

THE LIMITS OF MONEY:
PHENOMENOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS
ON SELFHOOD AND VALUE

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Our contemporary world is characterized by natural, political, and economic crises on a global scale, and these empirical problems must surely be our most pressing concerns in both practical and theoretical matters.¹ It is my contention, though, that addressing our empirical situation well requires of us in fact that we engage in ontological inquiry, and specifically an ontological investigation of our distinctive human condition. We are, I shall argue, definitively ontologically divided: we are constitutively split between two different experiences of ourselves in relationship to others, things, and values. Understanding our empirical situation depends, I will argue, on understanding the differences between these two types of experience. I will call these two experiences ‘intimacy’ and ‘economics.’ I will consider first the ontological intimacy that characterizes our inhabitation of our living bodies and of our lived situations. In this experience of intimacy, the differentiation that we typically presume of self from other and of fact from value is not operative; such intimacy is distinctive of the formative experience of children. It is precisely this formative experience, however, that gives rise to the experience of economics, the experience, that is, of discrete subjects who work upon an alien world. The experience of intimacy allows us to criticize the absoluteness of the terms presented by the experience of economics, and the critique of the economic model of human life will be the central point of my analysis here; at the same time, however, the experience of economics itself offers an important corrective to the experience of intimacy, and I shall argue that our true political challenge is to live in a way that acknowledges both forms of experience without resorting to the authoritative terms of either. After clarifying the conflict of these two forms of experience, I will consider the imperative our experience puts upon us to negotiate these two conflicting forms of experience. Along the

way, we will see that each of these forms of experience—intimacy, economics, and their negotiated reconciliation—manifests itself as an aspect of the distinctive functioning of the hand.

1. The Intimacy That Is Definitive of Our Formative Experience

By the time we conduct any explicit and systematic investigations into the nature of selfhood, we are already well-formed individuals, clearly able to distinguish self from not-self and fact from value. In fact, though, these terms in which we construe our relation to reality are not adequate to comprehend our experience in general. I will begin by looking at two ways in which these terms are insufficient: first, they are in principle inadequate to comprehend the very conditions of action; second, these terms are inadequate to comprehend the very experiences by which we *become* such independent individuals.

Let us imagine a simple situation of action: I pick up my teacup. Here, the apparently independent ‘I’ intentionally enacts a material change in the ‘outside’ world. Here, in my relation to the cup, we see the alienation of self and world we typically presume to be definitive of reality. The insufficiency of this model of action is evident, however, when we consider the missing ‘link’ in this process: the hand by which I grab the cup. While the relation ‘I–cup’ may have the form of alienation, the relation ‘I–hand’ *cannot* have this form: inasmuch as *I* pick up the cup, the hand must *be* me. Whereas I, as agent, am *alienated from the object*, I am necessarily *embodied in the means*: I *inhabit* my hand, am ‘at home in’ and not ‘alienated from’ it. Agency is indeed independent initiation of change in the ‘outside’—the equally independent real—but all of our capacities to ‘do’—our agency—rest on our being in the world in a way that does not have this form: our powers are given by a fundamental embeddedness, an ontological intimacy.²

Here we see that even at the level of the developed individual there necessarily is an ontological ‘intimacy’ that founds, and cannot be adequately analyzed in terms of, the alienation of self and world. The ‘fully fledged’ experience of being an independent human individual, furthermore, is not itself our immediately given form but is itself preceded by a process of growth. If we consider the earlier period of growth—the experience of childhood development—we can see further ways in which the experience of the alienation of self and world is itself necessarily contextualized by a relationship of self and world that does not take this form.

The inhabited hand is the founding reality from which the

independent object and independent subject ‘emanate,’ so to speak, as zones of detachment. For the child, these ‘zones of detachment’ have yet to develop, and her experience is fundamentally that of absorbed inhabitation. For the child, ‘self,’ world,’ and, indeed, ‘others’ are not three separate domains of reality or experience, but are, instead, intertwined dimensions of all experience.³ The development of her experience of the world is *simultaneously* the development of her experience of herself and the development of her experience of other people. As many have argued, the mother most typically provides the decisive context for this whole range of the child’s experience, and consideration of the mother and child is a helpful way to see this intertwining of self, world, and others.⁴

The child does not begin with a presumption of her separate existence, but works from a presumption of sharedness, experiencing herself as part of a ‘we,’ as one side of a ‘with.’ The importance of this interpersonal intimacy for personality formation is especially documented in the study of children deprived of such intimate contact: deficiency in this sense of ‘with’ leads to deficiency in many important sectors of personality development.⁵ This intersubjectivity, though (somewhat like the hand in our earlier example), is not the object of experience, but the platform for world-directed experience.⁶ As the child ventures into a new room or engages with a new toy or article of furniture, her comfort can easily be dependent upon her confidence that she is doing this ‘with’ her mother’s support. Should the mother leave, the child may well lose her sense of self-confidence, and the world as she perceives it may shift from welcoming to threatening. In other words, the child’s engagement with the world comes *from an inhabiting* of an intimate intersubjective space in which her companion is not the object of her experience, but the medium for her experience.

