

Autonomy, Diversity, and the Common Good

Edited by
INGOLF U. DALFERTH
and MARLENE A. BLOCK

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Mohr Siebeck

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Autonomy, Diversity, and the Common Good

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edited by
Ingolf U. Dalferth and
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Mohr Siebeck

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Preface

The theme of the 41st Philosophy of Religion Conference in Claremont was *Autonomy, Diversity and the Common Good*. It was chosen to honor the philosophical and theological achievements of Anselm K. Min, who has helped shape this conference for many years and who sadly died shortly after the conference in August 2020. He was the heart and soul of the PRT (Philosophy of Religion and Theology) program at Claremont Graduate University.

The volume is dedicated to the memories of Anselm Min and Joseph Prabhu. Joseph Prabhu has worked intensively for many years on the annual conference and has energetically supported its basic orientation of building bridges between the Western and Asian traditions in philosophy and theology. At the last conference he paid tribute to Anselm Min's person and work. He too passed away a few months later.

We are grateful to the *Udo Keller Stiftung Forum Humanum* (Hamburg), which has again generously provided ten conference grants to enable doctoral students and post-docs to take part in the conference and present their work on the theme of the conference. Five of those essays are published here along with the other contributions to the conference. We couldn't have done what we did without its support. We gratefully acknowledge the support of Pomona College which sponsored the conference for the last time. We are indebted to those who contributed to this volume, and to Mohr Siebeck who has accepted the manuscript for publication.

Marlene A. Block
Ingolf U. Dalferth

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Introduction: Autonomy, Diversity and the Common Good

INGOLF U. DALFERTH

1. Diversity and Difference

Diversity is different from difference. We are all different from each other because we are who we are and not somebody else. Diversity, on the other hand, is not about the identity of individuals, but about group identity and group membership. Groups of people can be distinguished from others by natural (biological), cultural (linguistic, religious), social, political, economic, or a host of other differences. Their members may belong to different groups, where the differences are not mutually exclusive. But groups are always defined by demarcation from other groups. In the social and political sphere, different groups compete for resources, influence, and power in society. And they create winners and losers in this struggle for influence, power, and recognition. Identity politics responds by designing political agendas based on diversity issues that focus on inequality, discrimination, and inclusion of those who are marginalized or feel excluded in society. The issue is no longer just the identity of the individual, but above all the status of the group in society.

The shift from focusing on the individual to focusing on the group changes the whole debate. Autonomy is different when it comes to individuals or to groups. And the same is true for the common good. What individuals see as the common good that they seek or should seek is different from what competing groups strive for as the common goal or objective of their respective groups. In the first case, the common good is about something that is fundamentally the same for everyone and makes everyone equal; in the second case, it is rarely about anything other than the competitive struggle of groups to assert their own interests in society.

In both cases, religion, faith, and recourse to God can play a central role. But they do so in very different ways. In the first case, they serve to bring to bear the fundamental difference between the individual and the universal in such a way as to make possible not only the distinction between ourselves and others, but above all a critically discriminating relationship to ourselves. We are

enabled to see ourselves as another, as Paul Ricoeur put it.¹ Otherness is not just a characteristic of others, but a constitutive feature of our own self. But it is so in a deeper sense than often seen. We are not just what we think we are and what others think we are, but who we are in relation to God. This relationship does not appear in real life as such, but as an ideal of humanity to which we never conform in such a way that we could not and should not conform to it even better. We are never as God sees us. God looks not only at what we are in fact, but also at what we could and should be in his presence, and thus judges us not only in the light of our reality, but also in the light of our possibilities. Therefore, we must always strive to become what we are before God, and this cannot be done without critically distinguishing ourselves from what we are and becoming what we are not but could and should be.

The second case, on the other hand, is about the relative opposition between groups that have power and those that want to have power, and thus about how one group asserts its identity and enforces it against others. In such constellations, religion often functions not as a critical questioning of one's own convictions, but as an amplifier of group identity and group certainties, and thus brings about the opposite of what it does in the first case: not the possibility of a critical difference to oneself, but the fundamentalist conviction that the world is only seen correctly as one sees it oneself.

