
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¹ Centrum voor Ethiek en Gezondheid (CEG)

Summary

This thesis aims to provide a framework on which discussions on integrity should be based, which is needed because integrity seems to have become a ‘container concept’: too many things are attributed to the concept. In order to provide some clarity in the debate this thesis describes four different views on integrity that have widely influenced the debate, namely the views as presented by Frankfurt, Williams, Korsgaard, and Calhoun. Besides describing these accounts of integrity this thesis analyses them and seeks overlap in the different theories. The three points where the different theories meet are the components that each discussion on integrity should at all times involve and thus form the framework on which further ideas can be based. The thesis does not contain a new and comprehensive definition of integrity but shows which components should at least be included in the concept of integrity.

Key words: integrity, autonomy, identity, authenticity, agency, community, will, desires, person, framework

01. Introduction

The term ‘integrity’ is a popular, but at the same time, rather puzzling term. Generally, the idea that people have of integrity is highly valued. But what is it? The notion of integrity seems to cover a variety of meanings but lacks one comprehensive or clear meaning. For example, the New Oxford American Dictionary describes integrity as “the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; moral uprightness”, *and* as “the state of being whole and undivided”. According to Oxford American Writer’s Thesaurus the following terms are all synonyms of integrity: honesty; probity; rectitude; honour; good character; principle(s); ethics; morals; righteousness; morality; virtue; decency; fairness; scrupulousness; sincerity; truthfulness; trustworthiness. When media write about integrity the term is often put in contrast with fraud, corruption, conflicts of interest, abuse of power, self-enrichment, shady declarations, plagiarism, and so on and so forth. I have even heard someone connect ‘environmental friendliness’ to integrity. Thus, when people speak of integrity they seem to refer to some of the concepts revolving *around* it. In the philosophical debate there is no consensus about the exact meaning of integrity either. Roughly two ideas can be distinguished in the debate: namely integrity as striving for or maintaining a certain unity or wholeness of character, and integrity as involving morally good or just conduct. The first idea correlates to the etymology of the word integrity: it is derived from the Latin word ‘*integritas*’, which means ‘wholeness’ or ‘soundness’.

Integrity seems to become a container concept or a label for too many different things, or as Scherkoske typically characterised it: “a Swiss Army Knife of virtues”². However tempting it is to put all the things we admire in people in one word, doing so will not conduce to a clear and understandable debate. A confused meaning of the term increases the chance of a confused debate. It is important to understand the ‘core’ of the concept before including too many other things. What are we actually talking about? My aim in this thesis is to do some spring-cleaning in the discourse on integrity. I will untangle four different interpretations of the concept in order to answer the question: what components of integrity should at least be involved in the discussion on integrity? I will provide a basic framework for the integrity debate.

² G. Scherkoske, “Integrity and moral danger”, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 40, No. 9, p. 337

I will examine the views of four philosophers, of which three have evidently left their marks on the debate (Harry Frankfurt, Bernard Williams and Cheshire Calhoun); and one is a newcomer (Christine Korsgaard). Because they all approach integrity from different angles and thus provide completely different arguments for what integrity consists of and why it is important, the sum of these four will comprehend a big part of the debate. The reason why it is important to look for the meaning of integrity in the philosophical debate rather than the public debate or dictionaries is that the philosophical theories are essentially connected to *why* integrity should be explained in a certain way. The philosophical debate facilitates understanding the term rather than just knowing what it (more or less) is.

First I will examine the ‘integrated self-view’ by Frankfurt in chapter 2. Frankfurt is particularly famous for his contribution to the discourse on autonomy, but his perspective has been very important in the debate on integrity as well, even though he did not explicitly scrutinise the concept integrity. According to Frankfurt integrity can be equated with wholeheartedness; in a nutshell, a person’s desires and volitions should be in harmony. When there is no conflict among his desires, the person can identify with his second-order desires and have second-order volitions. One could say it all comes down to volitional unity. This may sound puzzling now but I will provide a comprehensive analysis of this standpoint later. Subsequently I will examine Williams’ influential and often referred-to ‘identity-view’ in chapter 3. Williams presents the concept of integrity implicitly to us, in his critique on utilitarianism. Utilitarianism demands of agents that they abandon their own ‘ground projects’ – projects that an agent identifies with on such a deep level that it is what his life is about – in order to maximise the utility for all, which Williams finds objectionable. In chapter 4 I turn to the ‘self-constitution-view’ presented by Korsgaard – perhaps not as well known in the integrity debate as the other authors, but certainly no less interesting. Korsgaard argues that for a movement to be expressive of oneself in the way an action must be, it must result from one’s entire nature working as an integrated whole. That is to say, every action and choice constitute one’s identity, thus with every move you make, you decide who you are. In chapter 5 I will discuss the ‘standing for something-view’ presented by Calhoun, who criticises both Williams and Frankfurt, and then argues that the notion of ‘standing for something’ is central to the meaning of integrity. According to her, integrity is tightly connected to viewing oneself as one among many others in a community, whereby she is the first one of the above

mentioned authors to explicitly state that the relation to *others* is central for integrity. I chose for this sequence because the first three philosophers seem to characterise integrity as having a proper relation to the self: Frankfurt focuses on autonomy, Williams focuses on identity and Korsgaard combines these two by focusing on both agency and identity. Calhoun on the other hand, characterises integrity as having a proper relation to others. I will offer a thorough examination of each philosophical view on integrity. I find it crucial to let them ‘speak first’ before criticising and analysing them. Hence the chapters on the four accounts will consist of: first, an accurate summary of the standpoint, following the steps taken as closely as possible, second, an analysis of what is meant, and third, the main critiques with possible replies. Subsequently I will analyse the four views in chapter 6; I will point out important analogies and present a basic framework. Thereafter, in chapter 7, I will discuss a practical dilemma by means of the four different views, showing how each can be of help in practice and what the shortcomings of the individual theories are. Finally (chapter 8) I will conclude which components of integrity should at least be involved in the discussion on integrity.

The aim of this thesis is to get a clear understanding of what integrity should at least involve. I will not defend a completely new definition of integrity, however I will untangle four different concepts and analyse them in order to create a basic framework on which further ideas can be based. I believe this is essential, since the term is used in too many diverging meanings.

02. Wholeheartedness - Harry Frankfurt

This chapter examines the account of integrity presented by Harry Frankfurt, which is known as ‘the integrated self-view’. Frankfurt explains how we should understand autonomy and freedom of the will. It appears that these concepts are tightly connected to integrity, because in order to be an autonomous person and to enjoy freedom of the will, one ought to be a ‘fully integrated self’. In order to find out what is meant by this, first we need to examine what Frankfurt can tell us about what it is to be a person.

Desires of the first and second order

To begin with, Frankfurt argues that only human beings can be persons. The mere fact that we are human beings does not render us autonomous, however creatures from other species do not have the capabilities that are necessary for autonomy³ - and thus for being a person. The essential difference, Frankfurt argues, can be found in “the structure of a person’s will”⁴. Most animals are capable of having “first-order desires”: inclinations and desires to do or not to do something⁵. Persons are capable, not only of having these desires, but also of *reflecting* on them. Persons are able to form “second-order desires”: desires to have or not to have certain first-order desires⁶. Hence, in order to identify the will of an agent, identifying mere desires will not suffice; we need to identify the desire(s) by which she is motivated – or will or would be motivated – to perform an action⁷. In other words, we need to identify the *effective* desire: the desire that “moves a person all the way to action”⁸. So when a person has a certain desire and at the same time wants this desire to be effective, she wants this desire to be her will⁹. Consider this: someone may have a desire to eat a Big Mac Menu. At the same time she has the desire to work on being in good health. Eating a Big Mac Menu will not conduce to being healthy, so she may not want this desire to effectively move her to act. In this case, she does not want her desire to be her will. And if she does act according to this desire, the desire upon which she prefers not to act; she is unable to do what she actually wants to do¹⁰. In that case there is a lack of coherence or harmony between her higher-order preference “concerning which of her desires she wants to be most effective and the first-order

³ H. Frankfurt, “Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person” (hereafter referred to as FoW), p. 6

⁴ FoW, p. 6

⁵ FoW, p. 7

⁶ FoW, p. 7

⁷ FoW, p. 8

⁸ FoW, p. 8-9

⁹ FoW, p. 10

¹⁰ H. Frankfurt, “Identification and wholeheartedness” (hereafter referred to as IW), p. 33

desire that actually is the most effective in moving her when she acts”¹¹. It is only if a person has a desire to do something *and* also a desire to have this desire, that she can “coherently want this desire not merely to be one of her desires, but more decisively, to be her will”¹². There are two kinds of second-order desires: when a person wants to have a certain desire or when she wants a certain desire to be her will. The latter kind is what Frankfurt calls “second-order volitions”¹³. Second-order volitions are essential for being a person¹⁴. Frankfurt summarises the above in a clear way:

“There are at the lowest level first-order desires to perform one or another action...In addition, people characteristically have second-order desires concerning what first-order desires they want; and they have second-order volitions concerning which first-order desire they want to be their will”¹⁵.

Wantons

Agents that let themselves be led by their first-order desires only, but have no desires or volitions of the second order, cannot be persons. Frankfurt calls these agents “wantons”¹⁶. Now it has already been said that nonhuman animals that have desires cannot be persons, but to this class of wantons also belong young children and some adults¹⁷ – very old people and mentally disabled people, though Frankfurt does not mention this specifically. People can be “more or less wanton”¹⁸ or act more or less wantonly, when they sometimes act in response to first-order desires without having second-order desires. Wantons do not care about the desirability of their desires; they do not care about the question of what their will is to be¹⁹. Persons, on the other hand, are critically aware of their own will and of deciding what their will is to be, that is, of forming second-order volitions²⁰. According to Frankfurt we are especially aware of this because we are deeply concerned with what other people think of us. We care about what we are, what we wish to be and how we appear to others²¹.

¹¹ IW, p. 33

¹² FoW, p. 10

¹³ FoW, p. 10

¹⁴ FoW, p. 10

¹⁵ IW, p. 32

¹⁶ FoW, p. 11

¹⁷ FoW, p. 11

¹⁸ FoW, p. 11

¹⁹ FoW, p. 11

²⁰ FoW, p. 12

²¹ IW, p. 31

Freedom of the will

It is *because* persons are critically aware of their will, and able to form second-order volitions, that they are “capable both of enjoying and of lacking freedom of the will”²². What does Frankfurt mean by freedom of the will? Doing what one wants to do is not sufficient for having a free will: it has something to do with the *desires* that a person has²³. Frankfurt explains:

“Now freedom of action is (roughly, at least) the freedom to do what one wants to do. Analogously, then, the statement that a person enjoys freedom of the will means (also roughly) that he is free to want what he wants to want. More precisely, it means that he is free to will what he wants to will, or to have the will he wants”²⁴.

Thus the freedom of the will can be found in the capability of a person to conform her will to her second-order volitions²⁵.

Deciding

As Frankfurt puts it, deliberating about what to do is “seeking an alternative to doing what comes naturally”²⁶ (an alternative to a reflexive response to first-order desires), and thus replacing “the liberty of anarchic impulsive behaviour with the autonomy of being under his own control”²⁷. When a person makes a decision to do something, he identifies with the act of doing that ‘something’. Frankfurt notes that the closest way to describe the verb ‘deciding’ is: “to make up one’s mind”²⁸. ‘Making up’ in this sense means: to create “an orderly arrangement”²⁹ (of desires and volitions). The person who makes up his mind, endeavours to make himself into an *integrated whole*. By ordering and rejecting the desires that occur, one creates a self³⁰. It can thus be said, “the function of decision is to integrate the person both dynamically and statically”³¹. Why dynamically and statically? Dynamically implies coherence and unity of purpose *over time*³², whereas statically refers to the *hierarchical structure* by which the identity may be constituted.

²² FoW, p. 14

²³ FoW, p. 15

²⁴ FoW, p. 15

²⁵ FoW, p. 15

²⁶ IW, p. 43

²⁷ IW, p. 43

²⁸ IW, p. 41

²⁹ IW, p. 41

³⁰ IW, p. 39

³¹ IW, p. 43

³² IW, p. 43

Conflicting desires

Frankfurt adds that persons are indeed more complicated than this sketch of the structure of the will suggests, since there is no less room for conflict and ambivalence with regard to second-order desires than to first-order desires³³. However if a person has conflicting second-order desires and is not able to choose among them, he cannot have a second-order volition. This way, he cannot decide which of the first-order desires is going to be effective for his will. Frankfurt writes that if such a conflict is so severe that it prevents the person from identifying himself with any of his first-order desires, it will destroy him as a person³⁴; it will turn him into “a helpless bystander to the forces that move him”³⁵. This does not imply that a person can never have conflicting second-order desires. However, if he cannot identify with any of his desires *at all*, then it will destroy him as a person. Persons may have desires and volitions of a higher order than just the second, especially if the second-order desires conflict. There is no limit to having higher and higher order desires, but, according to Frankfurt, in practice this will not be problematic since common sense prevents us from refusing to identify with any desire³⁶. If you decide that you want to concentrate on your work, then there is no room for forming second-order desires to let the incentives around you be the motive force to move you. If you commit to concentrating on your work, this means you decide, “that no further questions about your second-order volition, at any higher order, remain to be asked”³⁷.