Something analogous to this non-differentiation of self and not-self pertains as well to the opposition of ‘fact’ and ‘value.’ In the case of grabbing the teacup, again, there certainly are situations in which I very self-consciously ask myself, ‘What would be a good way to capture that liquid?’ and then light upon the cup as a good means to fulfill my explicit project. More commonly, though, I am sitting talking with a friend, and my grabbing the cup to drink is in response to *its* vague beckoning: typically, that is, I experience the thing as charged with a significance that I feel called upon to discharge.⁷ Rather than imposing a self-chosen value upon a neutral, factual situation, I experience things as inherently charged with value, and my action is lived more as an answering to the imperatives of things

than as an imposition of will upon an indifferent matter. Again, the child, similarly, does not self-consciously formulate a desire to walk and then scout out viable materials with which to accomplish this, but instead experiences the space between the table and the couch as ‘to be walked in,’ a charge she plugs into (and plugs into in a way, as we saw, that is itself inseparably interwoven with her sense of being with her parents, and her lived sense of their hopes and their support).

For the child, then, her ‘self’ is not an already established, independent reality, which freely chooses the values according to which she will deploy her action upon an alien world. Such a free, individual self, rather, is more like a *telos*: it is the form of experience that will be definitive for her developed personhood, but that form must be established *from* and *through* a cooperative negotiation with the world and with others—a negotiation in which she experiences herself as intrinsically engaged and involved, rather than one in which she is alienated.⁸ The world and others are not objects for her experience, but that *from which* she experiences, and values are not the forms she imposes upon the world, but the forms to which she finds herself answering.

These considerations of the ontological conditions of action in general and of the formative conditions of personal experience reveal, then, that, prior to alienation, our experience of world and of others is necessarily one of intimacy. The world and other people are ‘in’ us, in the sense that we cannot separate our own innermost reality from them. We are able to experience a detached individuality for which the world and others are alien only on the basis of experiential resources that are afforded us by that world and those others—a world and others *in which we are at home*.⁹

But, though this intimacy with the world and others is the ‘first word,’ so to speak, of our experience and our reality, it is not, for that reason, the last word. The experience of independent agency and the recognition of the otherness of the world and other people remains irreducibly essential to our experience of freedom, our experience of ourselves. Our freedom is not found in remaining in the immersion of childhood experience, but in the development of self-responsible adulthood, and we hold parents and social institutions answerable to this norm, this *telos*: it is precisely their responsibility to foster this development of self-responsible freedom. While it is true that the experience of being reflectively and self-enclosedly detached from things and from similarly self-enclosed others is not the whole of our experience, it—the domain of personality, belief, choice, and self-

defined perspective—is nonetheless definitive of our experience.

It is the essentiality of this individualized autonomy that Locke defends in his *Second Treatise of Government*.¹⁰ Locke argues that it is only a political world founded on the recognition of the essentiality of *consent* that can properly do justice to the nature of human freedom.¹¹ A politics of consent recognizes the authority of the individual voice, the authority of the individually reflective self-consciousness that is the subject of alienated action. In addition to being the most powerful and compelling exponent of this political value of the recognition of individual consent—our authority as individuals to dispose of ourselves, ‘liberty’—Locke is also the most powerful and compelling exponent of the *essentially economic* character of this politics. Locke shows, that is, that a world of free individuals cannot be realized except in a context of recognizing private property.¹² Let us consider this relation of freedom and property.

2. The Economy that is Definitive of Our Free Existence

We have seen that our agency demands an ontological intimacy: I must inhabit the hand *with which* I act if I am to be able to move the cup *upon which* I act. This very same intimacy, this inherently non-alienated relationship to the world, is also the foundation of private property, the site, that is, for an essential alienation from the world. Let us consider again the hand.