The double dialectic of individual and society and of different groups in society plays a crucial role in the philosophical and theological discussion about the meaning of religion, faith, and reference to God in the complex debate about autonomy, diversity and the common good. It deserves special attention today. That is what this volume is about.

2. The Precarious Status of a Shared Humanity

We live in a time of growing social and cultural diversity and inequality. This has increased the traditional tensions between individual freedom and social responsibility to a point where the binding forces of our societies seem to be exhausted. We all know that ultimate diversity is a fact. We all belong to different groups, and groups define themselves by marking themselves off from others. And we are all different because no one is identical to another, and no one remains completely the same over time. However, we are not first individuals and then also social beings. On the contrary, we exist from the beginning as social beings who cannot survive for long if we do not succeed in creating a common human habitat and culture. Precisely because we are all different, we need common social conventions and moral, legal, and political rules and

¹ P. RICOEUR, *Oneself as Another* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

institutions that allow us to live our diversity without endangering the life, freedom, and humanity of others.

The precarious culture of a shared humanity has been in crisis for some time. Where previously the commonalities of nature, culture, religion and tradition that connect us before we become an individual self were emphasized, we have learned to deconstruct these commonalities and replace them with our own cultural constructions without being disturbed by the biological, cultural, moral or religious limitations of earlier times.

However, instead of creating a society of equals, for which many have hoped, we have increased inequality and injustice in our societies to an unprecedented degree. We fight for our individual identities, rights, and claims, often without much concern for those of others, and we do so at both ends of the power divide in our societies by different means. Those in power act as if everyone in our democracies had equal access to the institutions of education and politics, even though this is obviously not the case. Those who fight for power demand that others respect their needs and rights, even if they themselves are not willing to do so. Those who are in power must help those who are not – for moral reasons.

150 years ago, Nietzsche analyzed the resentment mechanisms by which the weak gain power over the strong by morally exploiting their role as victims. He clearly saw that social conflicts are not about questions of truth, the good or justice, but a power struggle waged under a moral guise. Most of our social debates over the last 50 years have been conducted in this way: liberation activists, feminists, critics of colonialism and nationalism, proponents of universalism and cosmopolitanism and their opponents have all practiced the mechanisms analyzed by Nietzsche, and they have been pretty successful in doing so.

3. Identity Politics

In order to create more just conditions for everybody, democratic countries around the globe pursue and implement policies that promote greater self-determination, cultural participation and political power for marginalized groups in order to help them assert their distinctiveness and gain recognition in contexts of inequality or injustice. But they often do it without due regard for the interests and potentials of society at large, or the different needs of others, or the commonalities we must share for our society to work. Identity politics that seek to overcome structures of inequality and injustice for marginalized groups in society thus often create new injustices and inequalities. Like the sorcerer's apprentice, we have inaugurated a global process of social change but cannot control the forces that drive us apart or prevent the weakening of the forces that bind us together. As Fukuyama has recently shown, if we take identity politics to the extreme, we end up in a destructive individualism and group

egoism that undermine the structures and procedures of democratic societies, social welfare and republican representationalism.²

The tensions between centripetal and centrifugal forces in society can be observed everywhere, and they have been fueled by the global spread of capitalism and consumerism. For some, freedom, independence, and autonomy are the highest values in our society that must not be compromised by any social commitments, legal restrictions, or political obligations. Others emphasize justice, equity and equality and insist that we must practice solidarity with those who need it and assume responsibility even for that for which we are not responsible.

But why play off one against the other? Is it true that insistence on autonomy and diversity weakens social cohesion, or that striving for justice, equity and equality undermines individual freedom? How much individuality and which kinds of diversity are we ready to accept? Where do we want draw a line, if we do, and for which reasons? How much autonomy and diversity are possible without destroying social cohesion and human solidarity? And how much social commonality is necessary to be able to live an autonomous life and do justice to diversity?

We all know that the Enlightenment's call to overcome traditional dependencies and prejudices through self-determined autonomy has been understood very differently. Some see it as a license to make their individual interests and desires the yardstick of their lives, and not always for bad reasons. Others follow a more Kantian line by focusing on an autonomy that does not center on one's own desires, wishes and dreams, but on the duty to universalize the maxim of the good will. They believe that the only way to make the world a better place is to better oneself; and the only way to better oneself is to will nothing that cannot be willed by everyone in the given situation, and to create legal and political institutions that allow people of different moral, political and religious persuasions to live together peacefully.

