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SOLIDARITY AND WORK: A REASSESSMENT

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1. Overview

The historical rise of the ideal of solidarity, as well as the most moving and enduring symbols we have for it, are intimately bound up with work. The ideal of solidarity first emerged as an explicit source of political mobilization by way of the workers' movement in mid-nineteenth-century France (Hayward 1959: 277; Wildt 1999; Wilde 2013), while of course the actions of the Polish trade union *Solidarność* in the 1980s provide an unrivalled image of what solidarity means, and what it can achieve, that inspires us to this day.

The link between solidarity and work is also central to the classical theories of solidarity, particularly those advanced by Hegel, Marx and Durkheim. Although Hegel did not use the word solidarity, his account in *Philosophy of Right* of the 'ethical basis' of the associations characteristic of civil society amounts to an elaboration of the kinds of solidarity that have to be in place for the social system of production and consumption to function properly. Alongside the bond of marriage, Hegel identified the social solidarity arising from membership of a 'Corporation' of workers as the key centripetal force,

as he depicted it, needed to negate the potentially destructive centrifugal forces of self-interest unleashed in civil society (Hegel 1952: sec. 255). For Marx, whose theory of solidarity is also implicit but nonetheless very influential historically, the pathologies of destroyed solidarity in the modern world are the inevitable consequence of the antagonism between labour and capital, which only a revolutionary transformation of the organization of labour can cure. While according to Durkheim's much-discussed theory (which is in part a reaction to Marx's), it is precisely the specialization of work under capitalism that makes possible a new, healthier and ethically more progressive (because more universalistic) 'organic' mode of solidarity, which can itself be drawn upon for overcoming the most egregious and socially divisive effects of capitalism.

So for the classical theories of solidarity the relation between solidarity and work is central, and this reflects the close historical and symbolic association between work and the ideal of solidarity. But for most contemporary theorists of solidarity, the relation between work and solidarity is peripheral or secondary. While recent analyses of solidarity do not *deny* the importance of work as a context or source of solidarity, they do nonetheless tend to marginalize its significance, or to include it merely as an after-thought. Certainly, it is unusual for a theorist of solidarity today to assign a *special* significance to work as a context and source of solidarity - the kind of significance, that is to say, that the classical theorists of solidarity mentioned above did (albeit in their different ways).

Perhaps the most notable exception to this trend, amongst critical social theorists at least, is Axel Honneth. According to Honneth's theory (which is obviously heavily indebted to Hegel's), just as love is the form that recognition takes in the familial sphere, and rights the form it takes in the legal/political sphere, so *solidarity* is the expression of *mutual recognition* proper to civil society (Honneth 1995a). Social solidarity, on this account, turns on the acknowledgement of social contributions made first and foremost through work. Here Honneth picks up on a thought shared by Hegel, Marx and Durkheim that social solidarity in the modern world is bound up more or less satisfactorily with the social organization of labour: with what people *contribute to society* understood as a common weal, a general and encompassing process of production and consumption.

While this is an important perspective to take on the link between work and solidarity, and is an important corrective to the relative neglect of work in the recent literature on solidarity, I want to propose that ~~it~~ there is a further lesson to be learned from the classical figures on solidarity. For in addition to drawing our attention to the solidarity at stake in contributions to society as a whole through participation in the social division of labour, they also invite us to consider the perhaps more fundamental solidarity that is presupposed and engendered in *acts of cooperation intrinsic to the activity of working itself*, firstly and for the most part.

The crux of my argument is this. If solidarity is a feature of effective cooperative relationships, and if it is above all in *working activity* that the concrete meaning of cooperation becomes manifest to us (that is to say, the context in which the need for cooperation and the difficulties of establishing and maintaining it become most tangible), then work should not be a marginal or secondary consideration for theorists of solidarity, as it currently is, but a *central* consideration. I'm aware that the conclusion of this argument is controversial and will sit uncomfortably with many theorists, but for reasons I will present later, I believe the main misgivings likely to be aroused by the centrality of work thesis can be assuaged.

First though, I should say something more about the relation between solidarity and work that emerges from some of the classical theories (section 2). I'll then show in a bit more detail how the contemporary debate around solidarity tends either to marginalize this relation or to make it difficult to keep in view (section 3). I'll also very briefly consider how a couple of exceptions to this tendency, that is, accounts that do take the relation between work and solidarity seriously, nevertheless ignore or choose to discount the possibility of a solidarity that is embedded - transcendentally, I'm tempted to say - in working activity itself on account of its cooperative nature. I elaborate the meaning of the claim that work has this feature by drawing on Christophe Dejours' psychodynamic approach to work (section 4). Only then will I be in a position to consider some of the main objections (section 5).