It is because the hand is itself a participant in the material world that it can come into contact with other things in the world. For the hand to thus be *my way into the world*, it must be *my way* into the world. My hand and the cup are both things in the world, but my hand is different from the cup because the cup is not inherently, but only externally, moved by my subjectivity. The hand, on the contrary, is inherently moved by me: it is the immediate realization of my will, that is, my will immediately governs it. My hand, in this context, is *inherently* dedicated to the fulfilling of my will, and *it must be undividedly so* if it is to function as my organ of action. What allows my hand to realize my will is equally what requires that it be mine and mine alone: in being intimate to me, it is necessarily withdrawn from you.¹³

I noted above that our freedom is accomplished only through our becoming free, individual agents, and if I *am* to act, if I am to be free as an individual, able to consent to the formation of my own way of being in the world, there must be a portion of the material world that is proper to me: this must be *my* body. There is no ‘I,’

in other words, without ‘mine,’ no self without private property. Just as intimacy is an *ontological* condition of action, so is *property* an ontological condition of action.

Locke is therefore correct to insist that property is essential to freedom: we need to have recognized a domain within the world that is ours, privately. This is most obviously and familiarly true with our individual bodily organisms: our ability to act in them immediately makes it possible for us to ‘own’ them in a distinct way. This ontological ‘property,’ however, does not automatically command political weight, for a condition of the body’s ability to mediate my worldly action is that it necessarily be *part of the world*, part, that is, of a reality that is inherently public, inherently *not* ‘my own.’ There is an intimacy (*‘Innigkeit’* in German), a mutual innerness of ourselves and our bodies, but our bodies equally—and equally necessarily—have an outside, worldly face as well, and we cannot own that ‘on our own.’¹⁴

My body does conform itself to my will immediately (once, that is, I have ‘owned’ my body through a process of bodily development, and before it has denied my ownership in illness or aging), but I am not the only ‘master’ of my body: my body, as an integrated part of the material world, also answers to all the worldly forces that have an impact upon bodies as such: my body can be trapped under rocks or knocked over by a car, quite against my will. It is indeed my ‘own’ body, but simply by virtue of being body, it is also in principle ‘unownable’: it is *inherently* public, and its reality, therefore, will always necessarily escape my grip.

My ability to own my body is thus afforded me from without. Specifically, I am exposed to the wills of others, that is, to the way that other bodies, ‘owned’ by other wills, can exert an influence upon my body. My body, in short, is an inherently *contested* site: it is *necessarily* the site where competing trajectories will collide. My *uncontested* ownership of my body, then, can never be a natural condition: it can *only* be a matter of agreement. *Ontologically*, ownership of my body is necessarily contested, but *empirically* or ‘*ontically*’ that contest can be renounced by the other(s). My ownership of my own body, then, is necessarily dependent upon the *consent* of others.

Already as an infant, my inhabitation of my own body involved my engagement with a body beyond myself, namely (typically), my mother’s body. In a fundamental way, I treated her body as mine, that is, I lived from the unreflective presumption of propriety over a body that was necessarily already inhabited by the will of another, and, necessarily, an adult other—a reflective individual—who allowed me to do so: without my mother’s willingness to allow me to

treat her body as my own, I would not be. Even at the most intimate level, then—the level of my very living organism, my very means of entry into the world—I am *necessarily*, i.e., *ontologically*, embroiled in matters of property and consent. The condition of intimacy, of ‘selfness,’ is exposure to the will(s) of the other(s), and my self-possession is thus always and necessarily a matter of intersubjective negotiation.

As a child, my embodiment depended upon my mother’s body, and my ability to inhabit her body thus necessarily depended on her consent. Thus, before being discrete, reflective individuals, our essential embodiment necessarily goes beyond the limits of the organic body and is necessarily transgressive of the ‘proper’ domains of others. Once one becomes such a discrete, reflective individual, one’s identity develops, one’s embodiment—one’s constitutive inhabitation of the world—grows correspondingly, and, inasmuch as one’s embodiment is inherently a site of contestation for ownership, the growth of one’s identity cannot be separated from a growing process of economic negotiation.

I am embodied in my organism, but, as Merleau-Ponty has shown, my embodiment extends well beyond my organic limits.¹⁵ Indeed, simply inasmuch as action is transformative action in the world, I must always enact myself as an instilling in the world of my will, a laying claim to a domain beyond my organism: in my movement, I presume to use the land, in my breathing, I presume to use the air, in my eating and drinking, I presume to use the water and the living organisms who supply my food. My characteristic action is much more complex than this, though: as an adult, my identity cannot be separated from my writing, by long-distance communications, my public display of my creative fashion sense, or my comfortable relaxation around the family dinner table. My adult humanity is realized in the complex developments of action that are mediated by artifice—culture—and I am embodied not just in my organism but in my papers, my cellular phone, my clothes and my house.¹⁶ These material parts of the world, like my hand, are not the objects of my experience, not what my experience is ‘about,’ but the inconspicuous platform *from which* I engage with the objects of my experience. As an adult and as a child, then, my embodiment extends beyond the limits of my natural organism.