Integrity

Now the point is reached where it becomes possible to distinguish what Frankfurt writes about integrity. Persons who are able to resolve their inner conflicts and bring all these levels of desires and volitions into a harmonious whole, and who identify themselves with the volitions of the highest order, are wholly integrated persons: “a person who makes up his mind also seeks thereby to overcome or to supersede a condition of inner division and to make himself into an integrated whole”³⁸. Such a person has control over his will. People who always act upon their first-order desires, without reflection, lack integrity. So what does integrity require? It requires that you are able to discriminate between your desires. The person of integrity reflects on the question of what his will is

³³ FoW, p. 15

³⁴ FoW, p. 16

³⁵ FoW, p. 16

³⁶ FoW, p. 16

³⁷ FoW, p. 16

³⁸ IW, p. 42

to be. Integrity therefore requires the rational capacities to critically reflect upon what one really wants. And even when your second-order desires conflict – when you are not sure what you really want - you will not be a ‘helpless bystander’ to this conflict: you will avoid or solve these sorts of conflicts. You will *make up your mind* and establish preferences concerning the resolution of conflicts³⁹. Hence, in order to be a person of integrity, one should be a rational being that has control over his will. When someone decides to commit himself to a certain desire, Frankfurt writes,

“the person no longer holds himself at all apart from the desire to which he has committed himself. It is no longer unsettled or uncertain whether the object of that desire – that is, what he wants – is what he really wants: the decision determines what the person really wants by making the desires upon which he decides fully his own. To this extent the person, in making a decision by which he identifies with a desire, *constitutes himself*”⁴⁰

Thus integrity can be found in the constitution of the self, without unresolved conflicts of desires and volitions, without ambivalence; it is found in the *wholeheartedness* by which a person constitutes himself. So: in order to be a person, one should be able to enjoy freedom of the will. And to enjoy freedom of the will, one should have control *over* the will, that is, to wholeheartedly identify oneself with what one wills. In other words: to be an integrated self. People always have many conflicting desires and there is no doubt that we would not attribute integrity to those who always respond to these desires by immediately acting upon them. By distinguishing first and second-order desires and volitions Frankfurt provides a justification for the claim that the above described persons cannot be said to have integrity. He also shows us that people who are able to take a step back to reflect on these desires, are able to discriminate between the desires and endorse or prioritise some and outlaw others, *are* the kind of people that we ascribe integrity to.

In my interpretation of Frankfurt it seems that having integrity can more or less be equated with having an exceptionally strong will. Therewith I do not mean having an exceptionally strong desire that is effective for what you do; I am talking about the iron fist of *reason*. For it appears that integrity consists in knocking down the many desires that scream for attention. The person of integrity does not have this kind of ‘inner-anarchy’ going on; he does not let strong desires usurp the authority that reason has over the will. He is able to have control over these desires. The main obstacle when striving for integrity then appears to be weakness of will. It is in this absence of

³⁹ IW, p. 44

⁴⁰ IW, p. 38

wholeheartedness that a person is not just in conflict with external forces pulling at him; rather, he himself is divided⁴¹. The agent in that case does not exercise any authority over his desires; he has no control over his will. Understood this way, integrity can be contrasted with corruption, which is the result of a situation in which principles such as reasonableness and fairness are overruled by desires such as greed or lust for power, status or other personal gains. A person of integrity – a person that has control over his own will – would not partake in bribery, just because his will is strong enough to resist desires. But there is a difference between behaviour such as bribery, theft, fraud and deceit on the one hand, and, say, the Nazi-regime on the other hand. Of the first category it is more clear that (first-order) desires play a major role in the conduct of a person, whereas this is less so in the latter case. Many Nazi’s, also after reflection and use of reason, thought that removing as many Jews as possible from Europe conduced to the greater good; and they wholeheartedly contributed to this aim. So, according to Frankfurt’s account of integrity it is possible to attribute integrity to morally despicable people such as the Nazis, but not to corrupt CEO’s. Understood this way, having integrity comes after a long and dedicated development of willpower – if it can be reached at all. However since the focus is on the will of a person, some questions about the content of the principles and values of a person of integrity remain unanswered. This is understandable since Frankfurt’s aim was to describe what it is to be a person (to be autonomous), and not to describe all the components of integrity. Perhaps it would be fair to say that what Frankfurt argues for are *preconditions* for integrity rather than a comprehensive theory on integrity.

Critical notes

Frankfurt’s integrated self-view of integrity has been a famous contribution to the integrity debate. However, a number of critics have shared their ideas on this view over the years. The main focus in their criticisms is the fact that Frankfurt only places *formal* limits on what it is to have integrity. There are several reasons for why this is problematic. First, because people can be wholeheartedly committed to certain things yet they may hold the wrong beliefs that support this commitment. As Taylor points out, someone can be wholeheartedly committed to a certain goal or purpose, but be *self-deceived* about this goal or purpose. By clarifying this point she refers to Mr. Casaubon, a character of George Eliot’s ‘Middlemarch’. Casaubon believed himself to be a devoted

⁴¹ IW, p. 33

scholar and was wholly committed to scholarship. However, in order to maintain his identity he took steps that actually prevented him from being a genuine scholar. He only complied with what the image of a scholar required of him, but certainly not with what it really is to be a scholar. When looking at Frankfurt’s theory, Casaubon did discriminate between various desires, he ordered his desires and he identified with his desires; he wholeheartedly committed to what he thought a scholar was. However, his view of scholarship was corrupted, and thereby he deceived others⁴². He identified with a certain type of person that he was not. It can thus be said that he was not an integrated person. Now how could someone like Casaubon slip through the formal constraints that Frankfurt places on integrity? Because Casaubon lacked critical self-reflection and he was blind to relevant evidence⁴³. Frankfurt, thus, leaves room for serious self-deception. We would not say of the self-deceived that they have integrity; according to McFall self-deception is contrary to integrity⁴⁴. Hence at least *something* about this should be said in a defensible account of integrity. Perhaps the solution to the problem of self-deception can be found here: if a condition such as self-deception prevents someone from identifying with desires in a sufficiently decisive way, we cannot speak of integrity. Self-deception by default prevents someone from sufficiently identifying with anything, because the thoughts someone has about a certain thing or action, *are mistaken*.

Second, the content-neutrality of the integrated self-view does not do justice to our idea that integrity is something that we value. Why do we admire persons of integrity? We usually think of such persons as being honest, upright and loyal (Taylor)⁴⁵, or truth-telling, honest and fair (McFall)⁴⁶. However, as Taylor writes, “nothing can be deduced about any particular kind of behaviour”⁴⁷ of a person who is wholly integrated. Stating that a person is integrated does not convey any specific information about this person⁴⁸. Hence, some authors argue that integrity cannot be a content-neutral concept. For example, McFall gives three examples of people who meet the formal requirements of having integrity, but “that none of these claims can be made with a straight face, suggests that integrity is inconsistent with such principles”⁴⁹. It should be noted that McFall here

⁴² G. Taylor, ‘Integrity’, *Proceedings of the Aristotelean Society, Supplementary Volumes*, Vol. 55 (1981), p. 147

⁴³ *Ibid.* p. 147

⁴⁴ L. McFall, ‘Integrity’, *Ethics*, Vol. 98, No. 1 (1987), p. 7

⁴⁵ G. Taylor, ‘Integrity’, *Proceedings of the Aristotelean Society, Supplementary Volumes*, Vol. 55 (1981), p. 143

⁴⁶ L. McFall, ‘Integrity’, *Ethics*, Vol. 98, No. 1 (1987), p. 5

⁴⁷ G. Taylor, ‘Integrity’, *Proceedings of the Aristotelean Society, Supplementary Volumes*, Vol. 55 (1981), p. 151

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 151

⁴⁹ L. McFall, ‘Integrity’, *Ethics*, Vol. 98, No. 1 (1987), p. 9

does not explicitly criticise Frankfurt; she points out why placing formal conditions on integrity is not sufficient. Now, the three examples⁵⁰ are:

- Sally is a person of principle: pleasure.
- Harold demonstrates great integrity in his single-minded pursuit of approval.
- John was a man of uncommon integrity. He let nothing – not friendship, not justice, not truth – stand in the way of his amassment of wealth.

Sally avoids the possibility of conflict at all; John commits to spinelessness; and Harold pursues a principle of having no principles, since “expedience is contrasted to a life of principle”⁵¹. All three characters lack a core; they hold the wrong principles and cannot lose integrity because they do not have integrity to start with. “In order to sell one’s soul”, McFall writes, “one must have something to sell”⁵². According to her, the principles held by a person of integrity, must at least be principles that a reasonable person could recognise as important principles⁵³. And there are some ‘social strings’ attached to what a reasonable person could recognise as important, because (most of) our conceptions are based on conceptions of the good – of what is regarded as good in a society. Thus naturally, there are moral boundaries on what can be regarded as integrity. “By definition, it precludes ‘expediency, artificiality or shallowness of any kind’”⁵⁴. As I have argued before, some morally bad behaviour or character traits do not fit in to the picture that Frankfurt sketches, and expediency, artificiality and shallowness are among them, since these seem to be characteristics that derive from acting on first-order desires without reflecting on them. However, Frankfurt indeed does not set explicit *moral* boundaries on what can count as integrity, which leaves some questions about the content of integrity unanswered. On the other hand, the integrated self-view does not run the risk of being a concept that is so rich that it becomes vague and indefinite.

Third, Calhoun questions whether integrity can be equated with wholeheartedness. She writes that Frankfurt does indeed outline some necessary and important conditions for integrity, however she criticises the fact that he reduces integrity to volitional unity⁵⁵ (wholeheartedness). A person can have reason not to resolve conflicting commitments. She presents the example of Maria Lugones⁵⁶, who has two different identities in two different cultural worlds. She is Latina, and it is important for her to endorse and affirm

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 9

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 9

⁵² Ibid., p.10

⁵³ Ibid., p.10

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 11

⁵⁵ C. Calhoun, ‘Standing for something’, in *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 92, No. 5 (May, 1995), p. 241

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 238-239

her identity as Latina as it is constituted within Hispanic culture. She is not only struggling against racist oppression; but she also confronts the task of endorsing her lesbian identity. In the Hispanic culture, there is an aversion against lesbianism, which does not make this easy. In the lesbian culture, Hispanic culture does not have a special value. In both cultural worlds it is difficult to endorse both identities at the same time. Maria Lugones doubts whether it would be possible or desirable to integrate both identities into a single unified identity. When she would unify both identities, she should have to compromise some of her identity. When she is a divided rather than a unitary being, the two identities need not exclude one another. Resisting wholeheartedness in this case conduces to the maintenance of her integrity. The integrated-self-view obscures the notion that people can have good reasons not to “resolve conflicting commitments and ambivalence about their own desires”⁵⁷, because the focus is on volitional unity. Integrity, if it is up to Calhoun, is a broader concept, and includes restrictions on what can count as a motivating reason for a person of integrity. She cannot accept that mere wholeheartedness puts someone’s integrity beyond doubt. For Calhoun, the motivating reasons to act for a person of integrity consist in an awareness of his position in a community with many other deliberators. These reasons will thus be derived from a conception of what is good – of what will conduce to living together in the community in a good way. But I will come to that in chapter 5.

Conclusion

Our desires and volitions can be hierarchically arranged. The first-order desires are desires to do or not to do something; the second-order desires are desires to have these desires to do or not to do something. A person has second-order volitions if she wants a desire to be her will, that is, to effectively motivate her to do something (“all the way to action”⁵⁸). A person can have third-order, or fourth-order (and higher) desires and volitions. Persons who are able to resolve their inner conflicts and bring all these levels of desires and volitions into a harmonious whole, and who identify themselves with the volitions of the highest order, are wholly integrated persons. These persons have control over their own will. Thus integrity requires that we are able to discriminate between our desires and order them (prioritise or outlaw them). And when someone decides to commit himself to a certain desire, he is certain about what he wants: he identifies with the desire. And by deciding what his will is to be, he constitutes himself, wholeheartedly.

⁵⁷ C. Calhoun, ‘Standing for something’, in *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 92, No. 5 (May, 1995), p. 241

⁵⁸ FoW, p. 8-9

Integrity can thus be equated with wholeheartedness⁵⁹. The main focus in the criticisms is the fact that Frankfurt only places *formal* limits on what it is to have integrity, hence there is room left in his theory for self-deception or immoral behaviour. However it seems fair to say that what Frankfurt argues for are preconditions for integrity; he does not provide a comprehensive theory on integrity.