2. Hegel, Marx and Durkheim: Mutuality and Expression in Work

As a first step in our reassessment of the relation between work and solidarity, it is worth reminding ourselves of the great significance attached to work and the social division of labour in the classical theories of solidarity.¹

As I mentioned before, while Hegel didn't use the term solidarity as such, his whole account of ethical life is meant to make explicit the solidaristic ethical relations that form the 'reverse side', to use Habermas's expression, of modern, autonomy-based universalistic morality (Habermas 1989). It is only through its objective expression in social practices such as the family and the state that the morality of freedom has concrete reality for subjects, and it is through socialization into these practices that subjects acquire a concrete sense of why morality matters. Without solidaristic bonds morality would be abstract and ineffectual: the universal would be 'split off' from the particular. It is on account of the particular 'rising to the universal', as Hegel often says, that morality and solidarity co-emerge. Hegel gives two accounts of the centrality of work in this dialectical process.

First, there is the transformation of the consciousness of the worker through the objectification of his powers that is recounted in the famous master-slave dialectic of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (Hegel 1977). The act of producing an object reveals the working subject to himself in a way that mere consumption or impulsive gratification - the nature-like particularity the worker has had to sacrifice for the sake of making the object - cannot match. The worker thus obtains a level of *self*-consciousness (he is able to say "I did that!", as Gadamer points out in his insightful commentary) that Hegel describes as the first step on the road to the full self-consciousness of freedom (Gadamer 1982).

While Hegel never abandons this expressivist, self-formative model of work, it moves backstage in *Philosophy of Right*, where the cen-

1 I shall only be considering - and all too briefly - the theories of Hegel, Marx and Durkheim, and I shall leave to others to consider how the other classical theorists, such as Tönnies and Mauss, conceive the relation between solidarity and work.

tral role of work in the dialectic of particularity and universality takes shape in the context of the socially mediated satisfaction of wants and needs. In a modern market economy, the satisfaction of need appears at first to be governed wholly by the principle of particularity, by individuals pursuing their own self-interest. And it is true that the exchange of goods, labour and services that makes up the market economy is aimed at the satisfaction of particular needs and the creation of private wealth. In the act of exchanging something that will result in the satisfaction of one's own particular want, an individual is of course forced into satisfying someone else's - the buyer's - and this sets in motion a dialectic of the particular and the universal (the 'invisible hand') that results in a 'system' of need or want-satisfaction (Hegel 1952: sec 199).

The interdependence of the individuals who contribute to this system provides an objective basis for social solidarity. But Hegel saw that the principle of particularity that holds sway in the market also generates great inequality and deprivation - not least, and most perniciously in Hegel's view, in the availability of socially useful work (or work that is recognized as making a contribution to the system of need). This is where what Hegel called the 'corporations' come in: associations that are responsible for maintaining the quality of the work of the various trades (their skill-base, training, population, etc.) as well as their social standing. Such associations gave expression to the solidarity of members of the *socialized* (though market-mediated) system of need (Hegel 1952: sec 253).

We can also distinguish two approaches to the relation between work and solidarity in Marx. On the one hand, Marx takes over the expressivist model of work according to which human beings realize their essential humanity through free productive activity. This conception of work is most vivid in early writings such as the 'Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts' and the 'Excerpts on James Mill's *Elements of Political Economy*' of 1844, but it is unmistakable in passages of *Capital* too (Marx 1975; 1976).² According to this concep-

2 As an example of the latter, Marx writes of modern manufacture that it 'converts the worker into a crippled monstrosity by furthering his particular skill as in a forcing-house, through the suppression of a whole world of productive drives and inclinations, just as in the states of La Plata they butcher a whole beast for the sake of his hide or his

tion, under capitalism labour is unfree (it is dominated and distorted by capital) and this results in the self-alienation of workers *in their productive activity*. This is at the same time a *social* alienation since it involves estrangement from other workers, from the process of social production and the social species being. True social solidarity is only possible in a society that would abolish the domination of labour by capital and thereby the fundamental source of both self and social alienation (Marx 1975: 277-78).

But such a social transformation can only happen, Marx also thought, if the working *class* can summon the solidarity to *take possession* of the social system of production. There are two related thoughts here which are adventitious to the expressivist approach but which came to dominate Marxist thinking on solidarity and work.

First, the moral and social pathologies of capitalist society are now seen as springing from *ownership* of the means of production. The question of who has *power* over the means of production, of the physical and labouring resources by which nature is transformed to satisfy human needs, becomes paramount. But this is distinct from the question of the organization of work per se and the kind of activity it is possible to undertake within it (a factory controlled by communists can be just as alienating as one controlled by capitalists).