Whereas with the mother’s body, the ‘economic’ negotiation is a very personal matter of sharing, the broader developments of our embodiment involve us in matters of intersubjective negotiation that are necessarily impersonal. Whereas each of us can make a unique claim to our organisms in that it is ontologically the case that our organisms typically give themselves over solely to our own, single

will, the worldly domains in which we embody our reflective selves are *exclusively* public, that is, they are no one's organism but are sites for the realization of *anyone's* world, domains, in other words, in which I have no more (and no less) inherent right than you.

Because we must embody ourselves through laying claim to real dimensions of the inherently public world—of the world, that is, *qua* potential 'body,' that has exactly the same status for *anyone*—my inhabitation or 'occupation' of that domain necessarily brings me, in principle, into contact—and thus potential conflict—with everyone. In other words, though in fact we might only have contact with familiar others, our 'ownership' of the world can always be denied by others we have never imagined and who do not share our values, as was experienced, for example, by the inhabitants of 'North America' whose world was taken over by European colonists. Whether we like it or not, then, it is the very nature of our embodiment that we are impelled to negotiate universally and impersonally with all others over the apportioning amongst ourselves of the inherently public world. *We must* make claims to exclusive ownership, and these claims *in principle* are claims against all others (who are in principle equally legitimate claimants). We saw above that property—laying claim—depends upon the recognition of others. What we see now is that it is implicit in the very nature of property that this need for recognition extends universally, and this means that, in principle, all property relies upon a universally recognized system of terms for recognizing apportioning: if it is to be securely established, property depends upon shared terms for recognizing portions and these must be impersonal terms, i.e., terms that are compatible across different systems of valuing. This demand in principle that property depends upon universal recognition means, in short, that property always implicitly depends upon money, upon a universal and indifferent quantitative standard for evaluating worth.¹⁷ The actual development of a money economy, in other words, is not an historical accident, but is a response to the possibility—a vulnerability—always intrinsic to our need to establish a domain of ownership within an inherently public world.

We are initiated into the world in a way that does not allow a clear separation of self, other, things, and values: these are the subsequently unwoven threads of what is originally a single concreteness, the single fabric of our existence. Value initially is qualitatively specific, non-transferable, concrete, dynamic, and inextricable from the experience of embodied, interpersonal intimacy. The self thus embodied, however, is a self destined to grow up into self-reliant, reflective individuality, and the experiences of

things, others, and values are destined to undergo a corresponding change. In particular, our experience of value is destined to become the demand that all of material reality be measurable according to a universally recognized, impersonal, quantitative standard of evaluation. Our originary intimacy precisely gestates our growth into self-reflective, adult individuals participating equally in the world of money.

3. The Personal and Political Problem that is Inherent to Our Developed Nature

There is a problem with these two sides of our identities. According to our economic identities, everything has a price. According to our immediate identities, what is proper to us is unexchangeable and of incalculable value. Though the development of our identities as economic individuals fulfills an intrinsic trajectory of our existence, the terms under which this identity operates are in principle inadequate to comprehend our existence. Our economic existence operates under terms that cannot recognize the very reality from which that existence derives and, correspondingly, if that economic existence is taken to be definitive of our existence *tout court*—as has largely happened in contemporary political discourse—its natural tendency is to undermine itself and obliterate the very (material) possibility of experience.

According to the definitive intimacy that is formative of our identities, we inhabit a determinate worldly environment that must be uniquely and exclusively our own: this is ‘inalienable’ property in the sense that removing it removes me. Our analysis of intimacy demonstrated the necessity of private property, but this is not property in the sense of material wealth hoarded by an independently existing individual; this ‘private property,’ on the contrary, is the living materiality that is the very condition for the existence of choosing individuals. This private property, in other words, precedes and is presupposed by individuals. A precondition for the very existence of ‘economic individuals,’ in other words, is that persons ‘have’—in the intimate sense of ‘inhabit’—the materials in which to embody their developed identity. ‘There are’ economic individuals only in a social system in which persons are recognized as having the right to the material conditions for independent individuality. In principle, then, those who are not granted such conditions cannot be held answerable to the norms of economic individuality, since they in principle cannot participate in that system.