⁵⁹ Cox et al., 'Integrity', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2013 Edition)

03. Particular individuals with particular concerns – Bernard Williams

This chapter examines the standpoint of Bernard Williams on integrity, which is known as the identity view. Williams presents this view implicitly in his critiques on utilitarianism and – to a lesser extent – Kantianism. “Utilitarianism”, he writes, “cannot hope to make sense, at any serious level, of integrity”⁶⁰. The impartial point of view that the theory presupposes is incompatible with the partial interests of a particular, separate person. Utilitarianism demands of persons that they abandon their projects that make them who they are, the projects that constitute them. In this sense it is an attack on a person’s integrity. This chapter presents the arguments by which Williams defends his standpoint.

Utilitarianism’s negligence of the separateness of persons

Williams points out that it is highly problematic that a theory requires of agents that they view the world from a moral point of view – as opposed to a particular, self-interested view – characterised by impartiality and indifference to particular relationships and by the rational application of this impartial moral point of view⁶¹. By neglecting the notion that particular individuals have particular desires and concerns, “utilitarianism strikingly abstracts from the separateness of persons”^{62,63}. Why? Because utilitarianism involves the notion of *negative responsibility*, which means that people are just as responsible for things that they allow or fail to prevent, as for the effects they actually bring about themselves⁶⁴. In other words: it does not matter whose conduct brings about an effect on the overall utility, it only matters *that* the conduct affects the overall utility. And this is the case because utilitarianism focuses on the state of affairs in the world: it is the only thing that has intrinsic value⁶⁵. Everything else has value because of its contribution to the state of affairs⁶⁶. Thus according to utilitarian theory there is no relevant difference between one person bringing about an outcome, and *another* person bringing about an outcome. This doctrine of negative responsibility displays the extreme impartiality of utilitarianism, not leaving much room for special relations and motivations of the agent, in fact, not leaving

⁶⁰ B. Williams, “A Critique of Utilitarianism” in J.J.C. Smart & B. Williams, “Utilitarianism: For and Against” (hereafter referred to as UFA), p. 82

⁶¹ B. Williams, “Moral Luck” (hereafter referred to as MI), p. 2

⁶² MI, p. 2

⁶³ Williams also criticises Kantian moral thought on this abstraction from the identity of persons, but for my current purposes I will not elaborate on this further.

⁶⁴ UFA, p. 95

⁶⁵ UFA, p. 83

⁶⁶ UFA, p. 83

much room for the *identity* of the agent to count as a morally comprehensible reason for doing anything. This brings us closer to Williams’ account of integrity, which at least involves that you are especially responsible for what *you* do, rather than for what *others* do⁶⁷. Some utilitarians suggest that people should forget about integrity anyway, in order to contribute to the general good⁶⁸. As a utilitarian agent, your action “has to be the output of *all* relevant causal items bearing on the situation, including all projects and desires within causal reach; your own and others”⁶⁹. Thus as a utilitarian agent you are a representative of the satisfaction system⁷⁰, and therefore your own desires, projects and ideals have no *more* moral significance than the desires, projects and ideals of others. Therefore, Williams writes, utilitarianism not only abstracts from identities of agents, but also from their separateness⁷¹.

The pursuit of happiness

This disregard for the separateness of the identities of agents is striking, because the basic goal – or specialty as Williams calls it⁷² – for utilitarianism is happiness: all projects or actions must conduce to happiness. “Traditionally”, he writes,

“utilitarians have tended to regard happiness or pleasure as experiences or sensations which were related to actions and activity as effect to cause; and, granted that view, utilitarianism will indeed see the value of all action as derivative, intrinsic value being reserved for the experiences of happiness”⁷³.

But what is it that actually makes people happy? It can’t be true that making other people happy is the only thing that makes people happy: “utilitarianism should do well to acknowledge this evident fact”⁷⁴. People want to be involved in projects and have their own projects and commitments⁷⁵. So it is not *just* the pursuit of happiness itself, or the project of bringing about maximally desirable outcomes⁷⁶, but the pursuit of some other things as well⁷⁷ that makes people happy. What sorts of things is Williams aiming for? Even utilitarian agents must have particular projects they try to realise, other than the one project of contributing to the general good, such as “desires for things for oneself, one’s family, one’s friends, including basic necessities of life, and in more relaxed

⁶⁷ UFA, p. 99

⁶⁸ UFA, p. 99

⁶⁹ ML, p. 4

⁷⁰ ML, p. 4

⁷¹ ML, p. 4

⁷² UFA, p. 82

⁷³ UFA, p. 84

⁷⁴ UFA, p. 112

⁷⁵ UFA, p. 112

⁷⁶ UFA, p. 110

⁷⁷ UFA, p. 112

circumstances, objects of taste”⁷⁸. Also, people can have intellectual, cultural or creative pursuits⁷⁹, or they can have projects connected to a certain religion or political cause. And if commitments or projects such as these are worthwhile, then according to Williams, pursuing these projects and realising them “is what will make the person for whom they are worthwhile, happy”⁸⁰. So creating the most desirable outcome must also consist in realising these projects⁸¹.

Ground projects

According to Williams, people have many ‘categorical desires’;

“Desires that do not depend on the assumption of the person’s existence, since they serve to prevent that assumption is being questioned... and one’s pattern of interests, desires and projects not only provide the reason for an interest in what happens within the horizon of that future, but also constitute the conditions of there being such a future at all”⁸².

These projects are the condition to a person’s existence. A person can have a project (or a set of projects) that is so closely related to his existence that it is what gives meaning to his life. Williams calls such projects *ground projects*⁸³. These are the kind of projects that a person connects to on such a deep level that if it were lost or frustrated, he may feel like he might as well have died⁸⁴. Generally, people have more than one such ground projects, and the loss of all of them would remove meaning from one’s existence⁸⁵. Ground projects are not necessarily selfish projects, they can be concerned with others as well, they can be altruistic projects, or moral projects⁸⁶; but the one thing they have in common is that they are the kind of projects that someone identifies with so deeply and extensively that pursuing them is what gives meaning to his life. A man’s ground projects provide “the motive force which propels him into the future, and gives him a reason for living”⁸⁷. Abandoning such a ground project would be abandoning oneself; a loss of one’s integrity.

The unacceptable demand

Now I have showed how Williams connects ground projects to integrity, it is possible to see how he criticises utilitarianism. Utilitarianism requires that a man give up his ground

⁷⁸ UFA, p. 110

⁷⁹ UFA, p. 110

⁸⁰ UFA, p. 113

⁸¹ UFA, p. 110

⁸² ML, p. 11

⁸³ ML, p. 12

⁸⁴ ML, p. 13

⁸⁵ ML, p. 13

⁸⁶ ML, p. 13

⁸⁷ ML, p. 13

project if it conflicts with “what he is required to do as an impersonal utility-maximiser”⁸⁸, which is, according to Williams, an “absurd requirement”⁸⁹. So utilitarianism neglects what is involved in having a character – namely having ground projects and categorical desires – because of its “ultimate insistence on the demands of impartial morality”⁹⁰. Utilitarians may bring forward that if a project is so essential to one’s life that a great loss of utility will be involved when the project is frustrated or abandoned, that from a utilitarian perspective the person should keep pursuing it⁹¹. But this is not the point. The point is that it would be absurd to require a man to just give up a ground project – a project that he identifies with so deeply that it is what his life is about – when the utilitarian calculation demands this of him⁹². As Williams writes:

“It is to alienate him in a real sense from his actions and the source of his action in his own convictions. It is to make him into a channel between the input of everyone’s projects, including his own, and an output of optimific decision; but this is to neglect the extent to which *his* actions and *his* decisions have to be seen as the actions and decisions which flow from the projects and attitudes with which he is most closely identified. It is thus, in the most literal sense, *an attack on his integrity*”⁹³ (emphasis added).

One thought too many

Crucial for having integrity is having a particular and separate identity. Williams describes the case of someone who finds himself in a situation in which he has to choose which of two people he should save from drowning, and one of them is his wife. Perhaps it could be argued by some moral principle that in a situation like this, it is morally permissible to save one’s wife, rather than the other person. But as Williams famously puts it; the thought that it is one’s wife *and* that it is permissible in situations like these to save one’s wife, provides the rescuer with *one thought too many*⁹⁴. The motivating thought is just that it is one’s wife. Abstracting persons from their character and asking them to be impartial in order to deal with such moral issues is a misrepresentation of moral thinking. The actual justification of the action of saving one’s wife has nothing to do with utilitarian impartiality: the action is justified by the specific relationship the rescuer has to the person he chooses to save – his wife.

⁸⁸ ML, p. 14

⁸⁹ ML, p. 14

⁹⁰ ML, p. 14

⁹¹ UFA, p. 116-117

⁹² UFA, p. 116-117

⁹³ UFA, p. 116-117

⁹⁴ ML, p. 18

Integrity

It is now time to connect the dots. Williams criticised utilitarianism by means of arguments based on a person's integrity. Although he may have had a clear idea in mind of what integrity is, this implicit idea needs to be defined explicitly. Integrity consists in being a particular and separate person with particular desires, concerns and relations; and in staying true to your own *ground projects* – not just any projects, but projects that you identify with and take seriously at the deepest level. Because these ground projects are what constitute a character and provide the motive force – the reason – for living, it would be an abandonment of the self, a loss of identity, to abandon such a ground project. Defined like this, it appears that having ground projects can more or less be equated with having an identity. And sticking by your ground projects – and thus your identity – means you have integrity. In summary: first, we need to have ground projects, and second, we need to stick by these ground projects.

Williams does not say so himself, but it seems logical that self-knowledge, and thus critical self-reflection is crucial for knowing which projects are the ones that constitute our characters, and which projects are commutable. In other words: one needs to be critically aware where the self stops, and where that which is not the self begins. Compromising is necessary in a world in which we live together with other agents, and in which conflicts are possible all the time. But according to Williams a person only ought to compromise when the conflict does not concern her ground projects, the projects that she identifies with on the deepest level. “Alright, we can eat meat instead of fish tonight” does not imply a loss of identity (unless the person who says it committed herself never to eat meat), but letting down a good friend in order to get a position you like at work, *is* showing lack of integrity and thus a loss of identity.

Williams' attempt was to create space for individuals to pursue their own interests instead of taking an impartial standpoint. Because of this, his focus was on forces from *outside* that threaten our identities. However forces from inside, such as a lack of strong will, laziness, idleness, selfishness, greed and much more, can also threaten our integrity. Integrity consists in being able to guard the core of our identity. It is not the ability to *have* ground projects (that would seem too easy), but the ability to guard and protect ourselves against everything that hinders the pursuit of them. It now has become clearer why this view is called ‘the identity-view’: integrity consists in maintaining a particular

and separate identity, in staying loyal to your own identity. Integrity is valuable because a person who identifies with his actions “as flowing from projects and attitudes which he takes seriously at the deepest level, as what his life is about”⁹⁵, is an individual with a very strong, particular and recognisable character. This is the sort of person who knows himself well and who shows what he stands for. These persons do not sell out their principles cheaply for personal gain and they do not just yield because of peer pressure or authoritative powers. This is usually conceived as admirable, but there should be more to it. Of a person who sticks by his ground projects, it can be said that he has a deep and authentic character. So perhaps the real value of integrity according to the identity-view is *authenticity*.

Critical notes

Even though the account of integrity that Williams presents is only implicit in his objection to utilitarianism, it has been very influential in the debate on integrity. Therefore it is not striking that this account is widely criticised as well. I will present some of the main critiques.

First, according to Cox et al., “Integrity is usually regarded as something worth striving for and the identity account of integrity fails to make sense of this”⁹⁶. They state that because the account only sets *formal* constraints on how to maintain integrity, it is disconnected from the idea that integrity is something praiseworthy. Integrity in this sense is something that persons want to protect because it is in their own interest, rather than something worth striving for because it is (morally) good. But if everyone seems to value integrity, there must be more to it than just staying true to your own ground projects. The authors therefore claim that integrity cannot be reduced to the maintenance of commitments⁹⁷ (or ground projects); it involves much more than this. Cox et al. here refer to things such as self-image, self-worth, moral agency, emotional repertoire, and value judgment⁹⁸, thus, things that presuppose a conception of the self. Cox et al. seem to suggest that the things that are worth striving for, or the things that we find praiseworthy, must in some way be connected to what is morally good. However as I have already pointed out, integrity intrinsically involves such things. A person of integrity has the self-knowledge that is necessary for these notions; he is very much aware of

⁹⁵ UFA, p. 116

⁹⁶ Cox et al., "Integrity", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2013 Edition)

⁹⁷ Cox et al., “Should We Strive For Integrity?”, *The Journal of Value Inquiry*, Vol. 33, 1999: p. 528

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 529

which projects constitute his identity and which projects are less important. Also, Williams’ theory is based on the idea that normally socialised people are committed to be morally good⁹⁹. Williams does not argue where exactly this commitment to the good in people comes from, but I conjecture he would call it: common sense or common morality.