Second, solidarity could now come to be seen first and foremost as something that is *instrumentally* valuable for the overriding political task of gaining power. This helps to explain why, in the Marxist tradition, the central point of reference for understanding the relation between work and solidarity came to be class understood in terms of where one stands in relation to ownership of the means of production. Class membership, or rather membership of the working class, came to be regarded as both the only *authentic* source of solidarity (because based on the truly human capacity to work) and as the only *effective* source of solidarity (because only it has the power to mobilize a truly social revolution). It is hard to find anyone nowadays who endorses either of these 'Marxist' views about solidarity and its relation to work, but before turning to why that might be the case, we should briefly consider Durkheim's views on the matter.

Like Hegel and Marx before him, Durkheim was acutely aware of both the threat to social solidarity posed by the specialization and

tallow' (Marx 1976: 481)

fragmentation of labour in modern industrial society, and the potential for an emancipating 'organic' form of social solidarity, as Durkheim called it, based on a more reflexive, transparent and inclusive system of social labour. The widespread availability of meaningful work, and the ability to see one's work as contributing to the social whole on account of transparent connections between the different parts of the system, are crucial to the organic form of solidarity Durkheim had in mind (Durkheim 1984: 298, 311, 326). Without the kinds of religious and kinship bonds that held together earlier societies, modern societies have to rely on the sense of connection people obtain from contributing meaningfully to the common effort in their work. Work thus has to be organized in a way that enables individuals to make such a meaningful contribution on pain of social disintegration (Durkheim 1984: 330).

To bring this brief discussion of the classical theorists of solidarity to a close, it is clear that work is central for each of them. For Durkheim and Hegel, the ethical basis of the social solidarity that is the 'reverse side' of the morality of freedom that finds partial expression in a market economy is bound up with the availability of work that provides individuals with a sense of contributing to the social whole, which in turn provides a basis for self-respect. Of course Marx denies that the system is capable of meeting that condition but he agrees (at least in his early writings) that only a society that did meet it (that did make socially meaningful work generally available) would have the required solidarity. But for Marx, the *political* solidarity of the working class, defined by its lack of ownership of the means of production, is also very important, since it is only by taking ownership of the means of production that the fundamental problems of *social* solidarity (and the economic crises that beget them) can be addressed. It is this feature, I suggested, that came to characterize Marxist analyses of solidarity, and is evident, for instance, in their preoccupation with class consciousness.

As class consciousness failed to materialize amongst workers in the radical way anticipated by Marxists, it no longer seemed credible to attach such a central political significance to class solidarity. At the same time, other forms of politically mobilizing identifications - forms based on gender and race, for example, rather than class - came to the fore. Indeed, class membership (or 'sameness of class posi-

tion', as Engels put it [Bayertz 1999: 17]) no longer seemed to define anything 'essential' or 'privileged' about identity at all. While, on some empirical measures, working class people showed more solidarity than people from middle class backgrounds, this did not seem to have much to do with their subjective identification with the working class as such, and in any case other forms of identification (religious, ethnic and cultural) seemed to carry more powerful subjective attachments (Sennett and Cobb, 1972). These two developments - the fragmentation of the working class as a political agent and the rise of new forms of non-class based group identification - made it seem to many theorists that work was no longer central to social solidarity. But this conclusion could only appear so compelling given the Marx-Engels premise that solidarity in relation to work was essentially a matter of shared class position.

The upshot of this is that work is now often taken up by theorists of solidarity solely on the grounds that it provides a context in which individuals are able to join together in effective common action to secure their particular group interest. As we shall see in a moment, this is the approach taken in Kurt Bayertz's influential account of solidarity. But our brief consideration of Hegel, Marx and Durkheim shows that this is a quite limited conception of how work and social solidarity might be related to each other.

3. The Contemporary Debate: the Marginality of Work

In recent years a number of illuminating analyses and taxonomies of solidarity have been proposed. These have advanced our understanding of solidarity considerably after years of neglect of the subject by theorists. But for all the insight to be gained from them, they tend to present the relation between work and solidarity in a limited way (typically, to illustrate one particular type of solidarity), and they sometimes even make it difficult to conceive of work as a locus of solidarity at all.