This logical demand upon economic life, however, is precisely

not recognized within economic life. Economic life takes its own position to be original, for economic life is the domain in which I am ‘anyone’: I participate only as an indifferent representative of the possibility of possessing and exchanging materials that are *in principle* not assignable to anyone in particular, for their value is qualitatively indifferent—simply quantitative. Economic life in principle ignores the *particularity* of my involvements and considers only how the reality in question measures upon a *universal* scale of value where it is precisely detached from anyone in particular. Thus, whereas the intimate inhabitation of property fails to acknowledge the essential outside, the essential publicness of its property, the economic appropriation of goods fails to acknowledge the essential inside of property, fails to acknowledge the inhabitation that is the precondition of economic individuals.

This ‘conceptual’ limitation of the economic perspective translates as well into a practical problem. If we live as if the economic domain were the total domain of human experience, then we enact a perspective that fails to recognize the essential inhabitation upon which we depend. The economic domain denies that there is any intrinsic value, denies anything of inherent worth, and recognizes only the universality of quantitative exchange.¹⁸ To build our lives on this interpretation is to abandon anything that *is* of inherent value, and instead to enshrine the money system itself as the absolute value (in short, to establish the rule of banks). But the essential intimacy that characterizes our existence entails that no one can, without self-contradiction, deny the reality of inherent value. While it is true that such values are relative to particular individuals or groups, and therefore are necessarily not *universalizable* (i.e., what is essential to me is not essential to you), those values are *for each of us* absolute. To approach our lives from the perspective of economics requires of each of us singly that we deny the worth of what is for us absolute, and systematically it means that the absolute needs of persons are not protected but are instead subjected to the economic powers for which their value is only their public price.¹⁹

4. Conclusion: The Imperative Definitive of Responsible Existence

What I have tried to show is that there is a constitutive tension—indeed, a contradiction—inherent to our nature. The tension is that we are equally committed to intimacy and economics, but these two ways of being-in-the-world operate on contradictory

principles, contradictory interpretations of self, other, thing, and value. Further, each on its own is unsatisfactory, for each on its own operates according to a norm that does not acknowledge the reality of the other domain. Intimacy operates with a sense of the world and others as inherently 'for me,' not acknowledging the alienness, the being-for-other inherent to all reality; living according to the norms of intimacy is insular and exclusionary. Economics operates with a sense of the world and others as inherently alien, not acknowledging the entanglement that always pertains between the self and the world; living according to the norms of economy involves the denial of all intrinsic worth and all relations of dependency. Each mode of existing, then, fails to acknowledge something fundamental about our existence. The contradiction, then, cannot be resolved simply by reverting to one or the other alternative. In other words, the problems caused by contemporary global capitalism are profound, and they will not be solved by a reassertion of the insular values of traditional society.

Indeed, there is no 'solution' to this tension. But, while there is no solution, there are certainly recognizably false responses to this: attempts to deny the necessity of economic relations are reactionary and demonstrably insufficient to address the needs inspired by our ontological character; unqualified embrace of the norms of economic life is dishonest in its assessment of worth, and is demonstrably insufficient to address the needs inspired by our ontological character. So, while this diagnosis of the contradiction in our life does not point to a 'solution,' it does have obvious political implications in that it identifies the character of human life to which our institutions must answer, and it gives us grounds for criticizing the principles behind inadequate policies. There is no solution, in the sense of a final removal of this tension, but there is the imperative to live—personally and politically—in a way that acknowledges both contradictory demands and exercises good judgment in limiting the claims of each and balancing the needs of each against the other.²⁰ The 'solution' is found in the practice of enacting a mutual accommodation of intimacy and economics.

What are the empirical terms of such a 'solution'? In the economic domain, it is a version of this principle that underlies, for example, 'Mahatma' Gandhi's advocacy of *swadeshi*, which he understood to be an economic and political movement oriented toward maintaining the independence and health of local communities in the face of the encroachments of a global (imperial) economy.²¹ One can see a similar spirit in Malcolm X's 'economic philosophy' of 'Black

nationalism,' which emphasizes the crippling effects on Black communities of having their local economic boundaries erased in a national economy.²² Both of these movements emphasize the necessity of protecting the integrity of the local environment as a site of resistance against the oppressive effects of operating exclusively in terms of the homogenizing perspective of the global economic system. (Indeed, it is precisely Adam Smith, often touted as the advocate of modern, global capitalism, who emphasized the destructive effects of a government that abandons its responsibility for maintaining the integrity of a domestic economy by subordinating its policies to the exploitative goals of global economic interests.²³)