This goes beyond the Hegelian idea that we must recognize and acknowledge ourselves in the other, or the Levinasian insight that it is the other who, by her mere presence, demands our moral solidarity. All this remains dangerously vague and indeterminate if it is not transformed into legal and political institutions which, by defining the rights and duties of every person, guarantee equal treatment of others *as others*. It is not because we are ultimately all equal that we must strive for something common. Instead, it is because we are all unequal and different that we need common, binding structures and institutions that enable us to live together in peace.

² M. LILLA, "Identitätspolitik ist keine Politik," *NZZ*, November 26 (2016) (<https://www.nzz.ch/feuilleton/mark-lilla-ueber-die-krise-des-linkliberalismus-identitaetspolitik-ist-keine-politik-ld.130695?reduced=true>) (7/13/2022); F. FUKUYAMA, *Identity: The Demand for Dignity and the Politics of Resentment* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2018).

4. The Importance of the Common

In order not to fall from autonomous subjectivity into egoistic subjectivism and essentialist tribalism³ that makes our diversity and individuality a plague for all, we must constantly search for commonalities that enable us to live together without denying our differences and diversity – as people, as citizens, as parents and children, as students and teachers. Without at least a minimal consensus on common orientations in our different spheres of life, we cannot even fight for an improvement of the asymmetrical distribution of goods in our world or develop a common mind about the social and cultural distortions that need to be overcome. If everyone only represents their own interests, soon no one will be able to do so, and we are in the state which Hobbes described as “the war of all against all” (*bellum omnium against omnes*) “when every man is enemy to every man” that comes with “continual fear and danger of violent death” and makes “the life of man solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.”⁴

It is important to be aware of what is at stake here. If we believe that “‘Good’ and ‘evil’ are names that [only] signify our desires and aversions, which are different in men who differ in their characters, customs, and beliefs”,⁵ then we are on the direct path to social self-destruction. What is good – good *for me, for you, for them* – must not separate us from one other but must make us better together. Only what can be freely shared by others is truly a common good, and only standing up for a good that implies the same duties and rights for all is true autonomy, true self-determination for the good, and not just a selfish struggle for a greater share of power. We are not free when we are driven by our interests, wants and desires. We are not free when we oppose those who oppose us. We merely fall prey to the dialectics of power and remain determined by what we oppose. In order to be free, we must move beyond this opposition, and we do so when we freely bind ourselves to the good that we share with others.

But we must do it voluntarily, not because we are forced to do it or because we are classified as members of a group, tradition, nation, or religion on the basis of external characteristics beyond our control. We all have multiple identities, and not all of them apply in all situations. We all belong in larger con-

³ Cf. S. HANSON-EASEY, M. AUGUSTOINOS and G. MOLONY, “‘They’re All Tribals’: Essentialism, Context and the Discursive Representation of Sudanese Refugees,” *Discourse & Society* 25 (2016): 362–382 (<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0957926513519536>) (7/13/2022); K. MASHINGA, “Is the university quota system discriminatory?” (<https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20191203045249423>) (7/13/2022).

⁴ T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, Pt. 1, chap. 12 (<https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/hobbes1651part1.pdf>) (7/13/2022).

⁵ *Ibid.*, chap. 15 (<https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/hobbes1651part1.pdf>) (7/13/2022).

texts defined by gender, race, culture or religion. But to regard a person not as an inviolable bearer of human dignity and autonomy but merely or primarily as a member of a group, and to define membership in that group racially, religiously or gender specifically, can itself be a form of racism, religious bias, and sexism. What matters is not this belonging, but how we and others relate to it, whether we make it a question of our identity or not. We don't have to. If we do so, we will soon realize that we are thereby reinforcing the divisions that we want to overcome.⁶ To see others as mere representatives of an ideologically defined group, without considering how they see themselves or how they want to be seen by us, poisons the way we treat each other, undermines social cohesion, and leads to the struggle of all against all.