As an example of a perspective on solidarity that gives a restricted view of solidarity in relation to work, consider Kurt Bayertz's account, which is one of the best of its kind and has rightly served as the point of departure for many subsequent discussions (Bayertz

1999). Bayertz distinguishes four uses of the concept of solidarity: 1) to refer to the 'universal' bond that joins all members of humanity in a single moral community; 2) to refer to the attachments that bind people together in particular, limited communities (what is invoked to explain social cohesion, especially in modern differentiated societies marked by cohesion-threatening pluralism and individualism); 3) to refer to the political bond that enables groups to stand together and present a united front in pursuit of their shared group interests; and 4) to refer to the bond that links the citizens of a modern welfare state together, legitimizing a redistribution of resources that ensures a minimal level of social protection for everyone.

Bayertz gives an interesting account of labour movement solidarity under the rubric of the third, political type of solidarity he identifies. The solidarity characteristic of the Labour movement is a good illustration of this type of solidarity, Bayertz argues, because it is the bond that enables workers to stand up to management and secure positive outcomes from the workers' point of view. But in contrast to the Marxist tendency I mentioned above to focus exclusively on the strategic political importance of this solidarity, namely its instrumental value in the class struggle, Bayertz reminds us that the solidarity of the Labour movement owes as much, if not more, to indignation at perceived injustices at work, as it does to an interest in obtaining or increasing power. There is a moral dimension to the solidarity expressed in the Labour movement as well as a pragmatic, political dimension. Without this moral dimension, the term 'solidarity' would not really be applicable to the Labour movement at all. Bayertz is surely right about this.

Nonetheless, there are aspects of the relation between work and solidarity that do not fit neatly into Bayertz's third type of solidarity and which are not picked up elsewhere in his account. In particular, the solidaristic significance of working *activity*, and of activity that is recognized as a meaningful contribution to the common good, is hidden from view. While it is true that Bayertz mentions the centrality of the division of labour to Durkheim's theory of social solidarity, he depicts this significance not in terms of the differentiated kinds of *social contribution* the organization of social labour makes possible, but in terms of the possibilities it opens up for solidarity based on

difference rather than *sameness* (Bayertz 1999, 12).³ The relevance of work for solidarity thus remains limited to solidarity that exists between groups whose identities happen to be bound up with work, to *class-based identities* that people may or may not have in the modern world (Bayertz 1999, 26).

Let me now turn to another account which, while helpful in many respects, nevertheless has the unintended effect of screening out work altogether as a locus of solidarity. William Rehg has proposed an analytical framework for understanding solidarity in terms of the kind of common good that members of groups bound by solidarity are able to realize (Rehg 2007). According to this framework, solidarities exist as a spectrum with the (relatively weak or thin) bond that joins what Rehg calls ‘voluntary instrumental associations’ at one end, and stronger or thicker ‘irreducibly social lifeworld solidarities’ at the other (Rehg 2007: 8). Voluntary instrumental associations are those that individuals decide to establish in order to pursue individual interests they commonly have (as an example, Rehg mentions time-share groups whose members are able to use desirable vacation spots they couldn’t afford on their own); whereas lifeworld solidarities involve irreducibly social goods which are essentially realized in common by the members of the association and in principle cannot be realized outside it (examples of this kind of association include sports teams and orchestras, though Rehg suggests that close personal relationships may belong at this end of the spectrum too).

If we start from Rehg’s premise, which I think is a good one, that solidarity is ‘the cohesive social bond that holds a group of people together in an association they both understand themselves to be part of and value’ (Rehg 2007: 8), then it is a promising strategy to analyze solidarity in terms of the understanding agents have of their associations and the kind of value the associations have for them. But

3 Durkheim is widely praised by contemporary theorists of solidarity for seeing beyond the possibilities of solidarity based on ‘sameness’, and it is this feature of his theory – his conceptualization of solidarity as ‘difference-based’ – that they see as its distinctive, enduringly relevant contribution. It is less remarked upon that for Durkheim it is not any ‘difference’, but specifically the different *work* that people do, their differential *contribution* to the division of labour in society, that provides the source of organic solidarity.

what about the associations that interest us - those that we form, find ourselves with, and like it or not have to cultivate, at work?

Clearly they are not voluntary instrumental associations. They are not voluntary because we rarely decide to join them: for the most part they come unforeseeably with the job. And they are not instrumental because they have a value beyond their mere expedience for completing a task, or getting something done. Yet they would also seem to differ, at least in many cases, from lifeworld associations as Rehg (following Taylor and MacIntyre) characterizes them (Rehg 2007:13). While some work associations may be valued for the irreducibly social goods they realize or promote, it would be presumptuous to suppose that the solidarities involved are for the most part geared around those goods. As I will argue later, it may be enough that *cooperation* is required amongst agents working together at a task. But my immediate point is that Rehg's analytical framework makes it hard to conceptualize what solidarity in work might mean: indeed, it is as if solidarity is paradigmatically a quality of those relationships we enter *outside* work - for example when we plan our holidays or play soccer at the weekend.