Second, Calhoun (whom I will discuss in chapter 5) mentions that on Williams’ account, people can have identity-conferring projects that are “non-moral or even morally despicable”¹⁰⁰. Thus people can act evil not just because they are unaware of it, but because they consciously choose to be evil. Calhoun criticises the standpoint of Williams, because if integrity is “nothing but being true to what one deeply identifies with”¹⁰¹, integrity cannot be a virtue, whereas according to Calhoun integrity *clearly* is a virtue¹⁰². Thus according to Calhoun the content-neutrality of integrity is problematic. If nothing is said about the content of the character of the person of integrity, there is no reason to value integrity; while she takes it as obvious that most of us *do* value integrity. Integrity, then, must be more than just a formal relationship to oneself. Here Williams’ standpoint should be put in the right perspective. Williams ‘went to war’ against utilitarianism to protect the interests of particular and separate individuals. He criticised the theory because it fails to respect the individual relationships, interests and concerns that people have. If every person implemented the utilitarian calculus from an impartial point of view, we could not live a happy life. Williams is right to point out this blind spot in utilitarianism, and he successfully does so. However, the current aim is to analyse his concept of integrity and his view is less explicit about the content of the ground projects that people pursue and thus asks for more interpretation. But as I pointed out before, Williams himself is not so worried about the morally despicable, as he shortly mentions the content of the ground projects: “these projects, in a normally socialised individual, have in good part been formed within, and formed by, dispositions which constitute a commitment to morality”¹⁰³. Whereas Calhoun specifically adds this notion of awareness of the position of an individual in a community with others to her concept of integrity, Williams assumes that most normally socialised people will be aware of this naturally (common sense) and will therefore just not have ground projects that have a negative

⁹⁹ ML, p. 12

¹⁰⁰ C. Calhoun, “Standing for something”, *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 92, No. 5, p. 242

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 242

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 235

¹⁰³ ML, p. 12

effect on the community. A certain awareness of others and respect for others is thus needed in order to have integrity.

Third, Scherkoske starts from a different perspective: he argues that there is *indeed* no reason to value integrity; integrity in the way Williams describes it, is even morally dangerous. Scherkoske writes that if integrity is a ‘loyalty-exhibiting’ character stance, it requires an uncritical bias to one’s own commitments¹⁰⁴. Integrity can thus lead one into moral error¹⁰⁵. According to him, integrity in the way Williams describes it – as sticking by one’s ground projects – enjoys “default normative privilege”¹⁰⁶; it is excused from critical rational scrutiny¹⁰⁷. The moral danger of integrity can be found in the fact that the loyalty to one’s convictions is so strong – to abandon it would be a loss of identity – that it can even be said that this loyalty is unconditional and (wholly) uncritical¹⁰⁸. How can it be dangerous? Integrity can be the same as self-indulgence or egoism¹⁰⁹; its blind allegiance to oneself can falsely reassure a person that he is a right-thinking person¹¹⁰; and the content-neutrality of integrity is a “significant source of risk”¹¹¹. Hence to Scherkoske it is not clear at all why we value integrity. The problem is that Williams defends a partiality to one’s own commitments, which can lead to very negative consequences for other persons in the community. Indeed, Williams remains silent on this topic, perhaps also because he presupposes common sense in (normally socialised) people. Williams appears to have great trust in the goodwill of people. But this is not enough for Scherkoske, who demands some boundaries for how far one can go in this bias towards one’s own commitments. Being wholly uncritical towards one’s commitments sounds more like stubbornness than like integrity, especially if this commitment is indeed ill-informed, foolish, or superficial. Williams’ lack of explicit explanation requires some interpretation. Is Williams’ trust in common sense the reason why he does not touch on the issue of having too much of a bias towards one’s own commitments? Or does Williams purposely not include boundaries on the extent to which persons can hold on to their own ‘righteousness’, because integrity essentially consists in having the ability to hold on to one’s own ground projects – no matter what

¹⁰⁴ G. Scherkoske, “Integrity and moral danger”, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 40, No. 9, p. 337

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 337

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 341

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 341

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 342

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 342

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 343

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 343

they are? In my interpretation Williams would certainly not say that a person should wholly uncritically stick by her commitments. But it would indeed make his account more defensible if Williams devoted some words to this issue.

Fourth, Calhoun accuses Williams’ standpoint of a lack of coherence: if integrity is only about fidelity to ground projects then people need not be true to their other, less identity-conferring, projects. This is a lack of coherence in the sense that people only have to stay true to *some* projects, but not to others. However, Calhoun expects persons of integrity to stand up for all their projects and commitments, and not just to some of them¹¹². She states that we do not just recognise people of integrity because they are holding on to certain projects so steadfastly, but also by their “conscientiousness in smaller matters”¹¹³. Williams did not write that people should not be conscientious in smaller matters. In fact he did not write about the smaller matters at all. Williams protected *at least* the ground projects, the most important projects for people: they can stay true to those, however in smaller matters people still need to be aware of their position amongst many others. Hence the general good is not unimportant; it is in some cases just not the *most* important thing to pursue. Conscientiousness (in smaller matters) implies that people sometimes have to let go of their desires and wishes, just because we live in societies in which we are not the only person. Williams defends the position that we cannot be impartial all the time. In this way, Calhoun wrongfully attributes her criticism to a lack of coherence, while she actually means to say that the account of Williams is too narrow and should also include some argumentation about how to deal with these smaller matters. Ground projects show what a person identifies with most deeply, but a person also expresses his identity when he acts in certain ways in smaller matters – for example by being flexible or lenient.

Fifth, another criticism that I would like to add is: I find it unclear where exactly should we draw the line between what sort of project is too important to abandon, and what is unimportant enough to compromise. If ground projects are the reason for living, and a person may feel “that he might as well have died”¹¹⁴ in case of the (forced) abandonment of such a project, then a person who is committed to being a vegetarian, but does not feel like he might as well have died when he has to eat meat, would not be a person of

¹¹² C. Calhoun, “Standing for something”, *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 92, No. 5, p. 245

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 245

¹¹⁴ ML, p. 13

integrity. This intuitively seems wrong. The condition that such a project must be worth dying for seems too narrow. In my interpretation there are other projects that would qualify as ground projects, too. I would probably feel like I might as well have died if I have to abandon my friends, but I would not feel like that if I am forced to abandon my philosophy studies¹¹⁵. I do however consider studying philosophy as one of my ground projects. Perhaps Williams could have meant that letting go of such projects *too easily* would be showing a lack of integrity. If I just give up writing this thesis because the sun is shining outside, *that* would be a lack of integrity, because I would be abandoning the project for the wrong reasons.

Conclusion

Integrity thus consists of being more than just someone carrying out actions that conduce to the general good; it consists of being someone who has a self. It consists of being a particular person with particular desires, concerns and relations; and especially in being true to your own *ground projects* – not just any projects, but projects that you identify with and take serious at the deepest level. Having ground projects is needed for having integrity, but comes prior to it, since integrity essentially consists in the ability to stick by these ground projects. This requires having a strong character; a strong will. Both forces from outside (authority, peer pressure, etc.) and from inside yourself (desires, laziness, lack of willpower, etc.) can disable you from pursuing these projects. A person of integrity is well able to maintain herself – her identity – despite all these forces that hinder her from doing so. Abandoning the ground projects means abandoning one’s identity. Utilitarianism demands of a person that he abandons his ground projects in the name of the greater good, hence this theory is an *attack* on a person’s integrity. What makes it difficult to find out what Williams conceives as integrity is the fact that this idea is only implicit in his writings, hence this requires putting the puzzle together. As a result, many criticisms have been raised towards this view. The main problem that is caused by the lack of explanation is that there seem to be no boundaries on the extent to which people can have a bias towards their own commitments, in other words: stubborn but foolish people could also have integrity, which seems wrong.

¹¹⁵ Ok, maybe a little bit.

04. From mere heaps to unified wholes – Christine Korsgaard

This chapter describes the view by Christine Korsgaard on action, agency and integrity. It is necessary to follow Korsgaard closely in her quest to describe these concepts, since her argumentation consists of many little steps. Her first aim is not to give a clear definition of integrity, but rather she regards integrity as a necessary condition for being a person. Korsgaard argues in her book ‘Self-constitution: Agency, Identity and Integrity’ that the function of a human action is to constitute the identity of the person who performs that action. When you determine what effects you bring about, whenever you take control of your own movements, you are at the same time constituting yourself and thus determining who you are¹¹⁶.

Action

Korsgaard starts her argumentation by stating that action is necessary for the human condition. It is impossible not to act, because even standing still is something that you have chosen to do¹¹⁷. Also, it is indispensable that an action requires an *agent* who performs it, and – this is important – it is indispensable to the concept of agency that the agent be *unified*¹¹⁸, because to regard an action as one’s own action, it must be an expression of oneself as a whole; it must result from ‘one’s entire nature working as an integrated whole’¹¹⁹. This needs clarification. Your identity is constituted by your actions and choices, by the effects you bring about in the world. And when you bring about such an effect, you also decide what sort of cause you are. Therefore, by acting you are determining who you are¹²⁰. Thus you are who you choose to be and at the same time your choices are expressive for who you are. In other words, you decide over your choices and actions, yet at the same time, you create your identity *by* your choices and actions, “in the very act of choosing them”¹²¹. Thus there is no ‘*I*’ prior to my choices and actions, because I am *constituted* by my choices and actions¹²². Action, then, is self-constitution, concludes Korsgaard.

¹¹⁶ C. Korsgaard, ‘Self-constitution: agency, identity and integrity’ (hereafter referred to as SC), Preface (p. xi)

¹¹⁷ SC, p.1

¹¹⁸ SC, p. 18

¹¹⁹ SC, p. 19

¹²⁰ SC, p. 19

¹²¹ SC, p. 20

¹²² SC, p. 19

Paradox

This whirling way of connecting action to self-constitution appears to be paradoxical. How can you start creating yourself if there is not at least *some* sort of self to start with? Korsgaard does recognise this problem and attempts to provide an answer to it by drawing on Aristotle: “a living thing is engaged in an endless activity of self-constitution... the picture here is not of a craftsman who is, mysteriously, his own product, the picture here is of the self-constitutive process that is the essence of life”¹²³. This might clarify the idea a little bit, however I find the analogy with a competence such as reading by Chapell more convincing; he mentions “it is entirely normal for rational competences to emerge as we develop, without knowing exactly when and where they first appear”¹²⁴. When we become more self-conscious, we develop our skills of constituting ourselves gradually. This will become even more apparent when we look into what self-consciousness is according to Korsgaard.

Practical identities

In our lives, we all find ourselves fulfilling many different roles. People find themselves in relationships, are members of certain groups or religions, have certain professions, find it important that they are a human being, a man or a woman, and many more things¹²⁵. Korsgaard calls these different roles “practical identities”¹²⁶. The task is to unite these different roles into a coherent whole¹²⁷. Self-constitution requires that an agent integrate her multiple practical identities into a single practical identity. A good action is an action that successfully unifies the agent¹²⁸. The agent must withstand threats to her unity or integrity such as desires and inclinations, in order to remain unified or whole, and to maintain her identity and thereby her agency itself. A good person does not strive to be good, but to be unified and whole. Thus a good person is “someone who is good at being a person”¹²⁹.

¹²³ SC, p. 41-42

¹²⁴ T. Chapell, ‘Book Review. Self-Constitution: Agency, Identity, and Integrity. By Christine M. Korsgaard’, *Philosophy*, 85(3), p. 3

¹²⁵ SC, p. 20

¹²⁶ SC, p. 21

¹²⁷ SC, p. 21

¹²⁸ SC, p. 25

¹²⁹ SC, p. 26

Teleological organisation

Korsgaard draws on Aristotle, by stating that teleological organisation – the organisation of objects by their *telos*; their purpose or function – is “what unifies what would otherwise be a *mere heap* of matter into particular objects of particular kinds”¹³⁰. An object’s teleological organisation results in “constitutive standards”: standards that apply to the object, just because it is that object¹³¹. Similar are constitutive principles, which apply to activities¹³². Thus objects and activities are defined by their own standards. When you perform an activity you are guided by the principle of that activity; if you let another principle guide you, you are just not doing that same activity. Activities can be performed in a more or less successful manner, and so “building a bad house is not a different activity from building a good house. *It is the same activity, badly done*”¹³³. And because action is self-constitution, a bad action is one that does not meet the standard of constituting the agent as a unified author of her own action¹³⁴. Korsgaard clarifies the idea of teleological organisation with the illustrative example of the giraffe:

“The function of the giraffe is to be a giraffe, to continue to be a giraffe, and to produce other giraffes... The giraffe thus is an entity organised to keep her giraffeness going... and a *healthy* giraffe is one that is *well* organised to keep her giraffeness going... Thus the giraffe’s actions are dictated by, and preservative of, her giraffeness. A good giraffe’s action then is, for example, nibbling tender green leaves at the tops of trees, because this keeps the giraffe going... So to be a giraffe is simply to engage in the activity of constantly making yourself into a giraffe: this is what a giraffe’s life consists in.”¹³⁵

And in exactly the same way, what it is to be a person is to be engaged in the activity of constantly making yourself into a person¹³⁶.