Complementing this, the challenge to the rigidity and insularity of our intimate identities and the insistence on the need to be open to the inherently universal dimensions of our experience is evident in, for example, 'Babasaheb' Ambedkar's personal reliance on Western resources to escape the oppressive dimensions of caste-identity, and especially in his turning politically to the welcoming resources of Buddhism to defend the inherent worth of 'Dalit' individuals beyond the terms of their caste-identities within the Hindu context.²⁴ And, again, Malcolm X, while advocating for the need to attend to the distinctive concerns of black Americans, nonetheless contextualizes his whole analysis by the insistence on the essential notion of universal human rights.²⁵ Most prominently of all, it is the practices and policies of multicultural accommodation (the practices celebrated by the Aga Khan, but denounced by Angela Merkel, precisely in the name of the global capitalism) that bear witness to the need to resist the insularity of one's 'home,' and to enact our identities as sites of engagement with others.²⁶

To grasp the philosophical meaning of this 'solution,' let us, finally, look once again at the hand. Specifically, let us consider the hand that makes a sign. When I wave, or when I point, I make my body an expression: my 'outside' is the appearance of my 'inside.'²⁷ When you recognize my greeting or look in the direction I indicate, you, similarly, take up my outside as the appearance of my inside. In the sign, the indifference of the outside to the inside that was the ontological foundation for economics is superseded. On the one hand, then, the body as sign marks a kind of victory for intimacy, in that my inhabitation of my body extends to my body as outside, my body in its publicness. On the other hand, though, the body as sign marks a kind of victory for economics, in that my effort to express myself reflects my acceptance of the essentiality of recognition by others, that is, I acknowledge that I must answer to an 'outside'

perspective. In the sign, then, the two sides of our experience that mark a contradiction in our way of being in the world are, far from a contradiction, the necessary conditions for its existence. In this sense, experiencing the body as a sign is a way of living that ‘solves’ the contradiction of intimacy and economy.

It is when we communicate that we precisely *live from* the imperative to reconcile the demands of intimacy and economics. I experience my ability to be myself, my ability to speak my own mind, *as* my ability to accommodate the perspective of others. I make my home, my intimacy, in the perspectives of others. In adopting a language, we accept the need to find our own way in a way that accommodates others. The hand that waves or the hand that points thus embraces an ontology of self, world, values, and others that, again, like the inhabited hand, experiences self and world as intrinsically united, but it does not presume identity; rather, like the agent hand, it recognizes the alienness of others. The hand of the communication is the hand that experiences itself as governed by *the imperative* to find a union with an other with whom one is initially not united. This is the value that must ultimately shape our personal and political life.²⁸ Instead of presuming either an *a priori* adequacy to my own particular values or a ‘universalizability’ of value in the abstract, we must posit universality as a goal, a goal to be accomplished between different particularities that cannot be removed, but that have horizons that can accommodate unanticipated others.

Notes

1. I am grateful to the Indian Institute for Advanced Study (Shimla) for the invitation to present this research during my tenure there as a Visiting Scholar. I am also grateful for the invitation to present an earlier version of this paper as a Keynote Address to the Canadian Society for Continental Philosophy, and for the kind receptions of versions of this research at the Michigan Technological University, Concordia University, Northern Arizona University, Wilfrid Laurier University and Xavier University.
2. This is the orienting theme behind Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Psychology*, Second Book, trans. R. Rojcewicz and A. Schuwer (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989); and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Donald A. Landes (London and New York: Routledge, 2012); see especially the discussion of the ‘lived body’ in Part I, ‘The Body,’ Chapters 1–3 of the *Phenomenology of Perception*. See also *Analyses Concerning Active and Passive Synthesis: Lectures on Transcendental Logic*, trans. Anthony J. Steinbock (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2001), pp. 50–51. I have discussed this lived experience of the body in ‘Haunted by History: Merleau-Ponty, Hegel and the Phenomenology of Pain,’ *Journal of Contemporary Thought*, 37 (2013): 81–89, especially pp. 81–85, and in ‘Self and Suffering in Buddhism