Now when theorists working within a Habermasian framework use the term 'lifeworld' - and much of the recent philosophical work on solidarity has been done by such theorists (Habermas 1987, 1989; Dean 1996; Brunkhorst 2005; Rehg 2007; Pensky 2008) to name but a few - they have in mind a contrast with the so-called 'system'. And of course the paradigm case of a sub-system is the capitalist economy: the market-mediated system of production and consumption. It thus seems natural within this framework to oppose lifeworld and system; and thus to think of the lifeworld, and the solidaristic relations that characterize it, as independent of the world of work. Put otherwise, solidaristic relations are the kind of thing that come into view from the perspective that is suited to the lifeworld *as distinct from* the perspective suited for understanding the economic system, and thus of the relations that are characteristic of working activity. Habermasian denials of the ontological provenance of the distinction between lifeworld and system notwithstanding, this framework inevitably makes it appear as if the lifeworld, conceived as a sphere of solidarities, were not only distinct from but *threatened by*, and therefore *opposed to*, the world of work.

The fundamental theoretical distinction between lifeworld and system, together with the equally fundamental distinction between communicative and instrumental action, arguably has had the benign effect of focusing attention on the solidaristic forces at play in a particularly important dimension of the lifeworld: the *public sphere*. The idea that the public sphere provides both a crucial context of solidarity and an opportunity for the creation of new, progressive, cosmopolitan forms of solidarity, is tremendously important and owes a lot to the Habermasian (and in turn Arendtian) theoretical framework it grew out of (Gould 2007). On the downside however, these distinctions make it hard to see how working, now viewed as economic activity subject to the forces of system integration, can be shaped at all by moral reasons and the solidaristic bonds that give them weight. The welcome rise of interest in the public sphere as a locus of solidarity is thus the correlate, I would suggest, of a less obviously welcome or justified decline of interest in work amongst theorists of solidarity.⁴ This development may not be just due to changes in the actual location of solidarity, but may be an effect of the theoretical perspective we bring to it as well.

The 'recognition-theoretic' transformation of critical social theory urged by Honneth is of course meant to avoid the distortions and oversights that the distinctions at the heart of the theory of communicative action are liable to bring. And the idea that work is geared solely according to functional imperatives of efficiency and success is one of the major misapprehensions his theory aims to overcome. In one of his earliest articles, he argued that certain minimal norms were counterfactually presupposed in the very activity of working, and that these norms provided not only a morally valid, but a pragmatically effective, basis for worker solidarity (Honneth 1995b).

However, as Honneth explains in one of his more recent articles, he has since replaced this idea with another one (Honneth 2012). This is the idea that goes back to Hegel and Durkheim that the market-mediated system of production and consumption, the exchange of goods and services that makes up a modern economy, must have an ethical basis that gives it legitimacy in the eyes of the participants,

4 To the extent that whole books can be written on the 'sources of liberal solidarity' without any consideration whatsoever given to work as one such possible source (Edyvane 2007).

and that this basis can be used to justify the social provision of a minimum wage and the opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way to the common good. Admittedly, Honneth (following Castel), seems pessimistic about whether contemporary societies have the resources of social solidarity to support such practices, but he has no doubt that this is one of the central challenges facing social solidarity today (Honneth 2012; Castel 2003). A not dissimilar conclusion has been reached by Charles Taylor (Taylor 2001). Commenting on Josef Tischner's account of solidarity (Tischner 1981), Taylor also draws attention to the normative basis of exchange, which involves a tacit mutual commitment on the part of those undertaking the exchange to contribute to each others' good. This norm is counterfactually presupposed in the labour market and can be drawn on to justify economic redistribution as well as re-organization of the division of labour. Unfortunately, however, this norm is in 'tragic conflict' - as Taylor puts it - with the capitalist principle of profit-maximization, and modern societies lack the funds of social solidarity needed to override that principle.⁵

4. Solidarity, Work and Cooperation: toward a new Expressivism

So both Honneth (drawing on Hegel and Durkheim) and Taylor (drawing on Tischner) suggest ways of thinking about the relation between solidarity and work that goes beyond the narrow focus on class-based identity that characterizes the contemporary debate - to the extent, that is, that work is a focus of the contemporary debate on solidarity at all. In doing so, Honneth and Taylor suggest that work should not be a marginal consideration for a theory of solidarity, but like classical theories proposed, a central one. The key idea they want to retrieve is that the exchange of goods and services has an ethical basis in norms of reciprocity that are sufficiently robust to provide a source of social solidarity in their own right. The empirical, sociological thought is that the modern market-mediated system

5 For further discussion of this interesting but little-known piece by Taylor, see Smith and Laitinen (2009).

of social labour depends on social bonds that arise out of participation in and contribution to that system. The normative, critical thought is that those norms which are *counterfactually* presupposed in the actual labour market can be drawn upon to strengthen social solidarity and to reform the system in a way that more adequately reflects the norms (say, by ensuring that everyone has the chance to do socially recognized, meaningful work or receive a minimum wage). But is this the only insight from the classical theorists that is worth preserving?