The Kantian imperatives

The principle of instrumental reason, or the hypothetical imperative as Kant called it, says that if we will an end, we must also will the means to that end¹³⁷. It is different from (merely) desiring or wishing, because “the person that wills an end determines himself to

¹³⁰ SC, p. 28

¹³¹ SC, p. 28

¹³² SC, p. 28

¹³³ SC, p. 29

¹³⁴ SC, p. 32

¹³⁵ SC, p. 36

¹³⁶ SC, p. 42

¹³⁷ SC, p. 46

bring the end about, that is, to *cause* it”¹³⁸ (emphasis added). This principle unifies and constitutes the will¹³⁹. Korsgaard illustrates this with a very recognisable example:

“Suppose I decide to get some work done on my book today. At this moment, now, I decide, I *will*, to work; at the next moment, at any moment (importantly, maybe even at *this* moment), I will certainly *want* to stop. If I am to work I must *will* it – and that means I must determine myself to stay on its track... Timidity, idleness and depression will attempt to overrule my will; desire and temptation will also take their turns... But if I give in to these claims as it appears I will do nothing and I will not have a life. For to will an end is not just to cause it, not even if the cause is one of my own desires and impulses, but to consciously pick up the reins, and *make myself* the cause of the end. Conformity to the hypothetical imperative is thus constitutive of having a will. It is, in fact, an essential part of what *gives* you a will.¹⁴⁰”

It is essential for determining your own causality that you must operate as a unified whole¹⁴¹. If your will would be particularistic, you could will a maxim for a certain moment only and then discard it without any reason¹⁴². But this is impossible, because then you would not be a person but ‘*a mere heap* of unrelated impulses’¹⁴³, which is in no way different than having no will at all¹⁴⁴. Thus: in order to constitute yourself as the cause of some end, you must operate as a unified whole. You must make a universal normative law for yourself that can be coherently applied to your actions¹⁴⁵. Korsgaard writes, “a free will, as a causality, must act in accordance with a universal law; yet because it is a free will, it cannot be a law that is imposed upon from outside. Kant concluded that it must be its own law, the categorical imperative, the law of imposing laws on oneself.”¹⁴⁶ Korsgaard characterises the moral law as slightly different from Kant’s categorical imperative; the moral law is “the law of acting only on maxims that all rational beings could act on together in a workable cooperative system”¹⁴⁷. She presents two ways in which to get from the categorical imperative to the moral law: “first, when we will a maxim as a universal law, we must will it as a law *for everyone*; and second, we must understand the reasons embodied in the universal maxims as reasons that have normative force for all rational beings”¹⁴⁸. As mentioned before, if we want to find out what the constitutive standards or principles of things or actions are, we must look at its teleological organisation, thus its purpose or function. The function of an action is to

¹³⁸ SC, p. 68

¹³⁹ SC, p. 68

¹⁴⁰ SC, p. 69-70

¹⁴¹ SC, p. 72

¹⁴² SC, p. 75

¹⁴³ SC, p. 76

¹⁴⁴ SC, p. 76

¹⁴⁵ SC, p. 79

¹⁴⁶ SC, p. 79

¹⁴⁷ SC, p. 80

¹⁴⁸ SC, p. 80

constitute an agent, and according to Korsgaard, an agent is essentially characterised by *efficacy* and *autonomy*¹⁴⁹. Efficacy means that the agent is able to succeed in causing the intended effect, which corresponds to the hypothetical imperative; autonomy means that the movements of the agent are self-determined, which corresponds to the categorical imperative.¹⁵⁰ Korsgaard states: “if you fail to follow the Kantian imperatives, you will not be efficacious and autonomous, and then you will not be an agent”.¹⁵¹

Self-consciousness

The starting point for every action is an incentive: “a motivationally loaded representation of an object”¹⁵². Thus every action involves a principle and an incentive¹⁵³. Because human beings are self-conscious, there is some space between the incentive and the response, which Korsgaard calls “reflective distance”¹⁵⁴. When we are aware of an incentive, we need to make a decision about how we respond to it, whereas other animals respond instinctively. Although Korsgaard does not mention this explicitly I believe it is important to give some attention to our gradual development as human beings in order to understand why the paradox of self-constitution is not really a paradox. When we are born we are not self-conscious and we do not have the space called reflective distance. Self-consciousness does not appear all of a sudden, we develop it gradually as we grow older. This self-consciousness is the reason that psychic unity is not a natural state, but something that must be achieved. So because we are self-conscious, we – or: our *souls* as Korsgaard calls it – have parts, and these parts must be unified¹⁵⁵. Incentives arise because of practical identities; the different roles that people fulfil and the different relationships that they are engaged in¹⁵⁶. “The work of pulling ourselves back together”, writes Korsgaard, “is also the work of pulling those identities into a single practical identity, choosing among them what we have to do, deciding which is to have priority, harmonising them when we can”.¹⁵⁷ And we do this by means of *practical deliberation*. The constitutive principle of practical reason is the unification of the self.¹⁵⁸ Thus, by self-consciously choosing our actions, we constitute our identities.¹⁵⁹ But how exactly does this work? If the soul has parts, what is it that unifies it into a single

¹⁴⁹ SC, p. 82

¹⁵⁰ SC, p. 83

¹⁵¹ SC, p. 83

¹⁵² SC, p. 104

¹⁵³ SC, p. 105

¹⁵⁴ SC, p. 116

¹⁵⁵ SC, p. 125

¹⁵⁶ SC, p. 126

¹⁵⁷ SC, p. 126

¹⁵⁸ SC, p. 126

¹⁵⁹ SC, p. 131

soul? Why would we act according to reason? Surprisingly, the answer Korsgaard gives us is: the necessity of the unified soul. She draws on Plato’s analogy between the city and the soul; the people in the city *need* to be unified in order to act as a collective agent:

“A constitution defines a set of roles and offices that together constitute a procedure for deliberative action, saying who shall perform each step and how it shall be done... Constitution in this way makes it possible for a group of citizens – who without the constitution would be a mere heap of individual people – to function as a single collective agent”.¹⁶⁰

In the same way, all parts of the soul ‘agree’ that reason should rule and other parts of the soul should be ruled – in order to act as an agent¹⁶¹. Korsgaard follows Plato and speaks of three parts of the soul, connected to the three parts of practical deliberation: *appetite*, of which the function is to propose (incentives) and to obey; *reason*, that rules; and *spirit*, of which the function is to carry out the decisions of reason¹⁶². Thus a person acts well when she acts in accordance with her own constitution¹⁶³. The principle of deliberative action is to unify the soul, which happens by nature: “when you deliberate about what to do and then do it, what you are doing is organising your appetite, reason, and spirit into a unified system that yields an action that can be attributed to you as a person”¹⁶⁴. In this way, deliberation is an effort to ‘reunite’ yourself. In order to reunite, you need a constitution, and the effects you bring about need to result from your constitutional rule over yourself¹⁶⁵.

Integrity

Korsgaard writes that being a person consists of being “engaged in constantly making yourself into a person”¹⁶⁶. This happens by constituting yourself through your choices and actions. It is indispensable for the concept of agency that the agent be unified¹⁶⁷, because for a choice or action to be your own, for it to be expressive of yourself, “it must result from your entire working as an integrated whole”¹⁶⁸. By choosing your actions you create your identity, you determine who you are. Integrity thus is crucial for the constitution of your identity and agency.

¹⁶⁰ SC, p. 142

¹⁶¹ SC, p. 142

¹⁶² SC, p. 147

¹⁶³ SC, p. 157

¹⁶⁴ SC, p. 179

¹⁶⁵ SC, p. 213

¹⁶⁶ SC, p. 42

¹⁶⁷ SC, p. 18

¹⁶⁸ SC, p. 20

What does this require of a person? In order to unify your will, you need to have a will. Having a will is not the same as having mere desires; what makes the difference is that an agent, who wills an end, also determines himself to bring about the end¹⁶⁹. He does not just desire the end; he effectively motivates himself to cause it. To will an end is to “consciously pick up the reins and *make yourself* the cause of the end”¹⁷⁰. Kant’s hypothetical imperative adequately summarises this: if we will an end, we must also will the means to that end¹⁷¹. In order to have a *unified* will you must make a universal normative law for yourself that can be coherently applied to your actions¹⁷²: the categorical imperative¹⁷³. Thus in order to be a unified whole (to have integrity), one needs to adhere to the Kantian imperatives. Korsgaard argues that having a particularistic will – as opposed to a unified will – means that an agent does not distinguish himself from the incentives upon which he acts¹⁷⁴. She writes: “if I give in to each incentive as it appears *I* will do nothing and I will not have a life”¹⁷⁵. If an agent does not deliberate, he removes the reflective distance and thereby stops being a person and becomes “a *mere heap* of unrelated impulses”¹⁷⁶.

Critical notes

I find this book by Korsgaard inspiring, however I cannot help but wonder why she is so certain that *I* create myself. I do find it plausible that we create or constitute ourselves up to a certain point, but there are many things that we cannot influence such as when and where we are born, whom our parents are, our physical condition, our rational capabilities, etc. Korsgaard does write something about this; she mentions that our practical identities are contingent, and that “making the contingent necessary is one of the tasks of human life and the ability to do it is arguably a mark of good human being”¹⁷⁷. However, perhaps it makes more sense to say that action is indeed self-constitution, but that there are other factors as well that constitute us. Doomen presents this view when he writes, “it may be more convincing to maintain that a human being develops on the basis of diverse factors... (one’s upbringing being a natural candidate) until he is able to reflect and make choices. In that case, man would be constituted,

¹⁶⁹ SC, p. 68

¹⁷⁰ SC, p. 69

¹⁷¹ SC, p. 46

¹⁷² SC, p. 79

¹⁷³ SC, p. 79

¹⁷⁴ SC, p. 75

¹⁷⁵ SC, p. 69

¹⁷⁶ SC, p. 76

¹⁷⁷ SC, p. 23

rather than that he would, in some mysterious way, constitute himself”¹⁷⁸. In this way Doomen attributes no capability for self-constitution to human beings at all – which does not do justice to the idea that Korsgaard presents to us. Self-constitution (to some extent) in the way Korsgaard describes it certainly is possible, however it should not be neglected that there are too many factors in the world that influence us, to be able to take up the task of self-constitution all by ourselves. And in my view this does not happen only when we are too young to be fully self-conscious, but throughout our entire lives. Especially if you also take into account that we live in a pluralistic society – or a broken world even – in which we have to manoeuvre without harming other people. In this sense it would never be possible to be a perfectly unified or integrated whole.

The book has received some other criticisms. One of these criticisms concerns the merits of having integrity. We have seen that integrity is not something that you are born with, not a status quo, but something you are trying to reach throughout your life. But why would someone strive for integrity, if the merits of being bad or wicked are more important for him than the idea of perfect self-constitution? As Barandella and Ridge write: “why should I care so much about not acting badly?”¹⁷⁹ Korsgaard writes that the bad person is not free; he is internally enslaved by the forces working on him or in him¹⁸⁰, so his movements are not entirely his own. In order to regard your movements as your own, your maxims need to pass the test of the categorical (and hypothetical) imperative. In this sense, evil or wickedness is a weakness; by contrast to goodness, which is “the self-confidence of efficacious power”.

Barandella and Ridge also write that being *imperfect* is an essential characteristic of human beings: “here we have in mind the contrast that Kant himself drew between agents like ourselves, who are generally prone to temptation in the face of duty, and agents like God who are beyond temptation. We think it is intuitively plausible that this general tendency to temptation reflects a deep fact about the kind of sensuous creatures that we are, and that such tendencies are therefore essential to human beings”¹⁸¹. In this sense, if imperfection is essential to human beings, then being perfect or flawless implies that one is malfunctioning as a human being. This does not seem plausible though. Korsgaard

¹⁷⁸ J. Doomen, Book review. Self-constitution. Agency, identity, and integrity, p. 320

¹⁷⁹ A. Barandella and M. Ridge, Function and Self-Constitution: how to make something of yourself without being all that you can be. A commentary and Christine Korsgaard’s The Constitution of Agency and Self-Constitution p. 377

¹⁸⁰ SC, p. 161

¹⁸¹ A. Barandella and M. Ridge, Function and Self-Constitution: how to make something of yourself without being all that you can be. A commentary and Christine Korsgaard’s The Constitution of Agency and Self-Constitution p. 375

writes that people never *choose* defective action; they only let themselves be *led* by it, because of temptations and desires. And the mere fact that there are many people who do not live a just or unified life does not imply that being imperfect is essential to human being. Perhaps the perfect human being who lives exactly according his *telos* does not exist, except theoretically, however it is still possible to *strive* to be unified, and as Korsgaard mentioned, that is exactly what good people do.