- and Phenomenology: Existential Pain, Compassion and the Problems of Institutional Healthcare,' in S.K. George and P.G. Jung (eds), *Cultural Ontology of the Self in Pain* (Springer, 2014), pp. 181–95, especially pp. 182–89. I am not at all convinced by the attempt to differentiate the positions of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty in Taylor Carman, 'The Lived Body in Merleau-Ponty and Husserl,' *Philosophical Topics*, 27 (1999): 205–26; for a subtler approach to Husserl's phenomenology, see Peter Costello, *Layers in Husserl's Phenomenology: On Meaning and Intersubjectivity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012) and James Mensch, *Postfoundational Phenomenology: Husserlian Reflections on Presence and Embodiment* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000). A rich analysis of the complex relations of self and other that constitute the mediating conditions of action is central to F.W.J. Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism*, trans. Michael Vater (University of Virginia Press, 1993).
3. For a rich discussion of these issues, see D.W. Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), and Edith Cobb, *The Ecology of Imagination in Children* (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1977). See also Jessica Benjamin, 'Beyond Doer and Done To: An Intersubjective View of Thirdness,' *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 73 (2004): 5–46.
 4. See, for example, Eva-Maria Simms, 'Milk and Flesh: A Phenomenological Reflection on Infancy and Coexistence,' *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 32 (2001): 22–40; and Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, pp. 15–20. This idea that the inner life of the child is shaped through the experience of the mother runs throughout Melanie Klein, *Love, Guilt and Reparation and Other Works 1921–1945* (New York: Free Press, 1975); see especially, 'Love, Guilt and Reparation,' 'A Contribution to the Psychogenesis of Manic-Depressive States,' and 'Mourning and Its Relation to Manic-Depressive States.' Merleau-Ponty offers a rich phenomenological account of these issues in 'The Child's Relations with Others,' in *The Primacy of Perception*, trans. William Cobb (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964). See also David Ciavatta, 'The Unreflective Bonds of Intimacy: Hegel on Family Ties and the Modern Person,' *Philosophical Forum*, 37 (2006): 153–81.
 5. The classic study of the developmental problems children face due to lack of intimate physical contact is René A. Spitz, 'The Psychogenic Diseases in Infancy—An Attempt at Their Etiological Classification,' *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 6 (1951): 255–75. See also Simms, 'Milk and Flesh,' *passim*; in her research, Simms stresses also the importance of recognizing the unique abilities that infants do develop in situations of lack of intimacy—see especially 'Deprivation in Infancy: An Ontological Systems View,' in *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* (forthcoming). Compare D.W. Winnicott, 'The Concept of a Healthy Individual,' in *Home Is Where We Start From: Essays by a Psychoanalyst* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), p. 23.
 6. On the theme of the 'platform,' see John Russon, *Bearing Witness to Epiphany: Persons, Things and the Nature of Erotic Life* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), pp. 19–20, 113–20.
 7. That perception is typically a non-explicit response to the 'call' of the object; see Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp. 106–9, 83–84. On these themes, see Anthony J. Steinbock, 'Affection and Attraction: On the Phenomenology of Becoming Aware,' *Continental Philosophy Review*, 37 (2004): 21–43.
 8. On the 'teleological' sense of selfhood, see John Russon, 'Desiring-Production

- and Spirit: On *Anti-Oedipus* and German Idealism,' in Karen Houle and Jim Vernon (eds), *Hegel and Deleuze: Together Again for the First Time* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2013), pp. 152–72.
9. See Kym Maclaren, 'Embodied Perceptions of Others as a Condition of Selfhood? Empirical and Phenomenological Considerations,' *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 15 (2008): 63–93. Compare also Kirsten Jacobson, 'The Interpersonal Expression of Human Spatiality: A Phenomenological Interpretation of Anorexia Nervosa,' *Chiasmi International*, 8 (2006): 157–73. See also Winnicott, *Home Is Where We Start From*, pp. 133–41.
 10. John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, in *Political Writings*, ed. David Wootton (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2003). For a rich interpretation of Locke's *Second Treatise*, see Shannon Hoff, 'Locke and the Nature of Political Authority,' *Review of Politics*, 77 (2015): 1–22.
 11. Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapter 2 and *passim*.
 12. *Ibid.*, Chapter 5.
 13. On the intrinsic connection between embodiment and property, see G.W.F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), sections 34–71. For the development of these ideas, see David Ciavatta, 'Hegel on Owning One's Own Body,' *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 43 (2005): 1–23. Sometimes, of course, the body does not embrace our undivided sovereignty—i.e., in illness, etc. Correspondingly, our agency is crippled. On the experience of the body in illness, see Havi Carel, 'Can I Be Ill and Happy?' *Philosophia*, 35 (2007): 95–110; see also S. Kay Toombs, 'The Lived Experience of Disability,' *Human Studies*, 18 (1995): 9–23.
 14. On these themes of property and embodiment, see Russon, *Bearing Witness to Epiphany*, Chapter 4, pp. 95–109.
 15. My embodiment, for example, includes the cane or the hat through which I navigate the spatial world; see Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp. 93, 144–45, 153–54.
 16. See John Russon, *Human Experience: Philosophy, Neurosis, and the Elements of Everyday Life* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), pp. 94–121.
 17. For the basic concept of money, see Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations: A Selected Edition*, ed. Kathryn Sutherland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), Book I, Chapter IV, pp. 31–35.
 18. On this theme, see Wendell Barry, *What Matters? Economics for a Renewed Commonwealth* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2010). See also G.W.F. Hegel's critical analysis of the attitude that presumes 'utility' to be the highest value, in 'The Truth of Enlightenment,' in *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), paragraphs 574–81.
 19. I have approached the critique of capitalist globalization from another angle in 'On Secrets and Sharing: Hegel, Heidegger and Derrida on the Economics of the Public Sphere,' in Divya Dwivedi and Sanil V. (eds), *Public Sphere from Outside the West* (London and New Delhi: Bloomsbury, 2015), pp. 41–57.
 20. For an analogous approach to the theme of a 'solution' to an inherent tension, see Kant's discussion of the 'solution' to the third antinomy of pure reason: Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 2nd edn, trans. Norman Kemp-Smith (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), A538/B566–A557/B585.
 21. Gandhi defined this notion in his speech at a Missionary Conference in Madras, 1916: 'After much thinking, I have arrived at a definition of *swadeshi* that perhaps best illustrates my meaning. *Swadeshi* is that spirit in us which

- restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote.... In [the domain] of economics, I should use only things that are produced by my immediate neighbours and serve those industries by making them more efficient and complete where they might be found wanting.' M.K. Gandhi, *The Essential Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). For the interpretation of Gandhi's economic thought, see, for example, Dilip M. Nachane, 'Gandhian Economic Thought and Its Influence on Economic Policymaking in India,' *ISAS Insights*, 25 (2008): 16–28; and Satish Kumar, 'Gandhi's Swadeshi: The Economics of Permanence,' in Jerry Mander and Edward Goldsmith (eds), *The Case Against the Global Economy and For a Turn toward Localization* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1996), pp. 418–24. See also A. Whitney Sanford, 'Gandhi's Agrarian Legacy: Practicing Food, Justice, and Sustainability in India,' *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*, 7 (2013): 5–87.
22. See especially Malcolm X, 'The Ballot or the Bullet,' in *Malcolm X Speaks: Selected Speeches and Statements*, ed. George Breitman (New York: Grove Press, 1994), pp. 23–44.
 23. See especially Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, Book IV, Chapter 7, Part Third, pp. 363–72; see also Book III, Chapters 3–4, pp. 246–73. Indeed, Smith's famous reference to 'the invisible hand' is precisely a reference to the salutary effects of self-interested investment *in a domestic economy*; see *Wealth of Nations*, Book IV, Chapter 2, p. 292.
 24. See Christophe Jaffrelot, *Dr. Ambedkar and Untouchability: Analysing and Fighting Caste* (London: C. Hurst and Co., 2005).
 25. Malcolm X, 'The Ballet or the Bullet,' pp. 34–35.
 26. The philosophical, political and experiential dimensions of the concept of multiculturalism are richly explored in Réal Fillion, *Multicultural Dynamics and the Ends of History: Exploring Kant, Hegel, and Marx* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2008).
 27. On the experience of gesture, see Merleau-Ponty, 'The Body as Expression and Speech,' in *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp. 179–204. On the rich sense of the hand in the context of our being-with-others, see Jacques Derrida, 'Heidegger's Hand,' trans. John P. Leavey, Jr, in John Sallis (ed.), *Deconstruction and Philosophy: The Texts of Jacques Derrida* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press), pp. 161–96; and throughout *On Touching—Jean-Luc Nancy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005). This material is helpfully discussed in Leonard Lawlor, "'Animals Have No Hand': An Essay on Animality in Derrida,' *The New Centennial Review*, 7 (2007): 43–69, though I disagree with the strong attempt here to differentiate Heidegger's and Derrida's thinking (even, indeed, in the context of discussing a quotation from Derrida that expressly disavows such a differentiation).
 28. Compare Gandhi, 'The Duty of Bread Labour' (1935): 'In the ideal State, doctors, lawyers and the like will work solely for the benefit of society, not for self.... Man's triumph will consist in substituting the struggle for existence by the struggle for mutual service.' Gandhi, *The Essential Writings*, p. 90.