It won't be if it can also be shown that the actual *activity* of working, and not just the *exchange* of labour and services, has a similar ethical basis, with corresponding bonds of solidarity in some sense built into it. That is to say, it might not just be the normative insights retrieved from Hegel, Marx and Durkheim regarding the counterfactually presupposed mutuality of exchange in the labour market that promise to put work back into the centre of the theory of solidarity: the expressivist conception of work found in the classical theorists might also be revived to similar effect. We have seen that in Hegel, Marx and Durkheim an expressivist conception of work sat alongside their account of the normative presuppositions of exchange and reinforced their understanding of the centrality of work for social solidarity. Let me briefly consider a way in which the expressivist model might be invoked once again to justify the centrality of work for social solidarity over and above the ethical basis of the labour market.

The crux of the argument I want to put forward is that just as exchange is a *social relation* bound by norms, so the activity of working also involves an inescapable social, and so normative dimension, independently of the norm of reciprocity that forms the ethical basis of the exchange of labour for a wage.

There are two aspects to the sociality of working I want to draw attention to that are most relevant for thinking about solidarity. These are the facts that:

- 1) working is always working *with others*
- 2) working is always working *for others*.

To work is to work *with* another and *for* another. Both aspects

bring us into the semantic domain of solidarity. To see this, it helps to consider more closely than is usual in philosophical discussions how working is experienced by the working subject: what impulses, motivations and constraints go to shape working activity. The theoretical and clinical research of Christophe Dejours is tremendously useful in this respect, and I draw on it in what follows (Dejours 2000; 2006; 2012).

1) To say that all working is 'working-with' is to say that *cooperation* is a central feature of working. It would be hard to imagine a single case of work that does not require some degree of cooperation, at least any work that takes place in a work organization. The organization of work is not just a matter of the *coordination* of actions, guided by the principle of efficiency (though of course successful organizations must be able to coordinate working activities in an efficient way).⁶ In addition, the organization of work must be able to elicit and facilitate cooperation between workers; that is to say, a desire to work together, or a 'quality of will' that enables them precisely to work *with* each other and thereby to assume shared responsibility for, and pride in, the work done. Co-operation involves a willingness to work together and thus requires a basic relation of trust to be in place.

The question of how basic relations of trust are established, and how co-operative activity can ever get off the ground, is a vexing one from certain psychological standpoints. If one begins with the premise that the basic causes of action are rational self-interest, preference satisfaction, or at some level, evolutionary advantage, it can seem mysterious - or at least in need of much further explanation - why human beings might be motivated to engage in cooperative action at all. But if one begins with the kind of actions that are actually performed in workplaces, and one examines the motivational structures that seem to be in play there, the situation looks quite different. For the main issue facing the organization of work (as Dejours reports it) is not so much how artificially to induce cooperative behavior, as how to prevent *obstacles* to cooperation arising through management malpractice. Since each individual worker brings their own compe-

6 Though it is this feature, the coordination of productive action entailed by the division of labour, that is emphasized in Marx's discussion of cooperation in *Capital* (Marx 1976).

tences, expectations and psychic history to the work situation, some with more ability and investment in the work than others, co-operation will inevitably involve compromise and some degree of sacrifice on the part of some individuals. But typically, the *content* of the sacrifice is not, as the psychology of rational choice theory or evolutionary psychology presumes, the satisfaction of a desire specifiable independently of the work, but on the contrary, as the *expressivist* view would predict, the opportunity provided by the work for the individual worker to express herself fully.

But self-expression in work in turn presupposes a functional work organization. And trust between workers is an indispensable feature of functional work organizations. Workers *have to* have trust in each other to work properly, indeed to work at all. When trust breaks down, no work gets done. The crucial issue for the organization of work is thus not how positively to create conditions of trust but how to prevent paralyzing conditions of distrust. Non-cooperative, mistrustful relationships are paradigmatic *social pathologies* of work organizations. In the normal case - the case of the functional work organization - trust, cooperation, and thus a certain degree of solidarity prevails.