Timothy Chapell criticises this aspect as well but in a different way; he does not refer to imperfectness but to frivolity. He writes that the way of living presented by Korsgaard is very demanding, since self-constitution is not something that one action achieves, but something that *each* action should achieve. Hence there seems to be no ‘time off’. “For one thing, a life where you are *always* in the business of unifying yourself sounds quite a strenuous and a high-minded life”¹⁸². He wonders whether there would be any room to be frivolous. He imagines that Korsgaard’s answer would be ‘sure, within reason’¹⁸³, but where exactly would reason set its boundaries on acting frivolous? It remains unclear to what extent there is room for acting playful, light-hearted or even thoughtless; whilst one could state that acting or being like that every now or then is a feature of real life. Korsgaard does not provide us with a clear answer to this.

Conclusion

An agent is someone who is the autonomous and efficacious cause of her own movements¹⁸⁴. It is essential that your own movements are caused by you as a whole, and not “as some force that is working in you or on you”.¹⁸⁵ Thus, to be an agent means to be unified, and practical deliberation is an attempt to reunite yourself – to pull back together the different parts of the soul. To be able to reunite, you need to have a constitution: reason should rule over appetite and spirit¹⁸⁶ and you have to act according to a universal law that enables you to maintain your integrity in any situation.¹⁸⁷ This process of reuniting the different parts of the soul – of pulling yourself together – results in constituting yourself. Becoming a person is becoming a *particular* person, with your own particular identity¹⁸⁸. Thus to create your own particular identity, you have to be a

¹⁸² T. Chapell, “Book review. Self-constitution: agency, identity and integrity”, in: *Philosophy* 85 (3), p. 2

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 2

¹⁸⁴ SC, p. 213

¹⁸⁵ SC, p. 213

¹⁸⁶ SC, p. 213

¹⁸⁷ SC, p. 214

¹⁸⁸ SC, p. 214

unified whole – you have to have integrity.¹⁸⁹ Integrity then, is the unification of the self. The main criticisms mention that Korsgaard’s view demands a ‘high-minded’ life; there is not much room for acting bad, being imperfect or for frivolity. The (ultimate) good person is a wholly unified person. Indeed, not many people are *wholly* unified; it even seems impossible to achieve this. This is why Korsgaard’s view should be conceived as an *ideal* to strive after.

¹⁸⁹ SC, p. 214

05. Proper regard for others – Cheshire Calhoun

This chapter describes the view on integrity as presented by Cheshire Calhoun, which is known as the ‘standing for something-view’. For Calhoun it is not sufficient to place only formal limits on what integrity is; we also need to discuss the content of integrity. “Integrity clearly is a virtue”, she writes, “but it is less clear what it is a virtue *of* or why we might prize it”¹⁹⁰. Her goal is to justify her claim that integrity is a virtue, and she does so by explaining that integrity is what makes us fit for functioning in a community with other agents. In this sense, integrity is a *social* virtue.

A swipe at Frankfurt and Williams

Calhoun starts by arguing why some other common views – the integrated self-view (Frankfurt) and the identity view (Williams)¹⁹¹ – fail to explain what integrity means. Calhoun finds these views insufficient for two reasons. First, she writes that these views “ultimately reduce integrity to something else with which it is not equivalent”¹⁹². The integrated self-view reduces integrity to volitional unity¹⁹³ and the identity view reduces integrity to acting on deeply held and highly endorsed commitments¹⁹⁴. But sometimes it can be necessary to continue to be divided. Calhoun also finds it necessary to be conscientious not only in identity-conferring matters, but in small matters as well¹⁹⁵. Second, she writes that these views are “accounts of integrity as a personal but not as a social virtue”¹⁹⁶. Integrity is a social virtue because it shows itself in relations with other people and should thus be defined accordingly, whereas Frankfurt and Williams regard integrity as defined by the relation that an individual has to *oneself*. Calhoun explains the difference between personal and social virtues as follows: “A personal virtue consists in having the proper relation to oneself... Social virtues consist in having the proper relation to others”¹⁹⁷. When you regard integrity as a personal virtue, it concerns protecting yourself: protecting your own agency, and your own character¹⁹⁸. When you regard integrity as a social virtue it is essentially connected to the way in which we

¹⁹⁰ Calhoun, “Standing for something”, *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 92, No. 5, (hereafter referred to as ‘SFS’), p. 235

¹⁹¹ Calhoun also discusses what she calls ‘the clean hands view’. However this account is not discussed in this thesis and I will not examine this critique because the critiques on the other two views are sufficient in showing that more needs to be said about the content of integrity.

¹⁹² SFS, p. 235

¹⁹³ SFS, p. 241

¹⁹⁴ SFS, p. 246

¹⁹⁵ SFS, p. 252

¹⁹⁶ SFS, p. 236

¹⁹⁷ SFS, p. 252

¹⁹⁸ SFS, p. 253

position ourselves among others. This, according to Calhoun, is the correct way to look at integrity.

Standing for

Calhoun argues that integrity is about “standing for something”¹⁹⁹. Standing *for* should not be equated with standing *by* (one’s principles and values). Acting with integrity in the latter sense means protecting the boundaries of the self against disintegration or loss of identity. This is not a sufficient account of integrity. Standing *for* principles and values means that a person regards these principles and values – in his best judgment – “as worthy of defence because they concern how *we*, as beings interested in living justly and well, can do so”²⁰⁰. So it is not just about one’s very own principles. Standing by one’s own principles, goals and projects only would not be a sign of integrity according to Calhoun. Integrity concerns principles that betrayal of which does not imply betrayal of oneself only but betrayal of others that count on you as well. It concerns standing up for “one’s best judgement about what would be just or what lives are acceptable forms of the good”²⁰¹. For the person of integrity it matters what other deliberators in the community endorse²⁰². The person of integrity views oneself as a member of this community and cares about what principles and values contribute to the good life for the community²⁰³.

A virtue

It is possible to see why integrity is valued according to views such as the integrated self-view and the identity-view. However, although these views show that integrity is an admirable characteristic, they fail to show how integrity can be a virtue, while Calhoun wants to show us that integrity *is* a virtue. According to Calhoun integrity is a social virtue because it makes us fit for functioning in a community with other agents. Without integrity we would not be able to live together in a community just and well, hence the reason for the importance of integrity is: living together in a *community*.

The way Calhoun describes what a social virtue is, is interesting. One could say, for example, that social virtues are virtues that conduce to a higher good for the community; virtues such as ‘courage to fight injustice’, or ‘persistence to reduce poverty’. But this is

¹⁹⁹ SFS, p. 253

²⁰⁰ SFS, p. 254

²⁰¹ SFS, p. 254

²⁰² SFS, p. 254

²⁰³ SFS, p. 254

not what Calhoun is aiming for. She gives several examples to illustrate what a personal virtue is, what a social virtue is, and what both a personal and social virtue is. She writes that temperance is a personal virtue because it consists in having a proper relation to *oneself*, to one’s desires²⁰⁴. Civility is a social virtue because it is an appropriate way of conducting oneself among *others*²⁰⁵. And self-respect, she writes, is a personal and social virtue because it involves “having proper regard for one’s own moral status *and* proper regard for one’s place among other moral beings”²⁰⁶. A social virtue, according to Calhoun, thus is a virtue that simply consists in having a proper relation to others. So Calhoun would not say that people who strive to end injustice or poverty, are not exercising social virtues; however less high-minded characteristics can be social virtues *as well*. Thus, the whistle blower indeed shows enormous courage in exposing misconduct occurring in his organisation, in order to conduce to the public good. But people who exercise virtues such as honesty, loyalty, civility and respect in everyday situations *also* conduce to the public good – or the common interest – because through this behaviour they facilitate living together in a community justly and well.

It seems then; that Calhoun would call every characteristic that conduces to living a good life, a virtue. Hence not all virtues require moral excellence; there are more ‘easy’ virtues, too. But integrity appears to be a higher virtue than the others because it is a host to many other virtues. In this sense, integrity is more of an ‘umbrella virtue’ of other virtues such as the abovementioned, rather than a virtue on its own.

Standing for something

When you try to find an answer to the question “what is worth doing?”²⁰⁷, the only way to do so is by answering it from your own individual viewpoint. Your answers – your judgments – may thus have a somewhat individual character, even when you attempt to answer the question in such a way that others within the community could endorse the judgment. These judgments *could* be wrong, after all. Nonetheless, the only way you (and everybody else) *can* answer the question is by using your own deliberative viewpoint²⁰⁸. So now it becomes clear that your own judgment – your best judgment – acquires some importance²⁰⁹. And this is where the ‘standing for something’ comes in. Sticking to your

²⁰⁴ SFS, p. 252

²⁰⁵ SFS, p. 252

²⁰⁶ SFS, p. 252

²⁰⁷ SFS, p. 257

²⁰⁸ SFS, p. 257

²⁰⁹ SFS, p. 257

best judgment of what is worth doing is not just standing for your (individual) self. It is about standing for (and before) all agents within the community that try to find answers to the question: what is worth doing?²¹⁰. Calhoun writes: “to have integrity is to understand that one’s own judgment matters because it is only within individual persons’ deliberative viewpoint, including one’s own, that what is worth our doing can be decided. Thus, one’s own judgment serves a common interest of co-deliberators”²¹¹. Persons of integrity are persons that regard their own endorsements as important for other agents as well²¹². Although the individual viewpoint is the only possible viewpoint, persons of integrity do not look at what is worthwhile in their own life only. They endorse principles that are not just valuable for themselves, but for other agents as well. For example, if a person is lying or stealing, he fails to regard his judgement as one that can matter to other agents²¹³. A person who thinks of values that are worthwhile for him only “abandons the co-deliberative perspective”²¹⁴. Thus a person of integrity has proper regard for what others might endorse. She is aware of her position as one deliberator among other deliberators in the community and adapts her judgment to this awareness. Stubbornness, fanaticism or uncritical loyalty to one’s commitments can thus in no way be connected to integrity in the way Calhoun describes the concept. Ignoring every kind of criticism would be a signal for lack of integrity since this implies not having proper regard for the judgments of others in the community. It would reflect “a basic unwillingness or inability to acknowledge the singularity of one’s own best judgment and to accept the burden of standing for it in the face of conflict”²¹⁵. In case of conflict, a person of integrity sticks to his commitments but at the same time takes the doubts of others seriously²¹⁶. Compromise is necessary at times. Now what is needed to be able to become such a person? This person must have “self-knowledge, strength of will, courage, honesty, loyalty, humility, civility, respect, and self-respect”, writes Calhoun. So, when getting back to the question how integrity is a social virtue, the answer is: it is a virtue that presses “a host of other virtues”²¹⁷ into service.

²¹⁰ SFS, p. 257

²¹¹ SFS, p. 258

²¹² SFS, p. 258

²¹³ SFS, p. 258

²¹⁴ SFS, p. 258

²¹⁵ SFS, p. 260

²¹⁶ SFS, p. 260

²¹⁷ SFS, p. 260

Integrity

Integrity is tightly connected to how we conduct ourselves among others. It does not consist in having a proper relation to oneself; it consists in having a proper relation to *others*. Central to integrity is that we stand for principles that represent what, in our best judgement, will conduce to living justly and well. Integrity thus presupposes an idea of what a just and well life requires. Integrity therefore always involves the question ‘what is worth doing’. Calhoun writes: “those who act for the sake of preserving their identity, without asking whether it is worth preserving, lack of integrity, because they do not even raise the ‘what is worth doing?’ question”²¹⁸. In order to answer this question and to adjust our behaviour to what we think is worth doing, we must acknowledge our position as one deliberator among many other deliberators. This implies two things. First, we should be aware of the fact that we live together in a community and that our behaviour not only affects ourselves, but others around us as well. The question does not involve just the judgment of what is worthy for *me*, but rather of what is worth doing for the *community*. Second, we should acknowledge the singularity of our best judgments. Each person can only give his own best judgment about what is worth doing; hence the judgments will have a somewhat individual character. A person of integrity is aware of this and takes seriously the doubts of others²¹⁹ without being too indulgent. “Integrity calls us simultaneously to stand behind our convictions and to take seriously other’s doubts about them”²²⁰. It can thus be said that integrity primarily requires having an eye for fellow members of the community – and therewith requires very strong social skills. Arrogance, close-mindedness and fanaticism (and more) are all banned from being in the running for integrity, because these are signs of unwillingness or inability to have proper respect for others. The person of integrity stands for his convictions – his best judgment of what is worth doing – but also takes criticism of others seriously. Integrity thus is a social virtue, a ‘master virtue’ that “presses a host of other virtues into service”²²¹.