5. Not Only a Token of a Type

The problem is currently particularly acute at universities in the USA.⁷ If you want to get an academic job at a university like Claremont Graduate University (CGU), you must show yourself to be “committed to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, both in the classroom and in larger contexts,” by writing a diversity statement that demonstrates your “commitment to embracing diversity and supporting inclusion and equity in education,” teaching and research.⁸ Open-

⁶ Cf. S. KOSTNER, “Wer sich als Opfer darstellt, hat es auf Macht abgesehen. Und wer sich schuldig bekennt, will moralische Läuterung: So funktioniert die neue gesellschaftliche Dynamik,” *NZZ*, September 30 (2019); *Identitätslinke Läuterungsagenda. Eine Debatte zu ihren Folgen für Migrationsgesellschaften* (Stuttgart: ibidem, 2019); R. SCHEU, “Interview,” *NZZ*, November 24 (2020) (<https://www.nzz.ch/feuilleton/wir-gegen-die-mentalitaet-opferansprueche-und-schuldbekennnisse-ld.1511319>) (7/13/2022).

⁷ S. BEN-PORATH, “Free Speech at the University: A Way Forward,” *University World News*, November 2 (2019) (<https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20191029104513847>) (7/13/2022); F. COULMAS, “Wozu sind Universitäten da? – Für Erkenntnis und Wissen und nicht für den Kult der Diversity,” *NZZ*, June 26 (2019) (<https://www.nzz.ch/meinung/wozu-sind-universitaeten-da-nicht-fuer-den-kult-der-diversity-ld.1489464>) (7/13/2022); I. U. DALFERTH, “Orientierungslos im Meer der Ideologien,” *FAZ*, Nr. 169, July 23 (2020): 6 (<https://www.faz.net/aktuell/karriere-hochschule/hoersaal/lage-der-geisteswissenschaften-orientierungslos-im-meer-der-ideologien-16872082.html>) (7/13/2022); “Großprojekt Gegendiskriminierung. Kritische Anmerkungen zur Entwicklung der Universitäten in den USA in Sachen Identitätspolitik,” *Zeitzeichen* 22 (2021): 8–11 (<https://zeitzeichen.net/node/8764>) (7/13/2022); “Kaninchen hervorgezaubert. Eine Replik auf ‘Fetisch Gegendiskriminierung’,” *Zeitzeichen* 22 (2021) (<https://zeitzeichen.net/node/8918>) (7/13/2022); H. PLUCKROSE and J. LINDSAY, *Cynical Theories: How Universities Made Everything about Race, Gender, and Identity – And Why This Harms Everybody* (Durham, NC: Pitchstone Publishing, 2020).

⁸ To provide just one example from an invitation to a *Preparing Future Faculty Webinar* about the “Basics of Diversity Statements” on June 30, 2022 at CGU: “A diversity statement is a valuable tool when you practice teaching, research, leadership, and most other endeavors.

ness to diversity is the new key competence,⁹ and the ability to write a diversity statement is an essential requirement for anyone applying for a position at the university. Of course, universities need to address the ethnic and cultural diversity of the country in which it is located. There are glaring injustices that are deeply rooted in history and experienced by many on a daily basis. These must be named, exposed, and remedied wherever possible. But there is no representative justice for individuals. No woman is better off if another woman gets a job, and no minority student is better off if another student of that group gets a place at university. Moreover, academia is not politics, and the duties and responsibilities of universities are not those of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. It's one thing to uncover problems, back them up with facts, work on models for solutions, and critically discuss the values that guide them. It is quite another thing when values are not only propagated but made binding and cast by administrations into rules that cannot be followed without discriminating against entire arbitrarily defined groups of people.¹⁰ In many places in the US universities and curricula are being purged of people, words, ideas, and issues that represent everything that is

Writing a diversity statement is an opportunity to narrate your journey as a teacher, scholar, and leader and articulate your values, beliefs, goals, and methods as an educator committed to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, both in the classroom and in larger contexts. This session will highlight important considerations in writing your diversity statement no matter what stage you are in. During this webinar, you will learn: 1. What to include in your Diversity Statements. 2. How to integrate Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) in your statement. 3. How to communicate your experiences and commitment to embracing diversity and supporting inclusion and equity in education. 4. How to get more help developing your own Diversity Statements.”