2) In order to consider the basic motivations that come into play with the 'for-others' structure of working, we need to distinguish three kinds of 'other' for whom work is typically done. These are: i) the employer; ii) the customer or client (where distinct from the employer) and; iii) colleagues, peers or fellow workers.

i) The for-other structure of work as employment brings into play just those norms of reciprocity and mutuality already discussed above. Ideally, the for-other structure of work as employment reflects one side of an interaction that benefits each of the parties (the employer and the employed) equally. The presumption or anticipation of an approximation to the ideal can be an important source of solidarity; while conversely the disappointment of this expectation can be a serious source of social disintegration and conflict.

ii) If the for-other structure of work as employment relates to the exchange value of the work (and so to the normative commitments implicit in the act of exchange), the bond that links the worker with the 'end-user' of the product of the work relates to the product's subjective utility for the user, or its use value. So it is by satisfying the

wants or needs of others that working in this sense acquires its 'for-others' character. The feeling of dependence on the specialized work of others for the satisfaction of one's own particular wants and needs is, as we have seen, central to Hegel's and Durkheim's accounts of social solidarity.

iii) Whereas normative expectations of reciprocal recognition inform the motivational 'for-other' structure of the exchange of work for a wage, and the anticipation of a fulfilled human need or desire informs the 'for-other' structure of the making or doing of something useful, working which is 'for-others' as far as one's colleagues, fellow-workers or professional peers are concerned brings in another layer of psychological complexity.

On the one hand, there are all those working acts that are for-others in the direct sense that by means of them one worker helps out another. In countless if often invisible and unremarked ways, working involves working for one's colleagues by assisting them, covering for them, giving them support - that is to say, showing solidarity with them in the most immediate sense. When working people act in these ways they are responding to more or less explicitly articulated moral demands that arise in the context of working.

On the other hand, there are what one might call 'aesthetic' demands that workers find themselves facing on account of the quality of the task to be performed, the thing to be made, or the service to be provided. Following Dejours, we could call this the 'beauty' of the work done as distinct from its value to the employer, its use for the client, or its moral worth for a fellow worker. While the 'for-other' structure is not so obvious here, it is still present because only other colleagues or professional peers are able to *see* this beauty, to judge its 'aesthetic' quality and so appreciate its worth. And the anticipation of recognition from one's peers for the quality of one's working activity (as distinct from the recognition of the usefulness of the work-product expressed in its purchase by a customer) is integral to the broadly speaking 'moral psychology' of working. This in turn both presupposes and makes manifest a certain solidarity with the community of fellow-workers.

Judgments of beauty are of course difficult to verify, but this has not prevented the wholesale introduction of quantitative techniques to objectively measure the quality of working activity. Such meth-

ods of evaluation often crudely mimic the agentic understanding of workers themselves. But worse, the recognition that is obtained through them is widely regarded as inauthentic by workers, as recognition not of the worth of the work, but of something else, such as compliance. Without authentic standards to be measured against or recognized for in their working activity, workers end up disinterested, cynical and alienated - further classical examples of social pathology reflecting deficits of solidarity.

What I am suggesting here is that for the 'for-other' and 'with-other' structure of the activity of work to come properly into view, we need a theoretical framework that conceptualizes the reality of work not as simply as the technically challenging confrontation between a subject and an object, or of an instrumentally rational agent's predicament in maximizing his gain (or minimizing his losses) in a context of unknowns, but as a 'situation' (in the old existential-phenomenological sense) structured by meanings. We need a framework for undertaking what I've called elsewhere a critical hermeneutics of work (Smith 2007). Within this framework, work is rescued from its lowly status as norm-free instrumental action so that it can be considered once again as a key form of human expression and a central sphere of moral experience.

5. Objections to the Expressivist Model

The view of the importance of work for solidarity I have presented here faces a number of potential objections. Let me conclude by briefly considering how the expressivist position I have defended might deal with some of the most serious challenges.

One criticism that could be made of the expressivist approach to work and solidarity is that it neglects the power relations that are endemic to work. The objection might be put this way: true, work is always work 'for others', but this formulation hides the central fact that work, at least in the modern world, is for the most part done *under* others. The figure 'for whom' we work is most tellingly the figure 'under whom' we work. The person who works for a boss, a manager, a foreman etc. is above all subject to their power, be it the power they owe to the contingent structure of the work organization,

or the power they owe more generally to their objective class position. This subordination of the worker ~~under~~ the boss, the fact that the boss or management exercises power over workers, makes it mere wishful thinking to talk of solidarity at work. Individuals or groups may make strategic associations to augment their power in the work organization, and to resist the power of others, but this is as far as solidarity really goes.