Critical notes

Calhoun made an admirable effort to show how integrity is broader than the relation to oneself. This helps to see how intuitive ideas of integrity as related to honesty, loyalty, respect, and so on, are not complete nonsense. However, this step in ‘the social direction’ was not big enough according to some. Graham finds it problematic that

²¹⁸ SFS, p. 258

²¹⁹ SFS, p. 260

²²⁰ SFS, p. 260

²²¹ SFS, p. 260

having proper regard for others in the community does not require moral goodness. She writes that although Calhoun’s account shows us that it is important to stand for something that is endorsable by the community, and that criticism of others should not be ignored, the account still “allows for a morally questionable character to have integrity”. She clarifies this argument by reference to a character of the Star Wars series: Darth Vader, one of the ultimate super villains of Western film culture. Graham writes that if you trace his rise to power, you will find an “individual who sincerely believed in the principles he stood for, and most likely recognised the importance of standing for those beliefs – especially for the community of deliberators that he thought ought to count”²²². Darth Vader had a coherent self and a consistent set of principles. On Calhoun’s account of integrity, Darth Vader is a man of integrity, according to Graham. This is problematic, because a character such as Darth Vader can never be regarded as a person of integrity. It does not matter how much he is willing to see himself as a member in a community of deliberators – or how integrated a person is, or how committed to his projects – when the person is not able to judge on what is *morally right*. At first hand, it seems like Calhoun’s account fails to recognise the need for this condition of integrity. However, psychiatrists have argued that Darth Vader meets six of the nine conditions for diagnosing a borderline personality disorder²²³; his example is even used for explaining BPD to medical students. Others have argued that he suffers from a posttraumatic stress disorder. Without elaborating on Darth Vader’s personal issues in too much detail, the man had abandonment issues and was uncertain about his identity, which led, among other things, to mass murder. The point is, of such a personality it is hard to claim that he has integrity, because his thoughts were for a big part influenced by his fears, which made him extremely close-minded. Calhoun writes that integrity certainly is not “just a matter of sticking to one’s guns”²²⁴. Darth Vader may have thought he stood for principles that conduced to the good of the community of deliberators, but clearly he did not. Because he failed to *properly* respect the judgments of others. This brings us to the next criticism.

In Calhoun’s standing for something-view, the notion of having proper regard for the judgments of other deliberators in the community is rather vague. It remains unclear where to draw the line exactly between what would be fanaticism and what would be a

²²² J. Graham, “Does integrity require moral goodness?”, *Ration (new series)* XIV 3, p. 237-238

²²³ E. Landau, “What is Darth Vader’s diagnosis?”, CNN Health, June 7th, 2010. URL = <http://thechart.blogs.cnn.com/2010/06/07/what-is-darth-vaders-diagnosis/> last visited June 23th, 2014

²²⁴ SFS, p. 259

courageous sign of integrity. In other words, how can one know whether to stand behind one’s convictions or to compromise? The notion of having respect for others seems important for integrity indeed; nonetheless for this notion to gain more gravity it should contain some more information. Cox et al. write that what is needed is an account of “the difference between failing to respect the differing views of others... and failing to *properly* respect the differing views of others”²²⁵ (emphasis added). People that we look back at as persons of integrity, such as Socrates or Galileo Galilei, held on to their commitments and principles steadfastly, *notwithstanding* the judgments of other deliberators in their communities. They found their own judgment so important that they refused to listen to other deliberators, which eventually led to their punishment (death and lifelong house arrest respectively). Although Socrates and Galileo can be regarded as exemplary persons of integrity, they did not meet Calhoun’s condition of having proper regard for the judgment of others. Calhoun acknowledges this but writes that it is “easy to overlook what from their vantage point acting with integrity must have looked like”²²⁶. She agrees that their commitment to their principles was admirable and courageous, but this is easier to say now we know that their convictions are still valuable to us. “Even protesters risk losing their integrity to arrogance”²²⁷. However, Calhoun does not really provide an answer to the question how one can know whether to stand behind one’s convictions, or to let go of them.

Scherkoske criticises Calhoun on this point but also proposes a solution to the problem. He fills in the answer about what proper respect for others could mean, by taking it a step further. Integrity can require “revision, compromise and even deference...in one’s convictions”²²⁸, because it should not be a social but an *epistemic* virtue: a virtue that concerns truthfulness. This implies that the person of integrity ought to ascertain that her judgments are “defensible, reasoned – and to her best approximation, correct”²²⁹. Proper regard then requires that persons stand for their best judgment when their judgment is right, but also “stand down if one’s best judgment is faulty or manifestly incorrect”²³⁰. This account does show how persons such as Socrates and Galileo properly respected the judgments of other deliberators but were still steadfastly true to their own convictions because integrity in this sense is not opposed to steadfast adherence to one’s

²²⁵ Cox et al., "Integrity", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2013 Edition)

²²⁶ SFS, p. 260

²²⁷ SFS, p. 260

²²⁸ G. Scherkoske, “Integrity and moral danger”, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 40, No. 9, p. 353

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 355

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 353

convictions but only to pathological adherence to one’s convictions²³¹. Thus what matters for integrity according to Scherkoske is not that a person has proper respect for other deliberators in the community, but that he gets his convictions right²³². The person of integrity must maintain his convictions in an epistemically responsible way²³³. Scherkoske adds more content to what ‘proper regard’ or ‘proper respect’ means – it should involve epistemic responsibility – and thereby enriched Calhoun’s account.

Conclusion

In summary, Calhoun regards integrity as a social virtue because it consists in having a proper relation to others. It consists in standing up for one’s best judgment of what is worth doing – in a community with others. This implies both that what one stands for must in some way conduce to the common interest, *and* that one has proper regard for the judgments of others; that one takes doubts of others seriously. Integrity thus always involves the question ‘what is worth doing?’ and motivating reasons such as ‘just because I like it’ do not count as candidates for reasons a person of integrity would endorse. In this sense, integrity can be regarded as a higher virtue, a master virtue pressing into service other virtues such as “self-knowledge, strength of will, courage, honesty, loyalty, humility, civility respect, and self-respect”²³⁴. The main focus of the criticisms is that the exact meaning of proper regard for others remains rather vague. The question is what principles should a person’s best judgment be guided by, if integrity does not require moral goodness? Calhoun does not give a clear answer to this question, however she successfully showed that integrity should not merely be characterised by a relation to the self, but rather by a relation to *others*.

²³¹ Ibid., p. 353

²³² Ibid., p. 354

²³³ Ibid., p. 355

²³⁴ SFS, p. 260

06. Analysis

So far I have described four different views on integrity. Each view has its own focus and explanation for how to achieve or maintain integrity. Frankfurt’s integrated-self view focused on autonomy; Williams’ identity-view focused on identity and authenticity; Korsgaard’s self-constitution-view focused on identity and agency and in Calhoun’s standing for something-view the focus was on community. Here it becomes clear that the first three authors characterised integrity in terms of a relation to the self, whereas Calhoun characterised integrity essentially as a relation to others. Although these four authors all described integrity in very different ways, I discovered several analogies. This chapter describes these findings.

Deliberating and deciding

I will point out the analogy between Korsgaard and Frankfurt first, which is about the act of deliberating and deciding respectively. The capability to become a *person* starts with consciousness (according to both). Korsgaard argues that self-consciousness creates a distance between the incentives and responses²³⁵, and it is because of this that we are able to take a step back and reflect before we act. She calls this reflective distance. Whereas non-human animals respond to their desires instinctively, we, as persons, are able to take desires to provide us with reason for doing something. Desires can be *reasons* for us to act, but that is not the same as directly *causing* us to act²³⁶. Therefore psychic unity is not a natural state for us, but something that we have to achieve; we have to pull ourselves together²³⁷. We get there by deliberation: “the function of deliberation is not merely to determine how you will act but also to unify you”²³⁸. Frankfurt writes that consciousness involves a secondary awareness of primary responses²³⁹, a capacity that no other animal than man appears to have²⁴⁰. As human beings we can reflect upon our desires and decide whether we want to have these desires and whether we want them to motivate us all the way to action. By deciding about what we want to do, we are looking for an alternative to doing what comes naturally²⁴¹, or in other words: doing what comes instinctively. Through deciding we attempt to control our desires and thereby to overcome inner division – and to become an integrated whole. The function of decision

²³⁵ SC, p. 116

²³⁶ SC, p. 105

²³⁷ SC, p. 126

²³⁸ SC, p. 125

²³⁹ IW, p. 30

²⁴⁰ FoW, p. 7

²⁴¹ IW, p. 43

is thus, as it is for Korsgaard, to integrate the person²⁴². In her book, Korsgaard does not mention Frankfurt, but the way she describes the act of deliberating seems strikingly analogous. And although for Korsgaard the central aim is the constitution of the self, as it is not for Frankfurt, the latter appears to have slightly similar thoughts about the idea of self-constitution, as he writes: “the decision determines what the person really wants by making the desire upon which he decides fully his own. To this extent the person, in making a decision by which he identifies with a desire, *constitutes himself*”²⁴³. One could recall that this analogy is merely semantic, however I believe there is more to it. Frankfurt also writes about deciding that we *create* our selves by ordering and rejecting desires within us²⁴⁴. We integrate the desires that we endorse and we separate ourselves from the desires that we reject. In this way we become persons. For Frankfurt deciding does not constitute a person’s identity or character, as it does for Korsgaard, but it does constitute an agent *as* a person. Hence I think it fair to say that there is a significant overlap in the way Frankfurt and Korsgaard understand the act of deliberating and deciding, both the structure and the function of it. Now I have pointed out how deliberating and deciding are basically the same thing, another analogy arises. The way Korsgaard explains the concept of agency is quite similar to the way Frankfurt explains autonomy. For Frankfurt’s autonomy it is essential that the agent be wholly ‘integrated’, for Korsgaard’s agency it is essential that the agent be ‘unified’. How is this done? In Frankfurt’s case the agent must wholeheartedly identify with his desires. The same applies for Korsgaard: the agent must see his action as a result from his entire nature working as an integrated whole²⁴⁵. Agency, according to Korsgaard, is the ability to be in control of the grounds on which we act, the ability to deliberately decide what sort of cause we will be²⁴⁶. Autonomy, according to Frankfurt, consists in the ability to have second-order volitions: the ability to want certain desires to be your will. We can attribute these concepts of autonomy and agency to a person who is well able to decide and deliberate and, in that sense, are not very different.

Practical identities and ground projects

When comparing Korsgaard with Williams, there is another evident analogy: Korsgaard’s ‘practical identities’ and Williams’ ‘ground projects’. The two concepts overlap almost literally. According to Korsgaard a conception of a practical identity is “a description

²⁴² IW, p. 43

²⁴³ IW, p. 38

²⁴⁴ IW, p. 39

²⁴⁵ SC, p. 19

²⁴⁶ SC, p. 19

under which you value yourself and find your life worth living and your actions to be worth undertaking”²⁴⁷. These practical identities are things such as relationships, professions, memberships of groups or religions, “or whatever”²⁴⁸: anything that makes your life worth living and your actions worth doing. We must not abandon our practical identities since doing so will provide us with no reason to act – and thus no reason to live. We have numerous practical identities, and the work of pulling ourselves together – deliberating – is the work of integrating those practical identities into a single identity: a coherent whole²⁴⁹. Thus if we do not have a separate and particular identity, we will have no reasons to live. ‘Practical identities’ is the name Korsgaard gives to ground projects but in essence they are exactly the same: they are what gives a person an authentic identity and they are the motive force for living (and acting). This similarity is interesting since Korsgaard is an avid Kantian, while Williams turns against Kantianism. So how is this possible? Korsgaard provides an answer to this by explaining how our desires are public rather than private: “to have a personal project is not to desire a special object that you think is good for you privately, but rather to want to stand in a special relationship to something you think is good *publicly*” (emphasis added)²⁵⁰. She regards practical identities not as purely individual and subjective, which makes sense because many ground projects that people have consist of special relationships with other people.

Proper regard for others

According to the views of Frankfurt, Williams, and Korsgaard, integrity consists in protecting and constituting the self. ‘What do *I* want’, ‘what do *I* identify with’ and ‘who am *I*?’ are all central questions when it comes to integrity. Calhoun does not argue that these questions are unimportant or that persons do not need to be autonomous, but she takes it a step further: the questions a person of integrity needs to ask concern what principles and values *we* – “as beings interested in living justly and well”²⁵¹ – should stand for. Whereas for the former authors the boundaries of the self are important, Calhoun regards persons as being intertwined with their community and thereby she broadens the focus of integrity. Nonetheless, Korsgaard mentions having regard for others as well and there is an analogy with Calhoun in the way she does this. Calhoun writes that integrity consists in standing for one’s best judgment about what would be worth doing – what would be a good life – not just for oneself, but also for the community. It involves caring

²⁴⁷ SC, p. 20

²⁴⁸ SC, p. 20

²⁴⁹ SC, p. 126

²⁵⁰ SC, p. 211

²⁵¹ SFS, p. 254

about what the community endorses. So when a person acts, she acts in a way that she thinks could be endorsed by everyone in the community. Korsgaard argued that constituting yourself requires acting under a universal law - a law with universal force that you make for yourself. She calls this ‘the moral law’, which should not be confused with the Kantian categorical imperative, although it is derived from it. The moral law is “the law of acting only on maxims that all rational beings could act on together in a workable cooperative system”²⁵². Hereby Korsgaard adds quite specific content to what a person of integrity must will. Acting on a person’s ‘best judgment’ is not so different from acting on a person’s ‘moral law’: both are principles that guide a person’s conduct and that necessarily involve having proper regard for others. Proper regard for others is the pet issue for Calhoun – the main focus. This is not the case for Korsgaard, yet her subtle mentioning of this notion is essential since it is an important part of how a person constitutes herself.