⁹ “CGU locates diversity as an essential component of its institutional mission. To attract the best and the brightest, to solve humanity’s most pressing problems, to foster a community of life-long learners who make a difference in the world, Claremont Graduate University is committed to the inherent value of diversity. CGU is advancing diversity and equity in higher education, and with a higher representation of domestic students of color than the national average, our student body affirms it.” (<https://www.cgu.edu/student-life/diversity/>) (7/13/2022).

¹⁰ One does not shrink from self-contradictory formulations, because they allow the administration to decide at will: “CGU is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, or physical disability in its employment practice and in admission of students to educational programs and activities in accordance with the requirement of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and other applicable laws. CGU is committed to affirmative action in employment practices regarding ethnic minorities, the physically challenged, Vietnamera veterans, and women” (<https://www.cgu.edu/employment-opportunities/>) (7/13/2022). The tension between the dual commitment to nondiscrimination and affirmative action for some and against other groups is either not noticed or intentionally ignored. The fight against discrimination at universities has long since become a major project of counter-discrimination through affirmative action, quota regulations and diversity management. It is considered morally justified to discriminate against the discriminators, because it is about good discrimination. Cf. I. X. KENDI, *How to Be An Antiracist* (New York: One World, 2019).

white, male, and heterosexual.¹¹ Those who do not make a diversity statement that meets the expectations the university has defined will not even be considered for application. Historically significant works of the European traditions are removed from the teaching canon because they were written by “white heterosexual men.” Critical questioning of different positions is challenged as Western thinking and as an academic perpetuation of colonialism and replaced by a declaration of commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The motivation is understandable, the goal may be well-intentioned, but the means are ineffective, and the result is devastating. To quote just one observer of recent developments at universities:

Isn't it also racist or sexist to exclude 'whiteness and heterosexuality'? Diversity supporters say: No. Because the majority, or the group that represents power, cannot be discriminated against. But is that true? No. To discriminate means to discriminate to the disadvantage of a group – whether that group is in the majority or in the minority is irrelevant.

Today, diversity is enforced by systematically excluding what has long since ceased to be the majority power at Ivy League institutions: the white, fearfully respected professor who constantly glances at young female students or embarrasses them with lewd remarks. Thus, diversity becomes a conformism of mind aimed at the male. And a doctrine that enables racism and sexism all the more, simply in the other direction. For the group that is to be excluded is no longer named at all – only those who must not be discriminated against under any circumstances are named. Does power become more bearable when it comes in the guise of diversity? [...]

Where is the error in thinking? In the fact that in the final analysis it is not about tolerance, nor only about racism or sexism in rainbow garb. It is about the claim to want to be minority and majority at the same time, subject and sovereign of power at the same time. It is about the lie of not identifying with the power that belongs to the adherents of a rigid but ultimately inconsistent identity politics.¹²

Where identity issues take over, the pursuit of insight and truth is reduced to a power struggle between groups. But for universities, this is self-destructive. They must undoubtedly meet the challenges of society's growing ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity. And they must be sensitive to the historical injustices that still affect members of certain groups today. But favoring some members of one group does not create justice for the others. And it is not a viable path to consider all groups and orientations equally.

Each semester, all faculty at CGU are informed of the Interfaith Calendar, which lists all religious festivals and holidays that may be relevant to students and should be considered when planning courses and exams. There is

¹¹ Cf. R. DIANGELO, *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism* (London: Penguin, 2019).

¹² S. PINES, “Diversity an US-Universitäten: Wenn Antirassismus zu Rassismus wird,” *NZZ*, April 4 (2019) (<https://www.nzz.ch/feuilleton/diversity-an-us-unis-wenn-antirassismus-zu-rassismus-wird-ld.1472150>) (7/13/2022).

hardly a day in the semester that is not affected. The list includes not only religions such as “Judaism, Islam, Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, Baha’i, Zoroastrian, Sikh, Shinto, Jain, Confucian, Daoist, Native American, Materialism, Secular Humanism,” but also Mandaeans, Yezidi, Kemetic Federation, Wicca, Scientology, Caodai, Society of Humankind, Eckankar, Theosophy, New Age, Temple Zagduku, Qigong/T’ai chi, Raelian Church, Asatru, Hellenismos, Yoruba, Rastafari, Unitarian Universalist. And recently, the Church of Satan and the Pastafarians (The Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster) have also been legally included in the “family of religions.” The university’s effort to give equal weight to all is obviously becoming a farce. One hopes that the problem will not arise in practice. The appeal to reasons of equity, equality and justice only conceals the fact that one does not know what to do.