The expressivist response to this objection is not to deny that power relations are an endemic feature of work, or that strategic associations in pursuit of power (or resisting it) are an important feature of working life, but it is to deny that power alone is the organizing principle of working activity. There is plenty of room for conflict and antagonism on the expressivist view I have been defending, but even in the most conflict-ridden, strategically-minded and competitive workplace - so I would argue - there must be some background presumption of trustworthiness and cooperativeness amongst the working agents. There must be some solidarity between them, however invisible, tacit or merely anticipated. If there were not, the work organization would be completely dysfunctional: it would not be recognizable *as* a place of work. So whilst it is legitimate to draw attention to the struggles for power that permeate the organization of work, this does not of itself amount to an objection to the expressivist understanding of work and the relation of work to solidarity.

If the objection we have just considered takes the expressivist to have a rose-tinted view of power and conflict at work, a similar point might be made of the expressivist view that work provides a key vehicle for self-expression, and so plays a central self-formative role, in modern societies. The criticism here is one that goes back to Adam Smith: the division of labour in modern societies has become so specialized and fragmented that it can no longer function as a satisfactory medium of integrated expression (Smith 1993). Menial, laborious, repetitive, low-grade work is the inevitable consequence of economic development. The work that goes on in a twenty-first-century fast food outlet, just like the work that went on in an eighteenth-century pin-factory, leaves little if any room for 'expression' - and so little if any scope for solidarity related to expressive activity.

The first point to be made in response to this objection is that the expressivist no more denies the existence of alienated work than she

denies the existence of domination at work. As things stand, many types of work leave little room for self-expression, as the criticism claims. But just as the most oppressive workplace, if it is functional at all, draws on *some* willingness to cooperate on the part of the workers, so the most tedious, routine tasks require *some* engagement on the part of the working subject, and so some exercise of their singular intelligence. If a task was purely automatic, repetitive, and brainless, it would be done by a machine. Of course this is not to say that all jobs equally allow for the exercise of expressive powers. Nor is it to say that the mere capacity to apply practical knowledge in any given task is enough to make that work fulfilling. The point is rather that criticism of alienating, unfulfilling, poorly designed work can take its point of departure from the *persistence* of expression (however mutilated) across the division of labour. And the persistence of expression in turn implies the stubborn continuing presence of corresponding modes of solidarity. Workers engaged in tasks that to outsiders seem mono-dimensional and strictly utilitarian can see 'beauty' in what they do, and on that basis distinguish between good and bad work. Recognition from one's peers for one's good work when one does it is a source of solidarity the importance of which is easily underestimated. For the sense of self-worth - of being a 'someone' (Hegel) - one derives from it supports the self not just at work but in all its expressive activity.

But even if we grant that the division of labour does not extinguish expression, one might still want to deny that the desire or need for expression has much to do with the motivation to work. The most basic psychological fact about employment, one might want to say, is that it provides the means for purchasing power. Work is first and foremost an instrumental good, and desired for that reason. To be sure, the purchasing power secured by work may not be expended on oneself. Many people work for their families. And this, it might be pointed out, is the most obvious and significant sense in which work is 'for others': one sacrifices one's time at work to bring in a wage that one's family or loved ones can benefit from. In such cases, work is no more than a contingent vehicle for the expression of *familial* solidarity.

There is a radical strain of expressivism which takes the expressive value of working to be incompatible with it having an instrumental

value - at least the instrumental value expressed in a wage. On the Marxist view, for example, the exchange value of one's labour power is in 'contradiction' with the use value that can be realized by it. But more liberal forms of expressivism assert that work can have an instrumental worth in addition to an expressive one. The question then arises as to which of these reasons for working - the instrumental or expressive good one gets from it - predominates. The expressivist certainly denies that work should be considered *solely* as something of instrumental value. And even if one chooses to do work above all as a means of providing goods for one's significant others, one's experience in work is still framed by tacit understandings of what is acceptable by way of work. Although such pre-understandings may play a small role in motivating an agent to start work, they give moral shape to the concrete experience of working once it begins. As they become collectively articulated and expressed, premonitions of solidarity also take shape.

What these criticisms bring out is that the expressivist approach to work can only succeed if it conceives work as *at once* a source of solidaristic human expression and a locus of domination, alienation and conflict. This, of course, is precisely what the classical theorists of solidarity, Hegel, Marx and Durkheim, tried to keep in view. If, as I have argued in this chapter, the classical theories remain a rich source of insight regarding the link between solidarity and work, it remains to be shown how the expressivist view they share can respond in detail to the new modes of subordination, alienation and instrumentalisation that characterize the contemporary world of work. To the extent that it can, it will also reveal new formations of solidarity.

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