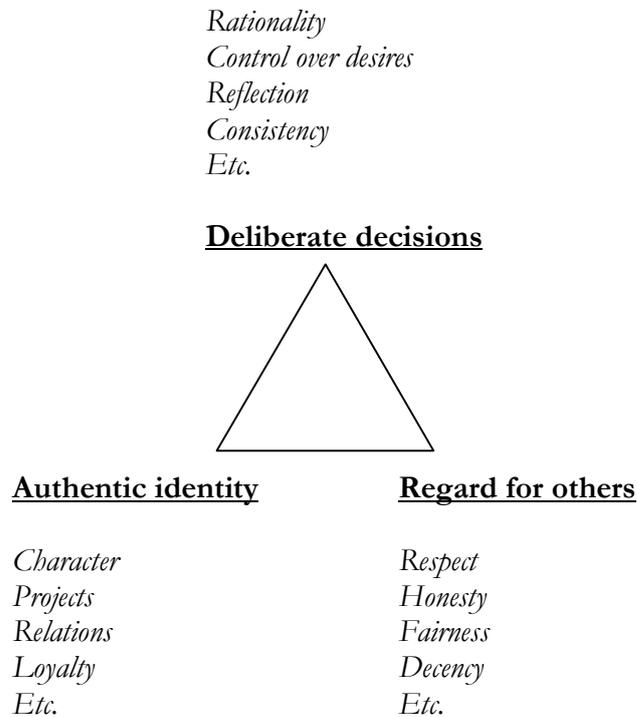
Conclusion

I have pointed out several analogies between the different theories. It is notable that the theory presented by Korsgaard meets the three other theories at some point. This is only logical because she is the only one of the four philosophers who devoted a whole book instead of one or two articles to integrity. Her theory in that sense is the most comprehensive of all and it is therefore not striking that there is some overlap with the other views on integrity. But perhaps when looking at the points where the different theories meet, something can be derived from this. First, when looking at the analogy between Frankfurt’s deciding and Korsgaard’s deliberating it becomes clear that a person of integrity does not act instinctively, but is able to reflect before she acts. A person of integrity consciously chooses her actions and in this way decides who she is to be. Integrity in this sense requires the ability to reflect and to be in control over your desires. Second, from the analogy between Williams’ ground projects and Korsgaard’s practical identities it has become clear that a person of integrity has a particular, and recognisable character. She is a separate individual. Integrity then, requires that we have an authentic identity, distinct from others around us. Third, when looking at the analogy between Calhoun’s proper regard for others and Korsgaard’s moral law, it becomes clear that the conduct of a person of integrity is guided by the idea of contribution to a good life for both ourselves and others. Integrity in this sense requires the ability to have proper regard for the interests and judgments of others.

²⁵² SFS, p. 80

If we add these three notions together, basically a person of integrity deliberately decides how she will act; she has a particular and authentic identity; and she has proper regard for others. If this triad would be the conceptual framework for integrity it becomes clear why people connect notions as honesty, consistency, rectitude and trustworthiness (and more) to integrity. But connecting such notions to the concept is not the same thing as equating them with it. So honesty should not be included in the concept; but based on this framework it indeed makes sense that the person of integrity *is* honest.

The following example shows how certain notions can be connected to the framework on which integrity discussions should be based, without including them in the meaning of integrity:



07. A kind turn: discussing a practical dilemma

This chapter will examine how the accounts of Frankfurt, Williams, Korsgaard and Calhoun can guide a person through a practical integrity dilemma. Looking at a practical dilemma will help to show in what way the accounts can be insufficient in solving the dilemma and why all of the three components of the framework are indeed necessary.

The dilemma

Oscar Peterson’s political career is going well: he won enough votes in the municipal elections and has now become a city councillor. Many of the votes came from the local rugby club that he is an active member of. Except for the excellent performances in the local rugby cup, Oscar also appreciates the club for the important work it is doing in neighbourhoods with lower socio-economic statuses. Many of Oscar’s close friends play rugby at the club too and are involved in the organisation. Oscar’s youth friend Herbert Gibson is the chairman of the rugby club. Herbert is happy for Oscar’s achievement and also sees an opportunity to fulfil his ambition to expand the club. In order to shorten the waiting lists for membership, the club needs new rugby fields. Also the canteen needs to be much bigger than it is now. Herbert asks Oscar for a favour: support in getting permission to expand the club from the city council. What should Oscar do?²⁵³

Frankfurt’s integrated self-view

Frankfurt writes that a person becomes integrated when he is able to have second-order volitions; when he is able to want a certain desire to be his will²⁵⁴. There are several first-order desires that Oscar might have: the desire to help a friend, loyalty to the club and high regard from members of the club. But Oscar also wants to show people that he is a good public officer, he has the wish to have a flourishing political career and to gain respect from other council members. There appears to be a conflict of first-order desires. Oscar cannot fulfil all of them simultaneously. Time to reflect: what does Oscar *really* want? And what does this involve? It appears that there are two possibilities; Oscar can either say yes or no to his friend. He could, for instance, wholeheartedly decide to do everything in his power to support the rugby club. But as a newly admitted city councillor Oscar finds it important to show that he is not biased on certain issues, after all he has a public role to fulfil. It all comes down to what he wholeheartedly wants.

²⁵³ This dilemma is based on a dilemma that is retrieved from ‘Binnenlands Bestuur’, (URL = <http://www.binnenlandsbestuur.nl/sociaal/partners/bmc/positief-omgaan-met-integriteit.9367922.lynkx>), last visited June 15, 2014

²⁵⁴ FoW, p. 10

Frankfurt does not argue why Oscar ought not to make this ‘kind turn’ for his friend, however it seems odd that Frankfurt would allow such things, especially for a person who has a public responsibility. Perhaps if a person is fully rational – which is one of the conditions to become integrated – caring for others is perhaps already internalised in the decision-making. But the outcome of the integrated-self view seems to depend solely on what Oscar really wants. This case shows that Frankfurt should have included a notion of regard for others in his argumentation. But as I have already mentioned: what Frankfurt argues for are *preconditions* for integrity; rather than a comprehensive theory on integrity.

Williams’ identity-view

According to Williams a person of integrity stays true to his ground projects. Oscar has several ground projects. He appears to be an ambitious man: if he would not be so committed to pursue a political career, he never would have reached this position. Being in the city council is very important to him. The rugby club has a very special place in his heart: it is how he knows many of his friends and he has played at this club since he was a young boy. Herbert is one of Oscar’s oldest friends and they have become very close throughout the years. Pursuing a political career is an important part of his identity, but so is the rugby club and so is the special relationship he has with Herbert. All these ground projects are what make Oscar happy: he connects with these projects on such a deep level that if they would be lost or frustrated, it would be a loss of his identity. Now does this dilemma come down to which of the ground projects he identifies with *the deepest*? But what if all projects are equally important to him? The rugby club ground project and the friendship ground project would not be frustrated when saying ‘no’, whereas the city councillor ground project *would* be frustrated if he says ‘yes’. It would thus be wise for Oscar to say no. However it seems that this is only the case if Oscar indeed identifies with his role as a city councillor on such a deep level. If he would not take the role very seriously, it would seem more logical for him to do everything in his power to support the rugby club, without losing his integrity. Again, too much of the decision seems to depend on what Oscar finds most important. If we think of the triad again it becomes clear that the way Williams’ theory guides us through the dilemma, does not touch on the notion of regard for others, and perhaps not even on the notion of deliberate decision-making. According to Williams it would be possible to make a decision that most people would regard as a sign of lack of integrity – the kind turn – while maintaining the ‘Williamsian’ integrity.

Korsgaard’s self-constitution-view

How can Korsgaard help Oscar make a decision? In this case we can clearly see that Oscar has to deal with his different ‘practical identities’. Oscar is a friend, he is loyal to the rugby club and he is a member of the city council. What Oscar must do is to pull these identities together into a single practical identity and he must do so by means of practical deliberation. Oscar may feel torn and now his job is to reunify himself. It is still possible to harmonise the practical identities. It seems that Oscar can harmonise these identities without too much trouble. If he thinks of the constitutive principles for all these things it appears that it is possible to act in such a way that all three identities can exist simultaneously: he ought to say no to Herbert. It is not part of friendship to respond to such favours and the decision has nothing to do with his rugby club membership, whereas it is essential for being a good city councillor to serve the public interest – and thus not to benefit friends over other people. Oscar cannot make an exception for his old friend because that would not fit under his universal normative law that he can coherently apply to all his actions. He cannot “will a maxim thinking that he can use it just this once and then so to speak discard it”²⁵⁵. A particularistic will such as that would disintegrate Oscar. Thus in order to constitute himself as an integrated, unified whole, Oscar ought to tell Herbert ‘no’. In Korsgaard’s case it becomes clear that there is no other option than to ‘do the right thing’: Oscar needs to unify his *identity* by practical *deliberation* and act under the moral law that necessarily involves *regard for others*.

Calhoun’s standing for something-view

Last but not least, how would Calhoun help Oscar solve this dilemma? Integrity demands of us that we stand for our best judgment of what is worth doing. This judgment is connected to viewing oneself as a member of an evaluating community²⁵⁶. Oscar should thus ask himself the question: what is worth doing? And when deliberating about this question he ought to think of what would be worth doing for *everyone*. Oscar should step out of his own perspective and think of what other people in the community would rightfully expect of him. Oscar knows that people expect of city councillors that they serve the public interest. Doing favours for his friends is not a problem for Oscar, however using his professional role to do so *is* a problem, because it would not conduce to living just and well in a community. It is very clear to Oscar that he ought to stand for his best judgment of what is worth doing for everyone, especially since he has a public

²⁵⁵ SC, p. 75

²⁵⁶ SFS, p. 254

role to fulfil. Oscar stands for what he finds important for the community and says ‘no’ to Herbert. On Calhoun’s account, this case is not even a dilemma, because having proper regard for others is so important. But then what is left of a person’s own authentic identity, if the aim is always to serve the public interest? Calhoun’s account is at risk of leaning too much to the side of others instead of the self.

Conclusion

When looking at a practical dilemma it becomes clear what shortcomings each of the different views on integrity have. It seems important to find a balance between the three components that I mentioned: deliberate decisions, authentic identity and regard for others. If a theory neglects one of these components, or focuses too much on one of them, two things can happen. First, it is possible to make a decision that seems to be a sign of *lack* of integrity. And second, there might be no dilemma at all. But if there is no dilemma, how can a person have integrity? Integrity seems to be something that shows itself in struggles. Hence I believe that integrity consists of finding the right balance between at least the three components of the framework I mentioned.

08. Concluding remarks

The aim of this thesis was to do some ‘spring-cleaning’ in the debate on integrity, which in my view was necessary since it seems that too many notions get included in the term. I wanted to untangle what we are actually talking about when we discuss integrity. I examined four different interpretations of the concept: the views as presented by Frankfurt, Williams, Korsgaard and Calhoun, in order to answer the question: what components of integrity should at least be involved in the discussion on integrity?

All the theories had a different approach to and focus on integrity, namely autonomy, authenticity, identity, agency and community. In the first three views it became clear that the focus is mainly on the self, whereas Calhoun essentially characterises integrity in terms of a relation to others. All authors presented different conditions and requirements for integrity and different arguments for why it is important, but although the views were so different, I have also pointed out three points where they come together, namely deliberate decisions, authentic identity and regard for others. These are the three components that should always be involved in the discussion on integrity. This triad shows how certain notions or characteristics can be connected to integrity, without including them in the term. In the last chapter I shortly discussed a dilemma in order to show that indeed all three components are necessary for integrity. I have thus untangled the concept and thereby I have showed what should be the framework to base further and more defined ideas on.

In this thesis I explored the views on integrity of four philosophers, and although I believe that the views of these four philosophers cover a big part of the debate, my analysis is inevitably limited. I would be hesitant to add too many components to the framework, but perhaps there are some other components to be discovered. This idea could be explored in further research. However the framework should consist of *no less* than the three components. Another line that could be explored in further research is how this framework can relate to professional integrity or academic integrity.

The triad that I presented as a basic framework can form a fruitful starting point for further investigations.

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