The effort to do justice to all raises more than just organizational problems. Universities should not only not discriminate against anyone, but also take into account the concerns of different identity groups in research and teaching. This is increasingly leading to a move away from the universalizing Western culture of scholarship and science. The simplest solution is to stop engaging with it. European thinking and white men’s science should no longer define the field; the culturally and socially marginalized claim the right to do scholarship and science as they wish in their own name. This opens up interesting perspectives that raise new and important questions. But taken by itself, it is not a path that leads beyond the differences of the various groups, but rather one that reinforces them. No one knows how to deal constructively with the ever-increasing diversity of methods, content, and group interests. If there were infinite resources, it might be possible to avoid conflicts. But there are not. Therefore, there is a struggle for the available resources, funds, and positions, and academia becomes the battleground of groups and their ideologies.

What is often deliberately overlooked is that, despite all the necessary criticism, it is precisely the European tradition with its emphasis on freedom, equality, justice, and solidarity that has found a way out of the religious, cultural, and national group conflicts in Europe. A better solution has not yet been proposed anywhere.¹³ Therefore, in this volume we will link the debate about diversity to the debates about autonomy and the common good. One must go back into history to understand the present. And a central point in this history is the attempt of Enlightenment thinkers in Europe to find a way out of the group dependencies and the resulting conflicts that had brought Europe

¹³ One can and must read the point of Alexander Pope’s “Know then thyself, presume not God to scan, // The proper study of mankind is Man” also in that way. A. POPE, *An Essay On Man: Being the First Book of Ethic Epistles. To Henry St. John, L. Bolingbroke* (London: John Wright, 1734), Epistle II, 1–2 (<https://www.eighteenthcenturypoetry.org/works/o3676-w0010.shtml>) (7/13/2022).

to the brink of the abyss in the 16th and 17th centuries. The often-criticized European individualism and universalism, rightly understood, is not the problem, but the solution to the problems of diversity, group conflict and the struggle for recognition.

6. The Difficulty of Becoming a Self

Kant – to name only him – saw the decisive step toward liberation from attachment to traditional opinions, groups, and identities in becoming a responsible self or subject through critical self-thinking and moral self-determination. His concern is misunderstood if it is understood as an “expansion of the subject zone, i. e., the demand for self-disposal and self-determination as a characteristic of,” and if “the promise of modernity” is seen in the right “to make use not only of one’s own intellect, but also of one’s own body.”¹⁴ To make oneself the means of one’s own arbitrariness is the opposite of the autonomy of which Kant speaks, and to interpret this as a subject’s free self-disposal over itself, to which no one else would have the right to object, turns Kant’s concept of the self-responsible subject into a romanticizing arbitrary subjectivism, which is the opposite of what Kant was concerned with. To be able to act in this way, one would first have to be a subject, and if one is a subject in Kant’s sense, aligning oneself with the maxim of the good, thinking for oneself, judging rationally, and acting responsibly, then one no longer acts in this arbitrary and selfish way.

But how do we become subjects who think and judge for themselves? Not by turning away from others and doing only what we want. We are not abstract individuals who have no obligations to others, but we are concrete individuals with identities that we share to varying degrees with others – not all with all others, but many with some, and not always equally, but each in a certain way. Being a human being is a fact that no one can deny, becoming a self is a task and a duty that everyone can avoid. We are all born as human beings without having contributed anything. We are there without being the cause of it ourselves. We all have a lot in common that comes with our intersecting identities. But while we are all human beings from birth and thus share in the rights and duties that we associate with the dignity of being human, no one is therefore already a self, but must first become one in the course of his or her life. This happens by not only being what we are, but by relating to it in a distinctive way by living it concretely. Since everyone does this in his or her own way,

¹⁴ P.-I. VILLA BRASLAVSKY, “Trans* Personen nehmen das Versprechen der Moderne ernst,” *Die Zeit Online*, June 25, 2022 (<https://www.zeit.de/kultur/2022-06/paula-irene-villa-braslavsky-trans-gender-soziologie>) (26/06/2022) (my translation).

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